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Introduction

The University of the Highlands and Islands prides itself as being an inspirational, innovative, and inclusive institution, and is committed to providing higher education and employment opportunities to enable people from all backgrounds to fulfil their potential. Our existing Equality and Diversity Charter commits the university to take steps to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relations

With the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty now in place the University sees this as an opportunity to build the mainstreaming of equality and diversity into our processes and improve engagement with staff and students on the issues identified.

This report details the actions taken to date, progress made in mainstreaming and the equality outcomes we plan to deliver during the period 2013 – 2017, both in terms of the wider University network and specifically within the Executive Office.

Equality Mainstreaming Report 2012/3

The University of the Highlands and Islands is committed to providing access to a quality higher education portfolio and in respect of its Executive Office being an employer of choice.

We are committed to the promotion of equality and diversity and believe there is no place for unlawful discrimination in any of our services and activities. We aim to ensure that all of our policies, procedures and practices do not unfairly discriminate and that positive measures are taken to redress any inequalities in employment practices, provision of services to students, or the way in which we manage our business.

During 2012, in addition to dealing with those legacy issues remaining from 2011, the focus of our activity in addressing the equality and diversity agenda within the University and Executive Office was on these seven key areas

1. Responding to changes in the committee reporting structure so as to ensure that the profile of the equality and diversity agenda within the University was maintained. As part of a re-organisation of the university committee structure, in December 2011 the decision was made by University Court to disband the Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) and to transfer responsibility for reporting on equality and diversity issues to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC) who also have responsibility for Human Resources as part of their remit.

FGPC also took responsibility for the work of the Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG). The EDWG has good cross partnership representation and comprises senior managers from throughout the university partnership, who all have equality and diversity as part of their remits.

Whilst there has been on-going discussion throughout 2012 on a revised remit, structure and terms of reference for this Group, the existing EDWG has absorbed and maintained the EOC's engagement with the equality and diversity agenda. In particular, it has been the focus for the on-going development of the university and the academic partners Single Equalities Schemes and action plans to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

2. Protected Characteristics Project

The University recognises the need to broaden the monitoring and reporting of equalities and diversity data relating to University of the Highlands and Islands students and has therefore established a strategic Protected Characteristics Project. The overarching objective of the project is for the University to meet our equality and legislative requirements by collecting and monitoring the protected characteristics for each student. The data to be collected has been determined partly by our equality

objectives and partly by the various legislative requirements. This will be kept under review as the requirements of UK and Scottish equality duties align in the further education and higher education sector.

Data collection regarding the protected characteristics will be used to inform the equality planning process, benchmark the university with appropriate organisations, and report on progress against outcome agreements and equality objectives. The information will be held as part of the student records in SITS. A detailed implementation document has been produced, with timescales and individual milestones. The project will deliver:

- Additional personal student data as covered by 'protected characteristic' legislation
- A system which will allow collection, secure storage and limited monitoring of the data
- Increased staff and student awareness of the importance of the student data

The main stakeholders and associated benefits to those stakeholders are:

- Senior management: data to allow monitoring, to ensure institution is meeting its legal equality obligations; meeting outcome agreements with SFC
- Students: protection from discrimination
- Registry Staff: increased data integrity for all fields
- External Agencies: additional data to be amalgamated to allow increased accuracy in any high level statistical analysis

In addition to the enhanced data generated through this project, the Equalities

Outcomes published by each of our Academic Partners will be assessed and integrated
at a university level through the on-going work of the Equality and Diversity Working

Group.

3. Engagement within the university

As indicated above the Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) has provided the university with a focus for discussing and addressing the equality and diversity agenda across the network. Within the Executive Office, equality and diversity issues are a standard item on the agenda for senior management team meetings and are discussed with staff representatives through our Information and Consultative Committee. In addition to the consultative process undertaken in support of our equality plans for 2013 and beyond, two specific activities aimed at engaging with Executive Office staff during the year were a staff survey and the development of on-line training modules for equality and diversity.

2012 Staff Survey

In 2012 Executive Office and six academic partners commissioned Scotinform to undertake a joint staff survey. The survey covered eight key aspects of the employment experience, one of which was equality and diversity and was conducted by emailing all staff the link to an online questionnaire.

