

University of Manchester Equality Objective Consultation: Objective 5 Staff and student sexual orientation disclosure

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

5.1 Objective 5

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.