UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

The Equality Plan

Advancing Equality and Diversity for 2010-2013

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1 Foreword by Professor Don Nutbeam, Vice-Chancellor

The Equality Plan presented here is an important development in the University of Southampton's continued commitment to Equality and Diversity.

I believe Equality and Diversity are core to the University and integral to every thing we do for all our members; students and staff. It is about more than just policies and procedures, and highlights the significance of our relationships with each other, and our desire to be a diverse and successful organisation.

I want to emphasise that:

- valuing, understanding and welcoming diversity is essential to the University both in terms of our social responsibility agenda and for our business case. Diversity in our staffing enables the University to draw talent from all sectors of the population and brings in creative challenge and innovation to the way we run our business.
- strong and diverse leadership, at the most senior levels of the University, is at the heart of ensuring that these values are articulated and embedded in everything we do. Leadership on these issues sets the tone for the sort of organisation we want to be and how we want to conduct ourselves.
- Equality and Diversity issues are central to the success of the University which has an impact locally, nationally and globally.
- diversity in our student and staff population is necessary to making the University a vibrant and inclusive environment, which will benefit the experience of all our students, staff and visitors.
- equality and fairness in the way we run the University are significant in making us an employer of choice, enabling staff to be more confident and productive.

The University of Southampton is a large and increasingly diverse organisation with:

- over 5,000 staff, making the University the second largest employer in the Southampton region. The University is also among the top 10 employers in the South East region;
- over 22,000 students (56 per cent female; 44 per cent male) at the University of Southampton, including 17,000 undergraduate students and 5,700 postgraduates;
- over 1,400 students from the EU and also welcome more than 3,400 international students (from outside the EU) from over 130 different countries;
- and over 240 student clubs and societies (82 Athletic Union clubs and 162 societies).

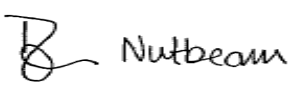
In this context, we have set ourselves high ambitions. Our mission statement is to:

> Change the world for the better through our education and research, our innovation and enterprise.

I am clear that this is underpinned by two key Equality and Diversity core values:

- valuing, respecting and promoting the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals within all our professional activities and relationships;
- equality of educational opportunity based on merit, irrespective of background, beliefs and socio-economic context.

I welcome this plan and want to thank the many individuals across the university who participated in the debates, ran focus groups and took action on Equality and Diversity issues.



Professor Don Nutbeam
Vice-Chancellor

2 Introduction by Kamaljit Kerridge-Poonia, Diversity Manager

The Equality Plan sets out the strategic priorities and actions to be taken over the next three years, to improve equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the University. Where appropriate, links to other important plans, incorporating Equality and Diversity in the University, are included, so that equality is prioritised throughout everything we do.

The Plan draws on previous work, including annual reviews, which has involved feedback and involvement from a range of stakeholders. Thinking has also been guided by consultations with members of the University, through working groups and focus groups, each targeted to help us to prioritise what must be done over the next few years.

There is national legislation which underpins this work, and a summary of the Equality Act 2010 is included in Appendix A.

Links are made to the overall strategic values of the University, and helps to take forward our commitment to Equality and Diversity.

The objectives, themes and actions presented here are based on what we have learnt from staff and students, as well as wider stakeholders in relation to Equality and Diversity.

The areas of race, gender, gender dysphoria and reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, and age have each been covered. This is our first attempt to cover all of these areas; previous plans had included race, disability and gender[1].

In developing the Plan, discussion also took place regarding the impact of social class on individuals' life experiences. Although the University undertakes substantive work on widening participation, it was felt that there needed to be more thought given to this issue, both for staff and students. At this stage, the impact of social class will be dealt with within the equality themes, rather than a separate issue, but the University's Equality Implementation Group (EIG) will discuss the matter further, to see what more can be done.

Finally, the conclusions and actions set out in the Plan will continue to develop as we review and implement our actions and thinking in all areas, and respond to changes in national legislation.

If you have any feedback or views you would like to let us know about, to inform future thinking, please contact the Diversity Team details at end of document. We are keen to hear from all members of the University on these, and related issues.