In total, 155 responses were received from staff at the Executive Office, based on a total sample of 210, this represented an excellent overall response rate of 74% the highest amongst the seven participating partners, whom averaged a participation rate of 57%.

In relation to equality and diversity, respondents were very positive about their understanding of their personal responsibilities for promoting equality at work (87% agreed) and they felt that the Executive Office actively promoted equality of opportunity (71% agreed). They were less positive, however, about their awareness of the organisation's equalities scheme (61% agreed) and how it would deal with equality concerns (57% agreed). The development of our Equality Plan provides us with the opportunity to raise staff awareness on these issues and highlight the steps they can take in addressing equality concerns.

On-line Training Modules

As part of our commitment to raising awareness of the general equality duty Executive Office staff and regular contractors are encouraged to access and complete three emodules, namely:

- Diversity in the workplace for higher education
- Understanding bias
- Challenging behaviour

A further three modules are available to staff on an optional, namely:

- Managing diversity for higher education
- Recruitment and selection training
- · Equality analysis training

During 2012, Executive Office and eight academic partners worked with Marshall ACM to develop a suite of multimedia courses on Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding (child and adult), Data Protection, Health and Safety, Bribery Act, Stress Management and Recruitment and Selection. Following customisation, these will be made available to Executive Office staff during the remainder of 2013.

4. Engagement outwith the university

Engagement with equality groups, stakeholders and the wider community is central to our ability to understand and respond to the needs of these groups. In addition to our network-wide engagement through EDWG, the university actively engages with a number of organisations.

The **Equality Challenge Unit** (ECU), which works to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education across all of the UK and additionally with colleges in Scotland. ECU facilitates engagement in Scotland through the **Scottish HEI Liaison Group** (SLG) and the **Scottish College's Liaison Group** (CLG), both of which

provide opportunities for the discussion of equality and diversity issues of common strategic interest.

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) **Highlands & Islands Equality Forum** (HIEF) provides support, networking, information and advice to organisations and community groups in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland on issues of equality and human rights and has been operating since 2002.

There is a strong history of partnership working in the Highlands and the **Highland Community Planning Partnership** (HCPP) **Equality and Diversity Group** works to promote equality and diversity in Highland by developing joint activities, engaging with local groups with an interest in equalities, and by gathering data and sharing information.

Through HCPP and alongside eight other public sector organisations we have set up the **Employees Disability Equality Network** (EDEN) for employees with disabilities to work with employers to improve, enhance and promote equality in the work place.

Similarly, through HCPP we have been involved with the establishment of the **Staff Equality Network** which is seeking to create better workplaces for LGBT staff working within Public Sector organisations in the Highlands and Islands.

5. Improving our equality impact assessment processes.

The university has operated an Impact Assessment Working Group (IAWG) since October 2008. IAWG has undertaken to review all policies, processes and practices within the university (principally the Executive Office) and assess their impact in relation to the legal strands of discrimination. The provision of advice and guidance by the Equalities Officer has raised staff awareness of the impact assessment process and how it can be mainstreamed into the policy development process. Building on this work will be a key component of our future plans.

In 2012 a proposal was made to extend the remit of the IAWG. This proposed change is intended to enable the university partnership to achieve wider consultation and engagement, in line with the requirements of the Specific Duties for Scotland. Discussions on this proposal are on-going.

6. Supporting preparations for the Research Excellence Framework 2014

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). It will replace the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and will be completed in 2014. Both the Equalities Officer and Head of Human Resources have been engaged in supporting the Dean of Research in ensuring an appropriate and equitable approach to the selection of staff for inclusion in the REF.

This included the development of a Code of Practice (CoP) [The Code of Practice and Guidance Note for Equality and Diversity in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework Submission Process: Staff Selection] involving the engagement of a wide number of individuals, groups and committees across the University. The development of the CoP has been a high priority for us to ensure that we establish an appropriate basis of staff selection for inclusion in the REF and also that our internal processes for monitoring and self-reflection in respect of impact assessment are robust.

