

University of Manchester Equality Objective Consultation: Objective 2 – Degree attainment

Overview

1.1 Objectives

A total of 6 equality objectives have been outlined for consideration, these include:

- Improve the representation of women and black and minority ethnic staff in senior, academic and professional support positions, by promoting the University as an employer of choice and providing targeted support in promotions and career development.
- Address the differential degree attainment of black and minority ethnic undergraduate students by further increasing our understanding and instigating programmes of support.
- Foster good relations between staff and students from different groups by challenging discrimination and stereotypes through awareness raising activities and training events.
- Understand the potential impact of University functions on disabled staff and students by improving disability disclosure rates and reporting mechanisms.
- Improving sexual orientation disclosure rates by providing an inclusive working and learning environment that promotes the University as an advocate of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans rights.

1.2 Selection Criteria

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) has outlined a set of criteria to help prioritise equality objectives:

- **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?
- **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?
- **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and service users themselves?
- **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?
- **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?
- **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?
- **Stakeholders:** What are the views of your stakeholders?

1.3 Consultation

To help you consider each of the proposed objectives the following information has been provided:

- The objective
- The measures
- A list of potential actions
- The extent to which each objective meets the criteria outlined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

At this stage in the consultation we are asking you to consider this information and answer the following questions.

- Considering the evidence outlined in the selection criteria, do you feel that this objective should be included in the final selection?
- If this objective is chosen, please identify any changes that you would make to it?
- If this objective is chosen, please identify any changes that you would make to any of the measures?
- If this objective is chosen, what actions do you think would help achieve this objective?

1.4 Timeline

- Thursday 23rd February 2012 – Final date to provide feedback on objectives
- Friday 24th February 2012 – Final Equality Objectives sent to the Planning and Resource Committee
- Tuesday 6th March 2012 – Planning and Resource Committee
- Thursday 5th April 2012 – Publish Equality Objectives

2.1 Objective 2

Address the differential degree attainment of black and minority ethnic undergraduate students by increasing our understanding and instigating programmes of support

2.2 Measure

- An increase in the proportion of black and minority ethnic students who receive a degree classification of a 2:1 or higher

2.3 A list of potential actions

- Continue to improve our understanding of differential degree attainment of undergraduate students in each Faculty and School.
- Continue the work of the University's Degree Attainment Group
- Work in schools to trial specific programmes and evaluate the impact on black and minority ethnic students.
- Work with other Universities to share good practice on differential degree attainment, especially Russell Group institutions.

2.4 Criteria

- 2.4.1 **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

- 2.4.2 **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?

Yes. The [Equality Challenge Unit Report on Ethnicity and Degree Attainment](#) and [student equality data](#) monitored and reported through the [Equality and Diversity Forum](#) and the University's [Annual Performance Review](#).

Summary – an investigation undertaken at the University analysed data on 4,846 students who had classified degrees in 2008/09 produced the following results:

- 75% of white students obtained a 'good degree' (1st class or Upper second) compared to 55% of BME students.
- The differences in degree classification between White and BME students occurred across all Faculties.
- The differences in degree attainment were not explained by differences in socio-economic status between these groups of students.

2.4.3 **Students:** Are these priorities for students themselves?

Unknown

2.4.4 **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?

Yes. Key areas of the student life cycle would include:

- Student Admissions
- Student Support
- Teaching and Learning
- Progression
- Retention

2.4.5 **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?

- Improving degree attainment has the potential to improve future employment opportunities and life changes of all black and minority ethnic undergraduate students who attend the University.

2.4.6 **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?

- 16% (6357) of all current undergraduate students are black and minority ethnic

1. Fostering good relations

2.5 Objective

Foster good relations between staff and students from different groups by challenging discrimination and stereotypes through awareness raising activities and training events.

2.6 Measure

- A proportional increase in the number of staff who agree that they are valued and treated with respect and dignity across all of the protected characteristics as measured through the staff satisfaction survey.
- A proportional increase in the number of staff who agree that they are treated with respect and dignity across all of the protected characteristics as measured through the student satisfaction survey.

2.7 A list of potential actions

- Consider expanding the equality information collected and reported in both the staff and student satisfaction surveys.
- A programme of awareness raising activities, based on the equality and diversity calendar, covering all of the protected characteristics
- Promote awareness of flexible working options
- Continue to support the University's staff network groups
- A programme of conflict resolution skills training for managers and those who work with students
- Work in collaboration with the Disabled Staff Service; the Disabled Staff Network and the Equality and Diversity Team to identify a programme of awareness raising activities that promote the support mechanisms that are available to disabled staff and their managers.

