



Annual Equality Report 2013/14

**EQUALITY
AND DIVERSITY
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

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Foreword from James Brent, Chairman of the Board of Governors



I am extremely proud to be the Chairman of the Governing Body for this extraordinary university. Our ability to combine academic excellence with genuine and unwavering commitment to social inclusion is what sets us apart and makes our university special.

Good governance is central to any successful organisation and universities are no exception. There are seven guidelines for university Boards, one of which is a responsibility to promote equality and diversity throughout the institution. I take this responsibility incredibly seriously in underpinning our approach to governance in all that we do.

This year, the Board and I will be working with the Equality Challenge Unit to review our approach to these important issues, our own individual and our collective practices and how we role model behaviours could not be more important.

The progress outlined in this report is excellent and my thanks go to all of you who have been involved in this important work. But we must not be complacent as there is still much work to be done and we must continually challenge ourselves as we move through 2015 and beyond.

James Brent
Chairman of the Board of Governors

Foreword from Professor David Coslett, Interim Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive



It is my privilege to be writing the foreword to this report as the University's Interim Vice-Chancellor. I think many of you will already know that this work is something that I am deeply committed to and passionate about.

Our University's culture is based on the principles of inclusion and respect; they define 'who we are' and are fundamental to both our mission and the way we deliver it.

The executive team and I are absolutely committed to developing a leadership culture that is transparent and inclusive. Our ambition is to ensure that every member of our university community feels respected for who they are and what they do, and are empowered to carry out their roles and responsibilities with confidence and pride.

This report provides an opportunity to recognise our achievements during 2013/14 while also outlining the areas we need to maintain a focus on improving. In particular we should celebrate the way our equality objectives have underpinned many of our broader achievements this year – a successful student recruitment round; a rise in the world university rankings; a first Times Higher University Award and a formidable Research Excellence Framework return, in which we retained our position as one of the UK's top 50 research institutions.

Looking ahead, we have a good understanding of the complexities inherent in meeting our equality objectives and wish to rise to these challenges. For example, whilst we have developed strong equality monitoring systems to help understand our progress in supporting an inclusive culture, we are also mindful of our duty of care in respecting and upholding each individual's right to privacy. Achieving this balance will clearly have some impact on our data collection and understanding of our progress against our ambitions. We look forward to addressing these challenges in consultation and co-operation with staff and students.

Plymouth University is a fantastic institution, and one that thrives on diversity. Our people – staff, students and partners – bring an extraordinary range of perspectives to our academic community, and from that rich culture we have the ingredients for our future success and growth.

Professor David Coslett
Interim Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive

The Purpose of this Report

Before we look at the aims of this report, it is important to address a fundamental question – why is an inclusive culture important to Plymouth University?

As David Coslett has said in his foreword, an inclusive culture which respects and supports a diverse population is inherent in our values – it is the way we think at Plymouth University. Our people make our University and we know that to succeed now and in the future, we must attract, develop and retain the best people to deliver a great student experience. And the best people will be just that – a diverse range of individuals who are great at what they do.

With this in mind, our report fulfils a number of requirements:

1. For our people (staff and students), our annual equality report documents the progress we have made against a set of stated equality objectives, captured in our **Equality Scheme 2011-16**. These objectives are firmly founded on the three aims of the Equality Act 2010 (see below) and were developed after analysing data and information about our employees and key stakeholders; specifically our students. The objectives were finalised in consultation with staff, students and stakeholders, including the Board of Governors and so this annual report is an important way of communicating our progress;
2. For the general public, as a university we are also required to provide access to data about the people who make up our University, and how this profile changes over time. The simplest way for any organisation to do this is through an annual report; and
3. As part of our legal obligations, this report provides an annual update on the work we have undertaken to ensure that University is a place where everyone feels welcome, respected, and has the same opportunity to succeed and thrive with us.

However, our report is more than a technical or legal document. It is also intended to act as a window for the reader – to bring to life how intensely people related our organisation is and how each person who works, studies, and visits or otherwise engages with us experiences and influences our culture.

Culture can be defined in many ways, but in this context, we are talking about the attitudes, behaviours and shared values and beliefs that make up Plymouth University.

Our culture is shared tangibly through, for instance, our brand, the language that we use, the events we choose to partner in, and the people we employ. On a less visible level, our culture shapes the processes we use internally, the way that we talk to each other, and the people who choose to come to work and study with us.

