Equality and Diversity
Framework and Sub-Strategy 2015-18
Equality and Diversity Framework and Sub-Strategy 2015-18

Aim

The Equality and Diversity Framework and Sub-Strategy aims to ensure staff, students and visitors are aware of the University's values and our commitment to advancing equality in order to provide a fair and inclusive working, living and learning environment in which all members of the community are treated with dignity and respect and solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential. It is a means to show how the University intends to meet its obligations under equalities legislation. It is also a guide to staff and students who believe they are being discriminated against, harassed or victimised, to make them aware of the advice and support available to them and how to make a complaint of discrimination.

Summary

The framework

The framework sets out the University's responsibilities under equalities legislation and how we intend to meet those obligations by embedding equality and diversity, working in partnership with others, aspiring to achieve independent access to services and facilities for all, encouraging disclosure of protected characteristics and setting out the inclusive behaviours it expects from staff and students.

The Sub-Strategy and Action Plan

The Sub-Strategy has four Key Themes, each of which has one main aim. The action plan that accompanies the Sub-Strategy sets out the specific ways in which the University will seek to achieve the aim of each Key Theme.

Legislative responsibilities

Under the general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 the University must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. In addition we must publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty and prepare and publish equality objectives.

Harassment and bullying

The University expects all staff, students and visitors to be treated with dignity and respect and is committed to establishing an environment that is free from any form of harassment or bullying. Staff, students or visitors who feel that they are being subjected to harassment or bullying are strongly advised to seek and advice and help from the Harassment Advisory Network who offer a confidential signposting service.

Making a complaint of discrimination

Complaints about a member of staff should go to the alleged perpetrator's Head of Department/Section or to the Director of Human resources. Complaints about a student should go to their Head of Department or to the Proctor. Complaints about a visitor should go to the Head of the Department/Section the alleged perpetrator is visiting.

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Introduction from the Vice-Chancellor

I am delighted to provide personal endorsement of our Equality and Diversity Framework and Sub-Strategy. This document sets out an ambitious agenda to ensure that we are clear in setting out our values, in particular our commitment to being an inclusive and diverse community that is open to all who have the potential to benefit from membership of it, which ensures equality of opportunity for all its members and that treats all its members with equal respect and dignity at all times. This is essential for the success of our University.

This is not simply a matter of calculation – the need to ensure we are compliant with current legislation – it is a matter of conviction, because we cannot achieve the goals we have set ourselves in the University’s Strategic Plan without demonstrating these values and behaviours. In 2014 we appointed our first female Chancellor, Shami Chakrabarti CBE, Director of Liberty, the civil liberties and human rights organisation. Shami will represent us, work with us and back us to continue challenging inequality and make the world a better place. Shami has said “Aspire to be anyone’s equal but no-one’s superior” which provides a clear aspiration for members of our University community to live up to.

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.
Introducing Essex

50 years ago our founding vision was to be “freer, more daring, more experimental”, a principle to which we still hold true. Our bold agenda, set out in our Strategic Plan, focuses on a very clear mission: to contribute to society through excellence in education and excellence in research. The pursuit of our mission is underpinned by our core values, shared across our community and evidenced in our activities and behaviours. These values are: excellence; academic freedom; integrity; partnership; accountability; community, innovation; global outlook and inclusivity. Sustaining an inclusive and diverse community that is open to all who have the potential to benefit from membership of it, which ensures equality of opportunity for all our members with equal respect and dignity at all times is essential for the success of our university.

We have a proud tradition of encouraging students to challenge convention and think differently. We are a University where curiosity prevails, and where exploring new ways of thinking and pushing boundaries isn’t just encouraged, it’s expected. We celebrate diversity and are a genuine global community. With more than 130 countries represented within our student body and around 40% of our students from overseas, we are one of the most internationally-diverse universities in the UK.

We have a long-standing commitment to challenging inequality and promoting equality and diversity. 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. 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.

