Strategic Equality Plan
2016-2020

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If you have any comments or feedback on this Plan, please email equstaff@aber.ac.uk or Dr Debra Croft (Director of Equality) on dec@aber.ac.uk.

This document is available on-line on the Equal Opportunities and Diversity website http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/equality/equality-reports/. It can also be made available in a range of formats, e.g. hard copy, Braille, large print, etc. on request. Should you or someone you know require this in an alternative format, please contact equstaff@aber.ac.uk

A Welsh version of this document is also available at https://www.aber.ac.uk/cy/equality/equality-reports/
Contents

Acting Vice Chancellor’s Foreword 3

1. About Us ........................................................................................................... 4
   1.1 Introduction 4
   1.2 About Aberystwyth University 5
   1.3 Our Diversity Profile 6

2. Legal Framework .......................................................................................... 8
   2.1 The Equality Act 2010 8
   2.2 Public Sector Duty for Wales 9
   2.3 Protected Characteristics (grid) 9

3. Aim .................................................................................................................. 10
   3.1 The Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives 10
   3.2 Engagement and Development 11

4. Implementation and Reporting .................................................................... 11
   4.1 The 6 Objectives 11
   4.2 Data 12
      4.2.1 Importance of data 12
      4.2.2 Uses of data 13
      4.2.3 Sources of data 13
   4.3 Reporting 14
   4.4 Communication 14

5. Responsibilities ............................................................................................. 14
   5.1 Introduction 14
   5.2 Council 15
   5.3 Executive 15
   5.4 Professional Development, Staffing and Equality Committee 15
   5.5 Institute Directors, Heads of Depts, Prof. Services, Managers 15
   5.6 Students and Staff 16

6. Linked Strategies and Policies ...................................................................... 16

7. Other procedures ........................................................................................... 16
   7.1 Equality Impact Assessments 16
   7.2 Procurement 17

8. Contacts, Feedback and Support .................................................................. 17
Foreword from the Acting Vice Chancellor

Aberystwyth University’s Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017 emphasises our commitment to creating opportunities: ‘to break down the barriers to access, supporting students and staff to succeed and grow’ and includes the importance of “Aber Values” including ‘celebrating the individual contribution of each colleague and each student, we work to enable all to reach their full potential and to remove barriers to success’.

This commitment is translated in to practice through the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) which sets out our commitment to promoting a fair, equal and diverse community for our students, staff and visitors. Each year we report against the current SEP in our annual Equality Report and publish this on our website, after approval and adoption by our governance structures. This Strategic Equality Plan (2016-2020) will inform the next University Strategic Plan covering the period 2017-2022. As a Welsh University, we currently implement a Welsh Language Scheme and will be complying with the new Welsh Language Standards, as part of our commitments.

Promoting equality is more than a statement of how the University will meet the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010: we aim for Equality to be an integral part of the way we conduct and deliver our activities and our interactions in our local community and when doing business. We strive to ensure that students, staff and visitors embrace equality and diversity as an essential part of how we operate and to embed this way of working in everything we do.

The Plan builds on progress made during the period covered by the previous four year plan and sets out six Equality Objectives, which were derived from staff and student consultations, surveys and focus groups.

In the current climate of economic uncertainty, particularly within the UK higher education sector, it continues to be important that the equality and diversity agenda is given a high profile and that we work proactively to change behaviours or practices which exclude or marginalise individuals or groups, deliberately or unintentionally.

Leadership and engagement at every level is vital to ensure that the Strategic Equality Plan is a success. We all need to make a positive effort to emphasise the benefits of our diverse population of students and staff, to enrich the life of the University and enhance the educational opportunities we offer.

I look forward to working with you to take these aspirations off the page, and into practice.

Professor John Grattan
Acting Vice-Chancellor
1. Context

1.1. Introduction

This Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) sets out Aberystwyth University’s continued commitment to diversity and equality, and our response to the Government’s Equality Act 2010 which promotes a fair, equal and diverse society. The Act aimed to address discrimination and harmonise, modernise and simplify equality law into a single legislative framework.

