

Queen's University Belfast



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2022-2023

Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/diversity>

Signature:



**This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.
It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties and
implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.**

This report reflects progress made between 1 October 2022 and 30 September 2023

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2022-23, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Policy/service delivery developments

Policy / Reporting

- During the reporting period the University conducted a comprehensive Audit of Inequalities and drafted a revised Equality Scheme and five-year Equality action Plan 2024 -2029. The draft Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024-2029 are currently being consulted upon. The consultation exercise is due to close on 23 October 2023 [Consultation Exercises](#).
- We published our Fair Employment returns for further details click on [Fair Employment Return Monitoring Data](#).
- We updated our [Trans Equality Policy](#) which provides information to staff and students on gender and trans identity. This updated guidance continues to support staff to help individuals discuss how they would like their transition to be managed, and how they can be supported at Queen's.
- We continued to offer support and guidance on Menopause and Fertility Leave and continue embedding our [Menopause Policy](#) and [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy](#).
- We relaunched our [Inclusive Employment Scheme](#) in conjunction with Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment. We host individuals with a disability or long-term condition in various schools and directorates and have supported 17 placements in 2023.

EDI Training

- We delivered four Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity awareness training sessions for staff online (June 2022, July 2022, March 2023 and April 2023).
- We delivered two Gender Identity Training and Non-Binary Awareness for staff online in collaboration with The Rainbow Project (March 2023 and May 2023).
- We delivered four Bitesize Deaf Awareness Training and Basic Sign Language for staff in collaboration with Signs4Life (May 2023, June 2023, February 2023 and April 2023).
- We delivered Neurodiversity Training with Employers for Disability NI for all staff (April 2023 and May 2023).
- We delivered Active Bystander Training to staff. (May 2022 and June 2022).
- We delivered Bullying and Harassment training to staff (May 2022, June 2022, December

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2022 and March 2023).

- We delivered two of our award-winning Menopause awareness sessions (May 2022 and Oct 2022).
- We delivered two Autism Awareness Sessions in conjunction with Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI) (Aug 2022 and Sept 2022).
- We delivered a series of Neurodiversity training sessions from June 2022 – August 2023 which included: Neurodiversity Training Session, Supporting your Neurodivergent Child, Busting Myths about Autism and ADHD and Parenting Children with ADHD.
- In this reporting period, the University delivered 6 mindful manager training sessions, 3 supporting managers mental health with Action Mental Health, we delivered 1 wellness toolbox sessions with action mental health, 1 introduction to suicide prevention and awareness session, 1 introduction to mindfulness, 1 stress awareness and management session, 1 understanding stress and overwhelm, and 1 wellness toolbox session.

Outreach, Engagement and Events

In the 2022-2023 reporting period, the University delivered:

- 25 events related to Disabilities / Long Term Conditions / Mental Health (19 in 2021/22).
- 31 events related to Race / Ethnicity (35 in 2021/22).
- 27 events related to Gender Equality (21 in 2021/2022).
- 11 events related to Sexual Orientation (9 in 2021/2022).
- 11 events related to political opinion (8 in 2021/2022).
- 2 events related to Religion / Faith (1 in 2021/2022).
- 2 events related to age (2 in 2021/2022).
- 7 events related to Dependents / Caring Responsibilities (6 in 2021/2022).

2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2022-23 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).

Some examples of outcomes and impact of delivering equality and diversity positive action measures are set out below in alphabetical order.

ACCESSIBILITY

AccessAble (Physical Accessibility)

In this reporting period, the University has continued its commitment to enabling physical accessibility on campus for staff, students and visitors. We have continued our partnership with [AccessAble](#) to develop guides to help staff, students and visitors to get to and around our sites and buildings more easily. The promotion of the AccessAble has seen a 140% increase in users during the reporting period.

To encourage awareness and consideration of physical accessibility there are posters for all public areas of the University which promote and provide information on accessibility guides of each of the locations on campus, to enable staff, students and visitors to work out if their destination at Queen's is going to be accessible to them. QUB Accessibility guides continue to be actively promoted on digital screens in shared areas on campus.

Institutional Digital Accessibility

Accessibility Regulations (Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018) came into force in September 2018 and continue to build upon regulations in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The regulations require public bodies to take the necessary measures to make their websites more accessible by making them perceivable, operable, understandable, robust and the University continues to ensure its webpages remain compliant.

The Web Support Team continued to provide training for all website moderators to ensure their content meets accessibility requirements and are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 - AA standard. Website owners and content editors received scheduled accessibility reports for their website(s) via email on a fortnightly basis.

We have continued to improve integrations between our web platforms to make the process of implementing accessibility fixes easier for website owners and content editors in the CMS. Our guidance continues to evolve with these changes.

The University has also created further resources for all content management system users to ensure that those working with web content are acting in line with the accessibility requirements for public sector bodies and continue to promote and follow good practice regarding web accessibility. This includes dedicated Accessibility support available from the University's IT Helpdesk. We are also moving our web content into newer templates which have accessibility features built into them from the start.

Digital Accessibility

Support and training continued for staff to enable digital accessibility since the introduction of Canvas in 2019. The Centre for Educational Development (CED) provided support, resources and guidance including:

- A range of online guides on the [Digital Learning at Queen's](#) site to help staff plan, design and develop content in a more inclusive way.
- A [Canvas Course Setup](#) guide has been developed which is updated annually and used as a tool to support staff in preparing for the next academic year 2023 /2024.
- How to [Record a Video quick guide](#) learning materials.
- [Accessible Video Content Design for Learner Variability](#).

The University has put in place appropriate tools, advice and support to staff on how to record learning materials which also allows for [automated captions and transcripts](#).

The University continued to deliver and promote '[Accessibility Toolkit](#)'; an online, self-paced Canvas course that provides guidance for academic staff to become more knowledgeable about digital accessibility. It provides advice on how to create accessible content for learner variability, giving examples of both good and bad practice; and highlights accessibility checker tools such as the Canvas Rich Content Editor and Blackboard Ally. The training is available to all staff with access to Canvas VLE and the training was advertised and promoted in a number of ways internally in the University in order to encourage attendance.

For those uploading teaching material, Canvas also includes an accessibility tool that checks common accessibility errors within the editor. This tool can help staff design course content while considering accessibility attributes and is located in the Rich Content Editor menu bar. The University has also recently invested in a Blackboard Ally integration with Canvas to further enhance this provision going forward.

The software underpinning Canvas is supplied by Instructure. Ensuring accessibility of the platform is a key focus of the provider, according to their accessibility statement. [Accessibility statement](#).

Features of Canvas VLE which support accessibility include:

- change colours, contrast levels and fonts on documents.
- zoom in without the text spilling off the screen.
- navigate the content using just a keyboard.
- navigate the content using speech recognition software.
- listen to the content using a screen reader.
- screen readers.

AGREEMENT 25

Queen's hosted a three-day conference [Agreement 25](#) in April 2023 to mark the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The three-day conference was hosted by Queen's but in partnership with the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils, the Council on Competitiveness, Women in Business, Politics in Action, Commission for Victims and Survivors, the Lyric Theatre as well as Hillsborough Castle, where supporting events also took place, including a programme for schools.

Former President of the United States, President Bill Clinton, and the Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, Secretary Hillary R. Clinton, were among the global leaders participating in an international conference to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement at Queen's University.

The conference had four themes:

- Celebrating the achievements of those who signed the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (GFA).
- Recognising the role of women in peace building.
- Amplifying the voice of the next generation of young leaders.
- Creating a dialogue that proposes and considers social and economic solutions to the major issues that will impact the region over the next 25 years.

Day one – Reflect

Day One of the conference included three panel discussions with the architects of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998: the UK and Irish governments, local political leaders from 1998; and the Guarantors (former UK, Irish and US Administrations).

Day Two – Renew

Day Two of the conference opened with keynote addresses from senior government figures and other leaders followed by a recording of 'The Rest is Politics' podcast.

The afternoon was dedicated to a number of academic panel sessions delivered by The Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice at Queen's University. These panels discussed themes including Rights and Social Justice, Peacebuilding, Legacy, The Dynamics of Peace and Conflict, and The Impact on Victims.

Day Three – Reimagine

Day Three was hosted in association with the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils.

Northern Ireland Vision 2050 focused on enhancing the economic prospects of Northern Ireland and included addresses from senior government officials and panel discussions with both local and global business leaders.

ANTI HARASSMENT ADVISORS

Queen's is committed to creating an environment free from any form of harassment and ensuring all staff feel comfortable within the workplace. We continued to work with our established network of Anti-Harassment Advisors on Campus who provide confidential information to staff on issues relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

The Anti-Harassment Advisors provided support through:

- Listening to staff who believe they are being harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible and provide similar support to those accused of harassment.
- Where requested, support individuals throughout the resolution of their concerns.
- This may include discussing with the individual what they may wish to say or write to the person who they feel has harassed or bullied them or to a senior member of staff who can take action.
- The aim is to empower and support the individual.
- Deal with all cases with the utmost confidentiality except in cases where there is an unacceptable risk to a member of staff, student or to the institution.
- Signpost to other appropriate support.
- Provide similar support to those accused of harassment.

The details and further information on our Anti-Harassment Advisors is detailed on our [Diversity and Inclusion webpages](#).

ATHENA SWAN

Athena SWAN (Gender Equality)

The University's continuing commitment to gender equality is recognised by a Silver Institutional Athena Swan Award from Advance HE and 15 departmental awards 3 Gold, 6 Silver, and 6 Bronze awards have been attained making Queen's a leader in gender equality in the Higher Education Sector. We have made significant progress in implementing the 2019-2023 Athena Swan Action Plan.