2.8 Criteria

2.8.1 **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2.8.2 **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?

Yes. The University's Staff Satisfaction Survey Dignity at Work and Study Report and the [University's student satisfaction survey](#).

Summary - 2636 (approximately 23%) members of staff took part in the University's 2010 staff survey.

- Black and minority ethnic respondents were less likely to agree that staff are treated fairly irrespective of their background (62%) than white respondents (78%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree that staff are treated fairly irrespective of their background (61%) than those who did not declare a disability (76%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree: my line manager is supportive of me (61%) than those who did not declare a disability (72%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree: I feel I am treated with respect and dignity by other staff (59%) than those who did not declare a disability (71%).
- Of the 1891 respondents who have contact with students female respondents were less likely to agree: I am treated with respect and dignity by students (68%) than male respondents (76%).
- Overall 54% of respondents agreed that policies relating to equality and diversity are working.
- Black and minority ethnic respondents were less likely to agree that policies relating to equality and diversity are working (50%) than white respondents (57%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree that policies relating to equality and diversity are working (50%) than white respondents (56%).
- Overall 50% of respondents agreed that: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do.
- Male respondents are less likely to agree: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do (49%) than females (53%).
- White respondents are less likely to agree: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do (52%) than black and minority ethnic respondents (57%).

A number of staff focus groups conducted on behalf of the University for disabled, international, lesbian, gay, bisexual, Trans and women, all identified training and awareness as barriers to dignity at work and progression.

A recent research report conducted by the Equality Challenge Unit on behalf of the University identified the following points relating to policy and practice

- Assess the relevance and take-up of current disability-related training.
- Develop a tailored awareness-raising training programme for line managers and middle managers to instigate change and narrow the gap between policy and practice.
- Further promote the business case for diversity in the workplace and the importance of increasing awareness and understanding of disability equality.
- Profile and promote the disabled staff network to all staff across the university.
- Develop a staff handbook which outlines regulations, legal rights and sources of support and advice

[The University's Student Satisfaction Survey 2008/09:](#)

- 75% of respondents agreed people are treated fairly irrespective of background.
- Undergraduate respondents were more likely to agree people are treated fairly irrespective of background (78%) than postgraduate taught (69%) and research (68%).
- 57% of respondents agreed there is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.
- Undergraduate respondents were more likely to agree that there is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment (59%) than post graduate taught (54%) and research (50%).

2.8.3 **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and students themselves?

Yes. Evidence through:

- The [University's staff satisfaction survey](#) and the [University's student satisfaction survey](#).
- A series of focus groups, undertaken on behalf of the E&D Team, with staff and students looking at issues that specifically affect gender, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and Trans.
- A review of the University's Disabled Staff Service undertaken by the Equality Challenge Unit.
- The work undertaken in preparation for submission to the [Athena Swan Awards](#) and the [Stonewall Workplace Equality Index](#)

2.8.4 **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?

Yes. Key areas of the staff and student life cycle would include:

- Dignity at Work and Study
- Training and Development
- Attainment
- Career Progression
- Retention

2.8.5 **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?

- Promoting understanding and raising awareness of key issues that affect different staff and student groups has the potential to have a positive impact on the entire institution.

2.8.6 **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?

- This objective has the potential to affect all of the University community, 10,929 members of staff and 39,732 students

2. Equality Information: Staff and student disability disclosure

4.1 Objective

Understand further the potential impact of University functions on disabled staff and students by improving disability disclosure rates and reporting mechanisms.

4.2 Measures

- An increase in the number of current staff disclosing a disability
- Annual monitoring of the application to the disability two ticks positive action initiative has taken place
- Annual monitoring of degree attainment by disability
- Annual monitoring of inclusion in career development activities by disability

4.3 A list of potential actions

- An annual programme of activities will take place to encourage staff and students to disclose disability
- A review of the disability equality information we collate and how we use it has taken place.
- Consider utilising the staff and student surveys

4.4 Criteria

4.4.1 **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share the protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

4.4.2 **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?

