Over 45 years of diversity and inclusion

The University of Essex Equality Policy and Strategy 2011 – 2014

Equality and Diversity
Introduction from the Vice-Chancellor

The University of Essex is committed to putting equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does, and to this I would add my own personal commitment and support for the measures we are taking to ensure that we consistently improve the experience of our students, staff and visitors. This is a task of great complexity and we are by no means complacent.

I hope that the work we are doing to increase the involvement and engagement of the University community through initiatives such as the Access Forum, the Dignity and Respect Group and the International Minority Ethnic Staff Forum, together with the physical changes we are making to the estate and awareness-raising, training and promotional activities, demonstrates that we are moving in the right direction.

I endorse this, our first single equality policy and strategy, not merely for reasons of convention, but because it represents the way in which we intend to meet our legal obligations, and to go beyond compliance and work towards a level of equality that would have been unthinkable a generation ago.

Professor Anthony Forster
Vice-Chancellor

If you would like to receive this document, or any of the policies referred to within it, in an alternative format, please contact Equality and Diversity.
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INTRODUCING ESSEX

The University of Essex, founded in 1964, is one of the UK’s leading academic institutions and the most internationally diverse campus-based university in Britain. It was ranked 9th in the UK in The Times research league tables following the last national research quality assessment, and 16th in England for student satisfaction, according to the National Student Survey for 2010. More than a quarter of Essex’s 10,000 students are postgraduates, and more than 3,500 are international students, drawn from more than 130 different countries. The University has three campuses in Essex, and partnerships with a number of other education institutions across the region. Essex has 17 academic departments, grouped into four faculties covering the social sciences, science and engineering, humanities, and law and management.

Our Mission is ‘to be a globally competitive, research-intensive, student-focused university that takes seriously its economic, social and cultural responsibilities to the eastern region, the UK and the world’ and by 2013, Essex aims to be acknowledged as a powerful regional university with a global impact and an international reputation unparalleled for its size.

Essex’s commitment to promoting equality and diversity is long-standing. Significantly, in 1970 Essex was the first university to launch Nightline, an anonymous telephone support helpline, now operating at over 40 universities. In the early 1990’s Essex was one of the first universities to introduce a Harassment Advisory Network, a confidential advice service for both staff and students experiencing bullying or harassment. The Network was, and still is, considered a model of good practice that has subsequently been adopted by many other universities. In addition Essex was one of the pioneers of modelling a multi-faith way of working, and its Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre is now home to representatives of more than a dozen religions.

Examples of more recent achievements in promoting equality and diversity include establishing The Access Forum, a forum for staff and students with a shared interest in access issues and the community-driven staff and student Dignity and Respect Group. We have also developed and made available to all staff an Equality and Diversity online training course, developed and delivered a wide range of equality-related courses, achieved Two Ticks accreditation, and subscribed to the International Staff web site.

In 2014 the University of Essex will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Still true to its founding principles of being international, interdisciplinary and inclusive, the University is celebrating 50 years of cutting-edge research and teaching excellence. As its half-century approaches, Essex continues to look forward with ambitious plans for the future.
1.1 Introduction

This Equality Policy and Strategy (hereafter referred to as ‘the Policy’) was written during the period June 2010 to March 2011 to comply with the first phase of the Equality Act 2010, in anticipation of the public sector equality duty expected to come into force in April 2011 and in the light of existing good practice at the University and elsewhere in the Higher Education sector. The policy was published in April 2011 and will be reviewed in April 2012.

This Policy has been approved by the University Steering Group and by the University Council and therefore constitutes formal University policy.

This is the University of Essex’s first single equality policy. Previously we have had separate schemes for disability and gender, a policy statement, code of practice and action plan on the promotion of race equality and policy statements and codes of practice for religion and belief and sexual orientation and gender identity. This policy aims not simply to merge our existing suite of equality and diversity schemes, policy statements, codes of practice and action plans but to provide a holistic framework that will help us fulfil both our legal obligations and core values as stated in our Vision 2009-2013.

‘As a University we value the following: the highest academic and professional standards, social, cultural and economic obligation, environmental sustainability, diversity, equality of opportunity, integrity and leadership.’

The introduction of a single policy enables us to streamline our equality monitoring and reporting processes and provide a clear vision of the University’s commitment to putting equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does for all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services.

Comments or questions about this policy should be addressed to Equality and Diversity, email diversity@essex.ac.uk.

1.2 Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

The University of Essex recognises the value of diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity within the University. We expect students and staff to be treated with dignity and respect and solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, political beliefs and affiliations, family circumstances or other irrelevant distinction.

The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy is fully effective.

1.3 How this policy fits with the University’s strategic aims

The University has a clear vision for the future and this policy is designed to complement that vision by aligning its equality objectives with the University’s strategic aims and supporting strategies.

The University’s Strategic Plan 2009-10 to 2013-14 points the way to an ambitious programme of investment designed to establish Essex as a University with global impact and an international reputation that is unparalleled for a university of our size, underpinned by our strong regional base.

The University’s strategic aims are grouped into five main themes and five supporting themes as follows:-

- Theme 1: Research
- Theme 2: Student experience
- Theme 3: **Knowledge Exchange**
- Theme 4: **Global**
- Theme 5: **Finance**
- Supporting Theme One: **Facilities**
- Supporting Theme Two: **Expanding Opportunities**
- Supporting Theme Three: **Staff**
- Supporting Theme Four: **Management and Governance**
- Supporting Theme Five: **Regional**

The Equality and Diversity Strategy has five components:-

- Component One: **Promoting Equality and Diversity: The University of Essex Way**
- Component Two: **The student experience**
- Component Three: **Staff**
- Component Four: **Services, facilities and information**
- Component Five: **Management and Governance**

Each component of the Equality and Diversity Strategy has an over-arching aim. An action plan links to each component. Each action plan contains a number of objectives which have been developed using evidence as detailed in Appendix A and are intended to help us achieve the component’s over-arching aim.

1.4  **Responsibility and accountability**

The University Council is responsible for ensuring that the University complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The University Council is the executive governing body of the University, responsible for the management and administration of the revenue and property of the University.

The Vice-Chancellor, together with the University Steering Group and the University Council, is responsible for ensuring that this policy is effectively implemented and that all staff, students and visitors are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the Policy. This is done in a number of ways; training, providing advice and guidance, promotional activities and raising awareness through the use of posters and other publicity materials e.g. the ‘Dignity and Respect’ card.

In this policy we have identified role holders for each point in the Action Plan who are responsible for carrying out these actions and reporting on progress, however we recognise that in order for us to become an exemplar organisation on equality and diversity we must work to build the knowledge, understanding and commitment of all members of our community, each of whom has an individual responsibility for engaging with the University in eliminating any unlawful discrimination, for promoting equality and for treating others with dignity and respect.

1.5  **Monitoring, reviewing and reporting progress**

Formal responsibility for agreeing, monitoring and reviewing policy in relation to equality and diversity issues lies with The Equality and Diversity Committee (EADC). EADC is an advisory committee to the University Council.

Monitoring of the actions contained in the Policy against our Performance Indicators will be on-going but formally reviewed annually. Progress reports will be published shortly after the completion of the review process and consideration by EADC. The policy will be completely reviewed every three years. Where monitoring shows that a particular action is not having the intended impact we will make changes to address this where possible.
The University is committed to gathering robust data to demonstrate how we are working towards meeting the general equality duty and we will publish this data in accordance with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duties.

1.6 Complaints of discrimination

The University is a large community engaged in many activities of both an academic and non-academic kind. From time to time a member of the University community may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of his or her dealings with the University and when that happens it is important that the issue is dealt with as quickly as possible.

The University offers support and advice for staff and students who believe they are being discriminated against, harassed or victimised.

Members of staff can seek advice from Heads of Departments/Sections, Harassment Advisers, Human Resources, Trades Unions and Equality and Diversity.

Students can seek advice from Departments, Harassment Advisers, Student Support, the Students’ Union Advice Centre and Equality and Diversity.

The University has procedures in place for staff and students to follow if they believe they have not been treated in accordance with this policy.

If you wish to make a formal complaint of harassment:

- It should be made in writing;
- Complaints about a member of staff should go to their Department or Section or the Director of Human Resources;
- Complaints about a student should go to the Head of their Department or to the Secretary to the Proctor using an Incident Report Form which can be found at [http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/rpp.shtml](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/rpp.shtml)

If you wish to make a formal complaint of any other kind of discrimination:

- Members of staff should follow the grievance procedure which can be found on the Human Resources web site at [http://www.essex.ac.uk/personnel/Pol&Proc/default.htm](http://www.essex.ac.uk/personnel/Pol&Proc/default.htm)
- Students should follow the Complaints Procedure for Students which can be found at [http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/complaint.shtml](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/complaint.shtml)
SECTION 2: THE POLICY

2.1 Introduction and overarching principles

Under the general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 the University has obligations as both an employer and as an education provider. This means that we must, in the exercise of our functions, have due regard to the need to:

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

In addition, as a public authority, we must:

- Publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty across our functions;
- Prepare and publish equality objectives.