All relevant staff associated with the REF submission were provided with access to the online training modules detailed above. In addition, REF-specific face-to-face training was provided by the Equalities Officer and supplemented with a REF-specific online module from Marshall ACM which all staff who will be part of the panel processes must successfully complete.

A baseline impact assessment was carried out, using data available from the submission to the 2008 Research Assessment exercise. As the selection process for the REF progresses further impact assessments are scheduled, beginning with an analysis of those staff who are eligible for potential inclusion in the REF 2014 submission, then at

the stage when staff are allocated to Units of Assessment and finally on the actual submission to the REF. The outcomes of these assessments are reported to the relevant committees, with a view to ensuring that appropriate actions are taken in amending policies and procedures relating to equality and diversity in research and other areas.

7. Mainstreaming equality and diversity within the procurement process

As a public sector body in Scotland, the university is required to adhere to Scottish Government procurement policies and European procurement legislation. Our Procurement policy discharges the university's moral, legal and economic duty to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, it follows procurement best practice. A review of the documentation in July 2012 provided the university with an opportunity to mainstream equality and diversity into the tendering process by requiring tenderers to:

- Provide a copy of their equality and diversity policy statement, and;
- Provide confirmation of their commitment to equality and diversity and that they
 have not been subject to legal proceedings relating to equality and diversity.

Executive Office employment information

The Executive Office is the administrative headquarters for the University of the Highlands and Islands. The main locations are at Ness Walk and Fairways in Inverness, but we also have staff located throughout the university network.

At the end of February 2013, we had a headcount of 231(197.4 fte) staff.

Analysis of existing staff data

Historically we have collected and maintained the following equality information for existing staff:

- Gender.
- Age.
- Ethnicity.
- Disability.

Whilst there is a planned exercise to refresh this data annually in line with our Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Staff Record submission, each member of staff has the opportunity to disclose and update their equality information at any time during their employment with the Executive Office.

Following the introduction of a new e-recruitment portal in May 2012, we have been able to collect data for seven of the protected characteristics of new applicants. With our planned progression to a computerised HR system, from August 2013 we intend to collect monitoring data for all the protected characteristics.

As has previously been indicated, the University participates in the annual HESA Staff Record submission and it is the dataset that we generate for this exercise that we have historically used in the annual equality report to the University Court. Pending our progression onto the new IT platform we will continue to use this dataset, but will review this prior to the

next report, as it is anticipated that the new platform will provide us with improved ability to interrogate the data.

A table detailing the data returned to HESA in respect of Executive Office employees each year from 2005/06 to 2011/12 is attached (Appendix 1). An analysis of the data shows a steadily aging population, with relatively little fluctuation in the gender mix or the predominant ethnicities over the period. In terms of data on disability whilst the percentage of staff for which we have no data has decreased, the actual numbers of staff with declared disabilities remain fairly low and may be indicative of a reluctance to identify themselves as having a disability.

Included in the table is data on the terms and mode of employment of employees over this period. The dataset for terms and mode of employment is based upon the number of contracts issued during that period and not the headcount figure. The data shows an increase in the use of fixed-term and part-time contracts, reflecting the growth in the number of project funded posts, in respect of both terms and mode; and an increase in the number of flexible working arrangements that have been implemented for Executive Office staff, in respect of the latter.

As staff development opportunities are managed at the departmental level we have no central record of activity to analyse in respect of the protected characteristics. We are reviewing our approach to staff development within the Executive Office and the benefits of collecting and reporting on this data will be considered as part of this review.

There were no issues addressed through the disciplinary or grievance procedures that related to equality and diversity.

During the 2011/12 period 21 members of staff left the employment of Executive office, their details are included in the attached table and broadly reflect the composition of the remaining staff.

Recruitment activity

Since the transition to our new e-recruitment system, we have received 637 applications for employment in respect of 53 vacancies. Applicants are encouraged to use our recruitment on-line portal although applications can be made in paper format if requested.

Whilst it is encouraging that less than 8% of applicants chose not to disclose one or more of their protected characteristics, there clearly is a reluctance on the part of some applicants to identify their protected characteristics and we will examine how we can improve the process and engagement with applicants so that they feel more confident in declaring this information.