3 Key objectives

In developing the Equality Plan, the University has identified the following key objectives:

- increase the diversity of management at senior levels;
- recognise and respond to the increasing diversity of the University's student body;
- actively engage University members from the equality groups identified in the Plan, and continue regular consultation with them;
- encourage leadership from the University Executive Group (UEG) to be more visible, in relation to diversity and equality;
- increase the diversity in the University's Governance Structures.

[1] These are archived on *http://www.southampton.ac.uk/diversity*.

4 Equality and Diversity: our definitions

During our consultation in the development of the Plan, many University members mentioned that they do not understand what is meant by 'Equality and Diversity'. These are terms which can be used in a number of ways, so we thought it would be useful to define here the way we use them in the University.

> **Equality** can be described as eliminating discrimination, and ensuring equality of opportunity, and access for all groups, to employment and the services we provide. This is with respect to gender, race, religion or belief, disability and sexual orientation. These are principles supported and protected by legislation.
>
> **Diversity** can be described as celebrating distinctiveness and valuing the varied contributions that everyone has to offer. Each person is an individual, with visible and invisible differences, and by respecting this, everyone can be valued for their contribution. In this way we can maximise the talents and skills of all our people.

In the University, we believe that both Equality and Diversity are important and strive to go beyond compliance with the law, to capitalise on the diversity of our staff and students and enhance our business.

4.1 Raising the profile of Equality and Diversity

4.1.1 Leadership and change

Feedback from consultations showed that members of the University who have been here for a significant period feel that there has definitely been a positive change in Equality and Diversity.

- Personal testimonies pointed to improvement to the working environment over time, and the general 'liberal' attitude around the University currently.
- However, respondents felt that there needs to be a more sustainable progression of change, with greater resources allocated to meet Equality and Diversity challenges.
- High-level leadership on Equality and Diversity issues is appreciated, but people feel that there needs to be more visible leadership from the top of the University. High-level leadership gives people the confidence to get involved in equality initiatives, as demonstrated by Pro Vice-Chancellor Debra Humphris' involvement in International Women's Day. Similar leadership needs to be given to the other Equality and Diversity areas.
- It is excellent that there is a Diversity Champion, selected to lead the University's Equality and Diversity agenda, and supported by a team of Diversity Champions across the University. However, other senior managers need to be more proactive in promoting Equality and Diversity in their areas. It is felt that this is essential to creating a culture for real change, and not merely 'ticking the boxes'.

What we will do

- Job descriptions of the eight new Deans will include an obligation to implement Equality and Diversity in their faculties.
- Each member of UEG will have a performance measure on Equality and Diversity, with an expectation to delegate monitoring to managers throughout University departments.
- There will continue to be a University Diversity Champion leading on overall coordination of Equality and Diversity issues.
- There will continue to be a network of Diversity Champions across the University, with representation for every faculty and department.
- There will continue to be an Equalities Implementation Group (EIG), with representation from across the University, to implement strategic thinking on Equality and Diversity and ensure it is integrated into all areas of the University.

- There will be closer work between the new Deans, UEG, EIG and the Diversity Team, to give Equality and Diversity a significant profile in the University.

4.1.2 Information and awareness

People feel that more can be done to publicise Equality and Diversity in the University. A particular concern was expressed with difficulties about the University's intranet and ease of finding relevant information.

Although there is a lot of information available, which has been added over the years, it is not easily accessible.

What we will do

In conjunction with the Communications Department, the Diversity Team and EIG will prioritise developing and implementing an information and awareness campaign in 2010/11, including distributing information through the University website.

5 Consultation on the protected characteristics

We established six working groups, each chaired by members of the Equality Implementation Group (EIG)[2]. This group is formed of people from across the University who work with the Diversity Team, to push forward Equality and Diversity in the University, and is chaired by the University's Diversity Champion.

The working groups focused on issues relating to the Protected Characteristics (as set out in the Equality Act 2010) of: Race; Disability; Gender; Sexual Orientation; Age; and Religion and Belief. Work was also carried out on gender dysphoria and reassignment, with links to the Gender Working Group.

People from diverse backgrounds were invited to join the working groups, although consultation on gender dysphoria and reassignment was conducted on an individual basis, with relevant members of the University. Invitations were advertised through the University intranet, encouraging involvement from staff and students.