Yes. The Equality Challenge Unit's research into the [Disclosure and Support Issues for Disabled Staff in Higher Education \(2008\)](#) and the Equality Challenge Unit guidance [Evidencing equality: approaches to increasing disclosure and take-up of disabled students' allowance](#)

[Staff and student equality](#) data monitored and reported through the [Equality and Diversity Forum](#) and the University's [Annual Performance Review](#).

Summary – Staff:

- 2.34 % of disabled people working in HE, while the 2004 census indicated that 9% of people working in HE have disabilities (HESA 2004/05).
- 3% of all current staff have declared a disability and 4% of those applying for academic posts and 5% for professional support posts declared a disability at recruitment (2010/11).

Summary – Students:

- A HEFCE review undertaken in 2009 raised concerns about the limited extent to which data was being used to improve support for disabled students in higher education.
- It reported an overall increase in the number of students disclosing themselves as disabled, but noted that disclosure rates varied across institutions and between part-time and full-time students.
- The University's current student disclosure rates have increased in recent years and are high compared to other Russell group institutions and the UK (Single Equality Scheme Appendix3 Equality Monitoring).

4.4.3 **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and students themselves?

Yes. Evidence through:

- A series of focus groups, undertaken on behalf of the E&D Team, with staff and students looking at issues that specifically affect gender, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and Trans.
- A review of the University's Disabled Staff Service undertaken by the Equality Challenge Unit.

4.4.4 **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?

Yes. Key areas of the staff and student life cycle would include:

- Recruitment and admissions
- Support provision for staff and students
- Dignity at Work and Study
- Training and Development
- Attainment
- Career Progression
- Retention

4.4.5 **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?

- Improving disclosure rates would allow us to better understand the needs of our staff and students. It would also allow us to determine how particular policies and processes affect disabled people. Activities to improve disclosure would also further promote an inclusive environment where disabled people feel valued. These activities would also create better understanding of some of the issues faced by disabled people.

4.4.6 **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?

- Current data notes that 3% (328) of staff have declared a disability. If HESA predictions are correct this could be closer to 9% (984).

3. Equality Information: Staff and student disclosing sexual orientation

5.1 Objective

Improving sexual orientation disclosure rates by providing an inclusive working and learning environment that promotes the University as an advocate of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans rights.

5.2 Measures

- An increase in table position in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index
- An increase in the number of current staff disclosing their sexual orientation
- An increase in the number of staff disclosing their sexual orientation at job application
- Annual monitoring of staff complaints by sexual orientation
- Annual monitoring of inclusion in career development activities by sexual orientation

5.3 A list of potential actions

- An annual programme of activities has taken place that raises the profile of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans issues at the University.
- A review of the equality information on sexual orientation we collate and how we use it has taken place
- To provide a forum to discuss LGBT issues and ensure unlawful discrimination, stereotyping and harassment are eliminated
- Identify a senior champion who will attend LGBT related events and promote good practise throughout the university
- Review policies and procedures to ensure all inclusive language is used
- Engage with local community groups to ensure they have support and facilities available
- Establish good links with the student population for collaboration on events such as IDAHO and Pride
- Use other local institutions as a way to benchmark our progress and collaborate on particular projects

5.4 Criteria

5.4.1 **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share the protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

5.4.2 **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?

Yes. Stonewall's guide, [Monitoring: how to monitor sexual orientation in the workplace](#), outlines the benefits of monitoring sexual orientation in the workplace.

The Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) guidance, [Advancing LGB equality; improving the experience of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff and students in higher education](#) reflects and adds to these benefits for staff and goes on to outline potential benefits for students.

The ECU's research [The experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans staff and students in higher education \(2009\)](#) identified an important need for HEIs to win the trust of their LGBT staff/student community before attempting to monitor staff/student sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Focus groups with staff and students on sexual orientation and Trans issues at the University

The work undertaken in preparation for submission to the [Stonewall Workplace Equality Index](#).

5.4.3 **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and students themselves?

Yes. Evidence through the information given above.

5.4.4 **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?

Yes. Key areas of the staff and student life cycle would include:

- Recruitment and admissions
- Support provision for staff and students
- Dignity at Work and Study
- Training and Development
- Attainment
- Career Progression
- Retention

5.4.5 **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?

- Improving disclosure rates would allow us to better understand the needs of its staff and students. Activities to improve disclosure would also further promote an inclusive environment where. These activities would also create better understanding of some of the issues faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and Trans people.

5.4.6 **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?

This is currently unknown.