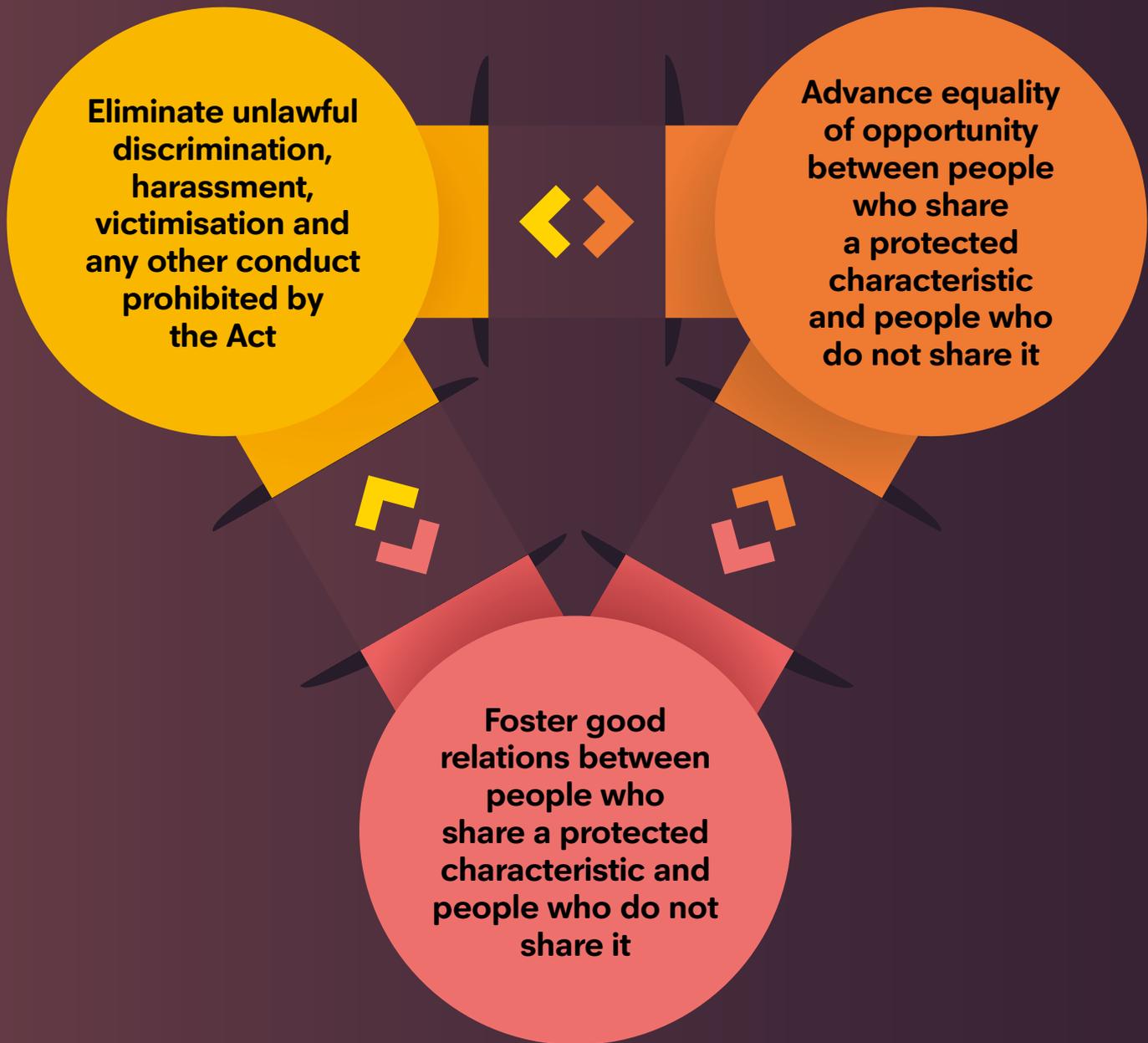
This report is therefore intended to:

- Provide the reader with access to information about the people who make up our organisation, based on individual protected characteristics and a progress update against our formally stated equality objectives;
- Create a window into the culture of our university by sharing some examples of activity that we have undertaken to support equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as outline our intentions and commitments going forward. What we do here matters!

The Three Aims of the Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 is often described as having three overarching aims for public sector bodies, which are shown in the opposite diagram:

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



Aims of the Equality Act 2010

Delivering on Our Vision

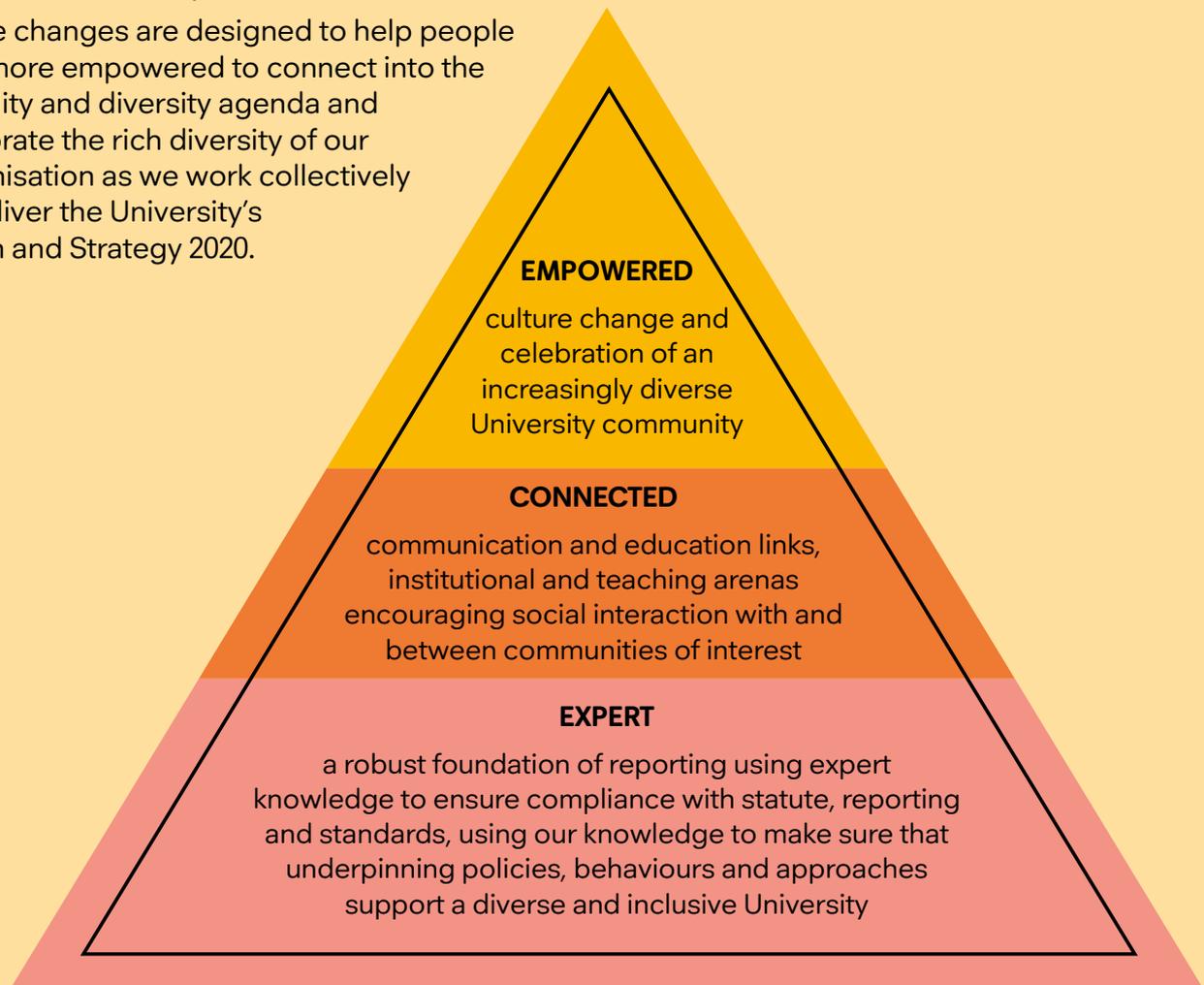
We are committed to the achievement of our Equality Objectives and in 2012/13, we refreshed the way that we think about equality, diversity and inclusion and the way in which we deliver our objectives.

