University of Strathclyde

Equality Mainstreaming Report 2021

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Introduction

The University of Strathclyde has equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) embedded within our University Values and Strategic Plan. As a socially progressive University, we are committed to achieving and promoting equality of opportunity in our learning, teaching, research and working environments.

We support our students and staff to realise their full potential regardless of background. We recognise, respect and value difference and diversity within and across the University community. An environment in which staff, students and visitors feel equally valued and respected is key to the realisation of the University's aims and objectives.

The University does not tolerate and works to prevent and eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation as defined under the Equality Act 2010 and to ensure that our students, staff and visitors, as well as those who apply to work or study at the University, are treated fairly.

This report provides an overview of our efforts and achievements in embedding and mainstreaming equality throughout our functions, particularly since our last report in 2019. It should be read in conjunction with our Equality Outcomes 2021 Report (incorporating our Equality Outcomes 2021-25 and Equality Outcomes 2017-21 progress update), Staff and Student Equality Monitoring Reports, Gender Pay Gap Report and Equal Pay Statement, all of which assist the University in tracking and demonstrating progress towards our priority equality objectives.

1. Strategic approach

The University's commitment to equality and diversity is articulated at the highest level, within the Strategic Plan 2020-2025:

"Our values ethos, and our focus on social inclusion, social justice, and community and public engagement influence not just what we do, but how we do it. As a University, we benefit immensely from welcoming diversity from across society and the world at large, and we will always remain open and outward looking. We will continue to focus on improving diversity, enabling inclusion and promoting equality at Strathclyde.

"…we will work to ensure we take into account the potential equality impacts of all of our policies and practices and to deliver on our commitment to ensure our campus is a safe space for all." (University Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025)

Our equality and diversity strategy, Equality Outcomes and associated action plans reflect the University Values:

- **People-oriented:** committed to our staff and students, providing opportunities and investing in their development.
- **Bold:** confident and challenging about what we do, and supportive of appropriate and managed risk in our decision-making.

- **Innovative:** focused on discovering and applying knowledge with impact, and encouraging creative thinking and new ideas.
- **Collaborative:** working together, internally and externally, with integrity and in an open, respectful way.
- **Ambitious:** for our institution, staff and students as well as supporting the ambitions of our partners.

In 2019-2020, we launched our People Strategy, placing staff at the heart of our plans, recognising that their collective talents, efforts and commitment will deliver our vision for the future. This 'people-first' outlook, and the health, safety and wellbeing of all our students and staff, continue to be at the forefront of our priorities, decisions and actions.

The People Strategy gives a baseline commitment to our staff – *'The Strathclyde Pledge'* - which confirms what every Strathclyder can expect to receive in the workplace. The University will achieve the Pledge by:

- carrying out a review of our use of fixed-term contracts
- ensuring consistent implementation of fair and appropriate rates of payment for our more casual staff
- continuing to ensure within-grade equal pay based on gender and reviewing within-grade pay between other protected characteristics, including race
- introducing and publishing a Remuneration Policy Statement
- introducing an all staff behaviour code and enhancing associated 'Report and Support' mechanisms
- introducing new, team-based, 'listen and action' meetings

2. Equality structure and governance

2.1. University equality structure

The University's Vice Principal is Equality Champion for the institution and convenes the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC). EDIC oversees the University's compliance with its equality and diversity obligations, most recently set out within the Equality Act 2010, and is responsible for approval, review and embedding of the University's equality and diversity policies, strategies, action plans and projects.

EDIC meets three times per academic year and membership includes the University Secretary and Compliance Officer, the Director of Student Experience, the Director of Human Resources, Deans or Deans' representatives from all four Faculties, the Equality and Diversity Manager, Head of Disability and Wellbeing and the President and Vice President Inclusion of Strathclyde Students' Union. The Committee reports annually to the Executive Team, Senate and the University Court on the University's compliance with equality and diversity legislation and effectiveness of the equality and diversity strategy.

The University's Equality and Diversity Office (EDO) is part of the wider Access, Equality and Inclusion Service, which brings together our Widening Access and Equality and

Diversity teams. The EDO leads the development and implementation of the University's equality and diversity strategy, policies and action plans for both students and staff at an operational level and supports key stakeholders, committees and networks to help embed equality and diversity in University policy, practices and culture.