As well as leading the Athena Swan Programme at Queen's, Queen's Gender Initiative (QGI) continued to celebrate and champion women at our University. It provides a voice for women at Queen's and advocates for structures, culture and working practices that are fair, transparent and responsive to the needs of women.

QGI is active in developing women's careers through promotions workshops and bespoke mentoring programmes, and enhances the visibility of the contribution of women in Queen's through prestigious lectures, events, conferences, portraits project, art commissions, podcasts etc. QGI engages with Schools and Directorates, representing women's views across Queen's and supporting women's views on priority issues to come to the fore.

In the last reporting year, QGI and the Athena Swan team at Queen's have hosted a number of activities as part of our continued commitment to gender equality.

Highlights include:

- **Imposter Syndrome Online Workshops** (September 2022, November 2022, March 2023). This workshop is open to all staff and includes focus on how to recognise Imposter Syndrome and how it manifests in everyday situations, explore unhelpful thinking styles and the impact it has on how we show up, discuss the underlying causes of negative self-talk, and challenge limiting beliefs.
- **Queen's Equality Survey**, a staff survey in March - April 2023 was undertaken to assess employee experience at Queen's through an equality lens. To give insight into areas that our staff value where progress has been made, as well as our commitments to embed equality, diversity and inclusivity in all aspects of University life. The results are being used to identify areas where changes are needed and to inform our work particularly around Equality Charters (Athena Swan Charter, Race Equality Charter, and Diversity Mark NI). Key Actions from this survey to date include the introduction of the Staff Forum, a Covid-19 Pandemic Research Enabling Fund, measures to mitigate the effect of lockdown on Academic Progression, the expansion of staff wellbeing team, implementation of an online work planning system, the introduction of Agile working and most recently the launch of our [Staff Charter](#).
- **Clare Mc Mahon Lecture delivered by Kate Muir** (May 2023) titled "Everything you need to know about Menopause but were too afraid to ask" which addressed the challenges experienced by many women in obtaining appropriate health interventions and highlighted the myths/ misinformation that impact decision-making.
- **Queen's Management School in association with Chief Executives Club Annual Mary McAleese Diversity Lecture** (October 2023) The lecture 'I've done my part: Why Gender Diversity Promotes Prosperity and Peace' was delivered by Professor Deirdre McCloskey.
- **Ada Lovelace Day** (October 2022) is an international celebration of the achievements we showcased female role models from Queen's and industry exploring why they chose a career in STEM and to highlight their career journey.
- **Swan Champions Network** meeting and activities continued over the past year providing an opportunity for School Swan Champions from across the University to collaborate on areas of common challenge in gender equality. An informal session was held in March 2023 where staff heard directly from colleagues about the changes they have seen as a result of the Athena SWAN programme at Queen's.

We also continued to offer differentiated Female Development Support to support female progression in the University.

- **Aurora Leadership Development Programme** is an Advance HE leadership development programme female only led aimed at addressing the under representation of women in leadership positions. In this reporting period we supported 16 female colleagues (both academic and professional services staff) from across Queen's successfully complete the programme.
- **Annual QGI Academic Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship for female lecturers, senior lecturers, readers and professors. The 2022-23 programme arranged approximately 25 Mentee – Mentor pairings.
- **Annual QGI Professional Services Mentoring Programme** provides mentorship in the area of career development and leadership for professional services staff at Grade 7 the 2022 – 2023 programme has arranged approximately 25 Mentee -Mentor pairings.
- **Academic Progression Workshop 2023** the annual academic progression workshop was held on Wednesday 11 January 2023. All female academics were invited including those on probation. The workshop was to enable learning about the Academic Progression process and career planning.

International Women's Day 2023

Queen's Gender Initiative and the wider Queen's community delivered a number of events to celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) 2023. These included:

- International Women's Day Networking Lunch with Caroline Young, Vice-President for Students and Corporate Services as a guest speaker.
- School of Natural Built Environment Women in Engineering Event which consisted of a panel of guest speakers and lecturer who talked about their experiences as a woman within the engineering sector. Followed by an interactive Q&A session.
- Queen's Business School hosted a panel discussion of female speakers ranging from entrepreneurs to successful businesswomen on the topic "Out of my comfort zone". Followed by a Q&A session and networking opportunities.
- Menopause Awareness Session delivered by two of the Universities own academic GP's with a keen interest in women's health Dr Helen Reid and Professor Jenny Johnston.
- LinkedIn Learning for All collection on Gender and Bias covering the topics: Gender equity for women, Leadership strategies for Women, Own it, becoming a Male ally at work.
- School of Arts, English and Languages in partnership with the Derry Playhouse – Round table panel on the theme of "Women and Leadership".
- Event to hear experiences of women living with Secondary Breast Cancer, featuring a presentation from photographer, Jennifer Wills on the 'Seen To Be Heard' Exhibition.
- Celebrate Women in STEM – Women in Red Wikipedia editathon. Wikipedia is the fifth most visited website in the world but lacks diversity in its editors and its articles. Less than one-fifth of biographies on English Wikipedia, the world's go-to source of information, are about women. This event focused on improving the representation online of inspiring women.
- QGI hosted an Athena SWAN information session for staff in Directorates.

Details of all these events can be found on our website [International Women's Day 2023](#)

Active Bystander Training

Queen's Gender Initiative, the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences Gender Equality Team and the Diversity and Inclusion Team undertook a pilot programme of Active Bystander Training in the University in 2021.

Delivered virtually, this training aims to empower staff across the Queens University community to challenge poor behaviours which have become normalised and bring about change through the reinforcement of messages defining the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour. We designed scenarios specifically related to experiences in higher education including scenarios on age, gender, LGBT+ inclusivity and respect for cultures to focus discussions and provide attendees with guidance and strategies on how they could intervene as an Active Bystander. Our hope is that by working together we can create a safe and supportive working environment within our community by supporting staff to intervene and interrupt unacceptable behaviours safely and appropriately.

The feedback from participants has been very positive and a number of academic colleagues have proactively developed material and delivered sessions to staff and students in their area. This training was also included as part of REC-EDI 5 programme this year. This programme was

developed by QGI as part of Queens Racial Equity Programme. Active bystander training is continuing to be developed and delivered across schools.

CARERS AND PARENTS

Carers Network

The staff Carers Network continued to support our employees with caring responsibilities, allowing them to come together and share experiences and information.

A new procedure continues to help identify new carers commencing at Queen's and improved alerts for those who update their record to identify as a carer.

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit issues regular updates and shares information with the Carers including information from Health Trusts and targeted information sessions around financial advice assistance including benefits advice from Employers for Childcare and Direct payments information sessions.

The Carers network continues to offer social gatherings as an opportunity to meet and share experiences. There have been several coffee mornings and a Christmas lunch during the reporting period.

The University continues to engage and consult with the network in helping shape an informed approach to new policies and procedures throughout Queen's. Further information on the Carers Network is available on the [Carers Webpages](#).

Carers Passport

Following the launch of our Carers Passport in 2022 we continued to promote its benefits. The Carer Passport is a way for staff who are working as carers to electronically document and communicate their caring responsibilities to their manager, in a way that allows for the conversation and discussion to take place with less stigma.

The passport, which has been adopted in many progressive workplaces around the UK, aims to promote the understanding of the staff member's needs, enabling managers to put in place the flexibility needed to support their individual circumstances where possible.

Enabling a two-way discussion, the Carer Passport supports a conversation between staff and managers that will generally involve balancing the needs of the staff member with the needs of the business area. It does not normally involve a formal change to the staff member's contract of employment, but, instead, enables staff and managers to find solutions and arrangements that can empower and support carers at Queen's.

The launch of the passport has been assisted by specific sessions for Line Managers to support their understanding and application of the Carer Passport at Queen's.

More Information [Carer Passport | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Parents Network

In September 2022, the University established an informal Parents Network. This network was

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established to help support staff who are new parents or have recently joined Queens and have children and wish to connect with other parents informally, to ask and answer general questions. Since its launch the network continues to grow, and the members of the network use it widely and it continues to be a great resource for Parents at Queen's.

Student Parents and Carers Network

Queens continues to offer support for students with dependants. For students with caring responsibilities, the QUB Student Parents and Carers network offers relaxed and friendly fortnightly meetings to raise issues, share information and learn about opportunities.

Students' Parents and Carers Support Fund

During this reporting period, the University continued to publicise and encourage applications for the 'Parent and Care' Support Fund. Available to all students with caring responsibilities, funding of a £100 award is available to contribute to the costs of caring activities such as emergency childcare, household or transport costs, or any other costs associated with caring responsibilities.

Homework Clubs

The Homework Clubs Programme gives Queen's University volunteers the chance to provide homework support to children and young people who live in areas of educational underachievement.

During 2022-23, Homework Clubs Programme worked in partnership with 16 Clubs based in areas of educational achievement throughout Belfast.

Volunteer Student Union recruited, trained and allocated 135 student volunteers to these clubs, offering weekly study support to 415 participating children and young people aged 4-18 years, improving their study skills, building their confidence and raising their aspirations about further and higher education.

Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms at Queen's

In 2022, the University formally introduced a range of private Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms for use by Queen's staff and students returning to work or study after Maternity Leave.

All rooms are equipped with comfortable sofas, armchairs and footstools, have access to electrical sockets for breast pump use, and are located close to bathroom facilities. Pregnant staff and students may also use these rooms to rest in during their pregnancy.

Information on the location of the rooms and areas where breastfeeding is welcome across the campus is available on the University's [Nursing Mothers and Parents' Rooms Webpages](#).