As part of this refresh, we identified that to fully realise the true value of the people who make up our University, it was essential for us to encourage a creative and inclusive working and learning environment. As explained in the diagram below, we will:

- engage with local and national expertise;
- set up open communications with staff and students;
- and therefore empower culture change.

As a result, throughout 2013/14 we have refined the way we connect our formal reporting responsibilities and communicate with each other, by initiating a network of communities of interest and employee networks. These replaced a set of sub-committees with the aim of creating a more inclusive approach for consultation and social networking. Progress against this is detailed in objective 1.

These changes are designed to help people feel more empowered to connect into the equality and diversity agenda and celebrate the rich diversity of our organisation as we work collectively to deliver the University's vision and Strategy 2020.



Sharing Our Data

We continue to publish our annual equality data on the University's website in order to make it more easily accessible for staff, students and members of the public. This information underpins the assessment of our progress against our stated equality objectives.

How to view the data

After opening a data file, the viewer can select the tables and charts of interest from the index or by mouse-clicking on the tabs at the bottom of the screen.

The equality data may be viewed independently of this report at the following internet address:

www.plymouth.ac.uk/equality

Introducing Our Equality Objectives

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) has highlighted important challenges in the higher education sector, such as:

- the low proportion of women in professorial and leadership roles;
- the gap in degree attainment for students with different ethnicities; and
- the gender gap in degree attainment.

Our Equality Objectives underpin our commitment to address these national issues through focused local action. For example, our staff gender targets (see Objective 6) were developed to measure improvements in female success through the academic career pathway. We have also developed objectives to meet local requirements, such as providing on-line campus access information for our disabled staff and students.

Our objectives are grouped in focus areas such as age, disability and gender, which are listed alphabetically in the next section.

Progress at a Glance

Our Equality Scheme contains 14 objectives and the table below gives a summary of progress against the objectives at the end of the 2013-14 reporting period. There is more detail against each of them in the pages that follow.

FOCUS AREA	OBJECTIVE	PROGRESS TO DATE
ALL	Equality Objective 1: The three aims of the Equality Duty will be considered as part of the process of decision-making	Ongoing
AGE	Equality Objective 2: To keep under review HR policies and practices in relation to the removal of a Default Retirement Age (DRA)	Complete
DISABILITY	Equality Objective 3: To provide campus access information online for disabled students, staff and visitors	Complete
DISABILITY	Equality Objective 4: The percentage of staff with an unknown disability status to reduce	Ongoing
GENDER	Equality Objective 5: Monitor the student gender attainment gap	Ongoing
GENDER	Equality Objective 6: Increase the representation of women in senior academic and academic managerial roles	Ongoing
GENDER	Equality Objective 7: Undertake regular Equal Pay Audits for all staff	Complete
LGBT	Equality Objective 8: Continue to gather and review anonymous data on staff sexual orientation through the staff survey, reviewing the availability and suitability of question options	Complete
LGBT	Equality Objective 9: Make the support we offer to LGBT students more visible	Ongoing
RACE	Equality Objective 10: Continue to increase the ethnic diversity of the UG and PG student body	Ongoing
RACE	Equality Objective 11: Annually monitor and review the attainment gap for UK BME students	Ongoing
RACE	Equality Objective 12: Increase the representation of BME groups in under-represented staff grades	Ongoing
RELIGION & BELIEF	Equality Objective 13: Continue to gather and review anonymous data on religion and belief through the staff survey, reviewing the availability of question options	Complete
RELIGION & BELIEF	Equality Objective 14: Make the support which we offer to students of diverse faiths more visible	Complete

Progress to date key

Complete: Original objectives met. Regularly reviewed and maintained.