2.2. University Court

The University Court is committed to a programme of action to enhance equality and diversity amongst its membership and seeks to ensure that a range of protected characteristic groups are represented. Court welcomes the diversity of opinion and experience people can bring irrespective of situation or background. Court is due to appoint a number of new lay members in 2021 and again in the coming years and diversity is a key consideration in the recruitment process.

In common with most registered charities, there is no remuneration directly associated with membership of Court. However, the University undertakes to meet reasonable expenses incurred in connection with membership or activities on behalf of the University including child and other dependent care costs. This offer is indicated within advertisements for lay members and the diversity of applicants is monitored.

Collection of a range of equality data was introduced in 2017/18 in order to meet HESA reporting requirements. Future actions will seek to develop plans based on this data to promote diversity beyond gender and consider how to attract interest from other protected groups.

As the below figures demonstrate, there has consistently been a higher percentage of female than male Court members since 2017. The current Convener of Court, Dame Sue Bruce, is female (appointed 2017).

University Court membership: 2017-21

Total Membership

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Male	% Female
2017/18	10	13	23	43%	57%
2018/19	9	15	24	37.5%	62.5%
2019/20	11	13	24	46%	54%
2020/21	11	14	25	44%	56%

Co-opted Members

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Male	% Female
2017/18	4	8	12	33%	67%
2018/19	4	9	13	31%	69%
2019/20	6	7	13	46%	54%
2020/21	6	8	14	43%	57%

3. Impact of and mitigations against COVID-19

In 2019-20, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we prioritised essential health and safety matters for our staff and students. The quality of our provision, the student learner journey and student experience were front and centre of our planning and decision making.

We redoubled our efforts in student support, with colleagues working around the clock to offer practical advice and support to self-isolating students, from food packs and other essentials to technology hardware, in tandem with provision of enhanced wellbeing services and financial help, including a dedicated COVID-19 hardship fund and a Relief Scholarship for returning students.

Our Student Services provided remote support from week one of the first lockdown onwards and specific support for certain groups was expanded. We also instituted a 'no detriment' policy in relation to student assessment and progression, and developed the Strathclyde Student Pledge.

Acknowledging that the pandemic has affected home life as much as work life, in 2019-20, we introduced a rest-day each week during the first UK-wide lock-down and have re-introduced the rest-days during the latest lockdowns, enabling colleagues to spend time with their families and loved ones to recuperate. We also introduced meeting-free Fridays, and accelerated the roll-out of our agile-working toolkit, to support our people in managing their work-life balance, allow them to continue their important contributions, and increase efficiency.

4. Setting equality priorities

The University's [Equality Outcomes and Equality policies](#) underpin our equality and diversity strategy and provide a framework for our activities directed at advancing, promoting and embedding equality and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

In accordance with the specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the University produces a set of Equality Outcomes every four years, which outline key institutional equality priorities. Our priorities are informed by informed by relevant equalities data, including annual student and staff equality monitoring reports, consultations with our student and staff populations and relevant sector evidence

An annual Equality and Diversity Plan is considered by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee at the beginning of each academic year, with progress reported at the end of the academic year.

This outlines key planned activities to advance and promote equality and diversity for students and staff throughout the year, incorporating work towards our Equality Outcomes, emerging equality projects and activities that help the University to mainstream its equality work.

5. Mainstreaming examples

Some specific examples below highlight how the University is continuing to advance, promote and embed equality in line with the three general duties of the Equality Act 2010.

5.1. Elimination of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.

5.1.1. Equally Safe @Strathclyde

The Equally Safe @ Strathclyde Steering Group was established in 2018 to take forward and embed the recommendations of the Scottish government funded and sector leading Equally Safe in Higher Education gender based violence (GBV) research project, based in the School of Social Work and Social Policy at the University. Recent activity includes:

- Consent Workshops held in 2020 with students in University residences, residence assistants and Halls Committee. Open sessions were also held for students from various year groups.
- Bystander intervention programme delivered as part of Social Work & Social Policy and Education courses
- GBV prevention message in all residences through Respectful Living Leaflet as well as posters on every door
- GBV prevention leaflets included in Freshers' packs
- The University's Organisational and Staff Development Unit (OSDU) delivered Active Bystander Training with open registration for staff
- Levels 1 & 2 GBV First Responder Training courses offered to staff via OSDU training calendar
- On-campus service offered by Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis extended to three days per week in response to service demand

5.1.2. Policy development

Some key policy developments between 2019-2021 have assisted the University in continuing to mainstream and embed EDI across all our functions.