*Appendix B defines ‘protected characteristics’.

This policy sets out how we intend to meet our obligations.

2.1.1 University publications and communications

The Equality and Diversity Policy Statement must be included in all key University documents. This includes prospectuses, policy documents, student handbooks, procurement regulations for suppliers, staff terms and conditions documents, recruitment literature, the University calendar, University regulations and higher degree regulations, the University strategic plan etc.

Non-discriminatory language must be used in all internal and external documents, official correspondence, publications and other communications, including verbal communication.

All staff and students are expected not to knowingly use language which may be deemed to be discriminatory or offensive to other members of the campus community or visitors to the University. All staff, students and visitors are expected to be tolerant of the beliefs of others and be sensitive to the influence of ethnic and cultural background, the needs of those with disabilities and issues related to gender, marital status, sexuality, socio-economic background and age.

Information for both current and prospective staff, students and visitors is usually made available in electronic and/or paper format and arrangements can be made for information to be available in other formats, for example, Braille, audio or large format. All University of Essex websites must comply with the minimum requirements for accessibility. The University’s guidelines for accessible web design can be found on the Web and Learning Technology web site.

2.1.2 University committees

The primary consideration when selecting members of University committees and other official bodies is ensuring appropriate expertise and representation, however equality and diversity issues are also considered and are important. Consideration is given to having a gender balance and including members from under-represented groups such as those from ethnic minorities and those with a disability.

2.1.3 Assessing the equality impact of University policies and procedures

The University will ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are taken into account in its policies and procedures and that, when new policies are developed or existing ones revised, consideration is given to the needs of particular groups of people e.g. disabled people.
In addition, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the University is committed to analysing the effect on equality of its policies with regard to all of the protected characteristics in order to ensure that they are neither directly nor indirectly discriminatory and to identify if there are any steps we can take to further advance equality or foster good relations.

In order to meet this requirement, the Equality and Diversity Committee (EADC) have agreed that policies * should initially be assessed using an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Pro-forma. An EIA Pro-forma should be completed for each University policy. Members of staff responsible for drafting new policies, or updating existing ones, must ensure that an EIA Pro-forma is completed prior to the new or revised policy being implemented. Completed EIA Pro-formas will be considered by the Equality and Diversity Officer who will refer any that give cause for concern** to the EADC who have the option to require a more detailed assessment, known as an Equality Impact Review (EIR), to be carried out. The EIR may consider whole areas of operation and include all related policies, procedures and processes, both formal and informal.

* For the purpose of EIA Pro-formas, the term policy refers to both new and existing formal policies, procedures and processes. It does not include informal policies, procedures or processes.

** This means it is a policy that either:

a) may be having a negative effect on equality but this is unknown as little or no analysis has previously taken place; or
b) has a potential high risk of appeals or complaints

The Pro-forma can be found on the Equality and Diversity web site.

If the assessment shows that a policy (or proposed policy) is having an adverse effect on a particular group we will make changes to address this where possible. If monitoring gives any indication that members of one group have received less favourable treatment than members of another group the situation will be investigated and, where appropriate, remedial action will be taken. In addition, evidence of significant underperformance by any particular group will be investigated to establish if there are any relevant reasons for this and, if any such reasons are identified, appropriate remedial action will be taken.

University policies and procedures must be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are consistent with this policy.

The Students’ Union has its own equality policies and procedures which are consistent with this policy and which should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain consistent with this policy.

2.1.4 Equality and diversity training

The University will provide equality and diversity awareness training to ensure that individuals are aware of their rights and responsibilities under equality legislation and this policy.

Staff of external companies or individuals arranging, delivering and presenting training courses within the University are responsible for ensuring that the course content, delivery and materials do not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.

It is the responsibility of any person arranging training within the University to monitor the evaluation of such training against the requirements of this policy.

2.2 Harassment and bullying

2.2.1 Policy Statement on Harassment and Bullying

The University of Essex is an international community that is both multicultural and diverse. All members of the University community and visitors to the University are to be treated with dignity and respect. The University is committed to establishing an environment that is free from any form of harassment and bullying. Harassment and bullying adversely affect working, learning and social
conditions for University students, staff and visitors* and are unacceptable. Any incident of harassment, bullying or victimisation will be regarded seriously and will be treated as grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal with or without notice or expulsion from the University.

*Visitors are considered to be any person or persons who are not members of staff or students who are legitimately on campus and over whom the University has no direct control i.e. contractors, visiting academics, prospective students, consultants, staff of businesses or organisations hosted by the University, etc. Under the Equality Act 2010, visitors are known as 'third parties'.

2.2.2 Third party harassment

The University will make every effort to make visitors aware of the behaviour it expects from all members of its community and will take steps to deal with any allegations of harassment or bullying by a visitor or of a visitor.

2.2.3 Dealing with harassment and bullying

The University has appointed a well-trained network of harassment advisers which is accessible to both staff and students. Appointments with advisers can be made by telephone or email. Advisers’ contact details are advertised widely and there is also a confidential telephone helpline. The harassment advisers meet regularly as a network and have regular refresher training.

The complete Guidelines for dealing with Harassment and Bullying, including contact details, can be found in the University calendar at www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/regs/harassment.shtm.

2.3 Disclosure, confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998

The University is committed to encouraging its staff and students to disclose information such as disability*, sexual orientation and religion or belief. Staff and students will be given as many opportunities as possible to disclose this information and the University will continue to strive to create an environment and culture that is open and welcoming so that people feel it is safe to do so.

Individuals have the right to choose not to disclose personal information such as a disability, their sexual orientation and their religion or belief, whilst others may want to disclose and discuss issues related to any of the protected characteristics confidentially or openly. It is important that the personal privacy and wishes of employees and students is not breached either implicitly or explicitly.

The University’s Data Protection Policy outlines its commitment to full compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and recognises the rights and obligations established by the Act in relation to the management and processing of personal data.

* Further information relating to the disclosure of a disability can be found in Section 2.7.1.1 of this policy on page 16.

2.4 Employment

Equality and Diversity is embedded in all dimensions of the University's current Human Resources (HR) strategy. All staff should be treated with dignity and respect and in accordance with equality legislation and there are policies and procedures in place to help ensure equitable treatment at the recruitment stage and throughout employment.

All HR policies and procedures should be operated fairly, be transparent and objective, and be reviewed regularly to ensure that they comply with this policy and equality legislation.

This section of the equality policy deals with specific equality and diversity issues relating to employment. Where a policy or procedure exists that covers a particular area of employment, such as flexible working, it is referred to in this policy but not replicated in detail.
Details of all HR policies and procedures that are referred to in this policy, including the HR strategy, can be found on the Human Resources web site.

2.4.1 Recruitment and selection of staff

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the ‘Procedures for the Recruitment and Selection of Staff’, the ‘Code of Practice on Teaching and Demonstrating by Graduate Students’ and the ‘Handbook and Guidance on Recruitment and Selection, equality and diversity’.

Good equality and diversity practice i.e. fairness, objectivity and transparency, must be applied to the recruitment and selection process for all posts regardless of whether they are permanent, fixed-term, temporary or casual.

The University is a Two Ticks employer and welcomes applications from disabled people. All applicants, regardless of whether they have declared a disability or not, should be asked whether they require reasonable adjustments or support during the recruitment and selection process.

2.4.1.1 Recruitment and selection training

Any member of staff who takes part in the recruitment and selection of staff* must have completed the University’s recruitment and selection training. Recruitment and selection training is offered in a variety of formats. Human Resources staff offer short briefing sessions, longer courses which give the opportunity for role-play and an online training programme is also available.

*For the purposes of this policy, drafting job descriptions and person specifications, short-listing, interviewing and selecting candidates are all considered part of the recruitment and selection process.

The training includes:-

- guidance on writing job descriptions and person specifications
- the importance of considering all candidates against the criteria for the post
- information about the dangers of stereotyping and the effects which generalised assumptions and prejudices about age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, political beliefs and affiliations, family circumstances or other irrelevant distinction might have on selection decisions
- the University’s obligations under the Two Ticks disability symbol
- interview etiquette
- responsibilities of the Chair of a selection panel

2.4.2 Terms of appointment

The University’s terms of appointment must contain the policy statement on equality and diversity and inform employees of the University’s Equality and Diversity Policy and where to find it. They must emphasise each employee’s obligation to comply with the University’s Equality and Diversity Policy and inform them that intentional breaches of the legislation or the Policy can lead to disciplinary action.