Ongoing: Improvements initiated in this area and work ongoing, as detailed in this report.

More Information about Our Progress

Equality Objective 1: The three aims of the Equality Duty will be considered as part of the process of decision-making

This objective is enshrined in our vision of how we work across the University, as reflected in our **Equality Scheme 2011-16**.

We have made progress against this objective during 2013/14 in 4 areas where the aims of the Equality Duty have played an important role in broader decision making:

- Equality and Diversity leadership and governance;
- The building of staff networks;
- Bullying and harassment advice and support;
- Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

1.1 Equality and Diversity leadership and governance

As detailed within the Delivering our Vision section, we now have a simplified governance structure in order to better use our expertise, and connect and empower our people.

Central to this simplified governance is the Culture, Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) Committee which was initiated in 2013/14 to provide institutional support for core equality initiatives.

Our CDI Committee provides the foundation for the way we empower our people to make decisions in line with the Equality Act. During the first year of its operation we have seen some notable progress as detailed in this report, such as performance against targets for the representation of women in senior academic roles.

1.2 Building staff networks

This year has seen the introduction of three new staff networks at the University:

- Cultural, Heritage and Diversity;
- Disability;
- Gender.

They are run by staff, for staff, bringing together people from a variety of departments and services. These networks have replaced the previous sub-committees (Race, Gender, and Disability).

These new networks represent our shift in emphasis from administrative bodies to proactive networks, not just communicating relevant information but enabling an opportunity for the

members to shape the future. It is also intended that these networks will be able to engage with all members in the University and the community to encourage inclusivity. They also provide an important opportunity for social interaction, peer support and personal development.

The networks have been modelled on the progress already made by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Staff Forum, which has been established since 2012.

1.3 Bullying and harassment advice and support

The Harassment Advisor Network offers informal support for staff and students who believe that they are experiencing bullying or harassment.

Based on the results of the staff survey in 2012/13 this network has worked on several initiatives throughout 2013/14.

For example:

- Raising awareness of the Harassment Advisor Network;
- Rebranding of publicity materials to help raise awareness and understanding;
- Recruiting and training of additional volunteer advisors;
- Utilising marketing channels to support information accessibility.

The following action is planned for 2014-15:

- Advertise the Harassment Advisor Service on the Staff Announcement page of the intranet once a month;
- Redistribute publicity materials across the University to maximise awareness;
- Introduce extra training for Harassment Advisors on harassment related to specific 'protected characteristics', for example sexual orientation;
- Monitor the impact of our work through annual Harassment Advisor Monitoring Report.

1.4 Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. University submissions to the REF were assessed in 2014.

The REF is important not only as a research quality measure, but because it serves as a mechanism for funding bodies to allocate research funding income and as such it provides benchmarking information about UK universities through their linked research reputation.

As part of the REF process, researchers and academics are required to submit a number of papers and examples of their work for consideration against a specific 'Unit of Assessment'. These papers are then assessed by an internal committee to determine which work, and therefore which researchers, will be submitted for review.

To ensure that all research staff had equal opportunity to be considered for our submission in November 2013, we provided training courses to ensure that decision making panels and staff understood our Code of Practice for REF submissions and how to use the new Staff Disclosure Forms.

This meant that staff were able to confidentially report special circumstances such as illness, caring responsibilities and pregnancy that may have limited the number of research papers that they could put to the panel for consideration. By doing this, we were able to ensure there was no discrimination in the selection of staff.

We then followed this up later with further equality analysis of our REF submissions during 2013/14. This analysis showed no difference in disability, age or ethnicity but it did highlight an under-representation of women who were entered for the REF.

This issue was then integrated into a revised Athena SWAN action plan in 2013/14 to promote the progress of women in academic careers. This action plan includes initiatives to develop mentoring and networking opportunities for female academics as well as a review of our academic career pathways. We also asked for staff feedback, to help us make improvements in this area. This feedback has highlighted some priority areas for study in 2014/15.

**DISCRIMINATION
BULLYING
INTIMIDATION
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HARASSMENT
ABUSE**

Don't suffer in silence

**WE ARE
HERE TO
LISTEN
& HELP**

**INFORMAL AND
IN CONFIDENCE**

Email: equality@plymouth.ac.uk Call: 01752 582060

**EQUALITY
WITH
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Harassment Advisor Network
The current list of harassment advisors is
available from Equality & Diversity at:
<http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/equality>

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Equality Objective 2: To keep under review HR policies and practices in relation to the removal of a Default Retirement Age