Gender	Male	Female	Not disclosed
Number of applications	229	404	4
Number interviewed	49	95	0
Number appointed	13	24	0

Age	16-19	20's	30's	40's	50's	60's	Not disclosed
Number of applications	4	158	153	166	120	16	20
Number interviewed	0	19	39	38	41	2	5
Number appointed	0	5	12	11	8	0	1

Ethnicity	White British	White Other	вме	Dual Heritage	Not disclosed
Number of applications	455	117	46	7	12
Number interviewed	112	18	9	2	3
Number appointed	33	1	2	0	1

Disability	Yes	No	Not disclosed
Number of applications	26	601	10
Number interviewed	2	141	1
Number appointed	0	36	1

Marital status	Civil partnership	Married	Partner	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Single	Not disclosed
Number of applications	13	275	48	24	23	1	230	23
Number interviewed	1	78	12	4	6	0	41	3
Number appointed	0	13	6	2	1	0	14	1

Religion or belief	None	Christian	Muslim	Hindu	Jewish	Bhuddist	Sikh	Other	Not disclosed
Number of applications	266	284	13	7	6	4	1	13	43
Number interviewed	59	63	2	1	1	1	0	6	11
Number appointed	20	13	1	0	0	0	0	0	3

Sexual orientation	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Gay man	Lesbian	Other	Not disclosed
Number of applications	570	7	7	2	1	50
Number interviewed	132	0	1	1	0	10
Number appointed	34	0	1	0	0	2

Equal Pay

The Executive Office uses an analytical job evaluation scheme for all but the senior staff roles, for which the Remuneration Committee retains responsibility for determining the remuneration package. Our Equal Pay statement is available on the website and an equal pay review is planned to run subsequent to our progression onto a computerised HR system later in 2013. The analysis will be published on our website and will include information on pay gap or occupational segregation identified during the review.

Pending this, an analysis of the distribution of roles against the grading structure has been derived from the data submitted as part of our HESA Staff Record. This analysis shows that for those roles subject to the job evaluation process there is little difference in the average salary level and in all instances the pay gap is positive in favour of women.

Pay Gap analysis by Grade	Male	Female	Pay Gap (%)
Grade EO 3			
Average FTE Salary	-	15866	n/a
Grade EO 4			
Average FTE Salary	17902	18714	4.5
Grade EO 5			
Average FTE Salary	23036	23288	1.1
Grade EO 6			
Average FTE Salary	29626	29649	0.1
Grade EO 7			
Average FTE Salary	34523	34889	1.1
Grade EO 8			
Average FTE Salary	43211	43674	1.1

Source: University of the Highlands and Islands HESA Staff Record submission 2011/12

Equality Outcomes 2013 -2017

The mainstreaming of equality and diversity within the University will be a key component of delivering on our objective of promoting diversity within our staff and student body and dealing with all on a basis of equality and with respect for their culture and values [Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2017 http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi/strategy-and-planning/UHISTRATPLANENG.pdf/view].

This commitment forms the core upon which our equality outcomess for both the Executive Office and the wider University Network have been developed.

Executive Office equality outcomes

Drawing on the university's commitment to equality and diversity within the Strategic Plan and taking due cognisance of the work undertaken to date and following consultation with our staff, governing body, students and stakeholders we have developed five key outcomes to take forward, these are:

- Improve engagement with the equality impact assessment process so that it is mainstreamed within all our business processes
- Improve awareness of the Equality and Diversity agenda through the provision of guidance and training for Executive Office staff, University Court members and UHISA Executive members
- 3. Ensure no groups are disadvantaged in being able to access information on websites maintained by Executive Office and all publications produced by Executive Office
- Enhance understanding of the composition of the Executive Office staff, University
 Court and UHISA Executive membership through the collection of protected
 characteristics data
- 5. Enhance equality of opportunity for all through the collection and monitoring of the protected characteristics through the recruitment process.

We believe these are realistic and achievable outcomes for the Executive Office to target over the period in question. The action plan (appendix 1) to take these forward and gather the evidence and data we will require is attached. This action plan covers much more than just the outcomes above, to enable us to be well placed to move forward with other aspects of the equality and diversity agenda from 2015 and beyond.