Terms of appointment will be reviewed regularly as required.

2.4.3 Grievance

The University has in place effective formal grievance procedures which can be invoked by any employee who alleges that he or she has been the subject of discrimination, including harassment or victimisation, by the University or by one of its employees, students, or visitors.

Such procedures must be made known to all existing and new members of staff. They should be clearly stated and contain instructions as to whom to contact concerning their use.
As far as is reasonably practicable, the University should ensure that its grievance procedures are understood by all employees. Special consideration should be given to those employees whose first language is not English, where their command of English is limited or when employees have communication difficulties.

2.4.4 The working environment

The University must show its commitment to maintaining and developing a working environment which encourages all members of staff to contribute fully, and on an equal basis, to the life of the University. The working environment must be supportive of the dignity and self esteem of individuals and free from harassment.

2.4.4.1 Flexible working

The University recognises the needs of individual employees to balance their work and home responsibilities by enabling them to have the option of alternative working patterns. To support this, the University has a flexible working policy and guidelines on compressed hours working.

2.4.5 Training

The University recognises that training and development benefits both the member of staff and the University, improving motivation, performance and retention. The University has a programme of induction training for all new staff. Induction is provided both within the local work area on an individual basis and centrally as part of a wider introduction to the University.

The following paragraphs should be read in conjunction with the University’s policy on the Request Time off for Training.

Heads of Departments and Sections must ensure that all staff have equal access to training and development opportunities and that decisions taken do not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics. This includes decisions taken about who can attend training courses or events, time away from the workplace to attend training courses or events and decisions regarding funding for training and development.

The University must have regard to the training and developmental needs of groups such as women, members of ethnic minorities, disabled staff including those with learning difficulties, and those returning to work after a career break. Where appropriate, specialist training will be made available in order to allow staff to develop their skills and career opportunities.

Wherever possible, arrangements should be made to ensure that part-time staff have the same opportunities to attend training and developmental events and activities as full-time staff.

Training arrangements must take into account the needs of disabled staff and those with caring responsibilities.

Details of training opportunities and activities must be widely circulated and displayed to ensure that all employees are aware of them.

Training courses and associated publicity material must be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with legislation and the University’s policies.

2.5 The student experience

This section of the equality policy deals with specific equality and diversity issues related to students. For the purposes of this policy the term ‘students’ refers to current students, prospective students and former students with whom we have a continuing relationship.

Where a policy or procedure exists that covers a particular area of University, such as admissions, it is referred to in this policy but not replicated in detail.
2.5.1 Admission of students

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the University’s Undergraduate Admissions Policy and Graduate Admissions Policy.

The University of Essex is committed to fair access and encourages applications from all students who are able to demonstrate the potential to meet the entry criteria for the relevant course and to benefit from study at any level. The University’s admissions policies and procedures are designed to ensure that all applications are considered fairly and consistently and in accordance with professional standards.

Against this background the University’s Admissions Policy is intended to provide a policy and procedural framework within which admissions decision-making is characterised by transparency, fairness and consistency.

2.5.2 Study abroad, work placements and other off-campus study

Staff with responsibility for the organisation of off-campus course elements will, as far as possible, take steps to ensure that students will not face hostility, harassment, victimisation or discrimination. This includes liaising with placement providers, ensuring a range of options and providing advice and information to students. Alternative methods of delivering core competencies will be considered on an individual basis e.g. for disabled students or students with family or caring responsibilities.

2.5.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

This section should be read in conjunction with the University’s Learning and Teaching Strategy.

The University will ensure that, wherever it is reasonably possible, no individual student or group of students is discriminated against, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics, by the content of the curriculum or the way in which it is delivered e.g. during classes, lectures, seminars or practical/laboratory sessions or by the assessment methods used e.g. examinations, coursework. This includes ensuring equality of opportunity to access the following:-

- Research facilities
- Learning equipment and materials, both paper based and on-line, such as lecture notes and handouts, laboratory equipment, computer facilities, seminar rooms, lecture theatres, laboratories etc
- Libraries and resource centres

The induction and training of new teaching staff includes reference to this Policy and the University’s Guidelines for dealing with Harassment and Bullying. The training also includes ways of considering different cultural groups’ approaches to learning and teaching, guidance on dealing with inappropriate language and behaviour and making reasonable adjustments to enhance accessibility for disabled learners.

2.5.4 External examiners

On appointment, the attention of each External Examiner will be drawn to this Policy, along with the expectation that s/he will act in accordance with it.

2.5.5 Grounds for appeal

One of the grounds on which a student may appeal against the decision of a Progress Committee or Examination Board is that there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the Committee or Board (including alleged administrative error) of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome might have been different had they not occurred. A prima facie case of discrimination will be regarded as procedural irregularity in this context.
2.6 Access to, and provision of, services and facilities

The University has three campuses. It should be noted that not every service or facility provided by the University is available at every campus. In addition, a number of services and facilities are provided by external businesses or organisations hosted by the University and, in some instances, by individuals e.g. owners of properties made available for letting to students, training providers. This Policy refers to both University and external service and facility providers.

The term ‘access’ covers all forms of access, not just access to the physical environment. It includes, for example, access to information. ‘Accessible’ means ‘independently accessible’ or ‘accessible with minimum assistance’. Independent access is the ideal to which all policy and practice should aspire.

The University is committed to ensuring information is made available in a range of formats when required and to providing opportunities for staff and students to develop skills e.g. computer skills, in order to achieve its aspiration of independent access for all.

2.6.1 Access and safety

Every effort must be made to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all parts of the University are accessible and safe for all members of the University community. The needs of disabled people should be given particular consideration * and steps should be taken to ensure that access and safety requirements are understood by those whose understanding of the English language is limited.

* The Disability Section of this Policy provides further information on access to the physical environment. See Section 2.7.1.5 on page 17.

2.6.2 Equality responsibilities of service and facility providers

All services and facilities provided by the University must be operated in accordance with this Policy. The University will make all external businesses and organisations that provide a service to staff, students or both aware of this Policy and it expects them to comply with equality legislation.

Staff of external businesses or organisations which operate on campus and contractors, must be made aware of both this Policy and the University’s Guidelines for Dealing with Harassment and Bullying, and be encouraged to act in accordance with them. If any breach of equality legislation, this policy or the University’s Guidelines for Dealing with Harassment and Bullying by a member of staff of an external business or organisation which operates on campus is brought to the attention of the University we will take reasonable steps to prevent any further breach occurring.

The University will ensure that equality considerations are taken into account in the tender process and seek to ensure that potential contractors have an effective equality policy. Contracts with businesses or organisations hosted by the University must be drawn up with reference to this Policy.

2.6.3 Review of services and facilities

All services and facilities provided by the University must be kept under regular review to ensure that, as far as possible, the needs of all groups of people are met and that no individual or group of people is disadvantaged or discriminated against.

2.6.4 Facilities for pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers

The University will ensure that it has suitable facilities for pregnant women to rest and nursing mothers to breast-feed or express milk on each of its campuses. These facilities will be made available to staff, students and visitors.
2.7 Policy relating to specific Protected Characteristics

2.7.1 Disability

The University welcomes and encourages applications from people with a disability and is committed to promoting positive attitudes towards disability and to equality of opportunity for disabled staff, students and visitors. The University recognises that the environment, services and facilities may themselves be ‘enabling’ or ‘disabling’ and therefore aims to continue to develop a more ‘enabling’ environment.

2.7.1.1 Disclosure of a disability, confidentiality and the Data Protection Act

Current staff and students and applicants to the University are encouraged to disclose a disability to enable appropriate reasonable adjustments to be made.

Students who apply to the University and who disclose a disability will be contacted by the Disability Team in Student Support to discuss any requirements they may have.

When an employee discloses a disability on their equal opportunities monitoring form, s/he is asked whether they would like to receive occasional information about access-related services and facilities on campus which the University feels may be of interest to them and whether they would like to discuss their access requirements (e.g. reasonable adjustments to their working environment, personal evacuation plans etc) with an appropriate member of staff. No employee will be contacted, having disclosed a disability, without having given their consent.