- The University's new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy was launched in 2021, following approval by University Senate in 2020. Consultation with students and staff during its development helped to shape a concise, accessible policy with proactive language, including clarification of how policy aims are delivered, monitored and reviewed. Policy appendices include case studies with examples of policy implementation that cover the three needs of the general equality duty under the PSED.

- Two new guidance documents on Guidance and Support for LGBT+ Students and Staff and Guidance and Support for care experienced students and staff were launched alongside the EDI Policy. These aim to promote understanding and provide clarity on issues that may be of particular relevance to LGBT+ and care experienced

students and staff respectively. They provide guidance for staff and line managers on support for students and staff and on ensuring an inclusive environment.

The guidance documents are part of a series that will outline support for students and staff at Strathclyde, with a particular focus on promoting equality of opportunity, diversity and preventing discrimination irrespective of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, care experience or socio- economic background. These documents underpin and should be read in conjunction with the EDI Policy.

5.1.3. Equality and Diversity training

The University's suite of online EDI training has been extended to enhance awareness of EDI issues, build capacity in advancing and promoting equality and increase competence in recognising and addressing discrimination.

New provision being rolled out during 2021/21, includes:

- Introduction to EDI (separate staff and student courses)
- Unconscious Bias (separate staff and student courses)
- Diversity in learning and teaching
- Diversity for managers
- Supporting transgender staff and students
- Bullying and harassment (separate staff and manager courses)
- Bullying and harassment for managers
- Sexual harassment
- Disability awareness
- Race in the workplace
- Reporting of racial incidents
- Micro-behaviours

Specific courses are being targeted by completion by all staff and students or targeted at identified staff groups as appropriate.

A series of 'face to face' half day online Diversity Training sessions were also held for staff and students during 2020/21, facilitated by one of the University's Senior Teaching Fellows.

5.2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.2.1. Race Equality Working Group

As part of our ongoing work to identify and address particular issues impacting upon specific equality groups, the University established its Race Equality Working Group (REWG) in summer 2020. REWG's remit is to ensure Strathclyde supports an inclusive environment for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and students, promotes racial diversity across the University and, where required, improves educational and employment outcomes for BAME staff and students. REWG reports directly to the University's strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), which in turn reports to University Court.

The establishment of REWG followed discussions at EDIC and at a breakout session of the University Court's Strategy Away Day in November 2019, which examined issues of race equality in the University community.

The Court session had a particular focus on developing inclusive and diverse learning and working environments and the group agreed on the need to ensure those with lived experience, people from BAME backgrounds for example, were central to discussions and highlighted the importance of engaging with different communities to understand potential barriers to inclusion and to develop impactful policies and practice.

In July 2020, a University wide Race Equality Workshop was held to afford staff and students the opportunity to share and discuss key issues with regard to race equality in Higher Education and priorities for Strathclyde's work in this area. Feedback from the workshop helped to inform some initial priorities for REWG to explore further during academic year 2020/21.

In August 2020, the Principal formally endorsed a landmark commitment from Scotland's universities and colleges to support a declaration against racism and in December, confirmed the University's membership of Advance HE's Race Equality Charter, which will provide a tried and tested, robust framework to help Strathclyde identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of BAME staff and students.

To date, the Race Equality Working Group has considered the wider context with regards to race equality in the higher education sector, BAME staff and student representation at Strathclyde and specific issues around staff and student recruitment and progression, race equality in the curriculum, communications and engagement and staff and student support systems. These areas were explored in more detail in a series of themed focus groups held with staff and students in January 2021, followed and complemented by a short survey.

The Race Equality Working Group is preparing a set of initial race quality recommendations for the University, informed by feedback from focus groups as well as additional internal and external evidence on race equality across the higher education sector and at Strathclyde. These will be presented to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and relevant additional strategic committees for approval during the current academic year and will outline some suggested areas for immediate action.

The University, led by the Race Equality Working Group, will use the framework of Advance HE's Race Equality Charter to undertake a full evaluation of race equality across the institution and develop appropriate actions in response, in the form of a SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) University Race Equality Action Plan. This will be completed by academic year 2022/23, at which point the University will apply for its first Race Equality Charter award.