We achieved the Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Award in November 2013 and a Bronze Institution Gender Equality Charter Mark in September 2014, introducing mandatory equality and diversity training for all staff in February 2014, being a founder member of the Essex LGBT Alliance, launched in March 2014 and being one of only six universities to score ten out of ten in Stonewall’s Gay by Degree guide 2015. Applying for external recognition is an important means of signalling our values, our commitment to this agenda and is an impetus for further change.
Section 1: Introduction to the Framework and Sub-Strategy

Our Equality and Diversity Framework and Sub-Strategy provides an integrated framework to enable us to deliver the objectives set out in our Strategic Plan and help us fulfil our obligations under equalities legislation. To complement the Sub-Strategy we have a range of Codes of Practice which provide practical guidance for the purpose of ensuring compliance with legislation and our Equality and Diversity Policy Statement. These can be found on the Policy and Strategy pages of the Equality and Diversity web site. The Sub-Strategy was published in January 2015 and will be reviewed in January 2016 and has been approved by the University Steering Group and by the University Council. Comments or questions about this policy should be addressed to Equality and Diversity, email diversity@essex.ac.uk.

1.1 Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

The University of Essex celebrates diversity, challenges inequality and is committed to sustaining an inclusive and diverse community that is open to all who have the potential to benefit from membership of it and which ensures equality of opportunity for all its members. We expect staff, students and visitors to be treated, and to each other, with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender identity, 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.

The Equality and Diversity Policy Statement is included in all key University documents. This includes, but is not limited to, prospectuses, policy documents, student handbooks, The Rulebook, procurement regulations for suppliers, staff terms of appointment, recruitment literature, the University calendar etc. We have policies in place to enable us to take action against those who do not adhere to this policy.

1.2 How this Sub-Strategy fits with the University’s Strategic Plan

The purpose of the University is to contribute to society through excellence in research and excellence in education. In pursuing this mission the University’s activities, behaviours and decision-making are underpinned by the following core values, to which all members of the academic community that is the University subscribe:

Excellence, academic freedom, integrity, community, inclusivity, innovation, global outlook, partnership, accountability.

This Sub-Strategy is designed to support the achievement of the University’s strategic priorities by setting out ways in which we will create a culture, based on our core values, that is open and transparent, where individuals are valued and value each other, where inequality is challenged and diversity is celebrated.

Our Equality Sub-Strategy has four Key Themes:-

- Key Theme 1: Promoting equality and diversity: Making a difference
- Key Theme 2: The student experience
- Key Theme 3: The staff experience
- Key Theme 4: Putting equality and diversity at the heart of all we do

Each Key Theme of the Sub-Strategy has one aim and an associated action plan, which identifies how we will seek to achieve each aim. The action plan has been developed using evidence as detailed in Appendix A.
1.3 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 supported by the University Steering Group and the University Council, is responsible for ensuring that this Sub-Strategy is effectively implemented and that all staff, students and visitors are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the Sub-Strategy.

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.

1.4 Monitoring, reviewing and reporting progress

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing policy in relation to equality and diversity issues lies with the Human Resources and Equality and Diversity Group, which is an advisory group to the University Steering Group (USG), and the Education Committee which is a sub-committee of the University Senate.

The University Council receives an annual Equality and Diversity Report which provides an overview of the work carried out by the University Steering Group and the Education Committee.

Monitoring of the actions contained in the action plan against our Performance Indicators takes place throughout the year but is also formally reviewed annually. Progress reports will be published shortly after the completion of the review process. The Sub-Strategy 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.
Section 2: The Framework

2.1 Legislative obligations

Under the general equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) 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\(^1\) 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.

The Sub-Strategy sets out how we intend to meet our obligations.

2.1.1 Embedding equality and diversity

In order to support the delivery of institutional excellence in education and research, our two central strategic objectives, we will focus on putting equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do.

We will do this by ensuring that all members of the University community are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities under this Sub-Strategy and equalities legislation by offering a comprehensive programme of training, promotional activities and publicity campaigns.

We will also further develop our work to ensure due regard is given to equality and diversity in all our activities including policy development, procurement, planning and decision-making processes and actively seek opportunities to increase the diversity of staff in subject areas and roles where particular groups are under-represented.

