



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2022-23

Authors: Elaine Browne, Director of Inclusion
Bhavya Jhavevi, Senior Inclusion Manager & EDI Lead

Publication date: 21st February 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Our commitment to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion	4
Our Equality Objectives	5
<hr/>	
Equality Objective 1: Continue to monitor, analyse, and publish gender and ethnicity pay gaps, as a basis for adjustments to policy and practice to close any gaps.	5
Equality Objective 2: To ensure equality and diversity in relation to student outcomes and measures of student success.	10
Equality Objective 3: Benchmark our inclusive environment against internal and external recognition frameworks including Vitae, AdvanceHE, Stonewall, University of Sanctuary, Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter and Mental Health Charter.	32
Equality Objective 4: Increase diversity of representation at all levels of the organisation so that the University represents the community its serves and encourages these communities to reach their potential (People Supporting Strategy 2025)	37
Equality Objective 5: Promote our institutional commitment to an inclusive working environment to every member of our community so that we can create a workplace which enables its people to do their best (People Supporting Strategy to 2025).	50
Conclusion	58
Appendix A: The University approach to external assurance and benchmarking diversity schemes	59
<hr/>	
Background	59
Appendix B	63
Appendix C: Table 21: Academic Leadership roles considered in Table 18	64
Appendix D: Blogs by Inclusion Champions in Reporting Period	65
<hr/>	

Introduction

1. At Essex, we have a strong commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), and we continue to embed EDI across all of our activities and areas of work. We are committed to promoting a culture of belonging, fostering a community that is inclusive of a range of different voices, views and ideas within the law, and creating an environment where members of our community treat each other with dignity and respect.
2. The University has a statutory requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to have due regard under the PSED to eliminate discrimination, advance equity of opportunity and foster good relations. This includes publishing information annually (including our equality objectives) to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty, including information related to people who share a protected characteristic and people affected by the University's policies and practices.
3. The 2022-23 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report:
 - Summarises EDI related information and activities relating to the year of the report;
 - Identifies highlights and trends;
 - Reports progress made towards achieving the University's equality objectives, including any challenges; and
 - Sets out priorities for the following year.
4. This report also outlines how we seek to meet, and in some cases, exceed our minimum legal obligations. It explains how, through our values-led leadership approach, we identify and address discriminatory practice or behaviour and promote inclusive practices.
5. This report updates on progress made since our 2021-22 EDI annual report, focussing on key achievements and any challenges during the reporting period in question and includes updates up to 29 November 2023. The report sets out our priorities for academic year 2023-24.

Our commitment to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

6. Our institutional statement on academic freedom of speech and freedom of speech within the law¹ makes clear that we convene difficult and sometimes uncomfortable conversations on our campuses through our teaching and research and extra-curricular events. It also states that we are committed to enabling people to speak freely within the law by providing a supportive and inclusive environment, within which people can expect to learn, grow, and develop through challenge. As a community this means that we may encounter ideas or arguments which may be experienced as objectionable or offensive, with a line drawn at speech and conduct which is unlawful or contrary to the University's policies. An update on how we have been preparing members of our community for the new Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 can be found in paragraphs 93-95.
7. Intersectionality continues to be woven across our various EDI workstreams, evidenced especially in our Equality Charter work, where we have analysed outcomes and experiences at different nexuses of identity and developed actions to address any gaps. Tackling all forms of discrimination including racism, misogyny and violence against women, Islamophobia, and antisemitism, as well as addressing issues around accessibility, remain priority areas. Good progress has been made, and the work to foster an inclusive environment is ongoing.
8. Our EDI Policy 2019-25 sets out our approach, in the context of our institutional mission, values and objectives as stated in our University's People Supporting Strategy to 2028, our Education and Research Strategies and our obligations within equalities legislation. Our EDI policy also outlines our principles of inclusion and fairness to create a sense of belonging and inclusivity amongst all members of our community and is a means to ensure everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities. It is included in all key University documents including student prospectuses and handbooks, student admissions policies, staff recruitment literature, and employment policies.

¹ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/about/academic-freedom-and-freedom-of-speech>

Our Equality Objectives

9. We are continuing to embed EDI across the range of the University’s activities. This is set out in the context of our University Strategic Plan, Education Strategy and Research Strategy. Equality objectives and performance indicators have been agreed and included within the People Supporting Strategy to 2028. The following five objectives and related performance indicators are those we believe will have the most significant potential to contribute towards sustainable, cultural change.

Equality Objective 1: Continue to monitor, analyse, and publish gender and ethnicity pay gaps, as a basis for adjustments to policy and practice to close any gaps.

Performance Indicator: To reduce our institutional mean gender pay gap from 17.6% as at March 2018 to under 5% by 2025 and to have no significant pay gaps (>5%) in relation to other protected characteristics.

10. As an employer with 250 or more employees, we are subject to the gender pay gap (GPG) reporting regulations. This means that we are required to publish annually the following information about our gender pay gap:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Gender bonus pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisations pay structure.

Table 1: Summary of pay gaps for the last three academic years

	31-Mar-21			31-Mar-22			31-Mar-23		
Mean Hourly Rate	£23.59	£19.84	15.90 %	£23.85	£20.24	15.10 %	£25.19	£21.42	14.97 %

	31-Mar-21			31-Mar-22			31-Mar-23		
Median Hourly Rate	£22.08	£17.97	18.60 %	£22.41	£18.24	18.60 %	£23.22	£19.32	16.80 %
Mean Bonus	N/A	N/A	N/A	£752.69	£606.24	19.46 %	£920.24	£850.30	7.60%
Median Bonus	N/A	N/A	N/A	£500.00	£500.00	0.00%	£750.00	£750.00	0.00%

11. Table 1 highlights that our statutory mean GPG has continued to reduce, from 15.10% in March 2022 to 14.97% in March 2023. Our median GPG had remained at 18.60% since March 2020, but we are pleased to report that it has decreased for the first time since then to 16.80% in 2023.
12. The most recent sector level data from Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that the median GPG for all Higher Education institutions (HEIs) was 13.7% (down from 16.2% the year before). No sector data was available in 2019-20 due to the impact of the pandemic.
13. The University annual review process provides a mechanism through which exceptional performance can be recognised through the award of a one-off bonus payment. In addition to the statutory requirement to report on the mean and median bonus pay gap, the University also monitors the proportions of staff in receipt of bonuses by gender.

Table 2: Percentage of staff awarded a bonus in academic year 2022-23

Male	9.06%
Female	12.71%

14. This distribution is consistent with previous years in that women are more likely to be awarded a bonus.

Table 3: Staff in each hourly pay quartile in last three years

	2021		2022		2023	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Lower	33.0%	67.0%	34.8%	65.2%	34.9%	65.1%
Lower Middle	36.0%	64.0%	36.2%	63.8%	36.5%	63.5%
Upper Middle	45.9%	54.1%	47.5%	52.5%	44.5%	55.5%
Upper	57.7%	42.3%	57.2%	42.8%	58.2%	41.8%

15. There has been limited change between years in the data relating to the proportion of men and women in each pay quartile. However, the decreases in the proportions of women in the lower (-0.1%) and lower middle (-0.3%) quartiles together with the increase in the proportion of women in the upper middle quartile (+3.0%) have helped to close the median pay gap.
16. The statutory GPG figures at Essex from March 2023 show a continuation of the trend of year-on-year reductions to the mean GPG. While encouraging progress has been made, neither the mean nor the median pay gap is yet sufficient to ensure that we meet our strategic commitment to reduce all pay gaps to below 5% by 2025. In addition to work on supporting staff in grades 1 – 4 with making bonus applications, working with the Women’s Network to raise awareness of the annual review process, and reviewing recruitment panel training to embed information about equitable hiring practices, we will continue to look at how we can improve the median pay gap, including a focus on the imbalance in the gender split within grade groups where this is contributing to the GPG.

Ethnicity and disability pay gaps

17. Analysis of the pay gaps for ethnicity shows that there is a 6.39% difference in favour of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E.) staff compared to White staff as at 31 March 2023. This is compared to 8.34% in the previous year. This positive gap arises because the majority of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff are employed in academic jobs, which are paid at the upper end of the pay scale (Grades 7-11). It is important to note that as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff make up a relatively small proportion of the total staff, the mean pay gap is more easily impacted by small changes within the cohort. This pattern continues from last year. Whilst there is a disclosure rate of 83%, we would still like to see this figure improve.