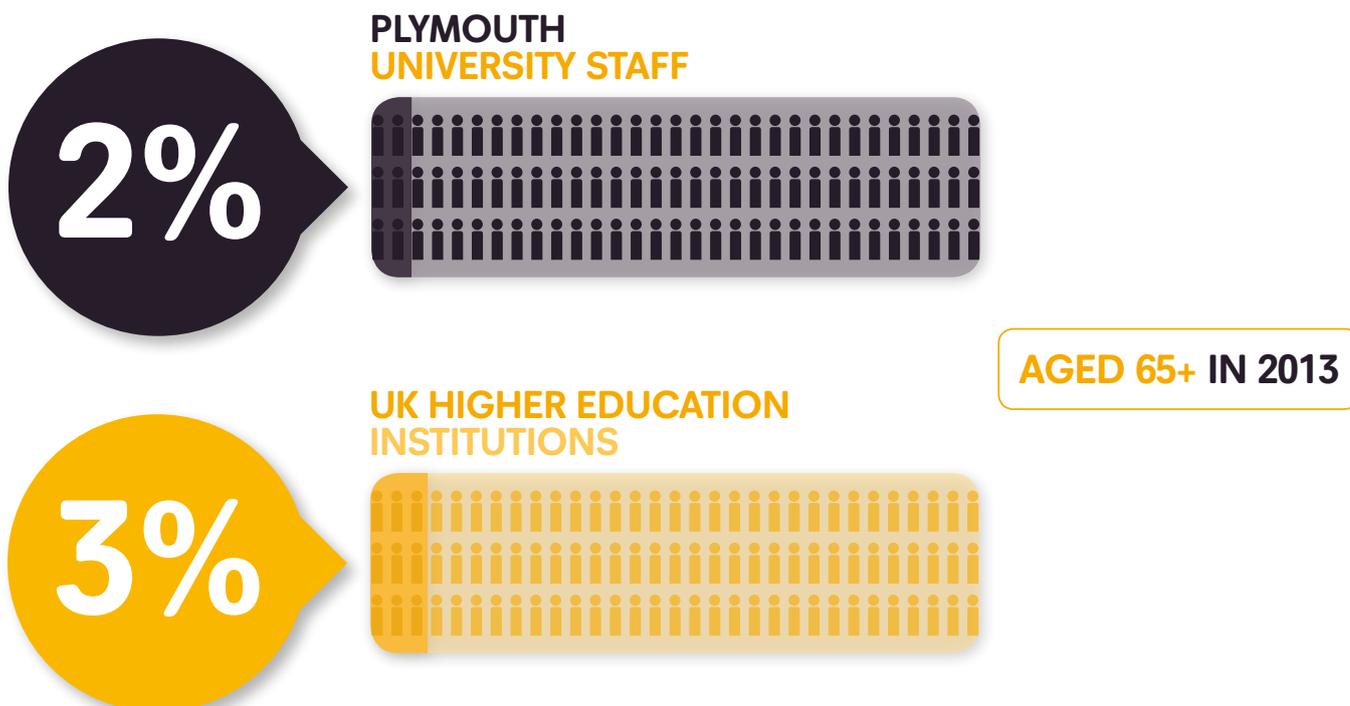
Staff at Plymouth University are no longer required to retire at a set age, following the abolition of the Default Retirement Age (DRA) in September 2011.

Instead, each employee has an opportunity to discuss their retirement plans during their annual Performance Development Review (PDR). These discussions are non-binding and are part of general forward looking discussions, where all employees (regardless of age) are asked about their plans and aspirations for the short, medium and longer-term future.

To underpin our delivery of this equality objective, we are monitoring the effect of the removal of the DRA on our staff profile. We have considered our internal trends as well as external benchmarks:

- Internal trends – data monitoring over a three year period shows that the percentage of staff in the 65+ age group has increased from 1% in 2012 to 2% in 2014;
- External benchmarking data – we reviewed data published by DLA Piper in 2013 comparing Plymouth with other HEIs who use their benchmarking service. The percentage of staff at Plymouth aged 65+ was 2%, whilst at other participating HEIs the figure was slightly higher at 3% (See **Staff Baseline Data 2012-14: Age 65+**).

We expect that the percentage of staff aged 65+ will continue to increase over time.



Equality Objective 3: To provide campus access information for disabled students, staff and visitors online

The **DisabledGo** website has been providing campus access information for staff, students and visitors for over two years. DisabledGo work with the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) team, together with the Estates and Facilities team, to keep the information up to date and accessible for disabled students, staff and visitors.

During 2013/14 the University completed a complete redesign of our external internet pages working with stakeholders, including D&I experts, to ensure that the DisabledGo website is clearly accessible in the new pages as well as incorporating some new features.

For example, on our 'getting here' page, an accessibility section introduces the DisabledGo guide and other links to DisabledGo have been added to encourage the use of this helpful facility.

During 2014/15, we will continue to review the information available online and work with our stakeholders such as the Disability Network to ensure the online information meets the needs of our disabled students, staff and visitors.

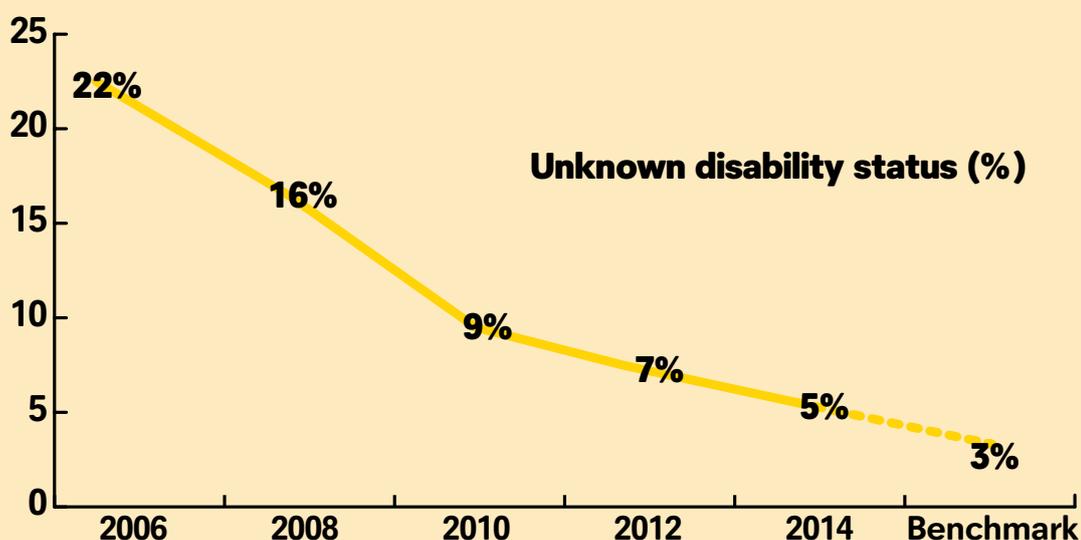


Equality Objective 4: The percentage of staff with an unknown disability status to reduce