2.1.2 Partnership working and engagement

We recognise the value of working in partnership with individuals, groups and organisations within and outside the University to share best practice and promote equality and diversity.

We will continue to develop existing relationships and seek opportunities to increase our community engagement work. Through our staff networks and the Students’ Union we will provide opportunities for staff and students to participate in and inform policy development.

2.1.3 Supportive community

At Essex, we don’t separate our students and academic staff, or our professional services staff from our alumni. Everyone is a member of our community for life. Our three uniquely intimate campuses encourage an inter-weaving of people, ideas and disciplines.

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 age, sex, marital status, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic background and transgender status.

\(^1\) Appendix B defines ‘protected characteristics’.
We expect all staff and students to not knowingly use language which may be deemed to be discriminatory or offensive to other members of the campus community or visitors to the University.

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\(^2\) and are unacceptable. The University has a zero-tolerance approach to instances of bullying or harassment. Zero tolerance means that (i) we will take action and (ii) the action will be proportionate to the circumstance of the case. Any incident of harassment or bullying 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.

2.2.2 Third party harassment

We make every effort to make all members of our community, including visitors, aware of the behaviour we expect from everyone 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

We have appointed and trained a network of Harassment Advisers who offer a confidential signposting service for staff, students and visitors who may be experiencing some form of harassment or bullying.

The Harassment Advisory Network is advertised widely across our three campuses in a range of ways. Appointments with advisers can be made via a confidential telephone helpline, by email or by text.

Our complete Guidelines for dealing with Harassment and Bullying, including contact information for a range of support agencies, can be found on the Equality and Diversity web site.

2.3 Access to, and provision of, services and facilities

Our aspiration is to achieve independent access for all both in respect of access to the physical environment and intellectual access e.g. access to information.

We provide a range of services and facilities on each of our three campuses. Some of these services and facilities are provided by the University and some 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 or training providers.

2.3.1 Equality responsibilities of service and facility providers

Staff of external businesses or organisations, and contractors, who operate on campus, must be made aware of both this Sub-Strategy and the University's Guidelines for Dealing with Harassment and Bullying, and be encouraged to act in accordance with them and with equality legislation. 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.

We 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 and on 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.)

\(^2\) 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.
University must be drawn up with reference to this Sub-Strategy.

2.4 Disclosure, confidentiality and the Data Protection Act 1998

We are committed to encouraging our staff and students to disclose information such as whether they have a disability, their sexual orientation and whether they have a religion or belief. Staff and students will be given as many opportunities as possible to give us 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 this type of information 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.

Our Data Protection Policy outlines our 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.

2.5 Complaints of discrimination

The University is a large community engaged in many activities. 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.

We offer 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 and its accompanying Codes of Practice.

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 the alleged perpetrator’s Head of Department or Section or to the Director of Human Resources;
- Complaints about a student should go to the Head of their Department or to the Proctor using a Formal Complaint Form which can be found at http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/experience/documents-stage2-formal-complaint.pdf

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

For formal complaints relating to any other kind of discrimination:

- Members of staff should follow the grievance procedures which can be found on the Human Resources web site at http://www.essex.ac.uk/hr/policies/grievances.aspx
- Students should follow the Complaints Procedure for Students which can be found at http://www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/complaints.aspx

Complaints about visitors or contractors should go to the Head of Department or Section the alleged perpetrator is visiting or, in the case of a contractor to the Director of Estate Management, in the first instance.

The University also has a Whistleblowing Policy which sets outs arrangements for individuals to raise serious concerns about malpractice or serious wrongdoings, including failure to comply with equality legislation, in ways
Section 3: The Sub-Strategy

3.1 Introduction

This Sub-Strategy outlines how we intend not only to meet our legislative obligations but to put equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do. The defining feature of the academic work of the University is ‘excellence with impact’ and we aim to deliver ‘equality with impact’ through a challenging action plan.