18. When looking at the pay gap for colleagues who disclose that they are disabled, the pay gap is 1.13% against those with a disability compared to colleagues who disclose that they are not disabled. It is also of note that there is a high non-disclosure rate for disability (53.5%)², so this figure is more easily affected by a change affecting a small number of disabled staff as the change will represent a significant proportion of the population for whom information has been declared.
19. Work to increase the number of ethnicity categories used within our reporting framework has started, with a view to removing any barriers to disclosure that might have arisen from the categories currently in use. In addition to our regular cycle of 'Your Profile Counts' campaigns (which help staff understand why we collect EDI data and provides reassurance on how we use it and how we keep data safe) this development will help to increase disclosure rates.

Equality Pay Gaps Working Group

20. The University is committed to equal pay for work of equal value and has been working steadily to reduce pay gaps. To build upon the good work that was already underway, an Equality Pay Gaps Working Group was established for the academic year 2022-23 to consider data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps, including in the context of intersectional identities. The Group, led by the Director of Inclusion, included Trade Union representatives, Inclusivity Leads, Chairs of Staff Networks/forums, other members of the Inclusion team and members of the Management Information team. The Inclusion Champion for Sex, Gender, Pregnancy Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership provided oversight and support at Executive level.
21. The Group met monthly and considered a wide range of data sets from different stages of the employee lifecycle and also invited members from different sections of People and Culture to understand current processes and any ongoing work in these areas to improve outcomes for protected groups.
22. Based on the analysis undertaken, the Group developed a number of recommendations to further address equality pay gaps at the University. Some recommendations overlap with existing workstreams, such as those being progressed as part of the University's Race Equality Charter and Athena Swan action plans, and some recommendations are embedded into GPG reporting to ensure that they are taken forward and monitored through that process. Recommendations from the Group focussed on enhancing recruitment practices, through the provision of additional training and pay gap data to all recruiting managers; support for making bonus applications, including offering training sessions targeted at staff in grades 1 – 4 who have the lowest propensity to seek awards through the annual review process; disclosure reporting, by ensuring consistent language is used wherever EDI data disclosure is

² For those included in the gender pay gap calculations.

mentioned, and lastly, by continuing to raise awareness of the importance of disclosure through Your Profile Counts campaigns.

23. These actions have supplemented those identified following the Gender Pay Gap Report 2023, including: the identification of benchmarking data sources to better understand our institutional position compared to other similar institutions; the creation of a Women in STEM micro-site to promote women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects and attract more women to apply for roles in these disciplines; and the establishment of roundtables arranged by the Women's Network to raise awareness of the annual review process. The impact of all these actions will be assessed in our 2025 and future GPG reporting.

Equality Objective 2: To ensure equality and diversity in relation to student outcomes and measures of student success.

Performance Indicator: By 2022, to have no significant (> 5%) equality awarding gaps for measures of student success at institutional level; and to maintain this through the period 2022-25 (University Strategy KPI 6)

24. As set out in our Education Strategy 2019-28, student success is at the heart of our mission. Our aim is to ensure that our curriculum and our approach to assessment supports every student from every background to achieve outstanding outcomes. We have set ourselves ambitious targets, one of which is to have no significant equality attainment gaps for measures of student success at institutional level. The measures of student success are progression and degree outcomes. These are assessed based on protected characteristics (including Age, Disability, Ethnicity, Sex) and socio-economic background (Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)). A further annual report on Access and Continuation is submitted to Education Committee in Spring term, and this report will continue.
25. In the analyses below, across Undergraduate (UG), Postgraduate Taught (PGT), and Postgraduate Research (PGR) levels of study, student outcomes and progression status data from academic year (AY) 2022-23 has been compared primarily to data from AY 2018-19. This enables us to assess data from the most recent year against outcomes achieved prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Undergraduate Students

Table 4: Registered Undergraduate Students over the past five years for Ethnicity, UK and Non-UK

Domicile	Ethnicity	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Domicile	Grand Total	12,816	100%	13,671	100%	14,235	100%	13,670	100%	12,850	100%
	White	6,520	51%	6,865	50%	7,152	50%	6,747	49%	6,089	47%
	Black	2,221	17%	2,489	18%	2,716	19%	2,673	20%	2,459	19%
	Asian	1,406	11%	1,478	11%	1,471	10%	1,395	10%	1,421	11%
	Chinese	1,184	9%	1,238	9%	1,152	8%	993	7%	1,076	8%
	Mixed	695	5%	742	5%	811	6%	778	6%	717	6%
	Other	394	3%	460	3%	481	3%	497	4%	517	4%
	Unknown	396	3%	399	3%	452	3%	587	4%	571	4%
UK Domicile	Grand Total	8,740	100%	9,300	100%	9,845	100%	9,630	100%	8,840	100%
	White	4,645	53%	4,860	52%	5,215	53%	5,165	54%	4,835	55%
	Black	2,005	23%	2,240	24%	2,425	25%	2,375	25%	2,160	24%
	Asian	1,010	12%	1,060	11%	1,020	10%	925	10%	835	9%
	Chinese	90	1%	95	1%	90	1%	75	1%	60	1%
	Mixed	570	7%	610	7%	650	7%	630	7%	565	6%
	Other	230	3%	250	3%	260	3%	235	2%	220	3%
	Unknown	190	2%	185	2%	185	2%	225	2%	165	2%
Non-UK Domicile	Grand Total	4,075	100%	4,370	100%	4,395	100%	4,055	100%	4,015	100%

Domicile	Ethnicity	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	White	1,875	46%	2,005	46%	1,940	44%	1,585	39%	1,260	31%
	Black	215	5%	250	6%	290	7%	295	7%	295	7%
	Asian	400	10%	415	10%	450	10%	470	12%	585	15%
	Chinese	1095	27%	1140	26%	1065	24%	920	23%	1025	26%
	Mixed	125	3%	130	3%	160	4%	155	4%	155	4%
	Other	165	4%	210	5%	225	5%	265	7%	300	8%
	Unknown	205	5%	210	5%	270	6%	365	9%	400	10%
% Gap (UK - Non-UK)	White	7.1%		6.4%		8.9%		14.5%		23.3%	
	Black	17.6%		18.4%		18.0%		17.4%		17.1%	
	Asian	1.8%		1.9%		0.2%		-2.0%		-5.2%	
	Chinese	-25.9%		-25.1%		-23.3%		-21.9%		-24.8%	
	Mixed	3.4%		3.6%		3.0%		2.7%		2.5%	
	Other	-1.4%		-2.1%		-2.5%		-4.1%		-5.0%	
	Unknown	-2.8%		-2.8%		-4.2%		-6.7%		-8.1%	

26. In AY 2022-23, there was a 6% decrease in our registered Undergraduate population, from 13,670 in 2021-22 to 12,850 in 2022-23. The largest decrease was in students identifying as White: our population went from 6,747 in 2021-22 to 6,089 in 2022-23, which represents a decrease of 9.8%. However, the proportions of each ethnic group across our UG student population have remained broadly consistent over the last five years.
27. In our UK-domiciled student population, the proportions of each ethnic group across the UG population have also remained consistent across the last five years. White students and Black students remain the largest groups, making up 54.7% and 24.4% of UK-domiciled UG student population respectively.
28. The population of non-UK domiciled Asian, Mixed, and Other students has increased year-on-year since AY 2020-21. In AY 2022-23, non-UK domiciled Asian students made up 14.6% of our non-UK domiciled UG population. In contrast, over the same time period, there has been

a decrease in the proportion of non-UK domiciled White students, from 44.1% in AY 2020-21 to 31.4% in AY 2022-23.