This second SEP responds to the advice and guidance set out by the UK Equality & Human Rights Commission in the “Is Wales Fairer?” document (2015) and advice letter from K. Bennett, EHRC National Director in Wales (Oct. 2015), building on initial work and reflecting on the PSED in Wales, by setting rigorous and measurable baselines data and goals. In addition, account has been taken of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015, and the consultation document for the Higher Education Funding Council in Wales (HEFCW) SEP 2016-2020.

The SEP addresses the University’s statutory duties introduced by the Equality Act 2010 and the enhanced Welsh Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came in to force in Wales on 6 April 2011 and applies to Welsh Universities. The PSED supports the Equality Act 2010 anti-discrimination legislation which offers protection to people with (but not limited to) the nine protected characteristics:

Race, Disability, Sex (Gender), Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion & Belief, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil partnership, and Pregnancy & Maternity,

and provides a framework for the continued implementation of legal requirements, as well as a continued commitment to equality, dignity and respect.

This Plan and the accompanying Action Plan (which contains benchmarking and measurable goals) are focused on the following six Equality Objectives, which represent key themes and priorities developed with our staff and students. They form the basis on which the underpinning phased actions (in the Strategic Action Plan) were developed and will enable the University to address some areas of concern in the student recruitment diversity profile and attainment gaps, as well as being able to better monitor staff data and make use of continuing improvements in records.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Key points from consultations</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1  | To embed the role of Equality and Diversity data in strategic decision making | 1. E & D to be standing item on Committee agendas  
2. ‘Buy in’ from senior staff / Exec  
3. Visible Equality Impact Assessments for all policies / changes  
4. Review governance / committee for Diversity  
5. Improve internal comms |
| 2  | To provide inclusive Learning and Teaching (including the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body) | 1. Training-academic staff (disability awareness, equality & language, alternative assessment, inclusive curriculum)  
2. Data - departments by protected characteristics (for recruitment, retention, progression, ‘good degrees’) Inclusion as LO in module design |
To attract, retain and develop a diverse and talented workforce

1. Promote diversity in external job adverts
2. Gender equality on panels
3. Training for managers and academics
4. Better support for staff with challenges within their teams and /or departments.

To attract, retain and develop sustainable research teams

1. Plan for the REF / research breaks
2. Equality represented on panels
3. Monitor Grad school data

To provide inclusive Estate and Facilities, encompassing Access in its widest sense

1. Prioritise accessible curriculum
2. Quiet contemplation spaces / faith spaces / for wellbeing
3. Better signposting externally and internally – colour coding, hi-vis lineage
4. Apply standards to al Campus’ / Locations
5. More training for estates and service staff

To communicate our commitment to Equality and Diversity both internally and externally and promote a cultural shift

1. Training, training–compulsory / compliance
2. Higher visibility through effective comms
3. Pool resources with local community groups
4. Make effective partnerships / best practice

1.2. Aberystwyth University

Aberystwyth University has a community of approximately 2,200 staff and almost 10,000 undergraduate, post-graduate, part-time and distance learning students from across the world.

Established in 1872, the University, since the last SEP, has undergone a re-structuring of its 18 academic Departments into six Institutes, with research an integral part of our mission and work.

The Institutes comprise:

- Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences
- Education, Graduate & Professional Development
- Geography, History, Politics & Psychology
- Literature, Languages & Creative Arts
- Management, Law & Information Science
- Mathematics, Physics & Computer Science
Our students, staff and visitors are supported by a number of Professional Service Departments as well as supporting facilities, such as the Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Sports Centre, Music Centre and the Nursery with childcare provision.