3.2 Underpinning Principles

The underpinning principles of this Sub-Strategy are:

- Every member of our community has rights and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity
- Every member of our community must be given an equal opportunity to reach their potential
- Decisions taken about staff and students must be based on merit
- Every member of our community should be treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect
- Our community should be one in which every member is proud to be a part

3.3 Key Theme 1: Promoting equality and diversity: Making a difference

AIM: To build the knowledge, understanding and commitment to equality and diversity of all members of the University community and promote a culture in which equality and diversity is celebrated.

Our approach to help us achieve this aim is:

- To seek to ensure that all members of our community are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities and legal duties in relation to equality and diversity by requiring all staff and students to complete relevant training and offering a comprehensive programme of awareness-raising activities and publicity campaigns.
- To make clear that we expect all students, staff and visitors to treat each other with dignity and respect and that we will not tolerate any incidents of harassment or bullying. We will ensure that we have appropriate procedures in place to deal with any complaints of unacceptable behaviour.
- For senior leaders to take every opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity and uphold the University’s Values.
- To give more prominence to equality and diversity by celebrating our achievements in this area, using a range of media, and focussing on how those achievements have made a positive difference to members of our community.
- To develop partnerships with key community equality groups to enhance our understanding of and engagement with, specific minority or marginalised communities and to promote the University as an organisation that celebrates diversity and challenges inequality.

3.4 Key Theme 2: The student experience

AIM: To appeal to a broad student market and provide a living and learning environment in which a diverse student population can develop as independent learners and globally-engaged, inter-culturally aware citizens.

Our approach to help us achieve this aim is:

- To ensure that our student recruitment literature is appealing to people with as wide a range of backgrounds, skills and qualifications as possible, seeking ways to encourage applications from members of under-represented groups wherever possible.
- To encourage prospective students to disclose information such as whether they have a disability, their sexual orientation and whether they have a religion or belief and to take a proactive and anticipatory
approach to providing relevant information and support, including reasonable adjustments, where appropriate

- In partnership with the Students’ Union, to provide a wide range of cultural and social activities.
- To seek to ensure that there are no barriers to any student from participating in an educational or co-curricular activity including arts, culture, sport and volunteering activities, work placements and studying abroad, because of a particular protected characteristic.
- To provide staff with the necessary training and guidance to effectively support our diverse student population in fulfilling their potential.

3.5 Key Theme 3: The staff experience

AIM: To recruit, develop, retain and motivate an increasingly diverse workforce through delivery of a fair and supportive working environment for all.

Our approach to help us achieve this aim is:

- To ensure that our staff recruitment literature is appealing to people with as wide a range of backgrounds, skills and experiences as possible, seeking ways to encourage applications from members of under-represented groups where significant imbalances have been identified.
- To undertake initiatives that encourage staff from under-represented groups to take up development opportunities and apply for promotion in order to increase the diversity of our staff population at all levels, but particularly at senior levels.
- To increase the percentage of staff who choose to disclose their personal information, through the use of positive messages and clear rationale for collecting the data, in order to be better informed about the diversity and needs of our workforce.
- To increase awareness of our equality forums and networks and encourage staff to participate in them.
- To identify, and fill, gaps in our provision of equality-related guidance in order to better support managers and to ensure that staff are treated fairly and consistently.

3.6 Key Theme 4: Putting equality and diversity at the heart of all we do

AIM: To ensure that equality and diversity are embedded in our decision-making processes and to continue to improve our equality performance through identifying, implementing and sharing best practice.

Our approach to help us achieve this aim is:

- To mainstream and integrate consideration of equality and diversity through policies and processes that support our mission to deliver excellence in education and excellence in research.
- To actively use equality monitoring information, and the staff and student voice, as a management information tool to inform strategic decision-making.
- To enable all members of our community to participate fully and equally in campus life by achieving excellence in all aspects of physical and intellectual access, exceeding our statutory responsibilities as far as is reasonably practicable.
- To ensure that the businesses and organisations are made aware of, and commit to operating in accordance with, this Sub-Strategy and equality legislation, taking that into account when considering whether to offer a contract, enter into a partnership or host an external service provider.
- To monitor the equality profile of our Senate and Council, and their sub-committees, taking steps to increase the diversity of their membership where possible.
- To benchmark our equality performance and to develop and share good practise, through engagement with national or sector-based organisations who specialise in promoting equality and inclusion and applying for appropriate equality-related awards.
## Section 4: Action Plan, Objectives and Performance Indicators