Table 5: Undergraduate Progression Status

Ethnicity	Progression Status	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asian	Successful	1,025	82%	1,170	83%	1,250	85%	1,215	83%	1,060	76%	1,040	73%
	Repeat	95	8%	100	7%	85	6%	135	9%	145	10%	130	9%
	Unsuccessful	125	10%	135	10%	140	9%	120	8%	190	14%	225	16%
	Unknown					0	0%					20	1%
Black	Successful	1,620	79%	1,730	78%	2,100	84%	2,125	78%	1,960	73%	1,845	75%
	Repeat	265	13%	285	13%	235	9%	395	15%	405	15%	325	13%
	Unsuccessful	175	9%	205	9%	155	6%	195	7%	305	11%	225	9%
	Unknown	0	0%							0	0%	60	2%
Chinese	Successful	730	77%	820	69%	945	76%	975	85%	770	77%	905	83%
	Repeat	40	4%	85	7%	30	2%	65	6%	50	5%	45	4%
	Unsuccessful	180	19%	285	24%	265	21%	115	10%	170	17%	125	11%
	Unknown									0	0%	15	1%
Mixed	Successful	510	80%	545	78%	635	85%	655	80%	610	78%	550	76%

Ethnicity	Progression Status	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Other	Repeat	50	8%	70	10%	50	7%	85	10%	90	12%	80	11%
	Unsuccessful	80	13%	80	12%	60	8%	75	9%	80	10%	85	12%
	Unknown											10	1%
	Successful	255	75%	280	71%	360	78%	365	76%	345	70%	350	67%
Unknown	Repeat	25	7%	45	11%	30	7%	45	9%	60	12%	40	8%
	Unsuccessful	55	16%	70	18%	70	15%	75	16%	90	18%	125	24%
	Unknown											5	1%
	Successful	215	68%	235	59%	275	70%	260	58%	245	42%	190	35%
White	Repeat	20	6%	40	10%	20	5%	60	13%	45	8%	40	7%
	Unsuccessful	75	24%	120	30%	100	25%	135	30%	295	50%	305	56%
	Unknown					0	0%			0	0%	15	3%
	Successful	5280	84%	5,435	83%	5,915	86%	6,055	85%	5,440	81%	4,905	80%
White	Repeat	385	6%	380	6%	345	5%	525	7%	540	8%	495	8%
	Unsuccessful	650	10%	705	11%	605	9%	570	8%	765	11%	620	10%
	Unknown					5	0%	0	0%	5	0%	80	1%
	Successful												

Ethnicity	Progression Status	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grand Total	Total	11,860	100%	12,815	100%	13,670	100%	14,235	100%	13,670	100%	12,850	100%

Note: Where N is <10, figures have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5.

Data extracted on 03/10/2023

29. Compared to AY 2018-19, progression rates for most ethnic groups apart from Chinese students have fallen. In most groups, the drops are quite small (up to 4%). The largest drops are for Asian students (2018-19: 83.3%; 2022-23: 73.2%) and Unknown students (2018-19: 59.5%; 2022-23: 35.2%). These trends will remain under close scrutiny by Education Committee.

Table 6: Undergraduate Degree Outcomes

Ethnicity Groups	Degree Outcomes	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Black	1st or 2:1	292	68%	258	63%	406	75%	441	81%	420	72%	380	68%
	2:2 or 3rd	136	32%	152	37%	137	25%	103	19%	163	28%	176	32%
Asian & Arab	1st or 2:1	119	69%	142	73%	199	85%	277	90%	218	82%	181	77%
	2:2 or 3rd	54	31%	52	27%	35	15%	30	10%	49	18%	55	23%
Chinese	1st or 2:1	170	66%	208	68%	222	82%	407	86%	378	80%	546	85%
	2:2 or 3rd	86	34%	96	32%	50	18%	65	14%	92	20%	94	15%
Mixed	1st or 2:1	79	78%	73	77%	92	83%	92	83%	117	87%	113	87%
	2:2 or 3rd	22	22%	22	23%	19	17%	19	17%	18	13%	17	13%
Other	1st or 2:1	153	69%	207	74%	224	81%	282	86%	258	79%	191	72%
	2:2 or 3rd	69	31%	72	26%	54	19%	45	14%	67	21%	76	28%

Ethnicity Groups	Degree Outcomes	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Unknown	1st or 2:1	43	65%	51	74%	58	82%	79	89%	74	86%	60	78%
	2:2 or 3rd	23	35%	18	26%	13	18%	10	11%	12	14%	17	22%
White	1st or 2:1	1,305	84%	1,272	84%	1,365	85%	1,599	89%	1,472	84%	1,430	83%
	2:2 or 3rd	254	16%	238	16%	248	15%	190	11%	272	16%	283	17%
Grand Total	Total	2,805	100%	2,861	100%	3,122	100%	3,639	100%	3,610	100%	3,619	100%

30. In comparison to AY 2018-19, there has been an increase in the proportions of students from every ethnic group achieving a 1st or 2:1 degree, except for White students, where degree outcomes have remained more consistent across the reporting period.

Table 7: Undergraduate Students Degree Outcomes over the past five years, for Age, Disability, Sex and IMD, where students achieved a 1st or 2:1

Characteristics		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
University		2,211	77.3%	2566	82.2%	3177	87%	2937	81.4%	2901	80.2%
Age	Mature	235	72%	303	75%	277	77.4%	327	77.5%	495	78.0%
	Young	1,976	78.0%	2263	83.3%	2900	88.4%	2610	81.9%	2406	80.6%
	% Gap	-6.4%		-8.3%		-11.0%		-4.4%		-2.6%	

Characteristics		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disability	Declared Disability	212	78%	280	83%	370	88.7%	347	80.5%	353	81.9%
	No Disability Declared	1,999	77.2%	2286	82.1%	2807	87.1%	2590	81.5%	2548	79.9%
	% Gap	0.7%		0.7%		1.6%		-1.0%		2.0%	
Sex	Female	1245	80.1%	1390	83.2%	1660	88.2%	1610	82.4%	1680	82.8%
	Male	965	73.9%	1175	81.0%	1510	86%	1325	80.1%	1215	76.7%
	Not Declared			0		5	50%	5	100.0%	5	100%
	% Gap	6.2%		2.2%		1.9%		2.3%		6.1%	
Ethnicity	Bame	888	69%	1143	80%	1499	85.1%	1391	78.1%	1411	77.0%
	White	1,272	84.2%	1365	84.6%	1599	89.4%	1472	84.4%	1430	83.4%
	% Gap	-14.9%		-5.1%		-4.3%		-6.3%		-6.4%	
IMD	Q1 & 2	526	72%	697	79%	833	84.7%	718	74.9%	656	72.8%
	Q4 & 5	619	83.0%	721	86.8%	825	91.9%	708	86.6%	710	82.6%
	% Gap	-11.1%		-7.9%		-7.2%		-11.7%		-9.8%	

Note: Where N is <10, figures have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5.

Data extracted on 03/10/2023

31. For most groups, the proportions of students achieving a 1st or 2:1 in 2022-23 is higher than in 2018-19.

The negative award gaps across all characteristics have narrowed between AY 2018-19 and AY 2022-23, albeit there has been some volatility in performance between AY 2022-23 and AY 2021-22. The most significant narrowing of the gap has been between White and Black Asian and Minority Ethnic students, where the gap has narrowed from -14.9% to -6.4% between 2018-19 and 2022-23.

Table 8: Undergraduate Students Degree Outcomes over the past five years, for Ethnicity and sex, where students achieved a 1st or 2:1

Ethnicity	Sex	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asian & Arab	Female	65	76.5%	75	83.3%	105	91%	105	87.5%	95	79.2%
	Male	75	68.2%	125	86%	170	87.2%	115	79.3%	85	70.8%
	% Gap	8.3%		-2.9%		4.1%		8.2%		8.4%	
Black	Female	155	66.0%	260	81.3%	250	82.0%	230	73.0%	215	69.4%
	Male	100	57.1%	145	65.9%	190	79%	190	70.4%	165	67.3%
	Not Declared			0		0					
	% Gap	8.9%		15.4%		2.8%		2.6%		2.1%	
Chinese	Female	110	73.3%	130	83.9%	200	87.0%	190	79.2%	270	88.5%
	Male	95	61.3%	95	79.2%	205	85%	185	80.4%	275	82.1%
	Not Declared									0	
	% Gap	12.0%		4.7%		1.6%		-1.2%		6.4%	
	Female	35	87.5%	55	84.6%	50	90.9%	55	84.6%	70	87.5%

Ethnicity	Sex	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Mixed	Male	35	63.6%	35	77.8%	40	73%	60	85.7%	40	80.0%
	Not Declared			0							
	% Gap	23.9%		6.8%		18.2%		-1.1%		7.5%	
Other	Female	120	77.4%	115	79.3%	150	88%	145	82.9%	105	80.8%
	Male	85	68.0%	110	85%	130	83.9%	110	73.3%	85	63.0%
	% Gap	9.4%		-5.3%		4.3%		9.6%		17.8%	
White	Female	740	86.0%	730	84.9%	865	89.6%	860	85.6%	900	85.3%
	Male	535	82.3%	635	84.7%	730	89%	610	83.0%	530	80.9%
	Not Declared					5	100%	5	100.0%	5	100%
	% Gap	3.7%		0.2%		0.6%		2.6%		4.4%	

Note: Where N is <10, figures have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5.