Breast Feeding Welcome Here Scheme

In September 2023 Queen's joined over 800 other business and organisations as a member of

the Public Health Agency's Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme. This scheme is an initiative which makes it easier for mums to recognise places where they can breastfeed their baby while out and about. [2023 | Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme launched at Queen's](#)

COST OF LIVING

In October 2022 Queen's announced a multi-million-pound support package of £7.69 million for students and staff facing the current cost of living crisis. A dedicated website was set up to provide a suite of information for the University community on support and interventions in place to assist staff and students. [Cost of Living Webpages.](#)

Student Cost of Living Support

- 3600 Students who come from families earning under £25,000 per year will receive a one-off payment of £400 each with all other students receiving £150.
- Dedicated Student support fund set up focus on international students.
- All graduation fees waived for Summer 2023.
- Accommodation Bursaries of £0.5m for students from lower-income backgrounds.
- Childcare support and discounted sport memberships.
- Free breakfast for students Nov 2022.
- A Free Food refill station – which provides a range of free products including dried foods as well as household hygiene items.

Staff Cost of Living Support

- University Staff, excluding senior management, received a payment between £500 - £750 with those on lower salary scale receiving the higher payment.
- A financial assistance scheme for staff allowing interest free borrowing of up to £2400.
- Existing childcare support, discounted sport membership.
- 'Introduction to Money Helper' delivered in partnership with Money and Pensions Service.
- Safer Borrowing and Budgeting training delivered in partnership with the Consumer Council.

DISABILITY

Autism Awareness Training

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit hosted Autism Awareness training sessions in this reporting period (August 2022 and September 2022), delivered by Employers for Disability Northern Ireland (EFDNI).

The session focused on how people on the autism spectrum are affected, their wide range of abilities, challenges, skills and strengths. The session brings the individual perspective of people on the autism spectrum through a number of videos, to increase insight and enhance awareness of how best to interact with and support people on the autism spectrum in the workplace and line managers were specifically encouraged to attend the session with 50 staff attending the session.

Further work to develop the support available to individuals with Autism is ongoing in partnership with Employers for Disability NI.

Bitesize Deaf Awareness and Basic Sign Language Session

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit arranged 4 sessions of Bitesize Deaf Awareness Language Training for staff (May 2023, June 2023, February 2023 and April 2023). Staff working in staff and student-facing roles were particularly encouraged to attend.

The sessions, delivered by Signs4Life, covered the following topics:

- Identify the barriers that deaf and hard of hearing people face;
- Understand and demonstrate how to implement positive methods of communication, and offer an equal service to deaf and hard of hearing people; and
- Apply the finger-spelling alphabet (sign language).

British Sign Language Training

In addition to these training opportunities above, The Language Centre currently supports the British Sign Language Level 1 and Level 2 teaching and assessment. Supporting people to improve their ability to communicate with the deaf community, including those living with hearing loss.

Employ Autism Scheme

The University continued to work with the charity Ambitious about Autism and Santander Universities UK to enable autistic students and graduates to access paid internships and tailored careers support and advice, and to improve neurodiversity in the workplace.

Internships are typically equivalent to full-time work for 8-10 weeks but could stretch over a longer period with reduced hours per week.

The programme is open to all current students or graduates who have graduated within the last two years and have not yet secured permanent employment, who are over 18 and registered as autistic with [Queen's Disability Services](#) or who have a formal diagnosis (received or in progress) of autism or a social communication disorder.

Other Disability Initiatives

The University continues to deliver a number of additional disability friendly good practice initiatives in existence around the University:

- Queen's University Disability Forum (meets quarterly) to review and monitor progress against the University's Disability Action Plan and consider the needs of, and the issues affecting, staff and students with disabilities at the University.
- Funded support is available for students with disabilities through Disability Support Allowance (DSA).
- The Needs Assessment Centre provides support, advice and guidance tailored specifically to the individual students to prepare them for University life and enable them to reach their potential and provides advice on the DSA process from the application for funding to receiving recommended support.
- Peer support is provided through regular social group meetings to enable students with disabilities and/or long-term conditions to meet other students.

- One to one support is arranged by Disability Services for students through the Register of Support Providers at Queen's to assist with specific academic challenges.
- Advice and guidance for staff declaring a disability is now available to provide clarity and support regarding who they need to tell and for what purpose e.g., for reasonable adjustments or staff monitoring, in addition to further sources of support.
- Support is provided to disabled staff via the [Disability Support Fund](#) which allows QUB staff (who have disclosed their disability) to apply for funding to purchase various pieces of equipment to assist them when carrying out their work.

Inclusive Employment Scheme

Our Inclusive Employment Scheme provides an opportunity for those who have been unable to get work, or have had to leave work because of a disability, to develop skills and gain valuable work experience.

This scheme has been re-launched in 2023 following the impact of the pandemic, with 17 placements opportunities currently matched. Those matched individuals will commence in August and September 2023, these placements are for varied durations from twelve weeks – six months. [Inclusive Employment Scheme Webpage](#).

Staff Disability Support Network

The Staff Disability Support Network continues to provide a voice for staff with disabilities and long-term conditions. The network provides an opportunity for staff with disabilities and long-term conditions to be represented and participate in University life. A nominee from the network is attends the University's Disability Forum which provides feedback on how the University can encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions throughout the University.

EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE CURRICULUM

During this reporting period, the University invested significantly in improving Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the curriculum, most notably with regards to digital accessibility. This is an area that we continue to work on with both staff and students.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum is key to the student experience. All of the support provided by the Centre for Educational Development aims to remove barriers for students and to ensure equity (See further information on digital accessibility on Page 5).

Queen's use of Canvas, a University-wide Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), across all academic programmes from has been a key enabler in the move to active connected learning and online learning, meeting the needs of a diverse digital student body. Canvas has also supported the delivery of alternative assessments.

Canvas has been enabled to allow a personal pronoun identifier in Canvas VLE; a Canvas account setting which enables staff and students to select and update their personal pronouns in their user settings, which will display after their name in areas throughout Canvas. This is function communicated regularly to ensure that new staff and students are aware of this way to identify.

In 2022, the Diversity and Inclusion Unit worked with colleagues in the University Canvas team to

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enable a personal pronoun identifier in Canvas VLE; a Canvas account setting which enables staff and students to select and update their personal pronouns in their user settings, which will display after their name in areas throughout Canvas.

There is continued on-going work across the University in relation to De-Colonising the Curriculum where appropriate.

EQUALITY SCREENING

In the reporting period, we equality screened (or are actively equality screening) the workplace policies:

- Trans Equality Policy
- Anti Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Triage Guidance
- Grievance
- Complaints Resolution
- Appeals Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Redeployment Policy
- Pilot Linguistic Residential Scheme
- Duty of Care of Staff and Students Traveling for Research Purposes
- Menopause Guidance
- Fertility Treatment Leave Policy
- Domestic Abuse Leave Policy
- Pregnancy Loss Policy

Please click to view our [Equality Screening](#) webpage for policies screened and supporting information provided to staff.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT RETURN

We have submitted our Fair Employment return to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland on 1 June 2023.

Workforce Profile

The University currently employs over 4,500 staff:



Female 54.4%

Male 45.6%



Protestant background 31.92%

Roman Catholic background 37.63%

Non-determined 29.73%



White 84.41%

Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic 9.35%

Not known 6.22%



Disability or long-term condition 9.2%

Dependants and/or caring responsibilities. 47.3%

LGB 3.9%



Aged 0-44 years, 17%. Aged 40-49 years, 30%.

Highest percentage of staff from EU or international nationality by job category are found in Academic and Research roles - 16.1% in Academic roles (30.3% EU and International) and 30.2% of staff in Research roles (40.8% EU and International).

We published our Fair Employment Return findings in respect of employees in June 2022, for further details, visit the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#).

Initiatives addressing Under-representation

We will continue to develop initiatives in order to address under-representation in the University, for example through the use of Welcome Statements, our Social Charter Project and our Inclusive Employment Scheme.

We have expanded our general Welcome Statement to confirm that the University welcomes applications from all sections of society and particularly from individuals from the Black, Asian, Minority or Ethnic (BAME) community, persons with a Disability and those who identify as LGBT. We also provide evidence of our commitment to Equality to applicants by including information on our staff networks for our LGBT staff (PRISM), BAME and International staff (iRise) as well as a Disability Support Network and Carers Network.

FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES

Staff can avail of family friendly policies to ensure work-life balance including Adoptive Leave, Career Break, Dependant Leave including Bereavement Leave, flexible working, parental leave, paternity leave (including Adoptive Paternity Leave) and Shared Parental leave. Further details

on our family friendly policies can be accessed on our [Annual, Family and Other Leave webpage](#).

Manager Training – Family Friendly Policies

Since 2019, knowledge sessions on Family Friendly Policies have been built into the People Manager Essentials Programme, the development programme is designed to support people managers to build their people management knowledge, skills and effective behaviours. These knowledge sessions provide guidance and information to Managers on Family Friendly policies such as Family Leave, Dependents Leave and Flexible Working to ensure policies are applied fairly and consistently.

Online toolkits have been developed, including an online toolkit specifically relating to family leave. These manager guidance toolkits provide support and ensure consistency, fairness and full information on family friendly entitlements for all employees when making and responding to requests. Policy, guidance and information of these toolkits was communicated via staff roundup (Internal Comms) and advertised on the Queen's webpage. This guidance can be viewed at [People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast](#).

The University is committed to facilitating flexible working arrangements where possible to ensure staff are supported to strike the right balance between home and work life, and particularly support those with caring responsibilities or those impacted by health or disability considerations.

New Hybrid Working Guidance was introduced in March 2023. This was developed in response to staff feedback in relation that working flexibly is considered an important benefit. Hybrid working can now be arranged formally through the flexible working policy or agreed informally as part of the Agile working approach. Hybrid working can also be combined with other kinds of flexible working such as staggered hours, part-time hours, or job share.

