

HEFCE Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2012-13

Role 1: as a funder and regulator		
Aims	Objectives	Actions (listed by HEFCE team)
<p>1.1 In all our external operations, to promote equality and diversity and to advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>a. Continue to consider the impact of all our policies and procedures on equality and diversity, providing regular training sessions to staff in this regard.</p> <p>b. Ensure that all HEFCE teams consider equality and diversity in their team plans.</p> <p>c. Ensure that all external communications are accessible to a wide audience.</p> <p>d. As far as possible to ensure that equality and diversity is considered in procurement.</p>	<p>Leadership, governance and management (LGM):</p> <p>i. Support the work of the SIA Network by running workshops in 2012 for all staff on completing equality impact assessments, including discussions on engaging with people with different protected characteristics, and seeking colleagues' views on the process.</p> <p>Finance:</p> <p>ii. In HEFCE's guidance on collaboration, merger and alliance we will ask institutions to take into account of equality and diversity in their relevant processes including an equality and diversity impact assessment.</p> <p>Communications:</p> <p>iii. Place interviews/articles as appropriate in a variety of media</p> <p>iv. Ensure text and images reflect diversity and equality considerations.</p> <p>v. Undertake Acrobat and PDF training to keep abreast of accessibility and other developments.</p>

		<p>Procurement:</p> <p>vi. Equality and diversity considerations are included in advice given around invitations to tender (ITT), also in our contractual arrangements and in our evaluation criteria.</p>
<p>1.2 To support and promote a positive approach to equality and diversity in the sector</p>	<p>a. Continue to fund and work in partnership with ECU to proactively engage with the sector, by providing briefings and guidance and supporting specific projects to enhance equality and diversity across the whole sector over the period of the scheme, e.g. with regard to BME staff.</p> <p>b. Continue to fund and work in partnership with the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, supporting its diversity strategy¹, in particular its objective to mainstream equality and diversity throughout their leadership, governor and senior management development programmes.</p> <p>c. Support a programme to improve and promote religious literacy in the HE sector.</p> <p>d. We will continue to fund the Higher Education Academy to promote a positive approach to equality and diversity in</p>	<p>Institutional teams:</p> <p>vii. Develop and improve lines of communication to and from HEIs on equality and diversity issues, e.g. highlighting relevant developments with institutions, maintaining equality as an agenda item on institutional visits.</p> <p>LGM (with Leadership Foundation):</p> <p>viii. Mainstream equality and diversity throughout programmes for leaders, governors and managers in HE.</p> <p>LGM:</p> <p>ix. Continue to support and promote religious literacy and efforts to promote good relations between people of all faiths and none.</p> <p>Business and community:</p> <p>x. Ensure Higher Education Innovation Fund 2011-2015 (HEIF 11-15) strategies make appropriate</p>

¹ 'Diversity Strategy 2007-2012' can be read at www.lfhe.ac.uk under Diversity/Diversity strategy.

	learning and teaching.	reference to institutional equality and diversity policy (assessed by external researchers). xi. Provide summary text (including links to external resources) from HEIF 11-15 to HEFCE equality and diversity colleagues and publish full strategies.
1.3 To support the sector in achieving a diverse and representative HE workforce	<p>a. Continue to provide high-quality, sector-level information about the HE workforce to enable HEIs to understand the national profile of HE staff and to utilise this data in their own benchmarking and target-setting as appropriate.</p> <p>b. Support projects around the HE career, e.g. around research careers (see 1.4 xviii below) or through our support for the Leadership Foundation and their programmes on diversity in leadership, governance and management.</p>	<p>LGM (with Analytical Services Group):</p> <p>xii. Publish annual equality and general workforce data through our 'trends and profiles' report².</p> <p>xiii. Manage HEFCE's relationship with HESA and our contribution to the reviews of the HESA staff record to ensure that adequate data is collection about protected characteristics.</p> <p>xiv. Support ECU's annual equality statistics report³.</p> <p>xv. Continue to promote the HE statistics/benchmarking tool 'HEIDI' and specifically the 'Equality HEIDI' to enable HEIs to benchmark their own equality data.</p> <p>LGM:</p> <p>xvi. Support projects around the HE career, e.g.</p>

² 'Staff employed at HEFCE-funded HEIs, trends and profiles 1995-96 to 2008-09' (HEFCE 2010/06) can be read at www.hefce.ac.uk

³ 'Equality in higher education: statistical report 2010' can be read at www.ecu.ac.uk under Publications.