Data extracted on 03/10/2023

32. The proportions of students across ethnic groups and sex achieving a 1st or 2:1 in 2022-23 is broadly in line with or higher than the proportions in 2018-19. The most significant increase in students achieving a 1st or 2:1 is seen in Chinese students, where the proportion of female students has increased from 73.3% to 88.5% and the proportion of male students has increased from 61.3% to 82.1%.
33. The gaps between the proportion of male and female students achieving a 1st or 2:1 within Asian and Arab students and White students are broadly at the levels seen in AY 2018-19. The gaps between male and female students within the Chinese, Black, and Mixed student populations have narrowed in AY 2022-23, whereas the gap between male and female Other students has widened.

Table 9: Undergraduate Students Degree Outcomes over the past five years, for Ethnicity, UK and Non - UK, where students achieved a 1st or 2:1

Domicile	Ethnicity	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Domicile	Asian & Arab	142	73.0 %	199	85.0 %	277	90.0 %	218	82.0 %	181	77.0 %
	White	1272	84.0 %	1365	85.0 %	1599	89%	1472	84.0 %	1430	83.0 %
	% Gap	-11.0%		0.0%		1.0%		-2.0%		-6.0%	
	Black	258	63.0 %	406	75.0 %	441	81.0 %	420	72.0 %	380	68%
	White	1272	84.0 %	1365	85.0 %	1599	89%	1472	84.0 %	1430	83.0 %
	% Gap	-21.0%		-10.0%		-8.0%		-12.0%		-15.0%	
	Chinese	208	68.0 %	222	82.0 %	407	86.0 %	378	80%	546	85%
	White	1272	84.0 %	1365	85.0 %	1599	89%	1472	84.0 %	1430	83.0 %
	% Gap	-16.0%		-3.0%		-3.0%		-4.0%		2.0%	
	Mixed	73	77.0 %	92	83.0 %	92	83%	117	87%	113	87.0 %
	White	1272	84.0 %	1365	85.0 %	1599	89%	1472	84.0 %	1430	83.0 %
	% Gap	-7.0%		-2.0%		-6.0%		3.0%		4.0%	
	Other	207	74.0 %	224	81.0 %	282	86.0 %	258	79.0 %	191	72.0 %
	White	1272	84.0 %	1365	85.0 %	1599	89%	1472	84.0 %	1430	83.0 %

Domicile	Ethnicity	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	% Gap	-10.0%		-4.0%		-3.0%		-5.0%		-11.0%	
UK Domicile	Asian & Arab	106	75.0 %	154	87.0 %	202	94.0 %	147	84.0 %	109	75.0 %
	White	941	85.0 %	995	85.0 %	1204	90.0 %	1,009	84%	1080	83.0 %
	% Gap	-10.0%		2.0%		4.0%		0.0%		-8.0%	
	Black	235	64.0 %	374	75.0 %	400	82%	371	72.0 %	339	69.0 %
	White	941	85.0 %	995	85.0 %	1204	90.0 %	1,009	84%	1080	83.0 %
	% Gap	-21.0%		-10.0%		-8.0%		-12.0%		-14.0%	
	Chinese	14	74.0 %	14	67.0 %	33	89.0 %	24	92.0 %	12	86.0 %
	White	941	85.0 %	995	85.0 %	1204	90.0 %	1,009	84%	1080	83.0 %
	% Gap	-11.0%		-18.0%		-1.0%		8.0%		3.0%	
	Mixed	60	75.0 %	82	83.0 %	82	84.0 %	102	86.0 %	93	86.0 %
	White	941	85.0 %	995	85.0 %	1204	90.0 %	1,009	84%	1080	83.0 %
	% Gap	-10.0%		-2.0%		-6.0%		2.0%		3.0%	
	Other	100	68.0 %	158	82.0 %	184	89.0 %	157	79.0 %	108	67.0 %
	White	941	85.0 %	995	85.0 %	1204	90.0 %	1,009	84%	1080	83.0 %
	% Gap	-17.0%		-3.0%		-1.0%		-5.0%		-16.0%	

Domicile	Ethnicity	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-UK Domicile	Asian & Arab	36	67.9 %	45	78.9 %	75	82.4 %	71	76.3 %	72	79.1 %
	White	331	81.5 %	370	82.6 %	395	88%	463	84.8 %	350	85.4 %
	% Gap	-13.6%		-3.7%		-5.6%		-8.5%		-6.3%	
	Black	23	57.5 %	32	68.1 %	41	74.5 %	49	70.0 %	41	66.1 %
	White	331	81.5 %	370	82.6 %	395	88%	463	84.8 %	350	85.4 %
	% Gap	-24.0%		-14.5%		-13.5%		-14.8%		-19.3%	
	Chinese	194	68.1 %	208	82.9 %	374	86.0 %	354	80%	534	85.3 %
	White	331	81.5 %	370	82.6 %	395	88%	463	84.8 %	350	85.4 %
	% Gap	-13.4%		0.3%		-2.0%		-5.1%		-0.1%	
	Mixed	13	86.7 %	10	83.3 %	10	77%	15	94%	20	90.9 %
	White	331	81.5 %	370	82.6 %	395	88%	463	84.8 %	350	85.4 %
	% Gap	5.2%		0.7%		-11.1%		9.0%		5.5%	
	Other	107	81.7 %	66	77.6 %	98	81.7 %	101	80.2 %	83	79.0 %
	White	331	81.5 %	370	82.6 %	395	88%	463	84.8 %	350	85.4 %
	% Gap	0.2%		-5.0%		-6.3%		-4.6%		-6.4%	

Note: Where N is <10, figures have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5.

Data extracted on 03/10/2023

34. In AY 2022-23, for all ethnic groups apart from Chinese and Mixed students, the proportion of students achieving a good degree was lower compared to the proportion of White students achieving a good degree. Across all domiciles, the widest percentage point gap is between Black and White students (-15%).
35. This finding is mostly accounted for by the widening gap between non-UK domiciled Black and White students, where the gap has increased by 4.5% from the previous year, albeit the gap is lower than that seen in AY 2018-19. The gap has widened between UK domiciled Black and White students by 2% in the last year although the gap remains considerably smaller than that recorded in AY 2018-19. The gaps between UK domiciled Black and White students and between non-UK domiciled Black and White students have consistently widened over the last three years.