### 4.1 Key Theme 1: Promoting positive attitudes: Making a difference

OVERARCHING AIM: To build the knowledge, understanding and commitment to equality and diversity of all members of the University community and promote a culture in which equality and diversity is celebrated and actively promoted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Performance Indicator (s) and Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>For all staff to have completed Equality and Diversity training</td>
<td>To make completion of Equality and Diversity training a requirement of passing probation</td>
<td>By the end of the academic year 2014-15 probation requirements for all staff to include specific reference to completing Equality and Diversity training</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources/Head of Equality &amp; Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To identify existing staff who have not completed Equality and Diversity training and encourage them to do so by sending termly reminders</td>
<td>The percentage of staff completing Equality and Diversity training increases year on year. 100% completion by end of 2018</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity Course Administrators/Heads of Departments and Sections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>To ensure that all members of Council complete Equality and Diversity training</td>
<td>New council members to be informed of the requirement to complete the course and given instructions as to how to do so</td>
<td>All Council members successfully complete the course prior to attending their first meeting</td>
<td>Governance Officer/Head of Equality &amp; Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>To consider and implement strategies to mitigate against the effect that subconscious bias can have on fairness and objectivity</td>
<td>To develop and deliver Unconscious Bias training, specifically encouraging senior managers and those taking part in recruitment activity to participate</td>
<td>Training material is written during Spring Term 2015, with delivery commencing in Summer Term 2015</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity/Assistant Director of HR (OD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>To develop a ‘Celebrating Equality and Diversity’ communications plan to raise awareness of the impact that initiatives in this area have had on members of the University community</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity to work with CER to produce a plan that sets out how, over the period of this Strategy, successes and achievements in Equality and Diversity will be communicated</td>
<td>Communications plan is developed by end of Spring Term 2015 and implemented</td>
<td>Head of Equality &amp; Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>To ensure job applicants are aware of the University’s commitment to Equality and Diversity</td>
<td>To embed consideration of job applicants’ commitment to Equality and Diversity into recruitment processes</td>
<td>Update Recruitment and Selection, Equality and Diversity Handbook and Recruitment and Selection training during 2014-15 to include guidance on how to assess candidates’ commitment to Equality and Diversity</td>
<td>Resourcing Manager/Head of Equality &amp; Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>To increase the visible leadership on equality and diversity issues</td>
<td>Members of the senior management team to become Diversity Champions for particular protected characteristics</td>
<td>Diversity Champions introduced during 2014-15</td>
<td>Vice Chancellor/Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>To ensure appropriate support and mechanisms are in place to help staff and students who</td>
<td>To review the terms of reference and protocols of the Harassment Advisory Network, including considering changing its</td>
<td>Review completed by the end of the academic year 2014-15</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action No.</td>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Performance Indicator(s) and Timescale</td>
<td>Responsible person(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>To increase engagement with organisations that work to support under-represented groups</td>
<td>Identify appropriate organisations to work with, developing partnerships that are of mutual benefit to both the University and our partners</td>
<td>Engagement with mutually beneficial organisations increased</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2 Key Theme 2: The student experience

