

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24

Mission and Vision



MISSION

To put inclusivity at the heart of all we do



VISION

To become more diverse and to be fully representative of the OU student body.

Strategic Aims

Inform & Support Strategy Strand

Anticipate and meet the needs of the protected groups we align with and represent.

Improve Relevance

Engage & Involve Strategy Strand

Create a culture of respect, inclusion, compassion and cooperation where all students, staff and volunteers feel safe and able to participate in Association events and activities.

Increase Engagement

Influence & Transform Strategy Strand

Ensure that all OU students receive a diverse and equitable study experience.

Improve Impact

Strategy Enabler - Communications

Increase awareness of our Equality Diversity and Inclusion work and promote the value of diversity.

Increase Awareness

Foster and maintain an inclusive culture

Aim 1 – Inform & Support Strategy Strand

Anticipate and meet the needs of the protected groups we align with and represent.

Objectives:

1. Develop a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of protected groups.
2. Ensure that students belonging to protected groups play an active role in our own learning and the wider work of introducing culture change so that they are not simply the end recipients of our support.
3. Demonstrate our inclusivity and increase trust with protected groups.

Planned Activities and Projects:

- Conduct work to identify where there are expectation gaps and/or under representation of protected groups and develop action plans, tools and capacity to address these gaps and reach more students.
- Implement a proactive training programme to upskill and prepare all staff, student representatives and volunteers to support and understand the different groups they represent.
- Continue to host engaging and inclusive Association-led events during key dates in the calendar (e.g. Black History Month, Pride Month).
- Continue to carry out 'Insights' and 'Deep Listening' sessions with protected groups

Aim 2 – Engage & Involve Strategy Strand

Create a culture of respect, inclusion, compassion and cooperation where all students feel safe and able to participate in Association events and activities.

Objectives:

1. Develop a clear understanding of what compassion, inclusion and co-operation mean to different people.
2. Nurture an organisation-wide culture and ethos of ‘zero tolerance’ to behaviours that do not meet our required standards.
3. Empower all students and staff to challenge behaviours that do not meet our required standards.

Planned Activities and Projects:

- Review the different community spaces we have (e.g. for events, activities, chat) and identify those places and spaces where students do not currently feel safe or represented, and the reasons why.
- Develop action plans to improve the safety and inclusivity of our community spaces.
- Continue our work in developing behavioural policies and standards.
- Implement a proactive training programme to upskill all staff, student representatives and volunteers in areas that support creating safe and inclusive spaces (e.g. difficult conversations, safeguarding, diversity).
- Continue to carry out ‘Insights’ and ‘Deep Listening’ sessions with students

Ensure that all OU students receive a diverse and equitable study experience.

Objectives:

1. Identify key stakeholders and develop working partnerships.
2. Maintain stakeholder relationships and utilise collaborative approaches to the advancement of Equality Diversity and Inclusion aims.

Planned Activities and Projects:

- Build working partnerships with relevant OU units (e.g. Access and Participation team).
- Develop manifestos and actively campaign to liberate the curriculum and reduce degree awarding gaps.
- Develop action plans to remove study participation barriers.
- Invest in building networks and communities of Equality Diversity and Inclusion practice across the wider Higher Education sector.

Increase awareness of our Equality Diversity and Inclusion work and promote the value of diversity.

Objectives:

1. Increase awareness and improve understanding of our work.
2. Demonstrate the impact of our work and the promote the value of diversity.
3. Encourage better standards of communication and transparency.

Planned Activities and Projects:

- Develop a better understanding of our target audiences in terms of their communications preferences, in order to tailor our communications appropriately.
- Deliver a rolling programme of Equality Diversity & Inclusion communications content and messaging.
- Use, and champion, best practice principles for the development of inclusive, diverse and accessible communications content.
- Provide regular updates on our Equality Diversity & Inclusion work and achievements.

Measures of Success

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Improve Relevance

Returning visitors to EDI web pages and resources hub

Social media amplification on EDI messaging

Newsletter click-throughs from EDI news items

Recommendation levels for Support Groups **

Increase Engagement

Election participation on EDI roles

Attendance levels for EDI events

Readership levels for EDI news posts and Hoot articles

Improve Impact

Level of complaints in relation to EDI issues

Participant feedback on EDI events

Participation and engagement in EDI campaigning and campaign outcomes

Demographic representativeness of volunteer base and elected roles

Increase Awareness

New visitors to EDI web pages and resources hub

Membership numbers for Support Groups

Foster and maintain an inclusive culture

Student agreement levels when rating the inclusivity of our events and spaces **

Student agreement levels when rating whether we are living our value of EQUALITY & DIVERSITY **

Items marked ** are data available via the Annual Membership Survey