Diversity Champions (DCs) drawn from a University-wide network were also aligned to each working group, to advise on relevant topics from their experiences as DCs, and to gain an insight into the developments of each working group. Participation in some groups was more active than others, which remains an issue for improvement.

Each group reviewed the University's current situation with regard to their focus, identifying what is successful and where there is scope for improvement. Some groups went so far as to act autonomously to implement positive changes.

In particular, the Sexual Orientation group liaised with Stonewall, the UK's leading sexual orientation charity, to subscribe the University to Stonewall's 'Diversity Champions' programme, and undertook bespoke senior leadership training. They also coordinated with members of the University to set up a staff LGBT network.

5.1 Focus groups

The University made arrangements for people to attend focus groups, organised to discuss and provide feedback on Equality and Diversity across the board.

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[2] More information on this group is provided in Appendix B.

Eight focus groups were held, with over 60 people contributing their views. The focus groups were open to everyone in the University community, including men and women, disabled and non-disabled staff and students, and those from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, and sexual orientations.

However, it was noticeable that the majority of contributors were white women. This means that more needs to be done in the future to involve wider participation in these discussions.

We have also drawn on information from three other focus groups, looking at diversity and career progression, with 30 people contributing to these discussions.

Very useful information was also gained from a consultation with women during International Women's Week. The University held activities on work-life balance, mentoring, networking and a women's dinner. The events were open to all people, and although the majority of participants were women, an increasing number of men also participated.

Overall, around 400 members of the University have contributed directly to the issues prioritised in this scheme. The draft of the Plan was also sent to the staff and student unions, working groups and published online for feedback.

The University also undertakes an annual diversity monitoring review, presenting this information to Council in March of every year. Information from these reviews has also helped to inform the Plan[3].

Further to this a draft was also sent to external agencies with a particular interest in the University's Equality and Diversity, including Southampton City Council, Southampton Solent University and Stonewall.

Plans are currently under-way to carry out a full Equality and Diversity survey among all staff and students during 2010/11, which reflects the legislative changes introduced by the Equality Act 2010. This will also inform any future amendments to the Plan.

5.2 Race

The University of Southampton has become an increasingly diverse University, especially with respect to race and ethnicity3. Feedback from people in the University welcomed this growing change and felt it enhanced the experience of students and staff. The University as a whole embraces its role as a growing international University.

However, a number of issues were raised for further work and development:

- The increasing racial diversity in the University has been created mainly through internationalization, and not necessarily by diversification of home students and staff.
- More analysis needs to be carried out on the degree attainment levels of minority ethnic students, to compare the University's figures with the negative trends identified in national statistics.
- The University needs to implement a better plan for the induction of international students, to improve integration and ease their transition into our community.
- The University needs to examine its admissions processes, to see if diversity can be better supported and encouraged.
- The University needs to prioritise Cultural and Diversity training for all members of staff.
- More emphasis needs to be given to supporting minority ethnic staff in the University to go for promotion.

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[3] Detailed monitoring data is available as part of the Annual Diversity Report, published at *http://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/equality.html*.

- The HR department needs to analyse its recruitment and advertising methods, to see how it can reach out to more diverse groups of people.
- The profile of women's issues has been raised through senior leadership and cross-University, a similar approach and profile should be attempted with race equality issues.

What we will do

The Student and Academic Administration Department will work with the Diversity Manager, to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment on the Admissions Policy and related processes.

The University's Transitions Project will support the development of an integrated cohort of students, regardless of their country of origin, by managing the information disseminated to international students and build their confidence.

The Student and Academic Administration Department has started to undertake detailed diversity monitoring of the student population, and this data will be analysed for trends in the achievement rates of all diversity categories.

The HR department will analyse its recruitment processes and implement more active ways of recruiting a diverse workforce.

The HR Director and University Diversity Champion will consult UEG on how Cultural Awareness and Diversity Training can be rolled out for all staff.

The University Diversity Champion and HR Director will consider implementing career support programmes, such as learning action groups, for minority ethnic staff.

The University Diversity Champion will lead on promoting race equality in the University through 2010/2011.