Postgraduate Students

Table 10: Registered Postgraduate Taught Students over the past six years for Ethnicity, UK and Non-UK

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Domicile	White	1,117	48%	1,123	45%	1,060	44%	1,252	40%	1,194	28%	1,123	20%
	Black	236	10%	237	10%	257	11%	314	10%	407	10%	768	13%
	Asian	239	10%	284	11%	337	14%	886	28%	1988	47%	3,189	55%
	Chinese	462	20%	538	22%	408	17%	286	9%	250	6%	239	4%
	Mixed	96	4%	88	4%	102	4%	115	4%	131	3%	107	2%
	Other	101	4%	99	4%	138	6%	151	5%	173	4%	184	3%
	Unknown	99	4%	102	4%	115	5%	109	4%	121	3%	147	3%
	Grand Total	2,350	100%	2,471	100%	2,417	100%	3,113	100%	4,264	100%	5,757	100%

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
UK Domicile	White	722	67%	736	69%	709	68%	893	68%	843	67%	755	70%
	Black	168	16%	172	16%	177	17%	211	16%	200	16%	144	13%
	Asian	61	6%	65	6%	70	7%	76	6%	78	6%	66	6%
	Chinese	10	1%	8	1%	3	0%	6	0%	14	1%	15	1%
	Mixed	37	3%	32	3%	47	4%	66	5%	61	5%	47	4%
	Other	14	1%	13	1%	16	2%	21	2%	21	2%	21	2%
	Unknown	61	6%	38	4%	27	3%	33	3%	36	3%	29	3%
	Total	1,073	100%	1,064	100%	1,049	100%	1,306	100%	1,253	100%	1,077	100%
Non-UK Domicile	White	395	31%	387	28%	353	26%	359	20%	351	12%	369	8%
	Black	68	5%	65	5%	80	6%	103	6%	207	7%	624	13%
	Asian	178	14%	219	16%	267	19%	810	45%	1910	63%	3,123	67%
	Chinese	452	35%	530	38%	405	30%	280	15%	236	8%	224	5%
	Mixed	59	5%	56	4%	55	4%	49	3%	70	2%	60	1%
	Other	87	7%	86	6%	122	9%	130	7%	152	5%	163	3%
	Unknown	38	3%	64	5%	88	6%	76	4%	85	3%	124	3%
	Total	1,277	100%	1,407	100%	1,370	100%	1,807	100%	3,011	100%	4,687	100%

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
% Gap (UK - Non-UK)	White	36.0%		41.0%		42.0%		48.0%		55.0%		62.0%	
	Black	11.0%		11.0%		11.0%		10.0%		9.0%		0.0%	
	Asian	-8.0%		-10.0%		-12.0%		-39.0%		-57.0%		-61.0%	
	Chinese	-34.0%		-37.0%		-30.0%		-15.0%		-7.0%		-4.0%	
	Mixed	-2.0%		-1.0%		0.0%		2.0%		3.0%		3.0%	
	Other	-6.0%		-5.0%		-7.0%		-5.0%		-3.0%		-1.0%	
	Unknown	3.0%		-1.0%		-3.0%		-1.0%		0.0%		0.0%	

36. There has been an increase of 35% in our registered PGT population, from 4,264 in 2021-22 to 5,757 in 2022-23, with the largest contributor to this increase being growth in the number of Asian students (by 60.4% from 1,988 in 2021-22 to 3,189 in 2022-23) and Black students (by 88.7% from 407 in 2021-22 to 768 in 2022-23). In both groups, the rise is accounted for by non-UK students.
37. The ethnicity split of our PGT population has been changing over the last six years; between AY 2017-18 and AY 2022-23, the percentage of White students has decreased from 48% to 20%, the percentage of Black students has increased from 10% to 13%, the percentage of Asian students has increased from 10% to 55% and the percentage of Chinese students has decreased from 20% to 4%.

Table 11: Postgraduate Taught Progression Status

Ethnicity Group	Progression Status	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Asian	Successful	185	77.1 %	200	70.2 %	245	73.1 %	640	72.3 %	1395	70.3 %	1145	64.9 %
	Repeat	10	4.2 %	15	5.3 %	55	16.4 %	105	11.9 %	150	7.6 %	75	4.2 %
	Unsuccessful	45	18.8 %	65	22.8 %	40	11.9 %	145	16.4 %	445	22.4 %	555	31.4 %
Black	Successful	185	78.7 %	170	72.3 %	180	70.6 %	200	63.5 %	285	70.4 %	320	75.3 %
	Repeat	15	6.4 %	30	12.8 %	45	17.6 %	75	23.8 %	50	12.3 %	40	9.4 %
	Unsuccessful	35	14.9 %	35	14.9 %	30	11.8 %	45	14.3 %	70	17.3 %	65	15.3 %
Chinese	Successful	285	62.0 %	355	65.7 %	305	74.4 %	205	71.9 %	200	80.0 %	55	69%
	Repeat	15	3.3 %	35	6.5 %	30	7.3 %	30	10.5 %	15	6.0 %	10	12.5 %
	Unsuccessful	160	34.8 %	150	27.8 %	70	17.1 %	50	17.5 %	35	14.0 %	20	25.0 %
Mixed	Successful	85	89.5 %	60	66.7 %	75	75.0 %	80	69.6 %	100	76.9 %	45	81.8 %
	Repeat	0	0.0 %	10	11.1 %	15	15.0 %	25	21.7 %	15	11.5 %	5	9.1 %
	Unsuccessful	10	10.5 %	20	22.2 %	10	10.0 %	10	8.7 %	15	11.5 %	5	9.1 %

Ethnicity Group	Progression Status	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Other	Successful	80	80.0 %	70	70.0 %	90	64%	110	73.3 %	130	74.3 %	45	60.0 %
	Repeat	10	10.0 %	10	10.0 %	20	14%	20	13.3 %	10	5.7 %	5	6.7 %
	Unsuccessful	10	10.0 %	20	20.0 %	30	21%	20	13.3 %	30	17.1 %	25	33.3 %
Unknown	Successful	75	75%	65	61.9 %	65	56.5 %	75	68.2 %	75	68.2 %	40	66.7 %
	Repeat	10	10%	15	14.3 %	20	17.4 %	15	13.6 %	10	9.1 %	0	0.0 %
	Unsuccessful	10	10%	25	23.8 %	30	26.1 %	20	18.2 %	25	22.7 %	20	33.3 %
White	Successful	930	83.4 %	910	81.3 %	770	72.6 %	920	73.6 %	880	73.9 %	470	69.1 %
	Repeat	80	7.2 %	95	8.5 %	165	15.6 %	200	16.0 %	135	11.3 %	70	10.3 %
	Unsuccessful	105	9.4 %	120	10.7 %	130	12.3 %	135	11%	180	15.1 %	140	20.6 %
Grand Total		2,350	100 %	2,470	100 %	2,415	100 %	3,110	100 %	4,250	100 %	3,140	100 %

Note: Where N is <10, figures have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5.

As PGT exam boards occur in December, the data above excludes the 'Unknown' progression status.

Hence, 2022/23 figures are subject to change (extracted on 16/11/2023).

38. Since PGT exam boards typically occur in November or December of a calendar year, at this stage many students still have an 'Unknown' progression status for AY 2022-23.

39. Comparing progression data for AY 2022-23 with AY 2018-19, the proportions of Asian, Other, and White PGT students with 'Successful' status has reduced, whereas the proportions of Black, Chinese, Mixed, and Unknown students with 'Successful' status has increased.
40. Further analysis of these data will be required when all outcomes from Exam Boards can be assessed, to identify further actions that may be required in response to the final figures for the proportion of students with unsuccessful outcomes.
41. The Masters' Preparation Programme has been introduced to ensure that all students are prepared for postgraduate teaching at Essex. The course is open to all students who are planning to enrol onto a PGT course at the University following an offer. Given significant changes in the composition of the University's PGT student population, a task-and-finish group is currently evaluating the PGT student experience holistically, with recommendations to be made to Education Committee on action that needs to be taken to improve the student experience. These activities and their impact on student outcomes are subject to regular monitoring by Education Committee, alongside the Committee's regular monitoring of student outcomes data. The Committee will continue to take an evidence informed approach to identifying further actions that may be required.