We work closely with our Students’ Union and the three staff Unions represented on Campus, and we pride ourselves on a healthy ‘Town-Gown’ relationship with our local community. In the last year, this relationship has been enhanced through a number of high profile consultation events concerning community access to University buildings and assets, as well as a number of ‘equality’ based activities. Given the dominance of the University in the local area, we are able to collaborate with and partner local organisations to deliver high quality events which support equality and diversity objectives. In 2015, the Director of Equality was appointed to work across all aspects of Equality and Diversity in the University.

The University is committed to providing students with high quality learning opportunities and a distinctive environment in which to study and live, from budget rooms through to our new luxury studio apartments. We are currently in the Top 50 Universities according to major UK employers (2015).

The University also has an established reputation for research excellence and is a member of the St David’s Group of research-led universities in Wales which work together to drive forward the knowledge economy in Wales. Our mission is to continue to be an internationally competitive teaching and research University which addresses global challenges and is responsive to the needs of the local community, the needs of Wales and the wider world. We have risen by 150 places in the QS world rankings and are in the Top 200 of International Universities (Times Higher Education, World University Rankings 2015).

1.3. Our diversity profile

The following information gives a brief profile of our students and staff as at July 2015:

A. Students

We have a current (2015) cohort of 7775 under graduate (UG) and post graduate (PG) students, and 2060 full-time and part-time distance learning students.
• For all our students (UG & PG and distance learning), 50% were female and 50% male;

• 77.5% of all students were under 25 years of age;

• 11.7% of our students disclosed a disability; just over 8% receive disabled students allowance; and

• 82% of our students declare themselves as ‘White’ (includes all white backgrounds), over 6% as Black and Minority Ethnic, and almost 12% not known or refused.

B. Staff

In July 2015 we employed just fewer than 2500 staff; 58% full-time and 42% part-time. The implementation of a new HR / payroll system (Pobl Aber People) has taken longer to embed than anticipated, but it is now demonstrating an increase in self-service update of records and the 2015 data is a good baseline to work with, with more improvements to follow.

• 51% of our staff were female and 49% male;

• During 2015, 48% of applicants for staff positions were female (52% male), but, of the successful applicants, 55% were female, showing high quality applications;

• Over 3.6% of our staff disclosed a disability;

• The declared ethnicity of staff (from 55 countries) was 91% White (includes all white backgrounds), 6% BME and 3% not known or information refused; 87% were UK nationals;

• The largest age profile of our staff remains 41-50 years of age, representing 26% of our staff although there is a difference between genders in age profile of staff;

• 29% of our staff are Welsh speakers (using the University’s own language levels as set out in the Bilingual Skills Strategy, Level 2 / 3) which is an increase from the previous year. Again the Staff Records system allows staff to update their records more simply and the data will continue to improve in accuracy.
2. Legal Framework

2.1. The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) consolidated many pieces of existing anti-discrimination law into a single legal framework. The majority of the Act came into force on 1 October 2010 and simplified, strengthened and removed inconsistencies that existed previously. The Act offers protection to people with **Protected Characteristics** which include (but are not restricted to):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Sex (Gender)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy and Maternity</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Gender Reassignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Religion or Belief</td>
<td>Marriage and Civil partnership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Act requires us to meet both ‘General’ and ‘Specific’ duties and covers groups which (prior to 2010) were protected (by a variety of legislation), extends protection to characteristics not previously covered, and strengthens particular aspects of Equality Law throughout the UK.

The three following General Duties were laid out in the legislation and relate to “day-to-day business”, ensuring we:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who do not.

As well as Direct Discrimination (being treated less favourably directly as a result of having a protected characteristic), the Act also laid out new duties such as indirect, associative and perceived discriminations, and harassment (direct or by a third party) and victimisation.
2.2 Public Sector Equality Duty (for Wales)

As well as the UK legislation, the nation states have additional or modified duties. Welsh-specific Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED) came into force on 6 April 2011, passed by the Welsh Government and, for Equality purposes, Higher Education Institutions are included in the scope of the provisions. The PSED included measures to ensure that the Act’s General Duties were met, but with some additional duties, such as implementing a social (rather than medical) model for disability support.