OVERARCHING AIM: To appeal to a broad student market and provide a living and learning environment in which a diverse student population can develop as independent learners and globally-engaged, inter-culturally aware citizens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action No.</th>
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<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>To continue to work in partnership with the Students’ Union (SU) to promote and support their equality-related events, activities and societies</td>
<td>To ensure links are fostered with relevant SU Sabbatical and Non-Sabbatical Officers and societies each academic year and opportunities to collaborate are identified and pursued</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity and the SU continue to work together on a number of equality-related events and activities each academic year</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>To better promote the University to under-represented groups</td>
<td>To identify ways in which publicity material can be used to showcase our commitment to equality and diversity</td>
<td>Our commitment to equality and diversity is given prominence throughout relevant publicity material e.g. prospectuses, web sites, social media and is considered within the University’s Access Agreement</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity/CER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>To support all students to create personal career paths</td>
<td>To provide accessible and engaging learning activities that enable all students to develop career paths and make informed choices&lt;br&gt;To identify employers and agencies who promote diversity and list them on the Employability and Careers website</td>
<td>A number of initiatives are supported e.g. bright futures.&lt;br&gt;The DHLE reflects the profile of our student community each year</td>
<td>Director of Employability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>To develop an inclusive curriculum and deliver excellence through appropriate pedagogical practice</td>
<td>To continue to develop resources, guidance and training to support staff in developing an inclusive curriculum</td>
<td>Inclusive design is integrated into curriculum design and approval documentation and the curriculum review toolkit. Documentation is regularly reviewed&lt;br&gt;A resource to support staff in considering equality and diversity matters through the Annual Review of Courses (ARC) is developed and widely publicised during 2014-15</td>
<td>Head of Learning and Development/Deputy Academic Registrar (Academic Standards and Partnerships)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>To reduce the ethnicity degree attainment gap</td>
<td>To horizon scan for best practice and research into what works, using an inclusive approach rather</td>
<td>Ethnicity attainment gap to be below the sector average</td>
<td>PVC (Education)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
than a deficit model
To build up a range of additional resources and guidance for all students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.6</th>
<th>To ensure all students are aware of the University’s commitment to Equality and Diversity and that it expects all members of the University community to be treated with dignity and respect</th>
<th>To work with departments to facilitate the provision of online Equality and Diversity training to all students and to identify appropriate ways in which this can be embedded within the curriculum</th>
<th>A year on year increase in the number of departments who embed Equality and Diversity training for students within their curriculum</th>
<th>Head of Equality and Diversity/PVC (Education)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>To encourage students to disclose information such as whether they have a disability or their ethnicity etc</td>
<td>To review, and update as necessary, the rationale given to students for collecting this data to ensure it is clear and to prompt students who do not complete this information at registration, to do so via the student portal</td>
<td>Non-disclosure rates below 10% by 2018 for all protected characteristics for which we collect information</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td>2.8</td>
<td>To consider equality and diversity within each of the Education Action Plan objectives each year</td>
<td>To provide prompts to consider equality and diversity, and direction to available resources, to those responsible for completing tasks listed in the Education Action Plan</td>
<td>Equality and Diversity implications and recommendations feature in the outcomes of objectives when they are reviewed</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity/PVC (Education)</td>
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### 3.3 Key Theme 3: The staff experience

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To recruit, develop, retain and motivate an increasingly diverse workforce through delivery of a fair and supportive working environment for all.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Performance Indicator (s) and Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 3.1        | To ensure there are no significant (more than 5%) pay gaps (for any of the protected characteristics) for staff at any level | To continue to regularly monitor pay data and take appropriate action based on the results. Next full equal pay audit to take place using data as at April 2016. | No gender pay gaps above 5% by 2016
No pay gaps in relation to any protected characteristic above 5% by 2019 | Director of Human Resources |
| 3.2        | To increase the representation of those from under-represented groups in senior positions | Continue to use positive action statements as appropriate when recruiting to senior positions
To promote our family-friendly policies on recruitment literature
To actively encourage women, disabled staff, and staff from minority ethnic backgrounds to take part in leadership development programmes
To ensure consideration is given to equality as part of appraisal and promotion processes | A continued year on year increase in the % of female Professors (24.1% as at 31/12/13)
A year on year increase in the % of Professors from an ethnic minority (12.4% as at 31/12/13)
The percentage of disabled staff in Professorial positions remains at least proportionate to their representation in the academic staff body (currently 6.5% of Professors have declared a disability and 4.6% of all academic staff have declared a... | Resourcing Manager/Assistant Director of HR (OD)/Head of Equality and Diversity |
### 3.4 To better support disabled staff through increased training for line managers in how to understand the needs of disabled staff