GENDER

Diversity Charter Mark NI

The Diversity Mark accreditation is awarded to companies following an assessment process which ensures they have reached the required standard of commitment to advancing Diversity and Inclusion.

Queens currently holds a Silver Diversity Mark, recognising its commitment to advancement of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

The Silver Diversity Mark award highlights the University's progress in advancing gender, race and disability equality and its ambitious plans in this space and reflects significant progress since the University was awarded Bronze almost three years ago.

Fertility Treatment Leave Policy

Following the launch of the [Fertility Treatment Leave Policy](#) in 2022 we have continued to be able to support staff who are undergoing fertility treatment, or those supporting a partner who is undertaking fertility treatment, including the provision of paid time off.

The Fertility Treatment Leave Policy acknowledges the demands on individuals and their partners, offering offers staff members who are undergoing investigation of fertility treatment, undertaking or recovering from fertility treatment up to five days paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy also entitles a staff member who wants to support a partner who is undergoing fertility treatment up to two days of paid leave per treatment cycle.

The policy was designed to offer support to staff undergoing fertility treatment, whilst raising awareness of the issues with line managers and other staff members. The fertility treatment leave is a day one right for all staff, and sits alongside existing support available to staff, including temporary workplace adjustments and free counselling.

Menopause Policy and Guidance

The University continues to create an environment where women feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for reasonable adjustments at work, if necessary. The [Menopause Policy](#) and accompanying [Menopause Guidance](#) sets out the University's commitment to supporting colleagues experiencing the menopause and/ or menopause type symptoms.

The [Menopause webpage](#) also provides information and further support for staff experiencing the menopause, and for Line managers and Supervisors who are supporting staff. These include Frequently Asked Questions, further sources of Information and support, information on roles and responsibilities, symptoms and reasonable adjustments.

Staff were invited to the campus Junction Café on Monday 17 October 2022 to find out more about the support and guidance available to staff and to line managers supporting staff experiencing the menopause and/or menopausal symptoms. Members of the HR Business Partnering Team, the Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Team provided guidance on the internal support available and were joined by a professional Menopause Nurse from Menopause Wellbeing NI.

Menopause Support Fund

The Staff Menopause Support Fund provides financial assistance for staff who are experiencing menopause/menopausal symptoms. The fund can be used to contribute towards the purchase costs associated with reasonable adjustments to enable them to remain in the working environment. For example, this could include:

- A fan.
- Fitting blinds to windows.
- Where uniforms are compulsory, providing additional spare uniforms, or uniforms in different sizes.
- Consideration of adjustments to, or purchase of additional PPE or in different sizes.

Menopause Information Sessions

The University is continuing to schedule a regular programme of Menopause information sessions for staff, and specific sessions to increase awareness and support line managers to support staff experiencing the menopause.

PART A

The sessions are delivered by two of the University's own academic GPs with a keen interest in women's health, Dr Helen Reid and Professor Jenny Johnston – both from the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences.

The sessions are designed to reduce stigma, raise awareness, and inform staff on what to expect and when and how to seek help around issues relating to menopause.

Free Period Products

The pilot project to providing free period products to students in 2021 – 2022 was supported by funding from Department of the Economy. This initiative will continue to be supported by the University and Students Union with free period products available in both the women's bathrooms and the gender neutral/accessible bathrooms in McClay library, Students Union, Student Guidance Centre and the Graduate School.

This scheme continues to support and help our students who require free period products whether its impact through cost or caught short.

Activities and Events

- Let us be Seen (January 2023) - Documenting how activists, artists and educators join forces to make change, containing art and music from many local individuals. Showcasing the creative ways individuals provide an alternative to the binary politics in Belfast, dealing with the myriad issues affecting feminists in Northern Ireland.
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science Event (February 2023) – “Breaking Barriers: Women in STEM success stories and strategies for progress.”
- Queen's Law Staff Seminar Series - Lecture / Discussion (March 2023) - The Forms of Cyber Sexism and Their Impact on Democracy by Dr Mia Caielli University of Turin.
- Evidence on the Treatment of Maternal and Child Mental Health Disorders (April 2023) This lecture from Professor Sonia Bhalotra discussed interventions which may help children and mothers with mental disorders and potentially improve further life course outcomes including female empowerment, parenting decisions and children's educational outcomes.
- Girls into Electronics (June 2023)– School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. The school age children took part in an Arduino workshop. Sponsored by UK Electronics Skills Foundation.
- Feminist Legal Rapid Policy Responses and How to Do Them Workshop (May 2023) – Doing Feminist Legal Work is a new network of Feminist Legal Scholars funded by the Irish Research Council of Ireland under the New Foundations Shared Ireland Scheme. The workshop focused on experiences of rapid responses across issues such Mother and Baby Homes, Magdalene Laundries, Reproductive Rights as well as considering future responses such as how feminist legal scholars might respond to legal changes on 'care'.

Series aimed at Female Students leaving Queens in 2023

- Inspire Panel Discussion (February 2023) – Women in Business with an inspirational panel of young women from a mix of business sectors discussing: - Working out what you are good at, Applying for jobs, Confidence Building, Overcoming Barriers, Life after Uni, Building your network.
- Women in Business Connect – (February 2023) Techniques to Connect with Employers

including: - developing your elevator pitch, standing out from the crowd, learning from role models.

- Women in Business Get Ready (February 2023) Assistance in developing a LinkedIn Profile, preparing a CV and Building your network.
- She Leads Workshop 1– Inspiring Future Women Leaders, January 2023 – March 2023 this programme is designed to help develop and acknowledge your potential as a confident leader. Learn from women leader and build a support network of like-minded peers as you set goals and challenges and learn to take advantage of opportunity.
- She Leads Workshop 2 - Inspiring Future Women Leaders, January 2023 – March 2023 this programme for female students to discover their unique strengths, values and behaviours their sense of agency as they learn to assert themselves, improve communication styles and limit self-doubt.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

African Scholars Research Network

Following establishment of the African Scholars Network in March 2022, the network continues to build a cross-campus Research Network of African Scholars at Queen's. The network fosters collegiality and a strong foundation for a sustainable supportive culture for these researchers of various disciplines and educational backgrounds.

Chinese Culture Forum

The Chinese Culture Forum continues to provide a platform at Queen's for ongoing exchange of ideas and sharing experiences of individuals who are interested in Chinese culture, contemporary or traditional, with an intention to understand better Chinese cultural products, practice and perspectives through intercultural dialogues.

The Chinese Culture Forum celebrated the Year of the Rabbit with an event in January 2023 which included:

- Introductions from Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Internationalisation, Co-Chair of iRise (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, and International staff network), and The Language Centre Manager.
- A live Guzheng musical performance.
- Traditional Chinese Dancing.
- A Workshop on Chinese Calligraphy.
- Dr Rosalind Silvester from Arts, English and Languages who delivered a talk on the topic '[Exploring Chen Xuefeng's Imaginary Garden](#)'.
- Round table discussion on the Titanic and 'The Six' Documentary which explored the little-known story of the six Chinese passengers.

Chinese Language Interest Group

The Chinese Language Interest Group facilitates the student-led learning community to enhance a better understanding of Chinese culture, through learning the language and social activities throughout the academic year. This year events included:

- Marking UN Chinese Language Day by celebrating the charm of the Chinese language in written form through calligraphy and spoken through recitation (April 2023)
- Chinese and Irish traditional music – the language of the sound (part of the Development

- Week programme).
- Chinese Kungfu Sessions (part of the PEC summer scheme);
- Celebrating Dragon Boat Festival.
- A taste of Chinese Tea with Guzheng music (BAME&I Staff Network social programme).

Language Courses

The Language Centre at Queen's continued to support staff and students at the University, as well as members of the public, in developing their language competence and cultural awareness, through the provision of language courses, both taught and online/blended course, as well as related training workshops focusing on cultural awareness and understanding.

In Academic year 2022/2023 there were over 2300 course registrations, across an offer of 16 different languages taught at a range of levels.

Cultural Awareness Training

The Language Centre supported Cultural Awareness training workshops during the academic year in both online and face-to-face contexts. This involved collaboration with Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences faculty, Students Union volunteering initiatives as well as a number of ad hoc workshops supporting engineering and global food security students in discipline specific training contexts.

Over the summer period, Cultural Awareness training was delivered to Engineering and Physical Sciences Summer School Programme (136 students).

The Language Centre team has also worked positively with colleagues at Queen's during this reporting period, to propose the development of an institution wide approach to supporting cultural skills development. It is hoped that this initiative will become part of the University's strategy and be developed in the coming academic year 2023/24 for rollout thereafter.

Linguistic Residential Scheme

Following the success of the Linguistic Residential Pilot Scheme in September 2022 the University will continue to offer this Scheme in 2023/2024. The Scheme is aimed at developing language students' skills as part of their academic studies. The Scheme offers a maximum number of 12 places for students studying Irish with remaining spaces offered to other students who have indicated a preference to live with Irish speakers and who have confirmed they speak the language.

The initiative was developed in response to a formal request by staff, students and alumni to create a programme similar to those already in place at other universities.

Following approval by Queen's Senate, the Scheme has been implemented with the aim of providing students with an environment to speak the Irish language daily and to encourage and support the use of the language in the students' personal and social lives outside of the study environment.

Activities and Events

- World Teachers Day – The Making of a Language Teacher (October 2022) Jointly supported by Queen's language centre and iRise, this event presented two language teachers experiences of their personal and professional development through interacting with Chinese students in difference contexts.