In ensuring that disabled students are not discriminated against, and that reasonable adjustments are made, the University may need to pass data about disabled students on to members of staff and others including work placement providers. Even if students have not requested confidentiality under the Equality Act 2010, the use and transfer of information about them (including through job references) is restricted by the Data Protection Act. Such processing may often require explicit informed consent from the student. In order to ensure that they are not in breach of either law, the University will:

- ask students’ permission to pass on information necessary for making reasonable adjustments
- alert students to the use that will be made of information when asking them to disclose disability on application, enrolment or examination forms
- ensure appropriate procedures are in place to keep sensitive and other personal information confidential.

Should a member of staff or student request confidentiality under the Equality Act 2010, information may NOT, from that point, be passed on to any third party. In determining whether it is feasible to make a reasonable adjustment for a member of staff or student who has requested confidentiality, the University must have regard to the extent that making the adjustment is consistent with a request for confidentiality. In some instances this might mean that reasonable adjustments have to be provided in an alternative way in order to ensure confidentiality.

In some cases a confidentiality request might mean that a less satisfactory reasonable adjustment is provided or that no reasonable adjustment may be provided.

2.7.1.2 Reasonable adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010 the University is required to make anticipatory ‘reasonable adjustments’ to ensure that disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in relation to their non-disabled peers. A ‘substantial disadvantage’ is one that is more than minor or trivial.

When considering what a ‘substantial disadvantage’ might be, the University will take account of the time, inconvenience, effort or discomfort entailed in comparison with other people.
The University will take into account factors such as effectiveness and cost when considering what is 'reasonable'. The effectiveness and practicality will be considered first. If the adjustment is considered effective and practical, its cost and the resources available to fund it will then be considered.

2.7.1.3 Reasonable adjustments for staff

Under the Equality Act 2010 employers must make 'reasonable adjustments' to the workplace and to employment arrangements so that disabled employees are not placed at an unfair disadvantage to their colleagues. Reasonable adjustments may include *adjustments to the workplace*, including special or adapted equipment, furniture and software and hardware to improve work stations, access or layout, *adjustments to working arrangements* such as allowing an employee to be absent from work for rehabilitation treatment or *adjustments to a job* such as providing alternative work.

More comprehensive information about what could constitute a reasonable adjustment for a member of staff can be found on the [Equality and Diversity web site](#).

Managers are responsible for ensuring staff have the appropriate equipment and support to enable them to carry out their work safely and effectively. Managers should be aware of the needs of their staff and take a proactive and anticipatory approach to reasonable adjustments. Alternatively, staff may themselves request a reasonable adjustment.

There is a central fund for reasonable adjustments for staff, and there are also opportunities for external funding in some cases. Therefore provision of reasonable adjustments should not be seen as an extra financial outlay either when recruiting new staff or providing support for existing staff. Equality and Diversity or the Occupational Health Adviser, as appropriate, will follow up each case and arrange funding appropriately.

More detailed advice and guidance for managers can be found on the [Equality and Diversity web site](#).

2.7.1.4 Reasonable adjustments for students

The University will anticipate the generality of student needs by making sure routine practice is reflective of, and responsive to, a diverse student population. The University recognises that it is unlikely that every need can be anticipated and it will therefore be ready to make reasonable adjustments on behalf of individuals as required.

Core competencies will be considered when reviewing adjustments to ensure that any adjustments do not compromise academic standards.

2.7.1.5 The physical environment

The University is committed to making buildings and sites and external environs accessible, where this is possible. The University considers accessibility within the design of each new building or development. Whilst the University is required to design an accessible environment under Building Regulations, it strives to provide greater accessibility than the legislation demands.

Every opportunity will be taken when undertaking refurbishments or routine maintenance to introduce improvements such as colour/tone contrast on doorways, better lighting, or flooring that is easier for wheelchair users.

The University recognises that the solution to lack of access to a building or physical feature is not always a physical adjustment. For example, technology may provide alternative access to services and a librarian may fetch books for a student or a member of staff from high or inaccessible shelves.

See the [Access@Essex web site](#) for more detailed access information including Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs).
2.7.2  Religion or belief

The University of Essex is a secular institution and does not give preference to any one religion or belief over any other or to people with no religion or belief. The University recognises that a wide variety of religions and beliefs are represented on campus and will seek to ensure the availability of facilities and opportunities for worship for staff and students.

All faith provision supported by the University will be multi-faith. There is a Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre (MFCC) at the Colchester campus and a quiet/prayer room at the Southend campus. The University has named representatives from various religions and denominations who are expected to comply with a separate code of practice. A committee oversees the running of the MFCC and considers, and recommends to the Registrar and Secretary for approval, applications for new chaplains or religious representatives for all campuses. The MFCC committee and/or the religious representatives and chaplains may be consulted on matters of University policy and practice or for individual guidance relating to issues of religion or belief.

2.7.2.1  Working arrangements and time off for religious observance

All staff, regardless of whether they have a religion or belief or not, are required to work in accordance with their contract. Members of staff are encouraged to approach their line manager to request a change in their working arrangements in order to carry out acts of religious observance such as prayer. This may be on a daily basis or at certain times in the year.

If a member of staff wishes to take part in a religious festival, day of observance or pilgrimage, they should request annual leave. Staff making such requests should give as much notice as possible, ideally at the beginning of the leave year. If an individual has insufficient annual leave remaining, the manager could allow unpaid leave, for all or part of the period, on the first occasion and ask the member of staff to book annual leave on any similar future occasions.

Managers should consider requests to change working arrangements or for annual leave sympathetically and should work with the member of staff concerned, Human Resources and/or their union representative to reach agreement on achieving an acceptable outcome to the request.

Permission to change working arrangements or for annual leave should not be refused unless there is a genuine operational requirement and if agreeing such changes would be a real detriment, or be discriminatory, to other members of staff or to the department or section.

It should be noted that not every member or follower of a particular religion will necessarily make the same requests or have the same requirements. Individuals will choose to observe and interpret their faith in their own way.

Some festivals and days of observance follow different calendars to that normally used in the UK. They may follow the lunar cycle or for other reasons may not fall on the same date each year. The timing of some religious events cannot be predicted until close to, or during, the event.

The Equality and Diversity web site has access to a calendar of religious festivals and events.

2.7.2.2  Leave arrangements for students

Students are not normally expected to request leave in advance but are required to inform the University of the reason for any absence from classes. Students should use the Notification of Absence Form to notify relevant staff of the reason for their absence. This form can be used where students miss classes or other prescribed instruction to attend a religious festival, day of observance or pilgrimage and can be found on the Academic Section web site at this address: http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/students/ug/index.htm.
2.7.2.3 Individual examination arrangements on grounds of religious commitments

The University will seek to avoid scheduling an examination to coincide with a major religious festival.

Students who are unable to take an examination, during the main examination period, on a Sabbath, holy day or religious festival, can apply for an individual arrangement to be made. The Application for Exam Arrangements (Religious Reasons) Form must be completed and returned, along with evidence, to Student Support by 31 October in each academic year.

If an application for individual arrangements is accepted, the Examinations Office will make every effort to schedule examinations accordingly, although the University reserves the right to schedule examinations on a Sabbath, holy day or during religious festivals where no suitable alternative is available.

2.7.2.4 Field trips and work placements

Staff involved in arranging field trips or work placements which are part of a programme of study should take account of students' religious requirements and consider any requests based on such requirements sympathetically. When it is not possible to grant such requests reasonable alternative provision should be considered.

2.7.2.5 Dress codes and uniforms

The University requires staff working in some areas to wear a uniform or particular form of dress.

Where there is a requirement for a certain form of dress this is usually by way of protective clothing and is required for health and safety or reasons of hygiene. If there is such a requirement and a member of staff requests a change of daily dress in the workplace the requests should be treated sympathetically and, unless there are genuine health and safety or hygiene reasons for refusing the change in daily dress, permission should be granted. For example:

- The wearing of trousers instead of skirts or vice versa
- Wearing shirts or blouses loose, rather than tucked in to skirt or trousers
- Wearing a hat or otherwise covering the head or hair when this is not a requirement
- The wearing of religious jewellery. Some religions support the wearing of rings or other items to indicate marriage or other status
- Although not strictly dress some people may, as a religious requirement, want to wear their hair longer than is usual or wear their hair in a particular style or with an adornment.

Where requests are difficult to meet, managers will seek to find a satisfactory compromise.

Those not required to wear a uniform or particular form of dress should ensure their dress conforms to the current majority view in society of what constitutes appropriateness and decency.

If a student chooses to wear a face covering for religious reasons then they are entitled to request that any requirement for proof of identity that necessitates removal of the face covering takes place only in the presence of same sex staff and this will be arranged.

For further information, see the Identification Policy for Students.