5.3 Gender

Overall, people were more aware of gender equality issues in the University because of the recent high profile activities associated with the women's day events in 2009, and for International Women's Day in March 2010. Further to this, the issues of under representation of women in the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) areas, which represent a large part of the University's activities, have been of concern to the University for some time.

The activities organised for International Women's Day provided an ideal opportunity to consult large amounts of women and some men on what we need to do in the future.

Overall, people feel that some progress has been made on gender issues and there were now more women at higher levels than before3. However, these numbers are small, and progress needs to be accelerated and more focus given to wider culture-change issues, as well as real change in the SET areas.

The following concerns, in relation to gender issues, were raised:

- There is an overall concern that gender issues should not be seen as just women's issues; they can also affect men.
- There is a need to develop the talents of men and women throughout the University. In particular, the promotion of women above level 4, and training and development for staff in levels 1 and 2, needs to be encouraged.
- The 'long-hours culture' at senior management level is perceived to be a barrier to the promotion of those with caring responsibilities.
- There need to be more women at UEG level.
- Attrition rates for different levels and different job families should be analysed, to see where we are losing talent, and develop solutions to address the reasons for this.
- Flexibility is fundamental to the career development of all staff. As we consider the development of the University – alongside initiatives such as 'Creating our Future',

extension of the teaching day and widening participation – flexibility needs to be at the heart of any changes.

- More examples of people working flexibly need to be publicised. There needs to be a clear message from senior leaders that working flexibly is not a barrier to career progression.
- Flexible working policies need to make clear that they are not just for people with childcare responsibilities, and more widely publicised.
- The rights of fathers, and other men with caring responsibilities, should not be ignored and the University should begin thinking about the extension of paternity leave from 2011 onwards.
- The current membership of key committees and governance bodies does not reflect a proper gender balance, and steps should be taken to address this. This issue needs to be raised at Senate.
- Where people take on committee roles or other activities outside their immediate work area, this should be recognised and recorded through performance reviews.
- The University needs to establish a University wide mentoring scheme for all levels of staff. This needs to be coordinated centrally, so that people can be aligned to appropriate mentors, with training provided where necessary.
- High-level leadership on gender issues, by PVC Debra Humphris, is seen to have been key to success in this area and should continue.
- Feedback from International Women's Week activities was overwhelmingly positive and supported the need for these activities to continue annually. This should also be used as an opportunity to feedback on progress made[4].

What we will do

- Men will continue to be encouraged to participate in the gender working group.
- HR will ensure better communication of the promotions procedures and encouragement of under-represented groups in level 5 and above.
- A clear Equal Opportunities statement will continue to be highlighted in the promotions procedure.
- An Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out on the promotions procedure.
- HR will make arrangements for workshops and other support mechanisms for people interested in applying for promotion.
- Action Learning Sets for women will continue to be part of the staff development programme.
- HR will analyse further the attrition rates for staff at different levels and job families to see where we may be losing talent and why this may be.
- HR will establish a University wide mentoring scheme.
- HR will complete the project to revise their website to provide clearer and more accessible information. This will include more information on flexible working arrangements in the University.
- Flexible working policies will be made clearer to ensure they apply to all people and just those with caring responsibilities.
- International Women's Day activities will continue to be sponsored by the PVC Education and held annually.

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[4] More information about International Women's Day can be found at *http://www.internationalwomensday.com/*.

5.3.1 Improving female equality in Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics

Our annual diversity monitoring continues to show that, like the national picture, we still have relatively low levels of women in both the student and staff profiles in science and engineering faculties. There has been discussion about this over the years, and some action has been taken to improving, for example, the number of women at higher levels in Chemistry, and establishing mentoring schemes for postdoctoral staff and early-career academics.

Much of this work has been carried out by the Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WiSET) group (established in 2002), and Theano (established 2005). Both groups have been active in promoting this agenda, with WiSET focusing on female academics while Theano promote women's equality for students as well, and highlighting the need to take a University wide approach.

The University has been awarded the Bronze SWAN Award, for work to further female participation in the science industry, and may bid for a Silver Award in the future[5].

Discussions between WiSET, Theano, senior management and the Diversity team have concluded that:

- The work on gender in SET departments needs to be coordinated and linked to the University's corporate agenda.
- This work should be led by a senior manager, and a man is preferred to promote that gender equality is not just a women's issue.
- Initiatives need to be targeted at measurable change and resourced appropriately.
- Key stakeholders need to be involved in any working groups.