The Duties are designed to ensure that public services and employment in Wales are fair, accessible and responsive to people’s needs. Duties include the creating, publishing, reviewing and reporting of four year SE Plans and Objectives, after consultation, and reporting annually against the Plan, with a published annual report (by 31 March each year), including monitoring data, from 2013 onwards.

Also included are specific Duties such as:

- a gender pay gap measure,
- equality in public procurement, and
- the carrying out of equality impact assessments which consider the needs of people in all policies, practices and decisions.

The University recognises that it has a special responsibility for the Welsh Language and Culture. The Welsh Language Act 1993 and Welsh Language (Wales) Measures 2011 are not specifically included under the Equality Act 2010, but the University monitors the use of the Welsh language under these measures and has included the data in this Strategic Equality Plan.

2.3. Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 has nine ‘Protected Characteristics’ which are shown below, with some notes and clarifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Sex (Gender)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age is defined in the Equality Act 2010 by reference to a person’s age group. On 6 April 2011 there was a change in the law affecting retirement - in most cases workers can now retire when they are ready, rather than when their employer decides.</td>
<td>A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment (seen or unseen) which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People are protected from direct, indirect or associated discrimination.</td>
<td>In most contexts, this is the ‘legally defined sexual identity’ which is determined at birth as a binary male / female. A man or a woman – and therefore treating someone more or less favourably because of this identity.</td>
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</table>
### Pregnancy and Maternity

Protections within employment are more extensive than other areas (e.g. education).

Single parents, all couples (including same sex) are included in policies, as are adoptive as well as natural birth parent(s). The Equality Act 2010 explicitly protects students from less favourable treatment because of breastfeeding.

### Sexual Orientation

A person's sexual orientation towards people of the same sex, opposite sex or both.

Lesbian, gay and bisexual staff, students and visitors are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

### Gender Reassignment

Concerns trans people who propose to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) of having their sex reassigned. A person does not have to be under medical supervision to have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 is also relevant.

### Race

The definition of race includes:
- colour
- nationality
- ethnic origins
- national origins,

and discrimination relating to all or any of these.

### Religion or Belief

Religion or belief should be taken to mean the full diversity of religious and belief affiliations within the UK, including non-religious and philosophical beliefs such as atheism, agnosticism and humanism.

### Marriage and Civil partnership

Protection is for people who are married or in a civil partnership. It does not protect people who are single, divorced, widowed or have dissolved their civil partnerships. Protection is only in employment and not education, the provision of goods, services, etc.

### 3. Aim

#### 3.1 The SEP and Objectives

Aberystwyth University’s aim is to promote equality and diversity, challenge discrimination (through both our legal and moral duties and obligations) and to strive to ensure that no one is disadvantaged or faces barriers to success. The University aims to achieve equality of opportunity for all: staff, students and visitors, customers and suppliers, by addressing any potential discrimination.

In addition to our legal obligations, the University recognises the importance of communicating how it expects each of its students and staff to behave towards each other and to engender a spirit of respect and co-operation within the community, in which all have the opportunity to work, learn and flourish. We aim to ensure that equality and diversity are at the heart of the all we do and will set relevant and updated benchmarking goals based on our local context and the Wales and UK data.
3.2 Engagement and Development

This latest Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives, together with the accompanying Action Plan, builds on the work set out in the SEP 2012-2016, and other previous schemes. The Plan and Objectives were developed using an engagement and consultative approach with students and staff, and have taken into account progress made on the previous Plan and the context and geography in which HEIs now operate.

In developing our Equality Objectives and this Plan, a number of methods and sources were used to formulate the evidence base, including:

- reviewing current internal strategies, policies, and reports,
- attending meetings with the Welsh HEIs Equality Welsh Liaison Group (chaired by ECU),
- reviewing the HEFCW consultation draft SEP 2016-2020, and other relevant external organisations' Plans,
- four internal focus groups and consultation events held in different locations and at different times of the day, including one within the Students’ Union,
- an anonymised online questionnaire sent out to all staff and students, and
- consultation and input from the Equality Champions group, the Equality Charter-mark group, the Admin Forum, the Disability Co-ordinators’ Network, the Students’ Union sabbatical officers and advisers, and other internal fora.