2.7.2.6 Freedom of speech

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is absolute, but the right to manifest beliefs is qualified by the need to protect the rights and freedoms of others. The University will seek to ensure that freedom of speech, debate and expressions within the law is secured for staff, students and visitors to the University. All University staff, students and visitors are expected to comply with the
requirements of the **Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006** which gives people protection from harm because of their religious beliefs or lack of religious beliefs.

The law focuses on those who stir up violence and hatred on religious grounds and the main offences cover:-

- The use of words or behaviour or display or written material
- Publishing or distributing written material
- The public performance of a play
- Distributing, showing or playing a recording
- Producing threatening material with a view to using it in a way that is intended to stir up religious hatred

For further information see the University’s [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) and [Policy on Tackling Violent Extremism in the name of ideology or belief and maintaining cohesive campus relations.](#)

### 2.7.3 Gender Reassignment

Staff or students who have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment will receive positive support from the University to meet their particular needs and the University will ensure that those who have undergone, or who are undergoing, gender reassignment, are treated in all respects as the gender in which they live.

The University recognises that changing one’s gender has implications for record keeping, for access to some facilities, services and benefits and for how complaints of discrimination are reported and investigated.

### 2.7.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership

Assumptions should not be made that partners of staff or students are of the opposite sex.

Civil partners are entitled to the same employment rights and benefits as those of married couples. The University extends those rights and benefits to same-sex partners regardless of whether they are civil partners or not, except where the law or the arrangements of other agencies do not permit such equal treatment.
SECTION 3: THE STRATEGY: EQUALITY WITH IMPACT

3.1 Introduction

This strategy provides a framework within which the University intends not only to meets its legislative obligations but to put equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does. The defining feature of the academic work of the University is ‘excellence with impact’; this strategy aims to deliver ‘equality with impact’.

3.2 Strategic Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Prevent unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people
- Embed equality and diversity into our policies, practices and procedures
- Support progress towards the University Vision and Strategic Plan

3.3 Component 1: Promoting positive attitudes: The University of Essex Way

OVERARCHING AIM: To build the knowledge, understanding and commitment to equality and diversity of all members of the University community

Links to the University’s Values - As a university we value the following: the highest academic and professional standards, social, cultural and economic obligation, environmental sustainability, diversity, equality of opportunity, integrity and leadership.

Strategy

The University will seek to ensure that all members of the University community are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities and legal duties in relation to equality and diversity by offering a comprehensive programme of training, promotional activities and publicity campaigns.

The University will make clear that it expects all students, staff and visitors to treat each other with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any incidents of harassment or bullying. The University will ensure that it has appropriate procedures in place to deal with any complaints of unacceptable behaviour.

Complaints made under University procedures will be monitored to seek to identify potential unlawful discrimination.

The University will seek to embed equality and diversity within its policies and procedures to increase accountability and heighten awareness of the issues.

3.4 Component 2: The student experience

OVERARCHING AIM: To appeal to a broad student market and provide a living, studying and working environment in which a diverse student population can learn, achieve and prosper

Links to Strategic Aim Two - To provide a superior student experience for all our students, through engagement with research-informed teaching delivered by leading academic scholars, using both traditional and contemporary delivery methods, in supportive, stimulating and well-resourced academic environments.

Links to Strategic Aim Four – To continue to be a leading UK university of choice for international students and to further develop the international dimension of our research, educational and cultural activities.
Links to Supporting Strategy Two – To maintain the diversity of the University's student intake by enhancing access to all those able to benefit from its educational provision.

Links to Supporting Strategy Five – To grow the University and to serve the Eastern region by appealing to a broad student market through a wide range of differentiated provision across multiple campuses.

Strategy

The University is proud of its diverse student community and aims to maintain this by continuing to provide access to higher education for all those able to benefit from its educational provision. The University will continue to seek to provide wider opportunities for participation to those from under-represented groups and applicants from non-traditional routes and to continue to recruit above benchmark in this area (HEFCE Pls).

Prospective students will be encouraged to declare a disability and the University will continue to anticipate the requirements of disabled students and the adjustments that should be made. The University will ensure that students with a disability have the same opportunities as non-disabled students.

The University takes pride in its dynamic international community and, in partnership with the Students’ Union, will continue to provide a wide range of cultural and social activities. In addition, the University is committed to offering an international experience for all its students as outlined in its International Strategic Agenda 2010-13.

Teaching staff will be encouraged and trained to develop inclusive learning, teaching and assessment practices and the University will seek to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to develop their employability skills in a variety of ways, including via work placements and studying abroad. The University’s aim is for 90% of its students to be in graduate employment or further study.

The University aims to increase levels of student satisfaction as outlined in its Strategic Plan and will obtain and use feedback from students about their experiences to inform future policy and practice.

3.5 Component 3: Staff

OVERARCHING AIM: To maintain and, where possible, increase the diversity of the workforce and deliver a fair and supportive working environment for all

Links to Supporting Strategy Three – To recruit staff from among the best available, to retain them and support them so they can perform to their full potential.

Strategy

The University recognises that a well-informed, diverse staff population can identify and meet the needs of a diverse student population and that different perspectives inspire creativity and innovation. The University will therefore seek to ensure that its recruitment policy encourages applications from people with as wide a range of backgrounds, skills and experiences as possible and that it has policies and procedures in place to ensure staff have equal opportunities to develop and progress.

The University is committed to remaining a TwoTicks employer. Job applicants and staff will be encouraged to declare a disability and the University will take a proactive and anticipatory approach to reasonable adjustments.

The University will continue to measure staff satisfaction by providing opportunities for staff to give feedback on their experience of being a member of staff. This information, together with staff management information, will be used to identify and address any equality issues and inform decision-making and objective-setting.
3.6 Component 4: Services, facilities and information

OVERARCHING AIM: To promote and enhance access to our services, facilities and information

Links to Supporting Strategy One – To be a university housed in modern campuses, with infrastructure fit for the twenty-first century.

Strategy

The University is committed to creating an environment in which all students feel able to reach their full potential and recognises that embracing equality and diversity and providing a network of accessible and student-focussed support services is critical to this.

The University is committed to ensuring that all members of the University community are able to participate as fully and equally as possible in campus life. We recognise that the provision of comprehensive, accurate information in a variety of formats is essential in enabling people to make informed choices.

The University will continue to meet its statutory responsibilities regarding accessibility and exceed these as far as reasonably practicable. It will continue to review the priority list of access issues identified by Access@Essex, the University’s one-stop portal for all queries relating to access and disability, and prioritise issues for immediate action.

3.7 Component 5: Management and governance

OVERARCHING AIM: To ensure that major strategic decisions are made with an awareness of their consequences for different groups of people and those with managerial responsibilities demonstrate inclusive leadership behaviours

Links to Supporting Strategy Four – To ensure that the University is soundly governed, to take effective decisions on the basis of timely and appropriate information, and to implement decisions on the basis of consultation and effective communications.

The University will embed its equality impact assessment process across the institution and, where a policy or procedure is identified as having the potential to have a positive or negative impact on a particular group of people, will take steps to address this.

The University recognises the important role that senior leaders have in promoting a culture that is inclusive and espouses dignity and respect and that effective communication and education are critical to this. Senior leaders are expected to take every opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity and uphold the University’s Values.

The University expects those businesses and organisations it works with to operate in accordance with equality legislation and will take that into account when considering whether to offer a contract, enter into a partnership or host an external service provider.

The University will ensure that service providers are aware of their commitment to promoting equality of access and will work with them to identify best practice and suggest ways to improve access where necessary.