What we will do

A corporate working group has been established to identify key issues and take forward initiatives to address them, chaired by the University Secretary and including representatives from WiSET and Theano, the Diversity Manager, the HR Director and key stakeholders from the SET directorates.

The Group will develop and implement a 12 month plan on priority areas and review progress regularly.

If appropriate, the group will submit for a Silver SWAN Award, though this is not a priority purpose of the group.

5.3.2 Transgender

Through the working groups set up, we have sought to learn more about the experiences of transgender staff and students, and identify any difficulties or short-comings they currently confront while working at the University. We have had preliminary discussions with some individuals and the trade unions. Although few new examples of problems were revealed, we are aware that some issues currently exist; for example, relating to the use of changing and sports facilities. We recognise the need to better engage with transgender staff and students, in order to learn more about these difficulties, and how best to address them.

What we will do

We will seek to find out more about the experience of transgender people at the University, through a staff equality survey and continued consultation with individuals.

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[5] For more information about the Athena SWAN awards, celebrating the inclusion of women in scientific industries, see *http://www.athenaswan.org.uk/html/athena-swan/.*

We will look to other organisations for guidance on how best to create a discussion of transgender-related issues, and best-practice examples for establishing an inclusive environment for transgender staff and students.

We will review our current policy on Gender Dysphoria and Transsexuality.

5.4 Disability

The University has conducted extensive work to improve accessibility and provision for Disabled people. However, it is perceived that efforts have been concentrated on accommodating students with disabilities, as revealed through consultations with staff.

Issues for future consideration include:

- The need to improve the physical access environment in relation to learning and teaching, leisure facilities, toilets and washing facilities.
- Improving website accessibility.
- The DisabledGo Audit[6] was considered to be a useful tool for staff and students wishing to come to the University, and feedback indicated that, in a similar vein, an environmental gap analysis should be undertaken on the internal staff environment.
- Although work on physical access to buildings has been carried out, and many improvements made, this should be continued.
- The Reasonable Adjustments Guide for staff and students is well received and needs to be publicised further.
- Increasing rates of disclosure of disability, for both admissions and recruitment, remains an issue that needs to be addressed.
- The involvement of disabled staff and students needs to be developed further, with a wide range of people accommodated and encouraged to participate.

What we will do

The Disability Discrimination Working Group, which includes membership from estates, will be continued, to take forward work on access to buildings.

The HR Director will consider the possibility of carrying out a similar audit as DisabledGo for the internal environment.

Publicity will be developed on the Reasonable Adjustment Guide as part of the overall communication and information strategy.

The Diversity Team will liaise with iSolutions to lead on developing work on web accessibility.

The Disability Working Group and EIG will consider more ways of involving Disabled people in the future.

5.5 Sexual orientation

Although some work has been carried out on Sexual Orientation in the past, it is not an issue that has been addressed by any previous scheme.

The Sexual Orientation Working Group has good representation from staff and students, and has worked to identify short-falls and act on developing work in this area.

The main points identified for improvement were:

- The low visibility of LGBT issues, and particularly LGBT role models, in the University.
- That leadership of the University needs to be more aware of LGBT issues.

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[6] For more information see *http://www.disabledgo.com/*.

- Many people commented that the University is a relatively liberal place to study and work, but that it varies as to how comfortable they feel to be 'out' to colleagues, and other staff and students.
- More effort should be made to seek the views of LGBT staff and students.
- The business case for diversity needs to be emphasised to those in managerial positions, to avoid financial and organisational marginalisation, and maximise the contributions LGBT staff and students have to offer.
- Good practice needs to be identified when it occurs within the organisation, and from other organisations, to help the University identify ways to improve.
- Links should be established with Stonewall[7], a national organisation working on sexual orientation issues.
- The involvement and recruitment of LGBT staff and students needs to be maintained and encouraged.

What we will do

The Group has already consulted with local members of Stonewall's 'Diversity Champions' programme, and consequently subscribed the University to the programme itself.

As part of Stonewall's programme, the links this provides will be pursued, and opportunities for LGBT staff and students to access development opportunities will be encouraged.