Table 12: Registered Postgraduate Research Population Students over the past 6 years for Ethnicity, UK and Non-UK

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Domicile	White	573	54%	562	54%	556	54%	530	53%	532	52%	503	50%
	Black	67	6%	66	6%	67	6%	61	6%	75	7%	84	8%
	Asian	104	10%	102	10%	102	10%	99	10%	119	12%	121	12%
	Chinese	64	6%	66	6%	68	7%	76	8%	84	8%	93	9%
	Mixed	43	4%	46	4%	50	5%	47	5%	44	4%	48	5%
	Other	149	14%	126	12%	111	11%	107	11%	95	9%	84	8%
	Unknown	71	7%	79	8%	80	8%	81	8%	77	8%	81	8%
	Grand Total	1,071	100%	1,047	100%	1,034	100%	1,001	100%	1,026	100%	1,014	100%

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
UK Domicile	White	352	81%	363	80%	368	76%	363	74%	394	73%	389	72%
	Black	20	5%	22	5%	31	6%	33	7%	41	8%	42	8%
	Asian	14	3%	14	3%	18	4%	21	4%	29	5%	29	5%
	Chinese	2	0%	2	0%	2	0%	4	1%	6	1%	6	1%
	Mixed	16	4%	17	4%	21	4%	20	4%	21	4%	23	4%
	Other	9	2%	13	3%	16	3%	21	4%	20	4%	21	4%
	Unknown	19	4%	23	5%	30	6%	30	6%	32	6%	28	5%
	Grand Total	432	100%	454	100%	486	100%	492	100%	543	100%	538	100%
Non-UK Domicile	White	221	35%	199	34%	188	34%	167	33%	138	29%	114	24%
	Black	47	7%	44	7%	36	7%	28	6%	34	7%	42	9%
	Asian	90	14%	88	15%	84	15%	78	15%	90	19%	92	19%
	Chinese	62	10%	64	11%	66	12%	72	14%	78	16%	87	18%
	Mixed	27	4%	29	5%	29	5%	27	5%	23	5%	26	5%
	Other	140	22%	113	19%	95	17%	86	17%	75	16%	63	13%
	Unknown	52	8%	56	9%	50	9%	51	10%	45	9%	53	11%
	Grand Total	639	100%	593	100%	548	100%	509	100%	483	100%	477	100%
% Gap (UK - Non-UK)	White	46.0%		46.0%		42.0%		41.0%		44.0%		48.0%	
	Black	-2.0%		-2.0%		-1.0%		1.0%		1.0%		-1.0%	
	Asian	-11.0%		-12.0%		-11.0%		-11.0%		-14.0%		-14.0%	
	Chinese	-10.0%		-11.0%		-12.0%		-13.0%		-15.0%		-17.0%	

Domicile	Ethnicity Groups	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	Mixed		0.0%		-1.0%		-1.0%		-1.0%		-1.0%		-1.0%
	Other		-20.0%		-16.0%		-14.0%		-13.0%		-12.0%		-9.0%
	Unknown		-4.0%		-4.0%		-3.0%		-4.0%		-3.0%		-6.0%

42. There has been a small decrease of 1.7% in our registered PGR population, from 1,026 in 2021-22 to 1,014 in 2022-23. The proportion of White students in our PGR population decreased by 2% between AY 2021-22 – AY 2022-23. In the same period, the proportion of Black students and Chinese students have both increased by 1%. The incremental increases and decreases are accounted for by non-UK domiciled White, Black, and Chinese students.

Transitions and Transformations

43. 'Transitions and Transformations: The Black Researcher's Journey' is a four-year project funded by Research England and the Office for Students aimed at enhancing opportunities and outcomes for Black researchers at the University of Essex. The project, now in its second year, is becoming embedded in university activities, platforms, and processes. We have continued to work with students to co-create our priorities, activities, as well as a range of training materials. The project has seen a significant increase in engagement and participation in events and workshops organised this year. Our Black Researcher's Hub (BRH), which launched in January 2023, has doubled its engagement from 375 students in the first quarter to 751 students by October 2023. In response to student feedback, we have refined the operation of the Hub, making it increasingly user friendly, with over 100 activities uploaded since its launch.
44. The project team has partnered with internal groups and external organisations to provide high quality skills development resources, paid opportunities, and a rich events programme to enhance our students' experience. Together with Vitae (part of the Careers Research and Advisory Centre), a new Research Development Framework has been designed (the Transitions and Transformations Skills Framework also known as the 'Grow your skills' framework) which is articulated at UG, PGT and PGR levels to guide students across key transitions. Students are guided through a self-assessment tool to identify their areas of strength and develop skills they would like to improve on; enabling activities, opportunities, and events to be selected to contribute to their personalised growth journey. The tool also signposts recommended activities that will help in these areas. In response to student feedback, the project has created events to address themes of representation and belonging;

for example, in October 2023 we hosted an academic panel on 'access to academic careers for Black Researchers', and a Black Researchers' Hub student social – both events received positive feedback.

45. In collaboration with Diverse Minds, the University has also developed four recorded training sessions on 'Mentoring with Race in Mind', created for staff-to-student and peer mentoring. This resource has been shared with all academic departments at the University, with a specific focus on PGR Directors and Graduate administrators, departmental Inclusivity Leads, and with the University network of senior academic tutors.

Access and Disability-related Support for Students

46. Our Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) has retained many of the access improvements made since the pandemic to ensure that our services remain accessible and encouraging for students to engage with the support available. Various appointment options are offered, including face to face and Zoom options, alongside and drop-in opportunities with needs for which an appointment would not be appropriate. Support is also offered by email and telephone. Students also have access to counselling and online support platforms such as Togetherall and SilverCloud. In addition, SWIS has provided additional forms of support such as workshops and group sessions, supplementing the Residence Life Programmes for students.
47. A particular focus of develop work has been on enhancing the University's approach to Reasonable Adjustments for students with disabilities. An Audit of current practice is informing the development of a revised Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy, which is scheduled to be launched in 2024. This will enable the University to better support the identification and implementation of Reasonable Adjustments so that barriers to student success can be addressed.
48. A specific partnership has been established with Disabled Students UK (DSUK), a community interest research institute working to improve accessibility in Higher Education. The University will take part in the Access Insights survey in Spring term 2024, which will be sent to all students to evaluate our accessibility and benchmark our services against other universities.
49. For students returning from periods of medical intermission, enhanced arrangements have been introduced to improve the visibility and accessibility of study skills workshops and sessions and of the support available from our Inclusion and Learning Advisors (ILAs) to assist students in returning to their studies.

CHASE EDI Ambassador internship

50. The Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England (CHASE) Doctoral Training Partnership, of which Essex is a member, was successful in its application to the Arts and Humanities Research Council to support EDI across the consortium. The University of Essex, along with the other members of the consortium, have benefitted from accessing funding via this grant to appoint a temporary part-time CHASE EDI Ambassador. Part of the role will be to strengthen networks to support progression to post graduate study in the arts and humanities from under-presented groups, supplementing existing EDI structures in member organisations. The opportunity will be open to PGR students in the Arts and Humanities at the University. The temporary internship (available until 31 March 2025) will be hosted by the Inclusion team in People and Culture and the role will support appropriate actions from the Race Equality Action Plan.

Equality Objective 3: Benchmark our inclusive environment against internal and external recognition frameworks including Vitae, AdvanceHE, Stonewall, University of Sanctuary, Athena SWAN, Race Equality Charter and Mental Health Charter.

Performance Indicator: To achieve an Institutional Bronze Race Equality Charter award by the end of 2022.

Performance Indicator: Sustain our position as a Top 100 Stonewall Employer.

51. We continue to engage with a number of Equality Charter frameworks which help us assess our provisions and identify gaps in inclusion for specific groups. Feedback from the Charter framework processes help the University to identify actions that could be taken to tackle inequity.
52. The use of external charters is only one part of the wider inclusion agenda at the University. They provide a mechanism for benchmarking ourselves against other institutions. They provide an external framework, constructive challenge, and access to best practice in other organisations facing similar challenges. Which charters to submit to, and any resulting action plans, are agreed through the University's governance or management structures, where there is a clear understanding and commitment to upholding the statutory duties of the University in relation to both freedom of speech within the law and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Through this approach, we consider and analyse the risks and benefits of participating in various Charters. Details of this approach can be found in Appendix A.

Athena Swan

53. Led by two co-Chairs, the Institutional Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team (AS SAT) has made good progress towards our Bronze award renewal application (which was submitted on 31 January 2024).
54. The AS SAT has carried out a detailed self-assessment process by analysing quantitative and qualitative data, including staff and student survey results, and through conversations with relevant teams and members across the institution. Seven institutional priority areas of focus have been identified for our five-year Institutional Athena SWAN Action Plan:

Key Priority 1	Address issues within central practices, so these can be adopted and/or enhanced and, where applicable, complemented by local-level actions.
Key Priority 2	Maintain momentum for Athena Swan work through effective accountability measures, as well as support for faculty and departmental Athena Swan work.
Key Priority 3	Advance the career development and progression of women across the University.
Key Priority 4	Advance the career development and progression of women across the University, with a particular focus on the impact of childcare and caring responsibilities.
Key Priority 5	Continue to celebrate and promote gender equity across the institution through central and local: events, communications, publications, imagery, language, and role models.
Key Priority 6	Ensure that every staff member and student is aware of how to report inappropriate behaviour, including misogyny, microaggressions, bullying, harassment and other forms of discrimination both as the affected party, and as a bystander. Reports to be followed-up appropriately and satisfactorily enabling trust in the process for staff and students.
Key Priority 7	Continue to create an inclusive environment for trans and non-binary staff and students.