5.2.2. Gender Equality

The University's Gender Equality Steering Group promotes and advances gender equality within the University's staff and student populations and specifically oversees progress against the University's Athena SWAN Action Plan and student Gender Action Plan. In particular, the Group has responsibility for:

- Reviewing gender equality statistics and additional evidence to assess the University's progress in promoting gender equality, with particular regard to the recruitment, representation and progression of staff and students.
- Evaluating the impact of University/Faculty gender equality actions and develop recommendations for further action
- Facilitating the mainstreaming of gender equality activities across the University by sharing good practice between Faculties and Professional Services Directorates
- Receiving updates on University projects or initiatives related to gender equality
- Maintaining oversight of the University's current and future Athena SWAN award accreditations at institutional and departmental level
- Reporting progress on the University's gender equality objectives and action plans to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)
- Making recommendations to EDIC with regard to potential new gender equality initiatives

The University is a member of the [Athena Swan Charter](#) and holds a Bronze institutional award, with our next institutional submission due in November 2022. Strathclyde also holds 15 awards at departmental level including a Faculty level award for Strathclyde Business School, which means that 20 of 25 of our academic departments currently hold Athena Swan accreditation.

The University provides annual funding and support for female staff to participate in Advance HE's women's leadership development programme, [Aurora](#). Since 2013, over 100 women have been supported through the programme.

In August 2017, the University published its student focussed [Gender Action Plan](#), in line with Scottish Funding Council (SFC) guidance, to outline ongoing and planned activities to address subject specific gender imbalances in student populations, spread across the five themed areas of Infrastructure, Influencing the influencers, Raising awareness and aspirations, Encouraging applications and Supporting success.

Updates on the ongoing implementation of the Gender Action Plan are provided to SFC and published via the University's Outcome Agreement progress reporting mechanisms. In our most recent update, we reported decreased gender imbalances in priority areas of Computer Science, Physics, Social Work, Electronic and Electrical Engineering, English Studies, Mechanical Engineering and Spanish Studies.

5.2.3. Flexible and family friendly working

The Strathclyde [Agile Working Toolkit](#) was launched in 2020, to help staff and managers understand what agile working is, what agile working arrangements may be available and how to make agile working successful for both our staff and our University. The Toolkit is an important step to increasing flexibility for many colleagues to work in ways that support their wellbeing, help them manage their work life balance, allow them to continue their important contributions, and increase efficiency.

The University launched its [Maternity Toolkit](#) in 2021, providing advice and guidance to help staff navigate through pregnancy, maternity leave and their return to work. In line with our socially progressive and people-oriented values, we also extended eligibility for University Maternity Pay and Adoption Pay by reducing the service requirements for staff. Eligible partners are now entitled to three weeks' Maternity Support Leave at full pay.

Our Family Friendly Research Leave Policy continues to provide academic staff returning from maternity or other relevant family leave with up to 3 months paid leave to re-engage with research.

Strathclyde was the first university in Scotland to be awarded Carer Positive 'Exemplary' status for its support of staff who are also carers. The award is Carers Scotland's highest level of recognition and builds on the University's 2018 award of Carer Positive 'Established' status".

5.2.4. Staff recruitment

A number of activities have taken place since 2019 that are targeted at ensuring equality of opportunity in staff recruitment, particularly with regards to recruitment of female staff to academic professional roles and categories where women are underrepresented. These have included:

- Use of a 'gender decoder' tool in the drafting of recruitment adverts, to avoid wording which may inadvertently discourage women from applying
- Explicit wording in job advertisements inviting women to apply
- Social media recruitment campaigns which specifically target women
- In our recent recruitment round for Strathclyde's Global Talent Programme (SGTP) (recruiting to early career and senior academic posts), recruiting departments were required to provide an action plan specific to their vacancies outlining actions to recruit a diverse range of candidates
- The recruitment site for SGTP had a page dedicated to equality, diversity and inclusion at the University
- As part of its current People Strategy, Strathclyde has committed to the introduction of 'blind shortlisting' as one of a range of measures to remove the possibility of unconscious bias from our recruitment process.

Most recent data demonstrates:

- A decrease in the gender pay gap of almost 2% since 2019/20
- 18% increase in female Professors since 2019/20

- Increase in BME staff from 7% to 9% since 2019/20

5.2.5. Equality Impact Assessments

The University's procedures for conducting Equality Impact Assessments were comprehensively reviewed and relaunched in 2019/20, to improve staff understanding of and engagement with the process and help to further embed EDI across all functions of the University.