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<th>Performance Indicator(s) and Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>To embed disability-related training into management development programmes</td>
<td>A higher % of disabled staff report that they feel they are a valued member of the University community in subsequent staff surveys (30% agreed/strongly agreed with this statement in the 2013 survey) A higher % of disabled staff report that the University cares about the wellbeing of its employees in subsequent staff survey (30% agreed/strongly agreed with this statement in the 2013 survey)</td>
<td>Assistant Director of HR (OD)/Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
<td>To increase staff disclosure rates in relation to disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief</td>
<td>To update text on self-service system to ensure rationale for collecting this data is clear and to prompt staff at least annually to update this information To ask staff to provide this information at ‘pinch points’ e.g. when applying for promotion</td>
<td>Non-disclosure rates below 10% for ethnicity and disability. Non-disclosure rates below 50% for sexual orientation and religion or belief. Current non-disclosure rates are: Ethnicity 11.7% Disability 14.4% Sexual Orientation 74.2% Religion or Belief 72.2%</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>To provide managers with simple at-a-glance guidance related to managing diverse teams</td>
<td>To extend the range of ‘How to…’ guides to cover more of the protected characteristics and other equality-related topics</td>
<td>A suite of guides is produced during the period of this strategy</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>To understand patterns of staff engagement, by protected characteristic, in training and development activities in order to target activities appropriately</td>
<td>Use the Learning and Development Module of iTrent to extract management information about staff engagement in training and development activities</td>
<td>Beginning in 2015-16, and on an annual basis</td>
<td>Assistant Director of HR (OD)/Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>To increase staff engagement with existing staff networks</td>
<td>To encourage participation in existing staff networks through a targeted awareness-raising campaign</td>
<td>Increased membership and attendance at meetings</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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### 4.4 Key Theme 4: Putting equality and diversity at the heart of all we do

**OVERARCHING AIM:** To ensure that equality and diversity are embedded in our decision-making processes and to continue to improve our equality performance through identifying, implementing and sharing best practice.

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<th>Action No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Performance Indicator(s) and Timescale</th>
<th>Responsible person(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>To raise awareness of the importance of having a diverse membership of Senate, Council and their sub-committees</td>
<td>To introduce equality monitoring for all sub-committees of Senate and Council, actively taking steps to increase the diversity of their membership where necessary</td>
<td>Monitoring of the equality profile of all sub-committees of Senate and Council is introduced in 2015-16</td>
<td>Head of Equality and Diversity/Committee Chairs</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>To increase the percentage of non-white Council members</td>
<td>Use relevant networks to identify best practice and successes in increasing</td>
<td>Minimum 15% non-white Council members by 2017-18</td>
<td>Director of Strategic Planning &amp; Change/Head of</td>
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<td><strong>4.3</strong></td>
<td>To increase awareness of how to assess the effect/potential effect on equality of a policy or proposal</td>
<td>To review current equality impact assessment guidance and resources and update accordingly. Publish revised information and communicate widely</td>
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<td>Guidance reviewed and published by the start of the academic year 2015-16</td>
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<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td><strong>4.4</strong></td>
<td>To ensure due consideration is given to the effect/potential effect of proposals to introduce or change policies/procedures on equality and to record this for audit purposes</td>
<td>To ensure satisfactory completion of the section entitled ‘describe the effect/potential effect of your proposals on equality’ on Committee Cover Sheets, following up with authors of papers where it is identified that further consideration needs to be given to equality</td>
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<td>Minutes of Committee meetings record how equality issues were taken into account in decision-making, where relevant</td>
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<td>Committee Chairs and Secretaries</td>
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<td><strong>4.5</strong></td>
<td>To ensure early integration of an inclusive perspective when planning new buildings, adapting buildings and undertaking refurbishments</td>
<td>The Head of Equality and Diversity or his/her nominee to be represented on the Building Project Steering Groups (BPSGs)</td>
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<td>Existing access and equality issues are addressed as buildings are refurbished and due consideration is given to access and equality issues when planning new buildings, with the best possible alternatives being adopted</td>
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<td>Director of Estate Management/ Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td><strong>4.6</strong></td>
<td>To ensure equality and diversity issues are identified and addressed in activities such as the annual planning cycle and workload modelling</td>
<td>To include consideration of equality and diversity issues in induction training for Heads and in leadership development programmes</td>
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<td>Relevant training is updated accordingly during the academic year 2014-15</td>
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<td>Assistant Director of HR (OD)/Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td><strong>4.7</strong></td>
<td>To continue to be at the forefront of promoting equality and diversity, identifying appropriate benchmarks and charter marks against which to measure our performance</td>
<td>To work towards achieving further Athena SWAN and GEM awards and to engage with other initiatives designed to promote good equality and inclusion practice e.g. the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and the Race Equality Charter</td>
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<td>Continued success in achieving external awards and recognition</td>
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<td>Director of Athena SWAN/Head of Equality and Diversity</td>
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<td><strong>4.8</strong></td>
<td>To raise awareness that all individuals have multiple identities which has an impact on their experiences of, and outcomes within, higher education</td>
<td>To consider, where possible, the effect of multiple identities e.g. gender and ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation when exploring issues and developing solutions to improve the experiences and outcomes for staff and students</td>
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<td>Consideration is given, wherever possible, to the intersection of multiple identities</td>
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<td>Head of Equality and Diversity</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.