55. Athena SWAN continues to provide a framework and mechanism for tackling gender inequity at the institutional level. Some areas of progress against the previous institutional action plan (2017 – 2023) have been:

Institutional progress from our previous action plan

Completion of a review and relaunch of the PDR system, especially following learning from the pandemic and the move to hybrid working

Improved support for early-career researchers (ECRs), such as centralised induction processes, and the development of the Educator Development Framework (EDF) and Researcher Development Framework (RDF).

Regular GPG reporting, which goes above and beyond statutory reporting requirements.

Introduction of enhanced or revised policy documents, such as the University's 'Approach to Supporting Trans, Non-Binary and Gender Non-Conforming staff' guidance, further demonstrating our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Establishment of the Athena SWAN Peer College, which has been in place since AY 2019/20 and enables good practice sharing and peer support for all departmental Athena SWAN leads.

Support for 15 of our academic departments to receive an Athena Swan Award (see paragraphs 56 and 57)

Progress on Departmental Athena Swan awards

56. Since our last EDI annual report, the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies has successfully achieved a Bronze award following submission in August 2023, and the School of Health and Social Care has successfully renewed their Silver award. The Department of Mathematical Sciences (now the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science) has been awarded a Silver award when they renewed their application.
57. A total of 15 departments currently hold an award (four at silver), and work is ongoing for the remaining departments to apply for Bronze accreditation by 2025.

Women in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

58. In addition to work addressing gender equity within the University, our international collaborations have also enabled colleagues to support the enhancement of women's career progression in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics related areas globally. Our work on promoting women in STEM in Brazil, funded by the British Council, is led by the Executive Dean, Faculty for Science and Health and supported by the Director of Inclusion. Two workshops have taken place this year:

- The first workshop was held between 24-25 May 2023 in Curitiba, Brazil involving multiple sessions delivered by both UK and Brazilian partners. Details of the programs can be found online³. The workshop had more than 100 participants.
 - The second workshop took place between 13-14 September in Belem, Brazil and similarly reached over 100 participants (136 registrations over two days)
59. In addition to the workshops during the visits, mentoring sessions for staff and students have also been run. Seven Brazilian colleagues visited us at Essex between 12-17 November, with members of the Inclusion and Organisational Development teams running sessions on EDI, policies and leadership (with very positive feedback being received).
60. We were pleased to secure five scholarships for Brazilian women that would like to study for a Masters programme in the Schools of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering (CSEE) and the School of Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Science (SMSAS). These are funded by the British Council and have enabled the University to enhance the global profile of its commitment to inclusion.
61. As part of our continued efforts to attract women into STEM subjects at Essex, we have developed a STEM micro-site where STEM roles can be advertised. Further enhancement of the materials available to promote careers in STEM disciplines are being added to ensure that the site continues to promote opportunities for women.

Race Equality Charter (REC)

62. In July 2023, we submitted our application for the Race Equality Charter for the first time at Bronze level. We are pleased to have been accredited with the Charter award. Feedback from AdvanceHE acknowledges our strong commitment to race equity and the University has been commended for a number of initiatives, including our support for Black Researchers through the Transition and Transformation project, the provision of a variety of UG scholarships and bursaries applicable to minority groups, our plans to pilot anonymised recruitment and approach to collaboration with groups outside the University, such as the One-Colchester Tackling Racism Group.
63. The submission represents the culmination of over three years of hard work by the REC Self-assessment team (RECSAT), following an extensive consultation process as well as support from across the institution in the development of our ambitious five-year action plan. The RECSAT will continue to meet twice termly and updates on progress will be monitored through the University's governance and management structure.

³ <https://utfpr.curitiba.br/mulheresnasteam/>

Workplace Equality Index (WEI)

64. Following our submission to the WEI in September 2022, we were pleased to have received a Bronze Award in the 2023 round. Our 2024 WEI application was submitted on 30 November 2023. The content of our action plan is currently being refined and will be shared on our internal web pages, when completed.

University of Sanctuary

65. The University's accredited University of Sanctuary status, awarded in 2021, recognises our commitment to promoting a culture of welcome, safety and inclusion across our campuses and wider communities for refugees and asylum seekers and we have been delivering on our three-year action plan. During this period, we were able to offer scholarships and support to six scholars.
66. Our status as a University of Sanctuary is due for renewal in March 2024. In preparation for the renewal, we have secured funding for future scholarships, effective from AY 2023-24 – AY 2025-26. We will support two scholars each year, and the scholarship offer will include a full fee waiver, a stipend of £6k per scholar to support living and study costs, and accommodation. We are pleased to be supporting two scholars for AY 2023-24.
67. In addition to scholarship funding, a range of activities are in place to ensure that the University of Sanctuary scholars are supported during their time at Essex, and to raise awareness of the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in our community. All Sanctuary students are allocated named wellbeing advisors and sent tailored support information through our Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service in advance of the start of the academic year to enable them to prepare for their time at Essex.
68. In collaboration with the Colchester Institute, Human Rights Centre, and Firstsite, our Centre for Migration Studies arranged a series of events for World Refugee Week in June 2023. This included workshops, exhibitions, and speaker events, as well as a social media campaign, to raise awareness of the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the Colchester area.
69. In the spirit of collaboration and partnership working with other Eastern Arc universities (University of East Anglia and University of Kent), we were pleased to host an event on 20 November focused on promoting sanctuary in research, education and wider engagement, as well as fundraising and promoting engagement with existing networks. Arrangements have been made for these collaborations to continue throughout the coming year.

Mental Health Charter

70. Mental health is a strategic priority for our University. The University signed up to the Mental Health Charter in 2021, as a demonstration of our clear commitment to the wellbeing of our students and staff, and in recognition that the Charter represents a useful independent

mechanism to assist us in evaluating our progress in achieving our aim of supporting an enabling environment.

71. Achievement of Charter status requires a whole University commitment, as the Charter is not simply concerned with the quality of our student wellbeing support but covers all aspects of the student experience, recognising the complexity of factors influencing student mental health and wellbeing.
72. Assessment for the University Mental Health Charter Award is a two-stage process. We are pleased to have completed the first stage by submitting our written self-assessment to Student Minds on 21 November 2023, which included information and evidence about our University and our approach to the principles of good practice in each of the 18 themes in the Charter. For the second stage of the process, an Assessment Team will visit the University to speak to staff and students, so they can better understand how the University's approach works in context, its areas of strength, examples of good practice and the challenges that the University faces. The on-site visit is scheduled for 30 and 31 January 2024.

Equality Objective 4: Increase diversity of representation at all levels of the organisation so that the University represents the community its serves and encourages these communities to reach their potential (People Supporting Strategy 2025)

Performance Indicator: An increase in disclosure rates (target 90%) for all protected characteristics by 2022 and for this to be maintained throughout the period 2022-2025.

Current staffing position

73. Tables 13-20 below provide information about the University's staffing profile, analysed by grade grouping gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability.