		around research careers (see below) or through our support for the Leadership Foundation and their programmes on diversity in leadership, governance and management.
1.4 To support the sector in addressing inequalities in research	<p>a. Build equality and diversity into the REF submission process.</p> <p>b. Continue to support Vitae project on equality in research careers.</p>	<p>Research and REF:</p> <p>xvii. We will ensure that by autumn 2012, all HEIs who plan to take part in the REF 2014 have a submitted a code of practice on selecting staff to include in their REF submissions, which has been reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel. In cases where codes of practice do not meet our requirements, we will take steps to ensure this is rectified by January 2013 at the latest.</p> <p>xviii. We will support Vitae's work to promote a suite of equality and diversity resources for free use by UK HEIs, increasing the understanding of equality and diversity issues amongst those who manage research staff within HEIs. The resources, aimed at principal investigators, research staff developers and human resources specialists, were launched in autumn 2011 and ongoing promotional work will include stakeholder briefings, half-day training sessions and case studies.</p>
1.5 Ensure all members of HEFCE strategic committees are familiar with equality and diversity legislation and with the needs and perspectives of people with	<p>a. Build equality and diversity considerations into the induction processes of strategic committees.</p>	<p>Policy teams:</p> <p>xix. Offer equality and diversity advice as part of the induction that clerks provide for new committee</p>

<p>protected characteristics, and apply this knowledge to their work</p>	<p>b. Require committees to consider equality and diversity issues arising in their area of work at least annually.</p> <p>c. Provide training for committee secretaries on the above.</p> <p>d. Continue to embed our sector impact assessment process to ensure that the equality and diversity impacts of our policies are understood by our strategic advisory committees.</p>	<p>members.</p> <p>xx. Ask committees to consider at least one paper on equality and diversity issues affecting their area each year.</p> <p>Governance:</p> <p>xxi. To take account of the published equality and diversity data on our strategic advisory committees (SACs) in providing advice on the criteria and process for the recruitment of new SAC members in 2012.</p> <p>xxii. Include knowledge and expertise relating to equality and diversity in 'desirable' criteria for appointing committee members.</p> <p>Learning and teaching:</p> <p>xxiii. We will explore how equality and diversity issues can be addressed by the Teaching, Quality, and Student Experience Committee in 2012. This will include how HEFCE can support diversity in promoting the collective student interest.</p>
<p>1.6 Maintain our focus on equality and diversity in addressing the requirements of the White Paper during the period of transition</p>	<p>a. Positively engage with new providers.</p> <p>b. Where appropriate, demonstrate leadership on equality and diversity issues in developing our 'lead independent</p>	<p>Finance:</p> <p>xxiv. After the new regulatory framework is put in place, we will produce a new Financial Memorandum (FM). We will ensure that, as part of the process for</p>

	<p>regulator' role.</p> <p>c. Cross-council work to determine the cumulative equality and diversity impact of these challenges.</p>	<p>revising/replacing the FM, there is consideration of including specific requirements on equality and diversity. This may help to promote the general duty and encourage providers to take positive actions. We expect the work on the new FM to start in 2012.</p> <p>Learning and teaching:</p> <p>xxv. In line with HEFCE's proposed observatory function, we will monitor and publish data to improve the HE sector's understanding of whether specific groups of students (i.e. with protected characteristics) experience disadvantage, and to encourage action where necessary. The timing of this will depend on the development of the observatory function.</p> <p>xxvi. We will involve the HEFCE's disabled people's forum in our policy development on funding, quality assurance and public information. This will include the group's involvement in the consultation on teaching funding from 2013-14.</p>
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Role 2: protecting students' interests

Aims	Objectives	Actions
<p>2.1 To support the sector in achieving and maintaining an appropriately diverse student body and reducing inequalities of student opportunities and outcomes</p>	<p>a. Working with HE Academy and ECU on specific projects as appropriate. This will include undertaking research into differences in participation and attainment for those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>b. Providing funding for widening participation which enables all providers, regardless of the tuition fee they charge, to build upon national progress and commitment to WP and inclusive HE communities.</p>	<p>Employment and skills:</p> <p>i. Monitor the extent to which certain groups of students participate in subjects defined as strategically important and vulnerable</p> <p>Widening participation:</p> <p>ii. Through research and development in 2011-12, we will examine differences in attainment and the wider learning experience for Black and minority ethnic students and those with other protected characteristics. We will actively work with partners, such as the Equality Challenge Unit and Higher Education Academy, to raise awareness of the outcomes of this and to promote action where this necessary.</p> <p>iii. We will continue provision and support for disabled students through mainstream disability allocation and sector support. We will consider the outcomes of the disabilities projects we have funded and we will continue to oversee and support the Sector Strategy Group. We will ensure that the Sector Strategy Group acknowledges gaps left in disability support in the sector by Skill, LLNs and Aimhigher and looks to fill them where possible.</p>

		<p>iv. Through the ongoing development of widening participation strategic assessments, annual monitoring and further alignment with the Office for Fair Access's access agreements, we will encourage institutions to consider their equalities duties and promote equality and diversity.</p>
<p>2.2 To enable fair access to higher education so that all students, regardless of their background, are able to access the institution or programme that best meets their needs and aspirations</p>	<p>a. We will work with OFFA to support the HE sector's commitment to improving social mobility, and further align our approach to access agreements and widening participation strategic assessments.</p>	<p>Employment and skills:</p> <p>v. Monitor the extent to which sustainability of national subject provision impacts on accessibility.</p> <p>Widening participation:</p> <p>vi. We will work with the sector and BIS in the ongoing development of the National Scholarship Programme. In particular we will include equalities analysis in the forthcoming evaluation of the scheme and we will analyse data regarding the recipients of the scheme from an equalities perspective. This will help to inform future discussions we have with institutions around equalities, as well as how our funding for widening participation and requirements for WP strategies could be further developed in future.</p>
<p>2.3 White Paper challenges – throughout the period of transition, impact assess work streams and monitor the cumulative effect</p>	<p>a. Establish an observatory function to monitor the effect of new fees and funding mechanisms and associated policies,</p>	<p>Employment and skills:</p> <p>vii. Monitor the extent to which there is concentration of SIVS in highly selective institutions.</p>