- School of Psychology Seminar (October 2022) Communication about Cultural Similarities in demotivating (violent) collective action participation in Northern Ireland
- Ciorcal Comhrá – Irish speaking coffee and conversation group. Meeting Monthly during term time.
- Diwali Night (November 2022) Queen’s South Asia Students Society Diwali Night took place in Mandela Hall and included live performances, food, henna and music.
- Canadian and American Students Association Thanksgiving Dinner (November 2022).
- Taste of Belfast - International Student Ceili (January 2023).
- Chinese New Year Student Dinner (January 2023).
- Introductory Staff workshop on the Guzheng (February 2023), a traditional Chinese string instrument.
- City Cemetery Jewish Series by Belfast City Council (January 2023) as part of the Commemoration for Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Language events: International Day of Sign Language, European Day of Languages, World Arabic Language Day, International Mother Language Day, UN French Language Day, The Sound of Language Festival, UN Chinese Language Day, World Portuguese Language Day.
- Language Centre support for the Language and Terminology Paper (Outlined on Page 29)

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (STAFF TRAINING)

During the reporting period the following numbers of staff completed the mandatory diversity training modules (e-learning):

- **Think Difference. Act Differently** – 90% of all staff have completed this module;
- **Unconscious Bias** – 89% of all staff have completed this module.

More details on all staff training during the reporting period is included in Table one on page 40 and 41.

LGBT+

Equality Enacted 40 Year on from Decriminalisation

December 2022 marked the 40-year anniversary since the legislation decriminalising homosexuality in Northern Ireland came into effect on 8 December 1982.

This was marked by a Panel discussion event featuring academics, gay rights campaigners, PRISM network Co-Chair and secretary of The Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association.

Following the panel discussion, the short documentary “The Troubles I’ve Seen” was screened in Queen’s Film Theatre. The documentary hears from those who experienced and were involved in the beginning of the LGBT movement in Northern Ireland.

LGBT+ Staff Network – PRISM

Members of PRISM continue to host an information stand at staff induction sessions for new staff.

In this reporting period we have held welcome events in October, February and June, each with all new staff who have started in that quarter in attendance. The welcome events provide new staff with an opportunity to meet PRISM members and hear about its activities and how to join the Network.

The network continues to provide a forum for networking and a means of peer support between LGBT+ staff, representing the interests of LGBT staff and working with colleagues to inform the University on relevant issues.

In 2022/23 the network met monthly and participated / organised a number of events in year including:

- November 18th - PRISM participation in Physics & Maths Society LGBTQ+ STEM Day
- December 5th PRISM participation in 'Equality Enacted? 40 years on from decriminalisation'
- December 8th PRISM Night out
- February 10th PRISM attendance at RAG and QUB SU Drag Night
- February 24th PRISM Night out
- April 15th PRISM participation at GNI Awards 2023
- May 13th PRISM City Centre Walk
- May 17th PRISM/PLUS Quiz night
- July – PRISM annual screen/print event at the QFT

Most recently the network has been instrumental in providing information, feedback and assisting the development of our enhanced guidance on our [Trans Equality Policy](#) which provides information to staff and students on gender and trans identity. This updated guidance continues to support staff to help individuals discuss how they would like their transition to be managed, and how they can be supported at Queen's.

Pride 2023

On 27 July 2023, Queen's University Belfast's second [Pride Picnic 2023 at Queen's](#) took place, bringing together staff and students to celebrate Belfast Pride 2023 with music and street food.

Over 400 staff, students and their families attended the event celebrating Belfast Pride and providing an opportunity for people to find out more about PRISM, our LGBT+ staff network, and how to become an LGBT Ally at Queen's.

LGBT+ Allies

The University formally established a network of LGBT Allies on Campus back in April 2020. LGBT Allies across the Queen's campus are supported to identify and practice practical ways to step up an ally and to commit to inclusive behaviours in the University, creating a safe and supportive

environment for all our LGBT staff and students.

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit and PRISM continue to work on developing and mobilising our network of LGBT+ Allies across the University.

Further information on the support that LGBT Allies can provide can be found on our [LGBT+ Allies webpage](#).

Activities and Events

- Queer at Queen's Live Podcast with Hilary McCollum and guests (November 2022).
- PLUS (QUB LBTQ+ postgraduate group) Games Night (February 2023).
- LGBTQIA+ History Month Film Night. Featuring a screening of The Troubles I've Seen from LGBT History NI and a feature length film from Pride Society.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The University continues to develop its #QUBeWell Healthy Campus Framework, which originated in 2019. This framework seeks to outline the University's commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of its student and staff community.

Staff Wellbeing (Including Mental Health)

The appointment of two new roles, a Diversity, Inclusion and Staff Wellbeing manager and a Staff Wellbeing Officer in January 2023 has supported further stakeholder engagement to take place across the University, resulting in a clearer understanding of the strengths and challenges associated with improving wellbeing for staff. A new institutional Staff Health and Wellbeing Action Plan is under development in support of wellbeing objectives stated in Strategy 2030. A draft Stress Management Policy and Guidance has also been written.

Staff Mental Health Awareness Week 2023

[Mental Health Awareness Week](#) took place on 15 – 21 May 2023, the theme for this year was Anxiety. Staff wellbeing marked the week with a programme of twenty events highlights include:

- Individual Advice Clinics with Employers for Childcare
- Building a resilient Mindset Panel Discussion
- Big Purple Picnic
- Mindful Botanic Walk
- Suicide Prevention Awareness
- Nightingale Holistic Therapies
- Men's heart health talk
- Atrial Fibrillation Heart Checks

The keynote event 'Building a Resilient Mindset Panel Discussion' was held on Thursday 18th May in Queen's Film Theatre with 135+ attendees. The panel was made up of a number of high-profile people in Northern Ireland representing sport, broadcasting, business and also experts in the field of mental health. Each of the panellists bringing their own experiences of dealing with anxiety and how resilience played a part in their journeys and candidly discussed their own experiences of building a resilient mindset.

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Training

Staff training continues to be a priority and there is continuous demand for training from students and staff at the University on supporting students, colleagues, and friends.

Targeted mental health support and training delivered during this reporting period included:

- Introduction to Mindfulness (Attended by 21 staff).
- Mental Health Awareness with Action Mental Health (Attended by 30 staff).
- Parenting NI Childrens Emotional Health (Attended by 17 Staff).
- Understanding Stress and Overwhelm (Charlie Waller Trust) (Attended by 21 staff).
- Personal resilience with Action Mental Health (Attended by 11 staff).
- Healthy Lifestyles with Parenting NI (Attended by 9 staff).
- Wellness Toolbox with Action Mental Health (Attended by 35 staff).
- Introduction to suicide Prevention and awareness (Attended by 13 staff).
- Period Problems Awareness QUB Academic GP's (Attended by 10 staff).
- Stress Awareness and Management with Action Mental Health (Attended by 11 staff).
- Suicide First Aid Lite – NCSPET (Attended by 17 staff).

Specific training support continued to be offered for all line managers / supervisors including:

- Supporting Managers Mental Health.
- Mindful Manager (Attended by 40 staff).
- Menopause awareness for Managers (Attended by 41 staff).
- Stress Awareness and Management (Attended by 11 staff).

Staff E-Learning Module of Supporting Students Mental Health and Wellbeing

As part of the funding allocated to the #QUBeWell project, an e-learning module has been developed with an external supplier. The course has been designed by the Student Disability and Well-being Team and aims to empower staff with the tools and confidence to provide the right support to students who may be struggling with their mental health and signpost them to the most appropriate service (if required).

This training is largely scenario-based training with the scenarios developed in response to the most common presenting issues from students, and staff who make referrals to the Student Wellbeing Service. They have also been aligned to the Service's Stepped Matched Care Model of Support that provides a framework for staff to know when and how to refer students to relevant support services, according to levels of risk.

Scenarios include:

- Stress, anxiety, procrastination and perfectionism
- Supporting a friend, with impact on academic study
- Disengagement and early warning signs
- Student at risk – suicidal ideation, self-harm, risk to themselves or others

PART A

This course will continue to be an E-learning module with in-person training delivered as and when required in the coming academic year 2023 /2024.

The module will also advise colleagues on what processes, protocols, and services are in place to help support students, and staff supporting students. There will also be content around additional training opportunities, including training which may be more specialised or aligned to specific roles.

Student Focused #QUBeWell University Wellbeing Week 2023

The University continues to raise awareness and encourage conversation about mental health to reduce stigma and promote better mental health.

This year's University Wellbeing week took place during the week of 2-9 March 2023 with over 20 events open to students and staff at the University.

Highlights of the week included:

- QUBeWell Treasure Hunt
- Wellbeing Sensory Night
- Creative Connections
- Gratitude for Wellbeing
- Community Gardening
- Beginners Guide to Running
- Colour Run in partnership with QUB Cardio Society

Full guide of events can be found at [#QUBeWell University Wellbeing Week 2023](#).

Talk Campus Peer Support

Talk Campus Peer Support is a further support in addition to Inspire 24/7 student telephone number [Talk Campus](#).

Talk Campus is an app-based Peer support platform where students come together from around the world, and give and get support within a safe, supportive infrastructure. Talk Campus is based around peer support; students can use it if they are struggling, worried about their mental health, and need some help, or they can go on and listen and support others. The app provides additional cultural competency to the suite of support services offered through the University as TalkCampus supports over 26 different languages.

The platform is safe and moderated and is designed as a place where students can be themselves and talk openly about how they are feeling. TalkCampus is not a replacement for counselling or professional support, however it is a great place to start talking and to make sure that however students are feeling, they are not alone.

Additional promotion of Talk Campus App will continue with particular focus during Semester One of 2023/2024.