Future recruitment advertising, and corporate University publications, will carry the Stonewall Diversity Champion logo to encourage LGBT applicants, and show the University's commitment to improving the experience of LGBT staff and students.

Stonewall will be involved in discussions on developing the business case for Equality and Diversity, and representatives of the University will continue to attend Stonewall's annual Workplace Conference.

Discussions will take place with UEG on higher-level visibility of LGBT issues and role models at senior management level.

An equality survey, including sexual orientation questions, will be developed and conducted in 2010/2011.

The involvement of LGBT staff and students in developing the University's Equality and Diversity policies, and working practices, will be further encouraged, through the continuation of the Group, consultation with student groups, establishing a staff LGBT network, and links with the wider community (locally and nationally).

Equality and Diversity policies and guidelines will be reviewed, to ensure that they explicitly include each of straight, gay, lesbian and bisexual people, and mention that other sexual orientations may be encountered and are no less significant.

5.6 Religion and belief

Over the past few years, the University has taken several measures to better accommodate members of different religious backgrounds and beliefs. There has been a particular focus on accommodating prayer and religious observance, but wider work on discrimination and inclusion has also been undertaken.

- The University has made arrangements for a prayer room for Muslim students and staff, and arranged for Garden Court to be dedicated to Friday prayer.
- While developing the Plan, a meeting was organised with Muslim students about future arrangements. The feedback was that they appreciated the changes and arrangements

[7] Full details of the charity are at *http://www.stonewall.org.uk/.*

made for prayer, especially as the University of Southampton is a campus University, and there has been an increase in International Muslim students.
- They also suggested that future building developments in the University should consider a more permanent facility for prayer; they have asked the University's Faith and Belief Group to consider possibilities for this.
- The University also hosts a multi-faith Chaplaincy, which is popular with students of many denominations and religions.
- Overall, it is felt that we need a better understanding of other faiths and beliefs, and how to accommodate them in the University in future plans.

What we will do

The Religion and Belief Working Group will consider future plans for faith provision, including multi-faith developments.

The Equality and Diversity Survey will consult all University members about faith and religious issues.

The Group will encourage Faculties to identify "quiet rooms", which can be used for the purposes of personal prayer and reflection.

The Group will formulate a policy that gives details of the faith provision that students and staff have a reasonable right to expect.

The Group will formulate a strategy for the development and long-term future of the Chaplaincy.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken on ways the University can further adapt and change to respond to increasing religion and belief diversity, in the way that we provide our services.

The University will continue to consult with members of different religions, faiths and beliefs, to ensure that their needs are best accommodated.

5.7 Age

Age issues have not previously been considered as part of a development plan, although the University has responded to changing legislation. However, this is seen as an increasingly important issue affecting the way we run our business.

Initial feedback suggests that the following are key areas for development:

- The age profile of students is increasingly diverse, and our provisions and facilities need to reflect this.
- Social activities tend to be targeted to younger age groups.
- Distance learners and mature students need more support.
- Timetabling needs to reflect these changes in the future.
- The dynamics between staff may change as we get an increasingly older workforce. The implications of this need to be looked at further.

It is proposed to re-establish the Age Working Group to monitor this situation, and develop solutions as necessary through 2011, chaired by a member of EIG.

6 Mechanisms for implementation

Equality and Diversity issues have been embedded in our Education Plan, Research Plan, Human Resources Plan and our Widening Participation Plan. Most importantly, the Plan is aligned to the University Strategy[8].

6.1 Dignity at Work and Study Policy

Members of the University feel that continuing to develop an environment free of harassment and conflict is essential, in order to maximise productivity and contentment at work. This is recognised by the University, and addressed by Dignity for Work and Study policy[9].

We will monitor this policy on an ongoing basis, seeking the views of people across the University.

We also maintain a register of Harassment Contacts[10] across the University, to support people who feel they may be harassed, and this work will be continued.

We will continue to provide an internal Mediation scheme as part of our policy to proactively cope with conflict[11].

6.2 Equal Pay Audit

The University of Southampton has been one of the first UK universities to carry out equal pay audits. The fist equal pay audit was gender based, but subsequent audits also cover Race and Disability. The University will continue to take a wider approach to equal pay issues.