The University will continue to monitor the equality profile of its Committees, senior management team, Council and Senate and take steps to increase the diversity where it is felt necessary.
4.1 Component 1: Promoting positive attitudes: The University Of Essex Way

OVERARCHING AIM: To build the knowledge, understanding and commitment to equality and diversity of all members of the University community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Number</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evidence Source</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Additional Resources</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
<th>Performance Indicator(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>To raise the awareness, and increase the understanding, of equality and diversity issues of all members of the University community</td>
<td>Requirement of the Equality Act 2010</td>
<td>Plan and implement an ongoing schedule of awareness raising and promotional activities for staff, students and members of the local community</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>At least three awareness raising / promotional activities each academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriately inform visitors e.g. contractors, visiting academics, consultants etc of our equality policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Poster version of Dignity and Respect card is produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promote this policy in a variety of different ways e.g. digital signage, staff/student portal, E&amp;D website, briefing sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy is visible via electronic media. Briefing sessions conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>To encourage all staff to complete the online Equality and Diversity training course</td>
<td>Management Information Data – online Equality and Diversity course</td>
<td>Continue to ask all new staff to complete the first module ‘Equality and Diversity Essentials’, encourage existing staff who have not completed it to do so and monitor % of staff successfully completing it</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>Monitor annually the % of staff successfully completing the course. Increase this % year on year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Routinely recommend staff who register for other equality-related courses to complete the on-line E&amp;D course</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>To provide a range of tailored equality and diversity related training, using external experts where appropriate</td>
<td>Good practice</td>
<td>Continue to plan and implement an ongoing programme of equality and diversity related training courses</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Deliver at least six equality and diversity related training courses per academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>To raise awareness of the Harassment Advisory Network (HAN) to staff and students, and increase its use</td>
<td>HAN review Group</td>
<td>Implement recommendations from HAN Review Group</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By October 2011</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Recommendations from HAN Review Group are implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>To make clear what ‘The University of Essex Way’ is and to encourage staff and students to sign up to its principles</td>
<td>Recommendation from Dignity and Respect Survey 2009</td>
<td>Develop a charter</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By October 2011</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>A charter is developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Encourage staff and students to provide equality monitoring information</td>
<td>Staff and student statistics</td>
<td>Prompt current staff through Integrated Human Resources (IHR) self-service system</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Reduction in the % of staff and students who elect not to disclose optional equality information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>To promote positive attitudes towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual people</td>
<td>Feedback from members of the University LGBT community</td>
<td>Consider the benefits of joining Stonewall</td>
<td>£2000 per annum</td>
<td>By October 2011</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Appraisal process is conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stonewall University Guide</td>
<td>Gauge enthusiasm of staff for participating in an LGBT staff network</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By October 2011</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Invite all staff to an event with a speaker from Stonewall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to support the Students’ Union LBGT Society in their activities</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Component 2: The student experience

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To appeal to a broad student market and provide a living, studying and working environment in which a diverse student population can learn, achieve and prosper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Responsible person (s)</th>
<th>Performance Indicator (s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>To ensure that procedures for student admissions continue to be non-discriminatory and make Essex a firm choice for those with protected characteristics and from non-traditional backgrounds</td>
<td>Equality Impact Assessment on Admission of Students Strategic Plan - KPI 7.1, Student Diversity and KPI 7.2 Support for students from a range of backgrounds Widening Participation Strategy</td>
<td>Implement the recommendations from the EIA on Student Admissions completed in March 2009 Encourage collaborative working to ensure relevant responsible people are aware of current equality legislation and good equality practice within the sector</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Head of Admissions</td>
<td>Recommendations are implemented Equality and Diversity meet regularly with those involved in Admissions/WP work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>To be better informed about the diversity of the student population</td>
<td>Student statistics</td>
<td>Introduce monitoring for religion or belief and sexual orientation</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Implement in 2011/2012</td>
<td>Academic Registrar</td>
<td>Monitoring process is in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>To identify the barriers facing students and staff who are juggling caring responsibilities with their studies or work and make recommendations to improve provision/information</td>
<td>Feedback from individual students Extension of discrimination by association under the Equality Act 2010</td>
<td>Set up a ‘caring responsibilities’ project to review current arrangements for both students and staff and make recommendations for future actions.</td>
<td>Estimated £6000</td>
<td>July 2011 to July 2012</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>Project is set up and completed by July 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>To seek to obtain specific equality-related student satisfaction information via the University’s Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS)</td>
<td>No specific equality-related questions currently asked as part of SSS</td>
<td>Work with the SSS Group to consider the development of equality-related questions to be included in the SSS commencing in 2012</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By December 2011</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>Equality-related questions are included in the SSS commencing in 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>To consolidate mechanisms within the University to enable disabled students to</td>
<td>Access Forum</td>
<td>Publish the role of the Access Forum</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Chair of Access Forum</td>
<td>Disabled students continue to actively participate in the</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.6</strong></td>
<td>To improve access to learning resources for disabled students</td>
<td>Student Satisfaction Survey 2010</td>
<td>To implement recommendations from disability library review</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultation with, and evidence from, disabled students</td>
<td>To feed information obtained from the review into the development of the new Skills Centre and/or Student Centre</td>
<td>By April 2013</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assistant Librarian</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Assistant Director, Student Support (disability)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recommendations are implemented</td>
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<td>This information is factored in to the development of the Student Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.7</strong></td>
<td>To seek to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to improve their employability skills through for example, study abroad, volunteering, work placement opportunities</td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>To develop written guidance for students and staff arranging placements and communicate this to departments</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>To ensure that those who take part in the recruitment and selection of Frontrunners have completed the University’s recruitment and selection training</td>
<td>By October 2011</td>
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<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dyslexia and Study Strategies Tutors</td>
<td>Guidance is written and communicated</td>
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<td>Frontrunners Project Manager</td>
<td>Recruitment and selection training is completed by all relevant people</td>
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<td><strong>2.8</strong></td>
<td>To provide information and guidance to teaching staff on inclusive learning and teaching methods</td>
<td>Feedback from consultation on Disability Equality Scheme, 2009</td>
<td>To continue to run ‘Developing Inclusive Learning and Teaching’ training courses</td>
<td>£1000 per year from E&amp;D budget</td>
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<td>Twice per academic year</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
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<td>Variable amounts from E&amp;D budget</td>
<td>Two courses are run per academic year</td>
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<td><strong>2.9</strong></td>
<td>To seek to provide an internationalised student experience for all students</td>
<td>International Strategic Agenda 2010-13</td>
<td>To contribute to the work of the International Student Experience Task Force (ISETF) and ensure relevant equality-related issues are raised and considered during the decision-making process</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A member of Equality and Diversity regularly attends ISETF meetings</td>
<td>A member of Equality and Diversity regularly attends ISETF meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.10</strong></td>
<td>To continue to promote and support equality-related events and activities organised by the Students’ Union (SU)</td>
<td>General Equality Duty</td>
<td>To contribute financially, where appropriate, to relevant events initiated by the SU and to promote via posters, the Equality and Diversity web site and other relevant means, appropriate equality-related SU events and activities</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Variable amounts from E&amp;D budget</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrable promotion of SU equality-related events by Equality and Diversity each academic year</td>
<td>Demonstrable promotion of SU equality-related events by Equality and Diversity each academic year</td>
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</table>
### Component 3: Staff

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To maintain the diversity of the workforce and deliver a fair and supportive working environment for all

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Number</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evidence Source</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Additional Resources</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
<th>Performance Indicator(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>To be better informed about the diversity of the workforce</td>
<td>Staff data</td>
<td>Introduce monitoring for religion or belief and sexual orientation</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Implement in 2011/2012</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>Monitoring process is in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>To introduce a system of monitoring and recording the reasons why staff leave the University</td>
<td>HR strategy</td>
<td>Monitor reasons for leaving from exit questionnaires to identify, and where possible take steps to address, equality-related issues and identify trends; Include equality data in exit questionnaires</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>A monitoring system is in place by Jan 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>To measure, monitor and take steps to improve staff satisfaction</td>
<td>Working Well Staff survey 2009</td>
<td>Survey staff on a regular basis, take action based on results of survey and communicate those actions to all staff</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Next survey completed by Dec 2012, then every three years</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>Surveys are completed, actions are taken and communicated, further surveys are planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>To ensure permanency and promotion procedures for academic and research staff are fair and transparent</td>
<td>Annual Review Procedures for Academic and Research Staff</td>
<td>Undertake a full Equality Impact Review of the Annual Review Procedures for Academic and Research Staff; To audit annually the equality profile of those applying for promotion, successful and unsuccessful candidates</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>May 2011 – May 2012, annually starting with data for 2010 / 2011</td>
<td>Equality Impact Review Panel, Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>EIR is completed by May 2012, Annual audit is undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>To ensure as far as possible, equality of development opportunities for all staff</td>
<td>HR Strategy identifies that further work needs to be undertaken to ascertain levels of</td>
<td>Audit access to Learning and Development events with respect to protected characteristics, where possible</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>There are no significant differences in attendance at L&amp;D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>Targets</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</table>
| 3.6 | To promote the University to disabled applicants as an employer of choice | - Continue to operate the Two Ticks system for all University posts  
- Continue to recruit participants to the work experience scheme for disabled people  
- Consider signing up to the Mindful Employer charter | None | Ongoing | Director of Human Resources | Increase in the number of participants to the work experience scheme for disabled people, disabled applicants and employees |
| 3.7 | To reduce the identified gender pay gap at Grade 11 | - To use positive action to encourage women to apply for senior positions  
- To undertake regular equal pay reviews and take appropriate action based on the results | None | Ongoing | Director of Human Resources | Gender pay gap at Grade 11 is reduced |
| 3.8 | To provide information and support for international staff relocating to Essex | - To continue to subscribe to, and promote, the International Staff website  
- To consider having an annual event to welcome new international staff | £1000 + VAT per annum | Ongoing | Equality and Diversity Officer, Chair of IMESF | Continued subscription to the International Staff website  
An event is planned for the academic year 2011/2012 |
| 3.9 | To give staff with an interest in promoting equality issues an opportunity to do so | - To put information about staff forums on the Equality and Diversity web site  
- To include information about staff forums in the Induction Programme for new staff | None | Ongoing | Equality and Diversity Officer | Information about staff forums is put on the E&D web site  
Information about staff forums is included in the Induction Programme for new staff |
### 4.4 Component 4: Services, facilities and information