However, consultation and engagement will be an active and ongoing process to ensure that further contributions can be integrated and the plan can evolve and become a living document. The Plan and further consultation shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Director of Equality and the Professional development, Staffing and Equality Committee of the University, and through the Annual Equality Report, at this Committee as well as the Senate and Council of the University.

4. Implementation and Reporting

4.1 The 6 Objectives

This plan outlines the objectives (formed for a four-year period) which will aim to deliver clear and specific equality and diversity benefits for students, staff and the wider community. The Equality Objectives listed below set out the overarching priorities, in maintaining and promoting equality and diversity for the coming period.

The Objectives should be read in conjunction with a step phased Action Plan, accompanying the SEP. The objectives will be reviewed at least annually and the Action Plan monitored, updated, reviewed and improved, subject to the relevant approvals as set
out in 3.2 above. Any agreed revisions will be published on the University website and staff and students alerted to any significant changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>To embed the role of Equality and Diversity data in strategic decision making:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>…by improved data collection and monitoring for all protected characteristics (in staff and students); and the development of robust benchmarking measures and reporting against these.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Objective 2</th>
<th>To provide inclusive Learning and Teaching (including the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body):</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>… by addressing any under-representation of groups with protected characteristics in application, registration, retention and progression; and developing improved support to staff to achieve student success, through inclusive teaching strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Objective 3</th>
<th>To attract, retain and develop a diverse and talented workforce:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>… by addressing the under-representation of groups, monitoring equal pay throughout the grades, and improving wellbeing and support structures, particularly through Equality and Diversity training (which both staff and students have clearly requested).</td>
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<th>Objective 4</th>
<th>To attract, retain and develop sustainable research teams:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>… by active monitoring of research team composition, training, support and progression, including working with the REF team early in the cycle to address research eligible staff and special circumstances.</td>
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<th>Objective 5</th>
<th>To provide inclusive Estate and Facilities, encompassing Access in its widest sense:</th>
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<td>… by continuing to improve our infrastructure (both physical and virtual) taking account of the needs of staff, students and our wider community and visitors.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Objective 6</th>
<th>To communicate our commitment to Equality and Diversity both internally and externally and promote a cultural shift:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>… by clear communications, excellent training, and improved knowledge and confidence in working with Equality issues in all aspects of University life, including governance structures.</td>
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### 4.2 Data

#### 4.2.1 Importance of Data

Equality monitoring is the process used to collect, store, and analyse data on protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. Monitoring is essential to ensure that the SEP is being delivered and that it is appropriate to the needs of students, staff and the wider
community. It will inform and improve evidence base: identifying inequities and imbalances, barriers and gaps, improvements made, and goals achieved – and in setting future targets and objectives to continue improvements.

Under legal obligations, an Annual Equality Report must be published by 31 March each year, reporting against the SEP, and set out the following:

- steps taken to identify and collect relevant information,
- how this information is used to meet the three aims of the General Duty,
- any reasons for not collecting relevant information,
- progress towards fulfilling each of the Equality Objectives,
- specified employment information, including information on training and pay,
- (in Wales) specified information on monitoring the Welsh Language Standards.

### 4.2.2 Uses of Data

Statistical data on the composition of the student and staff bodies for all the protected characteristics, where available, will be collected and analysed, and presented alongside the narrative of the Annual Equality Report. Uses of data collected will include:

- comparison with relevant demographic indicators (benchmarking) for the sector in Wales and the UK;
- assessment of the impact of the Strategic Equality Plan;
- identification of barriers in provision of service and support, and gaps in policy;
- planning appropriate actions to implement the SEP; and
- developing and planning future strategies and goals.