We have made considerable progress against this objective and have reduced the percentage of staff stating an 'unknown' disability status from a starting base of 22% in 2006. Over the last three years, the percentage has reduced from 7% in 2012 to 5% in 2014 (see **Staff Baseline Data 2012-14: Disability Status**).

During 2013/14, we improved our process for on-boarding disabled staff to provide easier access to information and support, e.g. the Access to Work Scheme.

We continue to raise awareness as to the reasons why we're asking staff to declare any disability, as this helps to ensure we can support them appropriately. Whilst we expect our focus on awareness raising and provision of support will enable us to move closer to a benchmark figure for UK HEIs of 3%, we also respect a colleague's right to privacy and so understand that some colleagues may wish to refrain from confirming their status.



Equality Objective 5: Monitor the student gender attainment gap

Gender and ethnicity attainment gaps remain an ongoing issue across UK universities, where attainment is defined as the percentage of 'good degrees' achieved, i.e. either a first or upper second.

At Plymouth University, the gender attainment gap for 2013/14 graduates is 7%, which is broadly similar to the gap in the two previous years (9% and 7%).

The reduction of this attainment gap is a priority, given the figure is slightly greater than the national gender gap of 4% reported by HESA for 2012/13 (see **Student Data 2013-14: Gender Attainment Gap**).

As part of our focus on reducing this gap during 2013/14, we commenced a number of initiatives such as:

- Rolling out of the Peer Assisted Learning Scheme (PALS) across the University to support transition into Higher Education. To date, this encompasses one third of all undergraduate programmes, some of which involve compulsory participation;
- Increasing focus on the diversity of assessment approaches;
- An extended induction period for students, as part of the Curriculum Enrichment Project, which is being trialled by a transition group of programmes in 2014/15, and is due for university-wide roll-out in 2015/16;
- New resources on inclusivity for students and staff are being developed, including an online self-assessment tool currently being piloted to help diverse groups of students understand the requirements for higher level study (and access support where needed);
- Planned roll-out of anonymous marking across the university to reduce any possibility of bias occurring;
- 7 steps resources available on 'inclusive assessment' and 'internationalising teaching and learning'.



Equality Objective 6: Increase the representation of women in senior academic and academic managerial roles

The higher education sector has been working to increase the representation of women in senior academic roles for several years; however, the proportion of women in the professoriate remains relatively low.

At Plymouth University, we have been actively working to increase the proportion of women in senior academic roles. Our results against our 2014 targets are as follows:

- 33% of our Associate Professors (Senior Lecturers) are women against our target of 40%;
- 31% of our Associate Professors (Reader) are women, exceeding our target of 25%;
- 22% of our Senior Academic Managers are women, against our target of 25%;
- 20% of our Professors are women, exceeding our target of 18%.

Overall performance against targets has improved on 2013 and we are now exceeding our targets on two measures (one measure in 2013). More detailed information is contained in **Staff Baseline Data 2012-14: Gender Targets**.

Some examples of the work that we have undertaken during 2013/14 that has supported our progress include:

- Monitoring the number of applications and success rates for academic promotion from women;
- Ensuring the availability of peer mentors who have previously been successfully promoted for academic staff considering applying for promotion;
- Actively highlighting our commitment to the Athena SWAN charter in our recruitment advertising;
- Embedding our performance development review process for all staff, where promotion plans, and development needs are regularly discussed;
- Reinforcing our revised recruitment selection panel training and best practice guidelines to provide greater gender balance on selection panels;
- Implementing our action plan as a member of the Athena SWAN charter for women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM).

Whilst we are encouraged by our improvement in results, we know we have more work to do and will need to build on the work undertaken so far to deliver more success in 2014/15.

Equality Objective 7: Undertake regular Equal Pay Audits for all staff

Plymouth University is absolutely committed to equal pay and conducts equal pay audits every two years. The most recent audit took place on 31st December 2013 – some notable headline figures (excluding allowances and Associate Lecturers/Demonstrators) are:

- Looking at pay for women and men, the gender pay gap for grades 1-9 is 16% in favour of men. This is an improvement from the previous year's figure of 19%. Similarly, looking at the gender pay gap across all of our staff, it is 22% in favour of men, representing an improvement on the University's previous result of 24%. The University is making good progress in reducing the gender pay gap; however, we know we need to maintain our focus on this area to bring our results closer to the UK figure of 20% in April 2013, in favour of men (Office for National Statistics);
- Considering disabled staff, the pay gap for grades 1-9 narrowed to 5% in favour of non-disabled staff from the previous 8%. Our aim for 2015 is to continue our improvements in reducing the gap;
- The ethnicity pay gap for grades 1-9 increased to 11% in favour of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff from 5%. The positive pay gap is heavily influenced by the proportion of BME staff in academic roles (55% of BME staff are employed in the Academic or Senior Manager Academic staff categories).