A short life EIA Working Group, which included representation from Education Enhancement, Equality and Diversity, Human Resources, Strategy and Policy and Widening Access, met to:

- Conduct initial scoping of a refreshed EIA process and establishment of implementation timetable
- Identify different types of EIA required, format and content of EIA template forms and information to be included in EIA guidance for staff
- Identify key University stakeholders and key trigger points to embed completion of EIAs across University functions
- Consider staff communications, engagement and training with regard to conducting EIAs

A new EIA Tool was developed, with versions for assessing Policy and Procedures, Programmes, Research and Initiatives and Events and Activities. The Tool has step by step guidance on conducting an EIA embedded within it and is situated on a SharePoint site which also holds an EIA Evidence Repository to assist with informing assessments. Staff can upload EIAs directly to the site once complete.

Guidance on embedding EIAs was communicated to Executive Deans, Heads of Departments, Professional Services Directors, Faculty Managers and Strategic Committee Managers, with all staff communication in the weekly staff newsletter, Inside Strathclyde.

Engagement with the EIA process has increased significantly since the implementation of the new Tool, with further embedding and EIA training activity planned from 2021.

5.2.6. STEM Equals

STEM Equals at Strathclyde is one of only eleven EPSRC funded projects under the Inclusion Matters initiative. This four-year research and impact project is focused on creating more inclusive STEM communities for women and LGBT people in both academia and in industry. Through an intersectional lens, the project is examining working cultures within higher education and industry, including systemic inequalities faced by women and LGBT staff in STEM disciplines. In partnership with BAM Nuttall Ltd, the project is launching and evaluating strategic initiatives focused on improving equality and diversity in STEM.

In its most recent report, the project outlines activities and achievements over 2019-20, including:

- A £50k funding call to support 10 projects led by women at Strathclyde and pump-prime larger bids within EPSRC 's remit

- Organisation of 18 talks and presentations, 50+ networking events and meetings, 3 outreach events and 3 workshops
- Attraction of £33k extra funding for outreach activities, to promote innovation and to establish global partnerships
- Focus groups and interviews conducted with 82 participants over 46 hours
- Creation of the Strathclyde LGBT+ Staff and PhD Students Network

5.2.7. LGBT inclusion

Between 2016 and 2018, the University's Dr Stephanie Mckendry and Dr Matson Lawrence conducted research, funded by SFC, on the experiences of and current provision for, trans and gender diverse applicants, students and staff in colleges and universities across Scotland.

The project developed a set of recommendations for the sector, open-access resources, guidance and training materials and the TransEDU website to provide a central resource for information on supporting trans applicants, students and staff. The development of further resources and leadership models was supported by funding from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (now part of Advance HE).

Since the conclusion of the research project, the University continues to engage with the Trans Edu Community of Practice (CoP), of which Dr Stephanie Mckendry, Head of Access, Equality and Inclusion, is Secretary. The CoP brings together staff from colleges and universities across Scotland to share expertise, build knowledge, develop practice, and gain peer support in advancing trans and non-binary equality - and improving experiences of trans and non-binary students and staff - in their institutions.

The University's Student Experience directorate and the School of Education both hold LGBT Charter awards. The Charter is managed by LGBT Youth Scotland and recognises the achievements of organisations in proactively including LGBTI people in every aspect of their work, protecting staff and providing a high-quality service to customers, students or service users.

The LGBT Charter requires departments and organisations to demonstrate that staff have undertaken LGBT awareness training and that policies, practice and resources have been reviewed to make sure that they are as inclusive as they can be. It also demonstrates that awardees have engaged and consulted with LGBT communities and undertaken work to promote LGBT inclusion and awareness within their organisation.

5.2.8. Supporting students from GTRSB (Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater) communities

The University is committed to supporting students and staff from GTRSB (Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater) communities, and signed the GTRSB into Higher Education pledge in 2021 to demonstrate our commitment.

We have established a named contact for GTRSB students who will lead activity to support applicants, students and staff and committed to the following additional actions:

- We will evaluate current data and seek ways to improve data collection and monitoring and promote methods for students and staff to self-identify.
- We will develop and promote guidance for staff regarding the experiences of GTRSB communities in education.
- We will include GTRSB students in our existing support offerings for access students with, for example, the provision of a staff mentor as part of our Strathclyde Cares scheme and priority for funding and extra-curricular opportunities.
- We will work with current and potential students to identify what support can be put in place to enhance the experiences of GTRSB students in higher education.
- We will seek opportunities to promote and celebrate GTRSB cultures within the University in order to raise awareness amongst students and staff.