Students Union Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

The Students Union (SU) has been working to progress mental health and wellbeing as a core

strategic priority and has created a Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. The plan is based on the Student Minds framework and has been reviewed by staff and student officers.

The plan contains core action areas (both strategic and operational) for the SU over the next few years. Several of these core action items have been progressed this academic year and have been achieved through cross-departmental working within the SU but also with internal and external stakeholders.

Some examples of the campaigns / initiatives this year include:

- Development of the Suicide Safe Policy 2023
- Blackbullion Financial Education Tool
- OMNI Mental Health Survey 2022 – 2023 [OMNI Survey Results 2022-2023](#)

The SU has also organised a variety of other events wellbeing pop ups, student stress buster events, student mental health workshops and a wide range of staff and student mental health and wellbeing training.

RACE

Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International (BAMEI) Staff Network (iRise)

Our BAME and International Staff Network, iRise, continue to provide a peer network open to all academic and professional services staff who identify as, or are characterised as, BAME and/or international.

The network provides a safe and welcoming space for BAME and/or international staff in Queen's to regularly meet during working hours to discuss issues and work matters, in addition to planning social events both on and off campus.

iRise was also established to give BAME and international staff at Queen's University a voice on systemic and operational issues and the network continue to represent the interests of BAME and International staff and work with colleagues to promote deeper understanding of the issues faced and inform the University on relevant issues. In this reporting period, the network was consulted in the development of the new Discipline and Grievance Procedure (currently pending approval).

The network also continues to provide support for new BAME and international staff joining the University iRise are represented at each new staff induction event and welcome events held in person in October, February and June with a total of 235 new staff in attendance. This gave new staff the opportunity to meet iRise members and hear about its activities, as well as find out how to join the Network.

iRise conducted a number of activities in 2022 – 2023 in partnership with other areas across the University.

These events were designed to engage with and celebrate the community of Black and international staff and students at Queen's, and to raise awareness of and educate staff on experiences of racial inequality. Events included:

- **iRise Welcome Lunch – Celebrating International Day for Tolerance.** The event held on 16 November was an opportunity for existing and new iRise members as well as local colleagues to socialise and network with each other, sharing experiences of living in Belfast and elsewhere in a social friendly and fun way.
- **World Day for Cultural Diversity 21 May 2022** – iRise in collaboration with the language centre invited colleagues to come and celebrate the cultural diversity at Queen's. With students and staff members coming from over 80 countries and regions, this day of

celebration of the vitality brought into the multicultural campus.

- **Cultural Diversity Survey** – This survey was conducted jointly with iRise and The language centre to ask for feedback on the cultural festivals and significant days that staff and students would like to be recognised at Queen's.

Race Equality Charter

Within the last reporting period, the University continued to work towards identifying and critically reflecting on the institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students through our work on the Race Equality Charter (REC). This national charter is run by Advance HE aimed at supporting institutions on their work in this area. We are one of 100 higher education institutions in the UK who are signatories to the Race Equality Charter (REC) and are aiming to apply for a Bronze Award by 2024 – of which only 39 institutions currently hold an award.

Our REC work is led by a senior academic and a dedicated REC Project Manager, supported by a Racial Equity Champions Network. This programme is synergised by a wider structure of staff and student groups whose collective efforts are imperative to driving meaningful and positive change on racial equity within Queen's. Our REC programme is a key component of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments, embedded within the University's Strategy 2030, designed to nurture an inclusive and supportive culture and demonstrably valuing the diversity of all our people.

Racial Equity Champions Network

Our network of Racial Equity Champions has over 30 active members representing each School and Directorate. A number of Champions have now come to the end of their two-year term as a Champion and new Champions have been appointed. This natural rotation also serves to enhance growth in engagement, knowledge, and contribution to the REC programme across the University community. Champions bring a wealth of personal, professional, and research-based knowledge to the work on advancing racial equity and the network meets formally every 6 weeks. Champions share best practice and identify local issues as part of their remit and are also responsible for the introduction of initiatives and promotion of REC-related programmes of work within their Schools and Directorates.

Language and Terminology Consultation

During the academic year the QGI team supported by the REC Network held a number of consultations, open to staff and students, to facilitate discussions on the language that we use at Queen's when discussing race and ethnicity. The staff and students agreed that it is difficult to come to a consensus on what should be considered 'correct' terminology due to the very personal and individual nature of the topic. The group did agree that some terms are widely accepted as inappropriate and should be avoided. Whilst the outputs from the consultation are not intended to act as guidance or instruction when discussing race and ethnicity at Queen's. There is a resource as an information source that staff and students may wish to review.

[Language and Terminology](#)

Mentoring Programmes focused on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff experiences.

A REC Reverse Mentoring Programme ran during 2022-23 provided an opportunity for senior staff to build genuine awareness of some of the barriers and experiences faced - particularly in a work context - by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues through a two-way mentoring

relationship. The term 'Reverse Mentoring' refers to the fact that it is the most senior members of staff who are the Mentees on the programme and are mentored by more junior staff, who identify as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Phase one of the programme received positive feedback from those involved and was marked by a close event where a number of participants shared their experiences. Phase two will launch later in the forthcoming academic year.

The 2023 Race Equality Mentoring Programme was launched in May 2023 and is the first traditional style mentoring scheme at Queen's designed to support the career progression of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues. Twenty-two staff mentees and mentors from across the University have now commenced a one-year mentoring relationship. A parallel programme is being run in a number of Schools for students which is in its early stages.

REC- EDI 5

The REC-EDI 5 Programme was launched by the QGI-REC team during Race Equality Week 2023. This innovative programme supported Schools and Directorates to deliver actions designed to seed new projects. The programme comprised five actions to be carried out over five months (February – June 2023) under the theme **EQUAL: Educate, Quantify, Understand, Assemble/Author, Link**. Schools and Directorates and their REC Champions were supported by the QGI-REC team to refine actions for their area of the University, to provide with training, supporting materials and practical support where needed – including facilitating Active Bystander Training (or Train the Trainer) and co-hosting listening exercises with staff and students. Several Schools and Directorates have already delivered successful pilot actions in the programme which will be taken forward in the next academic year.

Podcast Series

The QGI-REC team launched a new podcast mini-series as part of the wider Social Charter Podcast Series at Queen's. Colleagues from across the University have participated in podcast discussions sharing their thoughts on various topics related to racial equity. At present, four podcasts have been released with at least two more in progress. The purpose of the mini-series is to shine a light on the lives, experiences and stories of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students at Queen's and listener feedback has been very positive. [REC Network Podcast Series](#)

Race Equality Week 2023

The QGI-REC team marked Race Equality Week in February 2023 with several events across campus as well as a social media campaign. Awareness of Race Equality Week was raised through sharing of with several online resources including virtual badges, a five-day challenge and facilitation of listening sessions. Cupcake stands were set up in different parts of the University with REC representatives to encourage colleagues to come and learn more about the work of the network. A Gala event was held in the Great Hall to mark Race Equality Week and launch the REC-EDI 5 programme, attended by staff, REC Champions and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Institution-wide surveys on EDI at Queen's

QGI launched an Institution-wide Equality Survey in March which aimed to gather feedback from all staff on their views of equality, diversity and inclusion at Queen's, including a focus on Race. The results of this survey are currently being analysed and will inform our upcoming Charter

submissions as well as helping us as an Institution understand current issues faced by staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and how these can be addressed.

As part of ongoing engagement with staff, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women at Queen's were recently invited to attend a focus group to share their experiences in a confidential, conversational setting. A number of focus groups with students has also taken place and further groups are planned over coming months. Broader engagement sessions have taken place with Schools and Directorates to promote the work of REC and encourage participation through follow-up REC Roadshows.

Partnership work with iRise

iRise and REC participated at the Black History Expo in October 2022 at St George's Market, Belfast which was organised by the JoinHer Network. Both the Northern Ireland Executive Minister of Health and the Minister for Communities, alongside Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast Councillor visited the stand which provided an opportunity for colleagues in attendance to discuss the work of iRise and REC at Queen's. The internal comms team at Queen's produced a video of the event to share on various channels to further highlight the work of iRise and REC.

Staff Induction Events

The REC team attended three new staff induction events over the academic year 2021/22. At these events, new colleagues were provided with information on the Charter, work carried out by Racial Equity Champions as well as information on how new staff can get involved or seek support. REC branded merchandise was provided to those colleagues who visited the stand as a way of promoting awareness of REC across Queen's.

Report and Support

The [Report and Support](#) mechanism enables students to request support if they have been affected by either sexual misconduct, bullying, harassment or hate crime. The University continues to provide information and support in addition to the option for staff or students to make a report on behalf of another student, or to make an anonymous report.

Activities and Events

- Black Power Past, Present and Future; Ericka Huggins in conversation with Mary Philips (February 2023) they explored the complex relationship between historian and subject and the political urgency of the Black Power Project both in its past and present guises and heading into the future.
- Fix Your Pony (February 2023) the fifth edition in the Naughton Gallery's sports exhibition series, celebrating the coming together of art and sport and exploring a range of issues around diversity and inclusion.
- African and Caribbean Society Seminar on Education (February 2023).
- Hearing Our Needs (March 2023) Launch of Research exploring Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being needs of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Northern Ireland.

SOCIAL CHARTER PROJECT

Our [Social Charter](#) reaffirms our commitment to engaging with society and celebrates the many ways in which we contribute through our dedicated projects with communities throughout Belfast and the wider region.

