

University of Manchester Equality Objective Consultation: Objective 6 Staff and student religion or belief 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 6

Improve disclosure rates of religion or belief by providing an inclusive working and learning environment that raises awareness of religious and cultural factors that have the potential to affect the staff and student experience

5.2 Measures

- An increase in the number of current staff disclosing their religion or belief
- An increase in the number of staff disclosing their religion or belief at job application
- Annual monitoring of staff complaints by religion or belief
- Annual monitoring of inclusion in career development activities by religion or belief

5.3 A list of potential actions

- An annual programme of activities has taken place that promotes understanding of different religions or beliefs
- Promote a greater understanding of the support that can be requested from the University in fulfilling cultural or religious beliefs, flexible working options etc.

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. The Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) guidance, [Religion and belief impacts on staff and student experiences of higher education](#)

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

Yes.

- 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.

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
- Dignity at Work and Study
- 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 people with different cultural or religious beliefs.

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.