5.2.9. Disability and Wellbeing Service

The Disability and Wellbeing Service plays a fundamental role in supporting the health, wellbeing and disability related needs of our increasingly diverse student population. This includes implementing strategies to promote student wellbeing, and providing services that respond to the needs of students presenting with a range of disability, medical, mental health and wellbeing issues. Key developments since 2019 include:

- All students referring to the service with mental health and wellbeing issues are offered an integrated triage and assessment, allowing for direct referral to the necessary support.
- The Disability & Wellbeing Service is now open until 8pm 4 nights per week, offering counselling and disability support appointments.
- For the 2020/21 academic year, in response to the pandemic, mental health support is available to all students seven days per week with a drop-in service, facilitated by counsellors, running between 10am and 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.
- The appointment of our new Early Intervention Counselling Team has enabled us to offer same day triage appointments to all students presenting with mental health and wellbeing issues who refer before 4pm each working day.
- A programme of wellbeing themed workshops, targeted at both service users and the general student population is on offer.
- A credit-bearing wellbeing module titled "How to Create Wellbeing and Happiness" has been piloted in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Our group wellbeing and therapy programme is being offered online during Semester 2 of 2020/21 and includes topics such as Mindfulness, 10 Keys to Happier Living, Managing Stress and Anxiety. There are also a range of e-learning programmes available on our [webpages](#).
- A short-life working group has been compiled to review the specific requirements of the Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) community with a view to offering targeted disability and wellbeing training and more contextualized support.
- The on-campus service offered by Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis was extended to three days per week in response to service demand.
- A series of mental health training courses are on offer to staff including ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training), SafeTalk suicide awareness, Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Awareness and Improvement.

- The "Helping Students in Distress" guide for staff has been redeveloped.
- A new Mental Health and Disability Adviser has been appointed to conduct specialist disability needs assessments and manage complex casework for students presenting with mental health issues and/or other disabilities e.g. mental health issues and sensory impairments.
- A Disabled Staff Adviser post has been introduced to offer information and advice to staff with cognitive, physical or sensory impairments and long-term physical health conditions. This post will address an existing gap and, in liaison with Human Resources, Occupational Health and line managers, assist staff with disabilities to manage their condition(s) in the workplace and ensure that reasonable adjustments are systematically considered.

5.3.   Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

5.3.1. Events and communications

The University uses events and communications channels to mark a range of nationally and internationally recognised days, weeks and months of observance of relevance to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Media and Corporate Communications work closely with the EDO and departments across the University to ensure a coordinated approach to marking relevant dates that helps to promote and advance understanding of issues relevant to protected characteristic groups amongst our students, staff and wider University community.

Some examples from 2019-21 include:

- *Black History Month (BHM) 2019 and 2020*
  - o Events at Strathclyde included Gender Equal Media's screening of the award winning documentary 'Knock Down the House' and the event 'In our own words: women of colour in Scottish media'. Strathclyde Student Union hosted the 'Own Voices' event showcasing the work of BME students and a Black History Month Open Mic night.
  - o Dedicated University BHM webpage, featuring University and city-wide events, external resources, information on and profiles of the University Race Equality Working Group and information on relevant academic research at Strathclyde.
  - o Promotion of above via internal staff and student communications channels and social media

- *LGBT History Month (LGBTHM) 2020 and 2021*
  - o Raising of the rainbow flag on campus, lighting up a number of University buildings in purple to celebrate Purple Friday, dedicated University LGBTHM webpage featuring events, information on LGBT+ inclusion and support services at Strathclyde, relevant academic research.
  - o Promotion of above via internal staff and student communications channels and social media

- *Strathclyde Women's Week 2020*
  - o A 'Strathclyde Women's Week' was held from 2-6 March 2020, with a series of events celebrating the achievements of Strathclyde women past and present and discussing women's career progression, leadership and wellbeing at work.
  - o The week-long programme led into International Women's Day on 8 March and events included:
    - Women Leaders in Conversation
    - Women in Leadership Masterclass
    - Career Anchors and Circles of Influence workshop
    - Career Progression in Admin and Professional Services session
    - Finding Your Strengths and Using them to Achieve Your Ambitions workshop
    - Women's Wellbeing at Work session
    - Aurora Women's Leadership development programme: learning from participants session
    - Strathclyde Sport Free Taster Sessions

  The programme brochure also featured profiles of female staff from across staff categories and areas of the University.