The University's Social Charter commits us to the principles of equality and social justice. These principles are embodied in the following projects:

- Developing Social Innovation with local communities
- Widening Participation – Raising awareness, aspirations and attainment
- Asylum Seeker Scholarships
- Research on issues affecting migrant and minority ethnic communities
- Research and Expertise on Gender Issues
- Disability Research Network
- Transforming divided societies into welcoming communities

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS

We have continued our focus on improving awareness and support for Trans staff and students at Queen's and we reviewed and updated the Trans Equality Policy and Frequently Asked Questions.

The University delivered two Trans and Non-Binary Awareness training sessions and four LGBTQ+ Awareness training sessions in conjunction with The Rainbow Project, attended by over 100 staff.

The sessions provide an understanding of the key inequalities that still exist for trans people and what barriers there are for trans people attempting to access support or services, clarity on appropriate language and terminology and how we can support trans and non-binary people at Queen's.

We hope this will improve awareness and inclusion of trans and non-binary staff, students and visitors at Queen's and encourage all staff and students to consider the needs of these individuals through their day-to-day work and when creating or updating policies, procedures or guidance.

PART A

3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

Details on changes to policy and practice can be found in each of the policies screened, see the [Diversity and Inclusion Webpages](#) for further information on details of decisions.

As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Welcoming statements are added to job advertisements where underrepresentation is identified in certain areas e.g., in respect of persons with disabilities, females, and ethnic minorities.

In addition, all job adverts contain equal opportunities statements confirming Queen's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity to all, reference to LGBT+ and BAME and International Staff networks.

Queen's University is committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all. We have created an inclusive culture by establishing staff networks such as [iRise](#) (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and International Staff Network) and [PRISM](#) (LGBTQ+) which help us progress equality.

We also subscribe to Equality Charter Marks such as the Diversity Charter Mark NI in addition to Athena Swan.

For further information on our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, please visit: www.qub.ac.uk/diversity; www.qub.ac.uk/qqi and www.qub.ac.uk/sites/StaffGateway/StaffNetworks/

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

PART A

- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

6 In the 2022-23 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2022-23 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The University's new [Strategy 2030](#) and [People and Culture Plan](#) both seek to ensure that equality and diversity objectives are mainstreamed across Queen's.

During the reporting period we revised our Equality Scheme and devised a new Equality Action Plan 2024-2029 which is currently out for consultation closing on 23 October 2023. [Consultation Exercises Queen's University Belfast](#)

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:	36	Actions ongoing:	1	Actions to commence:	0
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Please provide any details and examples *(in addition to question 2)*:

Equality Actions detailed in Question 2

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action

PART A

plan/measures during the 2022-23 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2022-23 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- All the time Sometimes Never

11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2022-23 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

We have continued to offer targeted stakeholder engagements and consultation online both with internal stakeholders and external consultees through our consultee list, social media and external consultations available on our webpages at: [Consultation Exercises](#)

12 In the 2022-23 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: (*tick all that apply*)

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires

PART A

- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (*please specify*): Online via Microsoft Teams

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

Our engagements continue to be primarily online using our [Consultation Exercises Webpage](#) with responses received via email or using Microsoft Forms.

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Informal meetings were held with Trade Union representatives (UCU, NIPSA and Unite). Informal meetings were held with representatives from the Equality Commission during the year 2022-2023 and telephone conversations/email seeking advice. Formal consultation and engagement meetings were held with other key internal and external stakeholders.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[Consultation Exercises | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

[Equality Screening | People and Culture | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

14

PART A

16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2022-23:

1	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

In fulfilling the University's obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the University's Equality Scheme includes a commitment to consult on the implementation of new and revised policies, as defined by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland with regards to equality of opportunity and good relations.

To fulfil this obligation, a consultation exercise on the Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024-2029 and a consultation exercise to receive feedback from both internal and external consultees on the documents was undertaken.

The Consultation Period began on 31 July 2023 and will close on 23 October 2023 to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view.

The external consultees were notified by email on 31 July 2023 and both staff and students were notified by internal email communications.

As feedback is received it will be considered.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No concerns were raised No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes No Not applicable

PART A

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No, already taken place |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, scheduled to take place at a later date | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |

Please provide any details:

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |
|------------------------------|--|---|

Please provide any details and examples:

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2022-23 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

- In this reporting period a comprehensive Audit of Inequalities was carried out across the Section 75 categories to inform our institutional Equality Action Plan.
- Monitoring of equality data (community background) is helping to inform our Social Charter project and the use of welcome statements in job advertisements. This is designed to encourage applications from under-represented groups to apply for employment opportunities at Queen's.
- We use our equality data to inform our Equality Screening exercises and to inform policy development. E.g., the University's new Menopause and Fertility Treatment

Leave Policies, Pregnancy loss and Domestic abuse leave.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2022-23, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Detailed in Table One below.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Detailed in Table One below.

Table One

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
Recruitment and Selection Interviewing training session which addresses DDA and Reasonable Adjustments	Delivered 11 sessions during this reporting period.	There were 267 staff trained. With one-to-one sessions delivered as required
Think Difference Act, differently (mandatory e-learning training)	This training addresses issues such as equality, diversity, Section 75 and disability/gender discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training
Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff	89% of all staff have completed this module
An Introduction to Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity	The aim of this course is to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity among those working with international students	150 participants attending the training in this reporting period
Trans and Non-Binary Training	2 training sessions were delivered by the Rainbow Project	34 Staff attended these sessions
Bullying and Harassment Training	3 sessions delivered by	65 staff attended training sessions

PART A

	Diversity and Inclusion 2022/2023 (Dec 2022, March 2023 and May 2023)	during this reporting period
Active Bystander Training	Delivered as part of the REC EDI 5 programme	Delivered to staff and students
Neurodiversity Awareness Training	2 sessions delivered in partnership with Employers for Disability	38 staff attended the sessions
Autism Awareness	2 sessions delivered by Employers for Disability NI	28 staff attended the sessions
Bitesize Deaf Awareness	2 sessions delivered from Signs4Life	30 Staff attended the sessions
Staff Induction	All new staff joining the University must attend a Staff Induction Event. Which includes awareness raising on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.	There were three staff welcome events 6 th Oct 2022 = 85 attendees 6 th Feb 2023 = 74 attendee 2 nd June 2023 = 76 attendees
Mental Health and Wellbeing Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
Introduction to Mindfulness	2 Sessions delivered by Anne Costello Mindfulness	21 staff attended these sessions
Mindful Manager	3 Sessions delivered by Action Mental Health in this reporting period	21 staff attended the training sessions during the reporting period
Understanding Stress and Overwhelm	1 session was delivered by Charlie Waller Trust	21 staff attended the session
Mental Health Awareness with Action Mental Health	2 sessions delivered by Action Mental Health	30 Staff attended
Supporting Managers Mental Health	3 sessions delivered by Action Mental Health	23 staff attended these sessions
Wellness Toolbox session	1 session delivered by Action Mental Health	35 staff attended this session
Suicide First Aid	1 session delivered by National Centre for	17 Staff attended this session

PART A

	Suicide Prevention Education and Training	
Introduction to suicide awareness	1 session delivered by Lighthouse	13 staff attended this session
Menopause Information Session	2 sessions were delivered by two academic GPs from the School of Medicine, Dentistry	These sessions took place in October 2022 and March 2023, attended by 60 staff

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2022-23, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to **access to information and services**:

During the reporting period, significant progress has been made by a wide range of Faculties, Schools and Departments in providing University staff with access to a wide range of information, advice and support services online through a variety of sources, including but not limited to:

- The Queen’s University website: [Queen's University Belfast](#)
- The Queen’s People and Culture website: [People and Culture](#)
- The Queen’s Diversity and Inclusion website: [Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- The Queens Equality Screening and Consultation website: [Consultation Exercises](#)
- The Queen’s Disability and Wellbeing Services website [Disability Services | Student Centre](#)
- The Queen’s staff Wellbeing website: [Wellbeing at Queen's](#)
- Queen’s Accommodation website: [Student Accommodation](#)
- Students Union Equality and Diversity website: [Students Union Equality and Diversity](#)
- The Queen’s Gender Initiative Website: [Queen's Gender Initiative](#)
- PRISM, the Queen’s LGBT+ staff network: [PRISM LGBT+ Staff Network](#)
- iRise, the Queen’s Black Asian Minority Ethnic and International staff Network [iRISE | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)
- CONNECT the Queen’s Carer’s Staff Network: [Connect](#)

The University continues to ensure information is signposted to University Staff and Students through a wide variety of other communications vehicles (email: Staff Round Up) and social medial platforms (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).

The University makes its facilities available to a wide range of user groups and when required to do so can make its publications and general information available in alternative formats.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during

2022-23?

Insert number here:

1

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Queen's was notified on 16 August 2023 by the ECNI of a complaint detailed below:

A complaint about QUB's Student Complaints Handling Procedure and failure to comply with the Equality Scheme.

The complaint was considered under Paragraph 10 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and was not upheld.

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

Diversity and Inclusion Unit have in the first six months of 2023 reviewed the current Equality scheme and Action Plan 2018-2023.

Our new Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2024-2029 is currently out for both internal and external consultation (31 July 2023 – 23 October 2023). When the consultation is completed and any responses considered, the final Equality Scheme and Action Plan will be published, following internal approvals early 2024. [Consultation Exercises](#)

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

Continue to focus on training on:

- Sexual orientation, transgender, disability equality in the workplace (annually)
- Delivery of Bullying and Harassment Training
- Continue to raise awareness and provide training on equality screening new/ reviewed workplace policies.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same

PART A

Other (please state):

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are at the heart of [Strategy 2030](#) which sets out the University's ambition to shape a better world through life-changing education and research, investing in its people, both students and staff to ensure excellence and impact. Our Commitment to meeting the statutory Equality Duties is fundamental to these aims and our broad ranging programme of work will continue in the forthcoming year.