<p>of new fees and funding mechanisms. Seek to minimise disadvantages where they do occur.</p>	<p>working with the ECU where appropriate.</p>	
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Role 3: as an employer		
Aims	Objectives	Actions
<p>3.1 In all our internal operations, to seek to promote equality and diversity and to advance equality of opportunity.</p>	<p>a. Ensure impact assessments are carried out on all internal projects.</p> <p>b. Ensure internal policies and procedures regarding equality and diversity are publicised to all staff.</p> <p>c. Seek information in 2012 on how our working environment affects equality and diversity.</p>	<p>LGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Use launch of new Equality Scheme to brief staff on legal requirements and their day-to-day duties. <p>All staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Carry out impact assessments on all internal projects. <p>HR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Review and update HEFCE's people strategy, encouraging all staff to undertake their E & D responsibilities. iv. Embed the Dignity at Work policy in HEFCE induction process with new starters, clarifying their individual responsibilities. <p>Facilities management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Include questions in the 2012 staff survey about satisfaction with the FM service level and with the

		<p>working environment, to include consideration of impacts on people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>vi. Identify and implement training for reception staff on equality and diversity issues during 2012.</p>
<p>3.2 Improve the diversity of the HEFCE workforce: specifically, our gender balance and proportions of BME and disabled staff.</p>	<p>a. Seek to meet the following targets by March 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 40 per cent of employees at pay bands 10 and above to be women. • At least 29 per cent of employees at pay bands 1-9 to be men. • The average annual proportion of disabled employees to be at least 4 per cent. • The average annual proportion of employees from an ethnic minority to be at least 6 per cent. 	<p>HR:</p> <p>vii. Continue to monitor and report on targets.</p> <p>viii. Ensure recruitment and selection procedures are fair and transparent.</p>
<p>3.3 Increase awareness of equality and diversity issues for all HEFCE staff, increasing their confidence in embedding equalities issues into their daily work and promoting understanding of the intrinsic value of a more diverse staff.</p>	<p>a. Provide an annual programme of training and briefing for staff on equality and diversity issues.</p> <p>b. Offer work placements targeted at organisations (schools, colleges etc) likely to have people with characteristics under-represented in the HEFCE workforce.</p>	<p>HR, IT and LGM:</p> <p>ix. Develop an online equality and diversity training module which will be mandatory for all staff by March 2012.</p> <p>HR and LGM:</p> <p>x. Hold at least an annual briefing on E&D issues.</p> <p>xi. Run a biennial diversity awareness month of events</p>

		<p>and activities for all staff.</p> <p>HR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">xii. Publicise the activities and actions from the Equality Steering Group and Diversity Action Group through the HR bulletin. <p>Team managers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">xiii. Promote opportunities for teams to offer work placements. <p>Institutional teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">xiv. Identify a team lead for equality and diversity in HE to become a team expert and act as a source of information for team colleagues. <p>Governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">xv. Working with HR and IT services, to prepare and implement guidance for how we will make our e-learning courses as accessible as possible. The guidelines will state general principles to be followed as well as describing which modifications will be made, and under what circumstances, in order to meet the needs of staff. <p>Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">xvi. Share learning on equality and diversity in communications activities throughout the team.
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<p>3.4 Enhance the information we hold on staff and improve disclosure rates of protected characteristics, by promoting a culture in which people feel confident to disclose.</p>	<p>a. Our 2012-13 people report to the Board will aim to have no unknown⁴ returns for diversity data. Accurate information about our workforce will help us understand our staff profile, measure progress and identify any areas for improvement and targeted action. Creating a culture of trust that celebrates diversity will help to foster good relations, while respecting an individual's right not to disclose. We will extend existing practices to include the newly protected groups.</p> <p>b. Run a disclosure campaign promoting the purpose and benefits of disclosure.</p> <p>c. Develop a staff survey system that will return improved rates of disclosure, greater levels of confidentiality and reduced burden compared to the current system.</p>	<p>HR:</p> <p>xvii. Set up and launch by end 2011, a secure self-service HR system which enables all staff to access and amend their personal equal opportunities information. The systems will help to increase staff confidence and allow for more effective monitoring</p> <p>xviii. Run a disclosure campaign promoting the purpose and benefits of disclosure.</p> <p>ASG:</p> <p>xix. Support HR in conducting the annual staff survey and work together to understand staff disclosure behaviour as necessary.</p>
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⁴ Staff for whom we hold no equality data.