Statistics relating to the equality profile of our staff and 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

We currently collect information on the protected characteristics of age, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability from members of staff and students.

This information is kept confidential and used anonymously to assist in the following:

- Policy development
- Identifying unfair treatment or discrimination
- Identifying potential areas where positive action may be used
- Generating equality profiles
- Measuring progress towards achieving equality targets
- Identifying the need for training/development

The Human Resources and Equality and Diversity Group and the Education Committee receive and review equality-related information as appropriate, guided by assessment of the impact on equality of our policies and procedures.

We are committed to ensuring that due consideration is given to the effect/potential effect of proposals to introduce or change policies/procedures on equality. Our action plan contains a specific action to support this commitment.

A.3 Consultation

The following groups were consulted with in order to develop this Sub-Strategy:

- All staff and students via an online portal
- Equality experts from our partner institutions and other HEIs
- Campus Trades Unions
- University of Essex Students' Union
- Student Support
- Existing staff and student forums
- The University of Essex Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre
- External organisations such as Stonewall and the Equality Challenge Unit.

A.4 Additional evidence sources

Other sources of evidence used to inform this Framework includes:

- Focus groups conducted in March 2014 which considered issues faced by international and disabled staff
- Focus groups conducted as part of our Athena SWAN and Gender Equality Charter Mark work
- An all-staff survey conducted in 2012-13
- Harassment Advisory Network clients
- Outstanding actions from our previous Equality Policy & Strategy 2011-14
- The University’s Access Agreement 2014-15
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).
- 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 (or gender)
- 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)

* The University’s policies go beyond the requirements of legislation and protect a broader group of people than those covered by the term ‘gender reassignment’. Our policies cover all trans3 people, including those with non-binary gender identities.

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 appears to be neutral but its impact particularly disadvantages people who share a particular protected characteristic.

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3 The term trans is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex.
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.

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.

B.7.1 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.

B.7.2 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.

B.7.3 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

B.7.3 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 s/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 October 2014. Under the University’s Equality Sub-Strategy, 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>Key</th>
<th>Covered by legislation</th>
<th>Not covered by legislation</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protected characteristic</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Gender reassignment</th>
<th>Marriage and 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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct discrimination in employment</td>
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<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>
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<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>
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<td>A service user is treated less favourably because of a PC</td>
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<td>Discrimination by association</td>
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<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>
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<td>Direct discrimination against someone because others think they possess a particular PC</td>
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<td>Indirect discrimination</td>
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<td>Occurs when a provision, criterion, policy or practice disadvantages people with a particular PC</td>
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<td>Harassment</td>
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<td>Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic</td>
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<td>Harassment by a third party</td>
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<td>Employers are potentially liable for harassment of their staff by people they don’t employ</td>
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<td>Victimisation</td>
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<td>Someone is treated badly because they have made/supported a claim or grievance under the Act</td>
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