The University is committed to equal pay and a significant amount of work has been carried out in this area including implementation of a single pay framework for most of our staff (including a professorial grade) and completion of Gender Pay Reviews in 2006, 2010 and 2014. Revised policies for application for promotions and accelerated increments / contribution points have been put in place and these will be monitored and reported on.

### 4.2.3 Sources of Data

Information and statistical data is obtained from a variety of sources, including:

- student data from the AU records system and from HESA annual returns,
- reports and reviews from the Students’ Union (officers and staff),
- staff data from HR systems and HESA annual returns,
- staff recruitment monitoring forms,
- staff promotions and AICP applications,
- Welsh Language reports and data from the Centre for Welsh Language Services,
- student and staff surveys, consultations, and internal reports, and
- external organisations including WG, HEFCW, Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), and EHRC.
4.3 Reporting

Following the analysis and interrogation of data, an Annual Equality Report will be produced in order to inform actions and assess our progress against benchmarking and goals. The Director of Equality will be responsible for preparing and presenting the Report for comments and approval through the Committee structures of the University. The Report will include:

- progress made against the Plan and Objectives, with relevant key points;
- monitoring and analysis of student and staff diversity profiles;
- anonymised data relating to the above;
- relevant activities and partnership working which has taken place;
- any proposed revisions and recommendations; and
- any future legal or strategy developments which are being developed in the sector, Wales and / or UK.

4.4 Communication

The Plan, together with Annual Equality Reports, will be published bilingually on the Equality and Diversity section of the Aberystwyth University website, and made available in a range of formats on request to the Director of Equality in the first instance e.g. hard copy, Braille, large print, audio, etc.

Dissemination of information to specific service and academic areas will be carried out, such that those responsible for particular functions, e.g. staff recruitment and selection, student recruitment and admissions, retention and student success, are aware of the student and staff diversity profiles and the developing Equality landscape.

Part of the Communication strategy will be the development of flexible Equality and Diversity training (face-to-face and self-administered) using existing systems and working with CDSAP (or similar) and the ALTO e-Learning team.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Introduction

The delivery and achievement of the SEP and Objectives, through the Action Plan, are the responsibility of the whole community: staff, students, visitors and our local community. Every individual is required to adhere to the Strategic Equality Plan and is expected to apply its principles in their day-to-day work and activities, respecting the dignity and diversity of colleagues and peers and not engaging or tolerating behaviour that may be interpreted as discriminatory, harassment, bullying or showing lack of respect.
Such behaviour which comes to the University’s attention will be treated seriously and investigated under the appropriate procedures for students or staff. In the case of visitors or contractors, appropriate action will be taken in relation to the nature of the incident. Any member of the University who is the subject of alleged discrimination will receive advice and support during the investigation of their complaint.

5.2 Council

Under the University’s Charter and Statutes, the Council is the governing body of the University and retains the ultimate responsibility for legal compliance issues including monitoring the Plan’s implementation and ensuring its effectiveness. For this reason, the Council is responsible for approving the University’s strategy and has ultimate ownership of the strategy and implementation.

5.3 Executive

The Executive is responsible for the overall management and administration of the University with the Vice-Chancellor given ultimate executive responsibility for the effective development and implementation of the Plan. The Vice-Chancellor will provide a consistent and public lead on issues covered within the plan, in consultation with the Director of Equality.

5.4 Professional Development, Staffing and Equality Committee

The Plan and Objectives will be overseen by PDSEC. The Committee will consider the Annual Equality Report prepared by the director of Equality, containing the University’s equality data, monitoring of outcomes and progress in relation to the Plan, before recommending approval by Council and publishing on the University’s website.

5.5 Institute Directors, Heads of Departments, Heads of Professional Services, Managers

University Managers and those who line-manage staff have responsibilities for ensuring that procedures are carried out in compliance with this Plan. To support this, the Director of Human Resources is responsible for providing advice, guidance and support on the application of this Plan and Objectives in respect of employment matters.