The University

As independent institutions, each of the university's academic partners has responded individually to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Nonetheless, all of the academic partners have been actively engaged through the EDWG in the development and implementation of the equality agenda across the university and in the identification of common themes that can be pursued collaboratively.

In terms of the equality plan period 2013 - 2017 a number of common themes have been identified from which similar outcomes and mainstreaming action can be created, these are:

- Age
- Gender
- Impact assessment
- Communication
- Disclosure
- Staff development
- Equality in the curriculum
- Data collection
- Retention and attainment

Many of these themes were evidenced from the staff survey conducted by six academic partners and the Executive Office during Summer 2012. From this exercise, those who participated have drawn up a number of agreed joint key indicators that will form the basis of on-going engagement surveys.

Following publication of the individual academic partner equality outcomes, mainstreaming reports and action plans, the EDWG will collate the outcomes and seek to support and guide the partners in the pursuit of these outcomes, either individually or collectively. Links will be provided to these documents via the university website.

Moving forward, as each academic partner renews its own equality plan these common outcome and mainstreaming themes will be reflected within their own documents.

	2005	5/06	2000	6/07	200	7/08	200	8/09	2009	9/10	20	10/11	201	1/12	Leavers	2011/12
	Number	%	Number	%												
No. of employees (headcount)	116		142		187		233		248		230		228		21	
Age bands																
Teens	1	0.86	2	1.41					1	0.40						
20's	21	18.10	21	14.79	33	17.65	32	13.73	43	17.34	19	8.26	18	7.89	1	4.76
30's	31	26.72	47	33.10	61	32.62	82	35.19	78	31.45	70	30.43	79	34.65	8	38.10
40's	37	31.90	38	26.76	46	24.60	60	25.75	65	26.21	77	33.48	76	33.33	5	23.81
50's	21	18.10	25	17.61	35	18.72	48	20.60	50	20.16	56	24.35	46	20.18	6	28.57
60+	5	4.31	9	6.34	12	6.42	11	4.72	11	4.44	8	3.48	9	3.95	1	4.76
Gender																
Male	54	46.55	58	40.85	66	35.29	82	35.19	87	35.08	87	37.83	90	39.47	4	19.05
Female	62	53.45	84	59.15	121	64.71	151	64.81	161	64.92	143	62.17	138	60.53	17	80.95
Ethnicity																
White Scottish	60	51.72	79	55.63	100	53.48	122	52.36	142	57.26	137	59.57	139	60.96	12	
White Other	46	39.66	54	38.03	73	39.04	99	42.49	96	38.71	86	37.39	79	34.65	7	33.33
Black and minority ethnic	1	0.86	3	2.11	5	2.67	6	2.58	4	1.61	3	1.30	3			
Dual Heritage					1	0.53							1	0.44		
Not known	5	4.31	5	3.52	7	3.74	6	2.58	6	2.42	4	1.74	3	1.32		
Not disclosed	4	3.45	1	0.70	1	0.53							3	1.32	2	9.52
disability																
no known disability	83	71.55	93	65.49	125	66.84	178	76.39	198	79.84	193	83.91	197	86.40	18	85.71
declared	2	1.72	8	5.63	9	4.81	7	3.00	8	3.23	5	2.17	5	2.19		44.00
no info provided	31	26.72	41	28.87	53	28.34	48	20.60	42	16.94	32	13.91	26	11.40	3	14.29
Terms of employment																
Open-ended	94	81.03		0.00	144	77.01	176	75.54	172	69.35	178	65.68	185	72.55		
Fixed-term	22	18.97		0.00	43	22.99	57	24.46	75	30.24	87	32.10	61	23.92		
Atypical									1	0.40	6	2.21	9	3.53		
Mode of employment																
full-time	101	87.07		0.00	157	83.96	191	81.97	195	78.63	205	75.65	194	76.08		
part-time	15	12.93		0.00	30	16.04	42	18.03	52	20.97	60	22.14	52	20.39		
atypical									1	0.40	6	2.21	9	3.53		