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

37

Fully achieved

3

Partially achieved

3

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
Local for all items			
1	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Mainstream new or identify existing disability duties into local area plans, decisions and actions	<p>Achieved.</p> <p>Each member of disability forum to provide tangible evidence of how disability duties have been mainstreamed into their local area plans – every three months Process to ensure support and compliance to support every service provider in Professional Services and the learning environment</p> <p>Promotion and embedding of accessibility in University policies, guidance and structures, supported and lead by</p>

PART B

			<p>senior management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animals on Campus Policy • Embedding Accessible in Student Disability processes and staff recruitment
2	To mainstream the disability duties into all decisions and activities	Develop, communicate and operationalise an effective Disability Action Plan (DAP) that underpins the University's responsibility and commitment to enact disability duties into its strategic and operational decisions and activities	<p>Publication of DAP online (QUB website), maximising all social media channels and internal communication media such as Team Brief, Staff Round Up etc</p> <p>Each member of DF communicates locally in their Faculty/School/Directorate</p> <p>Section 75 Annual Progress Report provided to Senior Management and to the Equality Commission on the actions taken under this plan</p>
3	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Continue to administer and promote the Disability Support Fund	Achieved
4	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Work with external partners to deliver specific training regarding disabilities and long-term conditions, to educate and support staff, students and visitors	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Delivered a series of Neurodiversity training sessions, Autism Awareness, Disability Awareness and Basic Sign Language and Deaf Awareness training for all staff</p>
5	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all Line Managers are adequately supported to support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions 2. Provide Manager resources which include specific 	<p>Achieved and Ongoing</p> <p>HR Business Partners and Diversity and Inclusion Unit provide specific support to Line Managers and Supervisors</p> <p>Continue to review and plan for structured approach and sharing of best practice across the University</p>

PART B

		information on supporting and managing staff with disabilities (e.g. Sickness Absence Toolkit)	
6	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	<p>Include welcome statements at each key stage of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition</p> <p>Make digital and physical recruitment information available in accessible formats</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Welcome statements at all stages and alternative formats offered when requested</p>
7	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Establishment of Staff Disability Network	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness, encourage growth and engage members</p>
8	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	Relaunch and continue participation in the Inclusive Employment Scheme	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Inclusive employment scheme relaunched in May 2023 with 17 placements across host departments from August 2023</p>
9	Increase representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University	<p>Include welcome statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Welcome statements included on both digital and physical prospectus</p> <p>Digital and physical prospectuses available in accessible formats</p> <p>Encourage and share information about disability disclosure and accessibility with schools, colleges, careers teachers to</p>

PART B

			encourage student disclosure of disability Engage international students to minimise apprehension and support disclosure.
10	Enhance the experience of people with disabilities and long-term conditions working, studying and visiting at the University.	Continue to administer and promote the disability support fund	Achieved

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

PART B

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Think Difference Act, differently	Annual mandatory e-learning training)	90% of all staff have completed this eLearning training.
2	Unconscious Bias Training	E-learning mandatory training for all staff	89% of all staff have completed this module
3	Bullying and Harassment Training	3 sessions delivered by Diversity and Inclusion 2022/2023 (Dec 2022, March 2023 and May 2023)	65 staff attended training sessions during this reporting period.
4	Trans and Non-Binary Training	2 training sessions were delivered by the Rainbow Project	34 Staff attended these sessions
5	Sexual Orientation and Gender Awareness Identity Training	1 training session delivered by the Rainbow Project	18 staff attended this session
6	Menopause Information Session	2 sessions were delivered by two academic GP's from the School of Medicine, Dentistry These sessions took place in Oct 2022 and March 2023	60 staff attended these sessions.
7	Neurodiversity Awareness Training	2 sessions delivered in partnership with Employers for Disability	38 staff attended the sessions
8	Autism Awareness	2 sessions delivered by Employers for Disability NI	28 staff attended the sessions
9	Bitesize Deaf Awareness	2 sessions delivered from Signs4Life	30 Staff attended the sessions
10	Neurodiversity Awareness Training	2 sessions delivered in partnership with Employers for Disability	38 staff attended the sessions

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

PART B

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Continue representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions within the University.	Positively Promote the profiles of staff and students with a disability or long-term condition.	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Dr Bronagh Byrne: Staff Profile</p> <p>Charlie: Studying at Queen's with a visual Impairment</p> <p>Sissi: How my search for inclusive education brought me to Queen's</p> <p>Patrick: How Disability Services at Queen's has supported me</p>
2	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions	<p>1. Ensure communications and engagements activities and materials are available in other formats, including subtitles</p> <p>2. Create portfolio of diverse images which can be used throughout University communications</p>	<p>Achieved and ongoing.</p> <p>Continue to update the Brand Hub with diverse pictures.</p> <p>These photos are used across the website and marketing materials.</p> <p>Use of subtitles in all social media videos.</p> <p>You tube videos are auto subtitled.</p>
3	Enhance the physical and digital accessibility and inclusiveness of	Continue to communicate information on accessibility	Achieved and ongoing

PART B

	the University for people with disabilities and long-term conditions		
--	--	--	--

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘encourage others’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	1. Continuously review and update provision of the AccessAble App 2. Continue to promote the AccessAble App to service users	Achieved. Incorporated into Staff Recruitment and Induction/Onboarding process. 140% increase in users. 2020-2021: 7,799 Users 13,933 Page views. 2021- 2022: 18,785 Users 32,795 Page views. Further promotion of AccessAble in September 2023 and ongoing.
2	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to undertake Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) review for all staff and students with mobility impairments.	Achieved.
3	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to ensure that the University, where possible and reasonable to do so, ensures that the physical infrastructure and systems are in place and maintained to comply with the DDA codes of practice.	Achieved and ongoing

PART B

4	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Include welcoming statements at each key stages of the applicant journey to encourage and support prospective employees to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved
5	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure digital and physical recruitment, job advertisements and information are available in accessible formats	Achieved
6	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Ensure all Interview Panel attendees receive appropriate training to ensure they understand the University's commitment to equality of opportunity and support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions.	Training resources/support available to educate panel members on requests for reasonable adjustments and disability duties as part of the selection process, and reasonable adjustments in relation to the employment lifecycle.
7	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	<p>1. Continue to advertise and promote Staff Disability Network Group to raise awareness and encourage growth of membership.</p> <p>Disability Network to provide feedback to Forum on how the University can encourage and support greater representation and visibility of people with disabilities and long-term conditions</p>	<p>Achieved and ongoing</p> <p>Network established and continue to raise awareness and grow</p>
8	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Work with external partners to develop and participate in additional schemes and initiatives which provide persons with disabilities and long-term condition work	<p>Achieved and ongoing</p> <p>Inclusive Employment Scheme</p> <p>Employ Autism Scheme</p>

PART B

		experience opportunities	
9	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Inclusion of welcoming statements at various key stages of the student applicant journey encouraging prospective students to disclose a disability or long-term condition	Achieved
11	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Promote the experiences of current students registered with disability services at open day and transition events to encourage prospective student disclosure	Achieved
12	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Increase higher education opportunities for prospective students with disabilities and long-term conditions through targeted WP initiatives	Achieved and ongoing
13	To encourage participation of persons with disability in public life	Continue to enable autistic students and recent graduates to access 10 paid internships and tailored careers support and advice as part of the Employ Autism Higher Education Network	Achieved

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

PART B

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
	N/A		

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Staff Disability Network Established 2020	Governance and structure reviewed July 2023	Informal Structure preferred no formal chair or vice chair positions	Organic evolution of network and members preferences.
2	Host an event on International Day of Persons with Disabilities.	Planned collaboration with PEC to promote sport for people with disabilities.	Ongoing working with the Active Campus programme to offer active campus opportunities to students with disabilities	Unfortunately, it did not go ahead on the date of International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
3	Ensure all Line Managers are adequately supported to support applicants and prospective staff with disabilities or long-term conditions	Deliver one session per People Manager Essentials Programme which considers disability duties Develop enhanced resources for Manager Toolkit	Review / plan in place for structured approach to line manager awareness and support in relation to disability	Enhanced all staff/line manager training offerings to include Disability Awareness and Autism Awareness, Basic Deaf Awareness etc

PART B

Planned collaboration with PEC to promote sport for people with disabilities. Unfortunately, it did not go ahead on the date of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Ongoing working with the Active Campus programme to offer active campus opportunities to students with disabilities

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Identify opportunities to promote the experiences of current staff registered with disabilities or long-term conditions at recruitment events and during recruitment outreach activities to encourage prospective staff disclosure	We are continuing to promote and explore staff coming forward to share their experiences. However, given the sensitive and personal nature of some disabilities this is proving more challenging than expected
2	Register and promote JAM friendly business status to staff, students and visitors Communicate Queens' commitment to becoming a JAM Friendly organisation to all staff and students Relevant staff to complete JAM online disability awareness training	This was considered but not deemed appropriate for Queen's due to resources e.g., cost and training
3	Create an Inclusive Events Checklist for all events held in University Faculties	Planned for 2023 / 2024

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit actively monitors measures in the action plan as part of a live, iterative process. We informally gain feedback from staff across the on a range of subjects. Feedback is regularly discussed at team meetings which can help inform new initiatives.

PART B

(b) Quantitative

The Disability Forum monitors progress against the action plan measures at meetings which take place three times a year. Progress is also monitored by the Diversity and Inclusion Unit, who provide the University Operating Board with a Progress Report on an annual basis. Quantitative data is collected, collated and analysed across equality categories. Our equality monitoring system and database is reviewed regularly and where necessary, changes and/or new data may be commissioned.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please select No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A		

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No