The Director of Student Support Services has the same responsibilities in respect of student matters.
5.6 Students and Staff

Students and staff are required to:

- act in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED for Wales,
- act in accordance with the Strategic Equality Plan, as published,
- show consideration and respect to staff, students and members of the public using the University facilities and services, and
- inform their manager, tutor, or an appropriate member of staff, about any issue or situation which might adversely affect people in the exercise of their rights.

Staff are also required to use the resources available to make themselves more aware of equality issues and the Equality Act, through general and required training (the University’s Diversity E-learning Tutorial) or more specific training and development opportunities, such as Unconscious Bias in Interviewing, or Equality Basics for New Managers.

6. Linked Strategies and Policies

The Strategic Equality Plan is not a stand-alone document. It has close links to a number of key strategies and plans, for example (but not limited to):

- The University’s Strategic Plan
- Teaching and Learning Strategy
- Student Success plans
- Admissions policy for Disabled Students
- Policy on Reasonable adjustments for Disabled students
- The Fee Plan and Widening Access
- Finance and Planning documents
- Risk Registers
- The Welsh Language Scheme
- Estates Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Dignity and Respect at Work, and Harassment Policies
- Family Friendly Policies
- Flexible Working
- Capability Policies
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policies
- Managing Sickness Absence Policy

Copies of related policies and procedures for staff are available on the HR website and for student information on the Student Support Services website. Links from the Equality and Diversity webpages will be developed to all relevant University policies, following a website update.

7. Other procedures

7.1 Equality Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessments aim to ensure that policies, practices and decisions are fair to all groups of people and do not impact adversely on them in any way. This process also ensures that inclusive processes and strategies are developed and that decisions are based on robust evidence. The University has developed a process for assessing the impact of its policies and
practices, together with guidance on good policy formation. Any assessments shown to have “substantial impact”, i.e. considerable evidence that certain groups could or are affected by a policy or decision, are to be published.

EIA work is highlighted as an area for increased vigilance by EHRC in SEPs for 2016-2020 and this is included in the Action Plan as an ongoing action point.

### 7.2 Procurement

The University recognises that procurement is a way of influencing other bodies and individuals to review their own equality practices. The Welsh Government Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQuID) is available to the Welsh Public Sector to assist purchasing practitioners (within Higher Education and beyond) to address the obligations to promote equality in all their functions and to fulfil statutory provisions. This process includes an equality related question set within the SQuID that is completed by suppliers bidding against tender opportunities managed directly by the Finance department.

Presently, budget holders choose whether the questions around equality are asked or not in their tenders however the Procurement Team will, as part of its update to its tender template (in the current financial year i.e. before 31/07/16) include mandatory equality questions as minimum required standards in all tender documents directly managed by the Procurement team and encourage use of the template by other devolved purchasers who undertake their own tenders.

We shall continue to raise awareness of the importance of equality in all aspects of University procurement business and seek to ensure that the terms of contracts with outside providers of goods or services (public, private company or voluntary organisation) assess compliance with relevant equalities legislation, as well as Site conduct and Dignity and Respect at work policies.

### 8. Contacts, Feedback and Support

If any:
- student,
- member of staff, or
- visitor.

would like further information about our Strategic Equality Plan, Objectives and Action Plan, or wishes to offer feedback, or receive this information in another format, please contact:
The Director of Equality in the first instance, on equstaff@aber.ac.uk, or telephone on 01970 621890 (the Centre for Widening Participation, Equality and Social Inclusion).

Advice and support for staff is available through the Director of Human Resources, other HR staff, departmental line managers and recognised Campus Trades Union representatives, as well as the Director of Equality. The Human Resources Department also offers mediation, occupational health advice, and external counselling services.

Students may obtain advice and support from a range of staff, advisers and mentors within Student Support Services, the Director of Equality and Students' Union representatives and staff.

Students and staff may also contact external bodies for advice, such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Equality Challenge Unit, and locally, Ceredigion Voices for Equality.