These audits have highlighted a number of shortcomings, where work has begun to improve them:

- Potential glass ceiling
  Female staff, while having a slight majority (52 per cent) over the whole University, are greatly underrepresented at the higher levels.
- Pay protection
  Pay protection policy will form part of the Reward Strategy being developed in 2010.
- Use of the HRZ
  Addressing the inconsistency in application of the criteria across schools and services, which has developed since the pay review in 2004.
- Career pathways for administrative staff
  Exploring recommendations for a central communication point for all qualification, training and work experience pathways, a policy on study leave and setting up mentor/coaching groups.
- Level 7 pay
  Level 7 pay was included in the Equal Pay analysis for March 2010 for the first time.

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[8] The University Strategy is detailed on *http://www.soton.ac.uk/strategy/*.

[9] See *http://www.soton.ac.uk/hr/managing/diversity/dignityatwork.html*.

[10] For the complete list, see *http://www.soton.ac.uk/harassmen*t.

[11] For more information, see *http://www.soton.ac.uk/hr/support/mediation/*.

- Pay gaps
  The latest pay-gap data will be released in the 2010 Equal Pay audit update, based on the situation in 2009.

- Starting salaries
  There is no central guidance currently available to managers on agreeing starting salaries, but this is being developed for the future.

- Grading of Temp Bank posts
  Bringing the Temp Bank into line with overall University polices.

- Terms and conditions
  There are still actions outstanding from the 2004 pay agreement, regarding harmonisation for levels 1-3.

- Transparency
  Work is underway to improve transparency of processes.

- Reward strategy
  The University's Reward Team will lead on taking these issues forward, working with an equal pay group which includes the trade unions, to provide annual updates to University Council.

6.3 The Research Excellence Framework

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs). It will replace the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and will be completed in 2014. The REF will be undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies. The exercise will be managed by the REF team based at HEFCE and overseen by the REF Steering Group, consisting of representatives of the four funding bodies.

The REF will:

- inform the selective allocation of research funding to HEIs;
- provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks;
- provide accountability for public investment in research and demonstrate its benefits[12].

Through the REF, the UK funding bodies aim to develop and sustain a dynamic and internationally competitive research sector that makes a major contribution to economic prosperity, national wellbeing and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge.

The Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) has established an Equality and Diversity expert group, which will meet between summer 2010 and summer 2011, to provide advice on:

- the process for recruiting expert panels;
- definitions of staff eligibility and of individual staff circumstances;
- guidance to institutions on codes of practice for staff selection;
- the strategy for monitoring staff selection;
- processes for handling of individual staff circumstances (including the scope for a central group to handle cases during the assessment phase);
- the scope for promoting equalities through the assessment of the research environment;
- equalities guidance to expert panels;
- the equalities implications of using citation information;
- and the equalities implications of assessing the impact of research.

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[12] As specified at *http://www.hefce.ac.uk/.*

We will refer to the advice and guidance provided by the REF Equality and Diversity expert group to inform the way we undertake our REF processes.

6.4 Learning and development

We provide equality training as part of the training and development programme available to staff, which will continue in the future, while the following issues are considered to improve the training we offer.

- How do we get more people trained and made relevant to the University? Currently, low numbers of individuals are voluntarily opting to attend the Diversity modules offered as part of the University's core programme.
- There is an urgent need for Cultural Diversity Training to be rolled-out across the University.
- The learning sets for women have been very successful, which should be continued, and additional sets of other diversity groups should be explored as well.

What we will do

The University's Core training programme will continue to provide modules on managing diversity and keeping staff updated with legal developments.

The University Diversity Champion and HR Director will discuss with the executive how to progress cultural awareness across the University.

The Diversity Team, with the Head of Training and Development, will explore Equality and Diversity e-learning packages and identify funding to implement this development.

6.5 University communications and marketing

Marketing and communications of the University's Equality and Diversity work has been identified as a key area of work for 2010/11, following feedback in the development of the Plan (see page 5).

There are a number of areas that can be improved, from the University's corporate communications and marketing strategies, to internal communications and general awareness campaigns for Equality and Diversity services.