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To promote and enhance equality of access to our services, goods, facilities, premises and information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Number</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evidence Source</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Additional Resources</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
<th>Performance Indicator(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>To continue to meet our statutory responsibilities under Building Regulations and in accordance with Approved Document M, or equivalent, regarding physical accessibility and exceed these as far as is reasonably practicable</td>
<td>Best practice - British Standards BS8300</td>
<td>To ensure access issues are properly considered, in line with best practice, when planning new buildings, adapted buildings and refurbishments Via the Access Forum, raise access issues for debate, investigate and follow up. Pursue issue of door opening and closing pressures Develop a set of protocols for ‘Issues of accessible design’</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Chair of the Access Forum</td>
<td>A representative from the Access Forum is involved in relevant projects Issues raised by staff and students are investigated and appropriate action taken, if possible Set of protocols is developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>To improve information for students, staff and visitors on physical access to the Colchester campus</td>
<td>Feedback from staff and students</td>
<td>To produce:-  - an interactive version of the Colchester campus access map  - an under podia access map  - a mobile phone app To provide clearer directions around Colchester campus, both internal and external, by implementing proposals for new signs</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>By April 2014</td>
<td>Chair of the Access Forum</td>
<td>Maps and mobile phone app are produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>To facilitate links with faith groups for staff and students based at the Loughton campus</td>
<td>The University currently has no links with faith groups in the Loughton area</td>
<td>Chaplaincy based at Colchester Campus to facilitate links in the Loughton area</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By April 2012</td>
<td>Chair of Multi – Faith Chaplaincy Centre</td>
<td>Links to providers of faith groups in the Loughton are facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>To seek to ensure appropriate, accessible parking is available at Loughton campus</td>
<td>Consultative exercise carried out in 2009</td>
<td>To provide designated accessible parking spaces at Loughton campus</td>
<td>From Estate Mgmnt budget</td>
<td>By April 2012</td>
<td>Director of Estate Management</td>
<td>Improvements to accessible parking are made at Loughton campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>To continue to provide excellent support services and seek to ensure staff and students are aware of what services are available and how to access them</td>
<td>Good practice</td>
<td>To review where on the University web site information about support services is made available, and make recommendations for change to reduce duplication and ensure consistency</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Student information by October 2012</td>
<td>Assistant Director of Student Support (Disability)</td>
<td>A web page dedicated to sources of support is published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>To provide staff and students with the information to enable them to make the best use of assistive technologies</td>
<td>Review of QAA Code of Practice Section 3</td>
<td>To review current practice, identify issues, and develop good practice guidance</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By April 2012</td>
<td>Director of ISS/Assistant Director of Student Support (Disability)</td>
<td>Review is completed and good practice guidance is produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>To seek to provide an equal opportunity for staff, regardless of which campus they are based at, to attend equality-related training</td>
<td>Good practice</td>
<td>To use video-conferencing technology, where appropriate, to deliver face-to-face equality-related training across multiple campuses</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>Equality-related face-to-face training is made available at least three times per academic year at Southend and Loughton campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>To enhance access to Human Resources for staff via the new Integrated Human Resources (IHR) system</td>
<td>HR Strategy</td>
<td>To implement the self-service element of the IHR system to enable staff to update their personal information, including equality-related information</td>
<td>IHR budget</td>
<td>By April 2012</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>The self-service element of the IHR is fully functional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IHR system is tested for accessibility with assistive technology
### 4.5 Component 5: Management and governance

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To ensure that major strategic decisions are made with an awareness of their consequences for different groups of people and those with managerial responsibilities demonstrate inclusive leadership behaviours

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<tr>
<th>Action Number</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evidence Source</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Additional Resources</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
<th>Performance Indicator(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>To encourage senior leaders to develop behaviours that define the ‘University of Essex Way’ of doing things in order to eradicate unwanted behaviours</td>
<td>Schneider-Ross Survey</td>
<td>To develop a set of inclusive leadership behaviours for all leaders and managers within the University</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>By March 2012</td>
<td>Dignity and Respect Group / Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>A set of leadership behaviours is developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>To provide managers with the skills and knowledge to manage fairly and effectively</td>
<td>HR strategy</td>
<td>To include equality and diversity in management training, including induction for Heads of Departments To encourage managers to complete the ‘Managing Diversity’ element of the on-line equality and diversity training course and monitor twice per year the numbers of staff completing it</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>Equality and diversity training is included in training for managers Numbers of staff completing the ‘Managing Diversity’ element is monitored twice per year and the numbers increase yearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>To increase the diversity of the senior management team</td>
<td>Schneider-Ross Survey</td>
<td>To identify female, disabled and international talent for promotion to senior positions by actively communicating and encouraging participation in management development activities</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>Diversity of the senior management team is increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>To seek to have as diverse a Council membership as possible</td>
<td>Equality profile of Council members</td>
<td>To monitor Council members by protected characteristics, taking steps to recruit those from under-represented groups where possible</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Chair of Council and Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>Diversity of Council is increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>To increase understanding of how the University’s policies and procedures have</td>
<td>Equality Impact Assessments Staff/student surveys</td>
<td>To encourage Heads of Departments and Sections, to conduct Equality Impact Assessments on the policies</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Officer</td>
<td>The discipline of EIAs is mainstreamed into</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>contributed to furthering the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty</strong></td>
<td><strong>and procedures they have responsibility for</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>To increase our understanding of our equality and diversity staff profile in relation to other HEIs in the 1994 Group and develop a target position and milestones</strong></td>
<td><strong>HEIDI data</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gather equality-related data for HEIs in the 1994 Group and use this to determine our current position</strong></td>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td><strong>By February 2013</strong></td>
<td><strong>Director of Strategic Planning/Equality and Diversity Officer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data is gathered, targets and milestones are set</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Decide who we want to benchmark ourselves against and set targets and milestones</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>To ensure information gathered demonstrates how the University is working towards meeting the general equality duty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equality Act 2010</strong></td>
<td><strong>Form a Working Group to look at what information is/should be gathered and analysed and to make recommendations to the Equality and Diversity Committee</strong></td>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td><strong>By February 2012</strong></td>
<td><strong>Academic Registrar / Director of Human Resources</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recommendations from the Working Group are brought to the February 2012 meeting of EADC</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>To continue to work with the Equality Challenge Unit, the Higher Education Equal Opportunities Network (HEEON) and the Eastern Region Forum of equality practitioners to determine best practice</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>To contribute to equality-related meetings of partner institutions to share information and best practice</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>To advise the Equality and Diversity Committee (EADC) of best practice to inform policy-making</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>To follow best equality practice in the HE sector and encourage our partners and those organisations we collaborate with to do the same</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strategic Plan 2009-10 to 2013-14</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where relevant, ask those tendering for a contract equality-related questions and factor that in to the decision-making process</strong></td>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ongoing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equality and Diversity Officer</strong></td>
<td><strong>Appropriate, relevant meetings are attended</strong></td>
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<td><strong>To include a clause in every contract that prohibits the contractor from unlawfully discriminating</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>To build equality considerations into our commissioning and procurement processes, where relevant, and ensure contractors are aware of their legal obligations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equality Act 2010</strong></td>
<td><strong>To continue to work with the Equality Challenge Unit, the Higher Education Equal Opportunities Network (HEEON) and the Eastern Region Forum of equality practitioners to determine best practice</strong></td>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ongoing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Director of Estate Management</strong></td>
<td><strong>Equality-related questions are asked and contractors are made aware of their legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010</strong></td>
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<td><strong>To contribute to equality-related meetings of partner institutions to share information and best practice</strong></td>
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<td><strong>To advise the Equality and Diversity Committee (EADC) of best practice to inform policy-making</strong></td>
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APPENDIX A: EVIDENCE BASE

A.1 Introduction

Our equality objectives, action plan and key performance indicators have been informed by evidence from a range of sources. The data collected is both quantitative and qualitative.