Equality Objective 8: Continue to gather and review anonymous data on staff sexual orientation

We reported the results of the last Staff Survey held in 2013 in last year's report. This anonymous survey found that 3% of our colleagues chose to self-identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). This is the same percentage as in the previous Staff Survey in 2010.

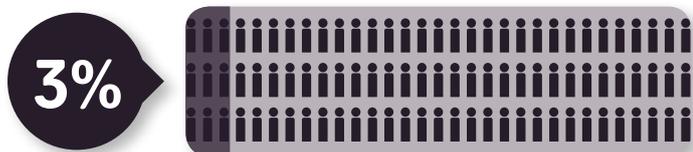
However, 13% of survey respondents elected to choose the 'prefer not to say' option when answering this question. Information from the Government and organisations such as the Stonewall suggest that between 5–7% of the UK population see themselves as LGB.

Following our joining the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme in 2013, we have worked with our LGBT forum to consider how we can benefit from the advice available. We decided to conduct a formal review in 2014/15 of where we are succeeding and where more needs to be done, based on the Stonewall guidelines and consultation with staff. During 2014/15 we will develop and communicate a more detailed action plan in consultation with the LGBT forum.

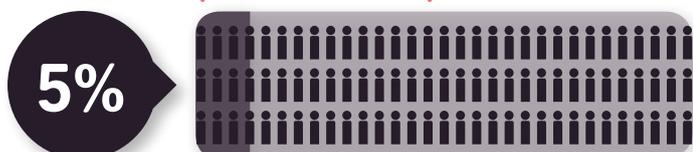
During 2013/14 we also sought to understand the issue in more depth and collected staff sexual orientation data as part of our standard equality monitoring procedures.

The number of staff who have completed this field has not yet reached the level at which the results are statistically significant and we will continue in 2014/15 to encourage completion of this report. While the University encourages staff to declare their sexual orientation to help us monitor equality, we also appreciate every individual's right to privacy.

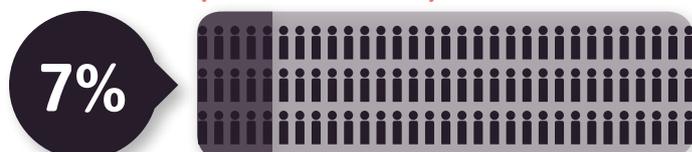
RESPONDENTS DESCRIBING THEMSELVES AS LGB (PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY SURVEY)



LOWER ESTIMATE OF LGB POPULATION IN UK (STONEWALL)



HIGHER ESTIMATE OF LGB POPULATION IN UK (STONEWALL)



Equality Objective 9: Make the support we offer to LGBT students more visible

During 2013/14, there were a number of activities to make the support we offer more visible:

- We updated our external website information to ensure that LGBT students have clear and easy access to information on the support offered by Plymouth University;
- The LGBT Staff Forum and LGBT student representatives started to work together where this makes sense for the two groups;
- The LGBT Staff Forum helped to publicise their work at the city's Respect Festival hosted on Campus in October 2013, ensuring all students, staff and members of the community were aware of the support on offer;
- As well as assisting with some financial support, Plymouth University participated in the 2014 Plymouth Pride event with a stand promoting the LGBT Staff Forum. This helped raise awareness of our inclusive culture and support for the LGBT community.

During 2015 we are planning to work with the LGBT Staff Forum and LGBT student representatives to develop an improvement action plan with clear priorities to enhance the support we offer. We are also proud to be hosting the city's Respect Festival on 20th and 21st June 2015.

Equality Objective 10: Continue to increase the ethnic diversity of the UG and PG student body

We are making clear progress with the diversity of our Undergraduate (UG) students and the ethnic diversity of our UG students continues to increase. The percentage of BME undergraduates in 2013/14 has increased from 10% to 12% (see **Student Data 2013-14: Undergraduate Ethnicity**).

Our benchmark data for first year, first-degree students in 2012/13 shows us having also increased our BME students from 7% to 8%. This compares with the average of 10% for South West institutions and 18% for the UK. (This HESA study treats non-UK students as having unknown ethnicity values.)

For postgraduate teaching (PGT) students (see **Student Data 2013-14: PGT Ethnicity**) the BME percentage is 17%, which is 1% lower than last year.

For postgraduate research (PGR) students (see **Student Data 2013-14: PGR Ethnicity**) the BME percentage has increased from 28% to 30%.

Equality Objective 11: Annually monitor and review the attainment gap for UK BME students

As we highlighted earlier in this report (see objective 5), ethnicity and gender gaps in attainment are a national issue and Plymouth University is committed to reducing the gap. Indeed, as demonstrated below, we have made important progress, particularly for non-UK domiciled students.

The attainment here at Plymouth of BME students domiciled in the UK tends to be higher than that of BME students domiciled outside the UK, however, there is still a significant attainment gap for both groups when considering the percentage of good first degrees obtained by White students (see **Student Data 2013-14: Ethnicity Attainment Gap**).

For UK domiciled students during 2013/14, White student attainment was 69%, compared to 55% for BME students. This gap of 14% is close to the latest national benchmark gap of 15% (HESA institutions 2012/13).