- *Strathclyde Women's Month 2021*
  - o In 2021, the 'Strathclyde Women's Week' format was extended to a month-long programme of activities, delivered online in light of ongoing restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - o Events included:
    - Women in Academia: Optimising our Potential webinar
    - 5 separate Women Leaders in Conversation sessions
    - STEM Equals event: Celebrating Women Researchers Focused on Sustainable Development
    - Aurora: Developing Influential, Impactful Female Leaders session
    - Women in Leadership Masterclass
    - Career Anchors and Circles of Influence workshop
    - Confidence Lab with Voice Business
    - Finding Your Strengths and Using them to Achieve Your Ambitions workshop
    - Strathclyde Feminist Research Network event: #FEAS Feminism in Our Times
    - The 5 Powerful and transformative Questions workshop

5.3.2. Staff networks

A number of University networks work to promote and advance equality of opportunity and provide support for various groups across the institution.

- The [LGBT+ Staff and PhD Student Network](#) was initiated by the STEM Equals project and provides an opportunity to build a more diverse and inclusive academic community and enhance support for and visibility of a marginalised and underrepresented community at Strathclyde.
- The Carers Group is a support group for staff members who have, intend to have, or have had caring responsibilities. It encompasses staff members who care for someone who is ill, old and/or frail, disabled or requiring significant assistance; care may be

substantial or ad-hoc. The group meets every 8 weeks, providing the opportunity to network with other carers and share concerns and experiences.

- The Women in Science and Engineering Committee supports female STEM staff in their career progression and organises a range of events and activities.
- The [Feminist Research Network](#) brings together staff across the University, developing stronger feminist research presence, visibility and connectedness. The Network was founded in 2016 and seminar series have run at Strathclyde each year on a wide variety of relevant topics.

5.3.3. Staff mental health and wellbeing

A range of initiatives have been directed at supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our staff. These include:

- The Wellbeing and Working from Home hub was established in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic and provides comprehensive information for staff on managing their physical and mental health wellbeing, both COVID and non COVID specific. This includes:
  - o Guidance for successful agile and home working
  - o Balancing home and work life
  - o Ways to stay physically well while working from home
  - o Advice on positive mental health and wellbeing
  - o Staying connected and safe online
  - o Agile working toolkit
  - o Access to online learning opportunities

- In 2021, the University's annual Wellbeing Week was replaced with a month-long campaign – 'Hello March!' Events and resources included:
  - o University Mental Health Day
  - o A Wellbeing Photography Competition
  - o Promotion of the Sustrans #ActiveCommuteClub initiative
  - o Juggling challenge
  - o Advice on maintaining a healthy workspace
  - o Sharing healthy recipe ideas
  - o Advice on improving sleep
  - o Free online Pilates sessions
  - o Online pop quiz

- The University introduced 'Rest and Recuperation Fridays', which were implemented for extended periods throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff were advised not to work on Fridays during these periods, but instead to use the day to recuperate and spend time with and support family and loved ones. Staff for whom Friday rest days were not suitable were advised to take another week day off from work.

- At the end of April 2021, the University reverted to 'Meeting Free Fridays'. Staff are advised to keep Fridays free from meetings wherever possible, allowing them to focus on key priorities with minimal interruptions, and asked to minimise email traffic on this day.

- In February 2021, staff were asked to complete a short Wellbeing Survey, which asked key questions around the Wellbeing and Working from Home (WFH) Hub, Meeting Free Fridays, Rest and Recuperation Fridays and ideas to further support staff. The survey helped inform a series of actions to be taken forward in the months ahead, including:
  o Development of a COVID Mitigation Action Plan
  o Recognising the additional impact of COVID on carers
  o Recruitment of a Workplace and Wellbeing Manager to support a mental health action plan for staff
  o Reducing bureaucracy underpinned by technology through the development of a transformational Digital Strategy

- Our People Strategy commits to the development and implementation of a workplace wellbeing strategy, 'Thrive @ Strathclyde'

- Strathclyde Sport Exhale (Exercise for Health, Achievement, Lifestyle and Energy) is a support service with valuable online resources open to all members of the University community and beyond, to encourage and provide advice on activity, healthy habits and improved wellbeing.