The equality profile of our staff as of 31 March 2010 and the equality profile of our students can be found on the Equality and Diversity website which also contains links to other evidence used to inform our objectives.

A.2 Equality monitoring

The University currently collects information on the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnic origin, nationality and disability from members of staff and students.

This information is confidential and is used anonymously to compile annual statistical reports, by protected characteristic, on the following:-

- Staff and student recruitment
- Those who make complaints
- Those who access services such as Student Support, the Careers Centre, The Harassment Advisory Network
- Student satisfaction
- Students who go through the disciplinary process

These reports are used to assist in the following:-

- identifying the need for training
- identifying areas where change or improvements to policies may be needed
- identifying unfair treatment or discrimination
- identifying potential areas where positive action may be used
- generating equality profiles
- measuring progress towards achieving equality targets

The reports are considered by the policy-owning section or department and by the Equality and Diversity Committee who can request further analysis or investigation and other reports as it sees fit.

The University is committed to reviewing its equality data collection and analysis to ensure the information it gathers and publishes demonstrates how it has complied with the general equality duty. The Equality Policy action plan contains a specific action to support this commitment.

A.3 Consultation and involvement

The University engaged in a variety of ways with a wide range of individuals and organisations in order to develop this policy, strategy and action plan. Significantly, three surveys were conducted from February to December 2009 which gave an opportunity for members of the University to communicate their views via focus groups, one-to-one interviews and anonymously on-line.

These were:-

- The Joint Schneider-Ross/ECU project: Dignity and Respect in a University setting: Evaluating the real ‘lived’ experience of employees, students and visitors (Feb – Sept 2009)
- The Working Well Survey (Nov/Dec 2009)
- The Disability Survey (May 2009)

In addition the Harassment Advisory Network Review Group undertook a comprehensive review of the Network from April-December 2010.
The following groups were consulted with during the process:-

- Equality experts from our partner institutions
- Equality experts at other HEIs
- Campus Trades Unions
- University of Essex Students’ Union
- Existing staff and student forums such as the Access Forum, the International Minority and Ethnic Staff Forum and the Dignity and Respect Group
- University Steering Group
- Staff from areas such as staff recruitment, student admissions, Accommodation Essex, Learning and Development
- All staff and students via an on-line portal

A.4 Equality Impact Assessments

Evidence was obtained from assessing the equality impact on areas of operation such as the recruitment and selection of staff, the admission of students and the student disciplinary process. Details of completed assessments can be found on the Equality and Diversity web site.

A.5 Other Evidence

A range of other evidence was used to inform this policy, strategy and action plan. This includes:-

- University Stonewall Guide
- Student Satisfaction Survey data
- Outstanding actions from our disability and gender equality schemes and our race action plan
- The work of The Access Forum
APPENDIX B: EQUALITY LEGISLATION AND DEFINITIONS

B.1 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaced the majority of previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of ‘protected characteristics’.

The protected characteristics under the Act are:-

- age
- disability (a detailed definition can be found in B.7)
- gender reassignment (defined as ‘where a person has proposed, started or completed the process to change his or her sex’. Individuals do not have to be under medical supervision to be protected by the law). A transsexual person has the PC of gender reassignment.
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief (religion is defined as ‘any religion, including a lack of religion’, belief is defined as ‘a religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief’)
- sex
- sexual orientation (defined as person’s sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex or persons of either sex. This means the Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people)

Staff and students must avoid discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic mentioned in the University Equality and Diversity Policy Statement, which includes those mentioned in the Act.

B.2 Types of Discrimination

There are four types of discrimination; direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All of these are illegal and are defined under the Act as follows:-

B.3 Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (discrimination by perception), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (discrimination by association). Under the Act, disabled people are protected from discrimination ‘arising from disability’ which occurs when someone has been treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability as opposed to ‘because of’ the disability itself.

B.4 Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a rule, policy or practice is neutral on the face of it but its impact particularly disadvantages people who share a particular protected characteristic.

B.5 Harassment

Harassment is defined as ‘unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual’.

Under the Act staff and students can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if the behaviour is not directed at them.

The Act also protects staff and students from harassment by people (third parties) over whom the University has no direct control such as contractors, visitors or staff of businesses or organisations hosted by the University. This is known as Third Party Harassment. N.B. As part of the 2011 Budget,
the Government announced that it would be consulting to remove the Third Party Harassment provision. The wording of this section of the Policy will be amended to reflect any change if necessary.

B.6 Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an individual is treated detrimentally because they have made a complaint about discrimination or harassment or have given evidence relating to such a complaint or because they are suspected of doing so.

B.7 Disability

A disabled person is defined in the Act as someone with a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Equality Act 2010 provides for certain people to meet the definition of disability without having to show that they have an impairment that has (or is likely to have) a substantial, adverse long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes people who have cancer, HIV infection, multiple sclerosis and people who are certified as blind, partially sighted, severely sight impaired or sight impaired by a consultant ophthalmologist.

What does ‘impairment’ cover?
It covers physical impairments and impairments affecting the senses such as sight and hearing. It also covers mental health conditions including learning difficulties and mental illness.

What is a substantial adverse effect?
A substantial adverse effect is something which is more than a minor or trivial effect and includes progressive conditions where impairment is likely to become substantial such as cancer, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and HIV infection, genetic disorder or other diagnosed disorder. The requirement that an effect must be substantial reflects the general understanding of disability as a limitation going beyond the normal differences in ability which might exist among people.

What is a ‘long-term’ effect?
A long-term effect of an impairment is one:

- which has lasted at least 12 months; or
- where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or
- which is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

What are ‘normal day-to-day activities’?
They are activities which are carried out by most people on a fairly regular and frequent basis. The term is not intended to include activities which are normal only for a particular person or group of people, such as playing a musical instrument, or a sport, to a professional standard or performing a skilled or specialised task at work. However, someone who is affected in such a specialised way but is also affected in normal day-to-day activities would be covered by this part of the definition. The Act gives the following examples of day-to-day activities

- shopping
- reading and writing
- having a conversation or using the telephone
- watching television
- taking part in social activities
- getting washed and dressed
- preparing and eating food
- carrying out household tasks
- walking and travelling by various forms of transport
Who else may be covered by the Act?
People with severe disfigurements are covered by the Act (tattoos and body piercings are not considered a severe disfigurement). Where a person has a progressive condition he will be covered by the Act from the moment the condition leads to an impairment which has some effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

B.8 Summary of Legislative Coverage

The table below is an at-a-glance guide to the coverage of the legislation as it stands in April 2011 (see B.5 above regarding the possible removal of Third Party Harassment provision). Under the University’s Equality Policy, any type of discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics will not be tolerated, regardless of whether it is covered under the legislation or not.

### Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covered by legislation</th>
<th>Not covered by legislation</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Protected characteristic</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Gender reassignment</th>
<th>Marriage and civil partnership</th>
<th>Pregnancy and maternity</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Religion or belief</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Sexual orientation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct discrimination in employment</td>
<td>A member of staff is treated less favourably because of a PC</td>
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<td>Direct discrimination in the delivery of higher education</td>
<td>A student is treated less favourably because of a PC</td>
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<td>Direct discrimination in the provision of services</td>
<td>A service user is treated less favourably because of a PC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discrimination by association</td>
<td>Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a PC</td>
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<td>Discrimination by perception</td>
<td>Direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular PC</td>
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<td>Indirect discrimination</td>
<td>Occurs when a provision, criterion, policy or practice disadvantages people with a particular PC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic</td>
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<td>Harassment by a third party</td>
<td>Employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don’t employ</td>
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<td>Victimisation</td>
<td>Someone is treated badly because they have made/supported a claim or grievance under the Act</td>
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Equality and Diversity at Essex, who can be contacted by emailing diversity@essex.ac.uk, can provide advice and guidance on good equality practice and the requirements and responsibilities arising from legislation.

The Equality Challenge Unit supports the higher education sector in promoting equality and diversity in higher education. Their website provides a wide range of information relating to each of the ‘protected characteristics’.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights. They offer information and guidance on discrimination and human rights issues via a helpline service.

The Government Equalities Office has responsibility within the Government for equality strategy and legislation. Their website provides details of existing and forthcoming equality legislation.

The Higher Education Equality Opportunities Network provide support, information, stimulation, validation, encouragement and sharing of good practice for those seeking to achieve and sustain equality of opportunity, diversity and widening participation in Higher Education, including matters relating to employment, career progression, student admission, retention and progression, learning and teaching, research and enterprise.