For non-UK domiciled students during 2013/14, White student attainment was 61%, compared to 45% for BME students. This gap of 16% has fallen sharply in 2013/14 to be much lower than for the two previous years.

Encouragingly, the improvements for all students at Plymouth University during 2013/14 show that compared to 2012/13 there have been notable improvements in the attainment of BME students, up 12% on 2012/13, whilst White student attainment was up 3%. This demonstrates tangible improvements for all Plymouth University students as well as improvements for our BME students.

Equality Objective 12: Increase the representation of BME groups in under-represented staff grades

We have made notable progress against this objective. When looking at our ethnicity data and comparing against our targets for 1st January 2014:

- We have been successful in academic posts, where 9.1% of our staff are BME against our target of 9.3% (see **Staff Baseline Data 2012-14: Academic Ethnicity Target**). Our result of 9.1% which is very close to the target is a clear improvement on the 2013 result of 8.1%;
- We have been less successful in professional services posts, where local demographics present a particular challenge for us. In 2014, 1.9% of our staff (an improvement on 1.8% in 2013) are BME compared to our target of 2.8% (see **Staff Baseline Data 2012-14: Prof Services Ethnicity Target**). The demographic challenge for Plymouth University is demonstrated by the 2011 Census where the local economically active BME population is much lower compared to the rest of England and Wales (4% versus 13% respectively in 2011). This local profile has a significant bearing on our ability to recruit BME staff. We therefore plan to do more in 2014/15 to encourage BME applications to professional services posts.

We believe that working with our local communities to open up the University is an important step in encouraging all local communities to see us as an attractive prospective employer. This will particularly benefit our ability to recruit to professional services posts.



Equality Objective 13: Continue to gather and review anonymous data on religion and belief through the staff survey, reviewing the availability of question options

The last Staff Survey took place in 2013 in which, respondents had the opportunity to share information about their religion and belief.

The two largest groups of respondents described their religious belief or affiliation as either 'no religion' (41%) or 'Christian' (40%).

During 2014/15 we will continue to encourage our staff to provide anonymous data to help develop our support for all our diverse groups across the University.

Equality Objective 14: Make the support which we offer to students of diverse faiths more visible

In 2011/12, the information provided about the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy was reviewed to ensure that it was easily accessible. Since then, we have ensured that our information remains current and is presented in a user friendly and accessible manner.

The chaplaincy has a team of chaplains and faith advisors from various religious backgrounds, who provide help and advice on faith related matters. Support is also offered, for example in the case of bereavement.

There are also several student religious groups, which hold regular meetings and organise events, using the facilities available at the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy.

All events are listed on our extranet, as well as details of local faith communities and places of worship that welcome students.

During 2015 we will work with the CDI Committee to review potential improvement actions in this area to make our support increasingly visible, including a review of the Religious Diversity Policy.

Looking to the Future

David Coslett highlighted that equality and diversity is really important to us – a culture of inclusion is fundamental to our University.

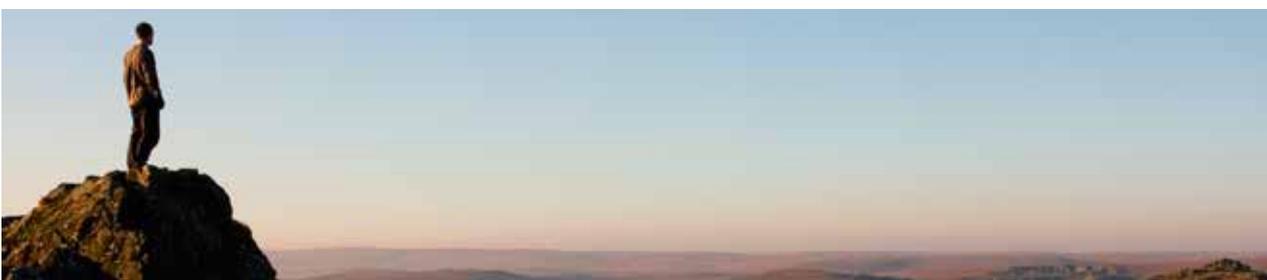
This report has shown good progress against a number of our original objectives from the Equality Scheme 2011-16, for example increasing the level of target achievement for the representation of women in senior academic roles, improving the attainment of BME students and improving the visibility of support we offer to our disabled staff, students and visitors.

Challenges ahead

We are far from complacent and we recognise that there is more work to be done to ensure absolute equality of opportunity for all. We have a number of actions captured in this report. The priorities for 2014/15 are:

- Embedding the way we lead and govern Equality and Diversity to further empower and support our staff and student networks. This will be strengthened by the Board and Leadership Executive working with the Equality Challenge Unit;
- Further improving our gender equality, particularly for women in senior academic roles, and maintaining our focus on our Athena Swan action plans;
- Supporting all our diverse communities to maintain our inclusive culture. For example, we will host the city's Respect Festival in June 2015, embed the visibility of our support for our diverse communities and actively encourage the completion of data by staff and students to help track our progress;
- Enhancing our strong equality monitoring systems to help understand our progress in supporting an inclusive culture, whilst being sensitive to each individual's right to privacy;
- Developing long term solutions to local demographic challenges, in order to enhance the number of BME colleagues in professional services posts.

We have a team of talented and dedicated colleagues here that are focused on working with all our stakeholders to maintain our progress. We look forward to highlighting our achievements in next year's report.



If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact the **Equality & Diversity Unit** on **01752 582060** or email **equality@plymouth.ac.uk**.

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