Appendix 2 - Executive Office action plan for reporting process on Equality outcomes, and mainstreaming over 2013/14, for report to University Court in Spring 2014

Depar	tment	Objective	Outcome	Measure
1.	Marketing and Communications	1.1 Audit the accessibility of the UHI website, and prioritise any access issues that are identified	Work with EDU and scope out any remedial actions required	Accessibility mark for website
		1.2 Audit the accessibility of UHI publications and address any issues identified		Accessibility mark for publications
2.	Principal and Secretary's office	2.1 Establish a process to record the profile of UC independent members for all the protected characteristics	Annual report on UC independent members profile published on web	Monitored annually, and action taken to address any under representation of particular groups in a proportionate manner
		2.2 Maintain a recruitment process for UC members that is open and transparent	Annual report on the recruitment of UC independent members, on the basis of applicants and those appointed	
		2.3 E&D training to be completed by all UC members	Report from completion of induction of UC members	

	2.4 Remuneration committee to have transparent processes for recruitment and determination of remuneration and benefits for staff at all levels in EO	Terms of reference published on staff intranet	
3. Development Office	3.1 Review materials to ensure that all publications, electronic and hard copy are accessible	Work with marketing and Communications team	Annual narrative reporting
4. HR	 4.1 Scope out what profile information we have in respect of our current staff, and identify gaps in relation to Protected Characteristics, linked to HESA requirements Strategic aim 5.7 4.2 PDR process to be amended to include completion of E-modules necessary before staff can progress on their salary scale 	Audit of personnel files Head of HR to submit revised PDR process to SMG	Annual report to SMG covering all of the outcomes identified and the action taking in progressing these at the January 2014 meeting annually, to ensure that progress for EO can be reported to FGPC, and then UC Spring 2014 meeting.

4.3 Regular repo	orts to line Monthly reports to SMG by Head
managers or	n staff of HR starting May 2013
completion	rates for
Compliance	e-modules
4.4 Report to Fa	acilities Monthly reports to Facilities
	respect of first Manager, until all Fire wardens
	fire wardens and First aiders have been trained
for E&D mod	
TOT EAD THO	uules
4.5 Staff survey	issues, Action plan from Head of HR for
actions and	·
and Staff co	
and Stair Co	iisuitations
4.6. Idontify F0.F	Discuss in axit. Audit axisting data to identify
4.6 Identify E&E	
interviews, o	· ·
and grievand	ce matters
4.7 Pay gap info	
	publication scheme, and update
	annually
4.8 Review equa	al pay Publish on UHI website in FOI
statement	publication scheme and update
	annually
4.9 Existing HES	A profile of Publish on UHI website in FOI
staff and an	y gaps in publication scheme and update
respect of P	• - •
characterist	·
on and decine	

	information as a bench mark each year		
	4.10 Proportionate measures to attract staff for groups that are under represented	Review of staff profiles in respect of applicants, and successful candidates as part of the recruitment process	
	4.11 Gather information on the profiles of staff who applied for posts, and consider a proportionate response	Review of staff profiles in respect of applicants, and successful candidates as part of the recruitment process	
	4.12 Check with staff who have declared a disability that they are content with the supports that are provided by EO, and if they need any further adjustments	Identify the staff who have declared a disability. Annual meetings to review the supports provided for them	
5. Facilities	5.1 Procurement – consider the award criteria and conditions in respect of Equality and Diversity policies and processes of suppliers	Work with APUC to identify appropriate award criteria and conditions	Report to SMG when completed

	5.2 Accessibility issues in respect of current estate	Identify if there are any issues from current data	Annual report to H&S committee
	5.3 E&D issues in respect of accidents recorded on estates	Identify if there are any issues in the accident book	Annual report to H&S committee
	5.4 Training for First Aiders and Fire wardens in respect of mental health issues	Report from provider of training	Annual report to H&S committee
6. LIS	6.1 Review helpdesk enquiries to identify if there are any Equality issues that need to be addressed	Audit of helpdesk enquiries from the start of academic year 2012 Identify a process to record Equality issues as enquiries come in	Report on audit of enquiries Annual narrative report
		issues as enquiries come in	