We will ensure all guidelines relating to Communications and Marketing activity take account of our Equality and Diversity aspirations through:

- image guidelines containing clear text on the consideration of diversity in the commissioning and selection of images, provided to all suppliers as well as commissioners;
- filming protocols that contain similar directions as for images, and ensure that these are also given to suppliers, as well as commissioners, of film;
- monitoring all channels of communication, within and outside the organisation;
- review of the Voice, the quarterly e-newsletter for staff, to measure the impact of the guidelines on this publication, since the arrival of a dedicated internal communications officer;
- work with the Diversity Team to ensure that the aspirations regarding diversity are clear to all audiences, including work on the planning and execution of collateral across media.

External suppliers also need to be kept informed and monitored in compliance of this area, by:

- emphasising, at the annual review meeting with designers, the importance of diversity and their role of raising this issue with commissioners;

- briefing new suppliers for film in a similar manner, and monitoring progress regularly with these suppliers.

6.6 Procurement

The planned implementation of the Equality Act will involve new regulations, designed to encourage public sector contractors to take the lead in driving through equality within their procurement processes.

The University will need to become more proactive in incorporating equality into the procurement process, making sure that all our suppliers adhere to the principles of Equality and Diversity.

Discussions have taken place with the Head of Procurement and in the future we will:

- respond actively to the implications of the Equality Act 2010;
- research good practice in procurement and apply it to our processes;
- develop a check-list of requirements, and incorporate Equality and Diversity questions into our processes;
- establish good practice guidance, and publicise it.

7 Monitoring and accountability

The Plan has been developed with an expectation of change within the University, directly and indirectly affecting its action points, throughout its execution. As such, it must be reviewed annually, to ensure its relevance as new developments take place.

7.1 Equality Impact Assessments

Feedback on the University's Equality Impact Assessment process indicates that:

- there has been some improvement in undertaking Equality Impact Assessments in the University;
- the HR department is increasingly proactive in this process, and have also had discussions with the trade unions on how to better involve them in the process;
- it is useful to have a question on equality impact assessments on the pro-forma for committee reports, but needs to be used more proactively by people, and committee chairs need to be more proactive in asking equality questions;
- there is still a need for ongoing training on EIAs, as people still feel unsure about how to undertake them.

What we will do

The Equality Implementation Group will discuss how to prioritise this issue further.

The Diversity Team will consider how further training in executing EIAs can be provided across the University.

Discussions will be co-ordinated between the new Deans to establish how to roll-out EIAs in their new faculties.

7.2 Engagement and consultation

Throughout the process of developing the Equality Plan, opportunities have been created to involve and consult with people across the University, especially those from the identified categories.

Each of the Working Groups has representation from individuals, although some have found it more difficult to encourage wide participation than others.

There was also a wide representation on the various focus groups held to inform our thinking in developing this scheme.

We are aware, however, that more needs to be done on an ongoing basis.

What we will do

The Working Groups established to develop the Equality Plan will be continued, meeting at least annually to review progress and involve appropriate people from the protected characteristics.

The planned publicity campaign will include encouraging invitations for people to participate in the Working Groups.

There will be regular opportunities on the Intranet and internal communications for people to provide further feedback.

7.3 Governance and University structure

Diversity in our governance structures is vital to a healthy, creative and effective organisation. Over the last two years, we have monitored the gender diversity of our governance structures, and reported outcomes to Council.

Council has expressed concern about the lack of diversity in our structures, including its own make-up, and has asked for action to be taken to redress this imbalance.

What we will do

- Council has agreed to formally monitor race, disability and gender on all our governance structures, which will be implemented from 2010 onwards.
- Council will consider how to make its own membership more diverse.
- The Diversity Champion will consult Council on nominating one of its own members to lead on Diversity.
- Council will monitor diversity of all governance structures through the Annual Diversity Report.

7.3.1 Governing body

The University's Council has overall responsibility for the Plan and monitoring its progress. Council discharges this responsibility through the management structure of the University, and will receive annual progress reports including monitoring information for staff and students.

The Vice Chancellor has overall management responsibility, and delegates some of this to the University Executive Group. The Vice Chancellor nominates a member of the executive board as the University Diversity Champion.

All managers and supervisors are expected to support, promote and implement the diversity agenda.