Table 13: All Staff protected characteristics

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Gender					
Female	57.64%	55.89%	56.66%	56.29%	57.45%
Male	42.36%	44.11%	43.34%	43.71%	42.55%
Ethnicity					
White	74.98%	74.05%	71.12%	70.06%	66.93%
B.A.M.E.	11.82%	13.27%	13.49%	14.39%	16.61%
I prefer not to say	1.14%	1.12%	1.15%	0.96%	1.23%
Unknown	12.06%	11.56%	14.24%	14.59%	15.24%
Sexual Orientation					
Heterosexual	40.43%	39.45%	38.26%	39.41%	43.08%
Bi	1.26%	1.42%	1.57%	1.88%	2.42%
Gay man	1.14%	1.38%	1.29%	1.16%	1.28%
Gay woman/lesbian	0.75%	0.67%	0.82%	1.03%	1.00%
Other identity not listed	0.51%	0.48%	0.54%	0.75%	0.98%
I prefer not to say	3.03%	2.98%	2.93%	2.73%	3.59%
Unknown	52.88%	53.62%	54.58%	53.04%	47.65%
Disabled					
Yes	3.07%	2.76%	2.61%	2.32%	1.92%
No	71.63%	68.08%	62.81%	55.02%	44.33%

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Unknown	25.30%	29.16%	34.57%	42.65%	53.75%

Table 14: Protected characteristics grade 9-11

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Gender					
Female	32.64%	34.45%	37.56%	45.70%	46.12%
Male	67.36%	65.55%	62.44%	54.30%	53.88%
Ethnicity					
Unknown	4.15%	7.18%	7.69%	8.59%	8.28%
B.A.M.E.	16.06%	15.79%	17.65%	21.65%	23.95%
I prefer not to say	1.55%	0.96%	0.90%	1.46%	1.63%
White	78.24%	76.08%	73.76%	68.30%	66.15%
Sexual Orientation					
Unknown	46.11%	47.37%	47.96%	50.43%	43.98%
Bi	1.04%	0.96%	0.90%	1.29%	1.77%
Gay man	1.55%	1.44%	1.36%	1.46%	1.85%
Gay woman/lesbian	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%	1.11%
Heterosexual	45.08%	43.06%	42.99%	41.49%	46.34%
I prefer not to say	6.22%	7.18%	6.79%	3.52%	4.29%
Other identity not listed	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.60%	0.67%
Disabled					
Yes	4.15%	4.78%	5.43%	1.98%	1.70%
No	81.35%	76.56%	75.57%	64.60%	57.80%

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Unknown	14.51%	18.66%	19.00%	33.42%	40.50%

74. Table 13 shows the proportions of staff analysed by protected characteristics for the total population, whereas Table 14 shows the proportions for grades 9-11. Separate analysis of the proportions of staff with protected characteristics in grades 9–11 is provided as these are recognised as senior grades, enabling comparison of the composition of staff in a senior grades with the whole staff population.
75. Tables 13 and 14 show that, in 2022-23, women still comprise more than 50% of the workforce as a whole, with the proportion remaining reasonably consistent since 2018-19. Although the proportion of women in senior grades is lower than within the population as a whole and below 50%, at 46.12%, the percentage of women in senior grades has increased each year since 2018-19 and is at the highest level over the five-year reporting period.
76. The percentage of staff that are from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic groups has also increased each year since 2018-19, reaching 16.61% in 2022-23. Within senior grades, percentages of staff from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic groups have increased each year since 2019-20 reaching 23.95% in 2022-23, higher than the proportion within the workforce as a whole.

Table 15a: New starters by gender and ethnicity

Academic Years	New Starters (Gender)	%
2018-19	Female	55.54%
	Male	44.46%
2019-20	Female	59.58%
	Male	40.42%
2020-21	Female	61.05%
	Male	38.95%
2021-22	Female	56.64%
	Male	43.36%
	Female	60.74%

Academic Years	New Starters (Gender)	%
2022-23	Male	39.26%

Academic Years	New Starters (Ethnicity)	%
2018-19	B.A.M.E.	17.38%
	Unknown	11.69%
	White	70.92%
2019-20	B.A.M.E.	17.32%
	Unknown	10.50%
	White	72.18%
2020-21	B.A.M.E.	19.80%
	Unknown	10.80%
	White	69.39%
2021-22	B.A.M.E.	18.60%
	Unknown	32.45%
	White	48.53%
2022-23	B.A.M.E.	17.49%
	Unknown	25.61%
	White	56.90%

Table 15a: New starters by gender and ethnicity (disaggregated)

Academic Years	New Starters (Ethnicity)	%
2018-19	Unknown	11.69%
	Asian or Asian British	5.28%

Academic Years	New Starters (Ethnicity)	%
	Black or Black British	1.54%
	Mixed	2.22%
	Not Stated	1.04%
	Other Ethnic Groups	7.30%
	White	70.92%
2019-20	Unknown	10.50%
	Asian or Asian British	7.03%
	Black or Black British	1.54%
	Mixed	2.08%
	Not Stated	1.27%
	Other Ethnic Groups	5.40%
	White	72.18%
2020-21	Unknown	10.80%
	Asian or Asian British	7.04%
	Black or Black British	3.36%
	Mixed	3.70%
	Not Stated	0.80%
	Other Ethnic Groups	4.90%
	White	69.39%
	Unknown	32.45%

Academic Years	New Starters (Ethnicity)	%
2021-22	Asian or Asian British	6.43%
	Black or Black British	3.22%
	Mixed	3.64%
	Not Stated	0.42%
	Other Ethnic Groups	5.31%
	White	48.53%
2022-23	Unknown	24.94%
	Asian or Asian British	7.60%
	Black or Black British	4.35%
	Mixed	3.33%
	Not Stated	0.66%
	Other Ethnic Groups	1.40%
	White	56.90%

77. Tables 15 shows that a higher proportion of new starters continue to be women, with the proportion joining in 2022-23 also being higher than the proportion of women in the University's workforce overall. This figure has increased from last year and is at 60.74% as of 2022-23. The proportion of new starters from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic groups remained relatively stable across the reporting period and in 2022-23 was at 17.49%.

Table 16: Staff turnover

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 ⁴	2022-23
Gender					
Female	8.29%	5.72%	6.51%	8.48%	7.32%
Male	7.90%	4.40%	5.86%	7.39%	7.47%
Ethnicity					
White	7.81%	4.93%	6.17%	7.19%	6.66%
B.A.M.E.	9.60%	5.54%	5.84%	11.52%	9.23%
I prefer not to say	0.00%	7.41%	3.85%	6.67%	4.55%
Unknown	10.00%	6.09%	7.65%	8.30%	8.78%
Sexual Orientation					
I prefer not to say	2.82%	4.35%	2.94%	6.96%	6.20%
Unknown	8.39%	5.56%	6.58%	9.39%	8.36%
Bi	7.14%	6.67%	5.88%	5.06%	8.05%
Gay man	8.33%	2.94%	13.33%	11.63%	15.22%
Gay woman/lesbian	5.56%	6.25%	0.00%	8.57%	5.56%
Heterosexual	8.27%	4.73%	6.02%	6.58%	6.14%
Other identity not listed	11.11%	0.00%	0.00%	10.34%	12.00%
Disabled					
Yes	9.72%	4.23%	4.62%	5.48%	2.90%
No	7.56%	5.27%	6.04%	7.58%	5.72%
Unknown	9.95%	4.86%	6.90%	16.82%	6.98%

⁴ 2021-22 turnover data has been updated to improve accuracy and consistency with previous years.

Table 17: Staff turnover by disaggregated ethnicity

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 ⁵	2022-23
Arab	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	4.00%	12.00%
Asian or Asian British	10.96%	5.05%	8.91%	15.70%	9.14%
Black or Black British	9.09%	8.00%	8.00%	8.93%	11.46%
Chinese	13.64%	5.17%	5.26%	8.64%	12.94%
Mixed	9.62%	7.14%	5.08%	11.54%	7.69%
White	7.82%	4.93%	6.16%	7.19%	6.66%
Other ethnic background	5.66%	3.23%	1.67%	9.46%	3.95%
I prefer not to say	0.00%	7.14%	3.70%	6.67%	4.55%
Unknown	10.17%	6.25%	7.98%	8.30%	8.78%

78. Tables 16 and 17 show that turnover has increased for male colleagues for each of the last three years, following the period of the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in historically lower levels of staff turnover. For female staff, the same trend was true until 2022-23 where there is a slight dip to 7.32%. According to our People Supporting Strategy, a healthy turnover rate would be in the order of 15%, with current turnover levels below this level. Trends in turnover for men and women have remained similar, relative to each other, in the last five years suggesting that gender is not a significant factor in turnover rate. When looking at the disaggregated ethnicity data, there is significant variance in the turnover rate by ethnicities and across years amongst Black Asian and Minority Ethnic staff. It is worth noting that the relatively small numbers in some categories can result in significant volatility within these data.
79. The University offers leavers the opportunity to complete a leaver's questionnaire, however the response rate to this remains low. As part of our REC and Athena SWAN action plans, we have committed to launching a revised questionnaire by January 2024, alongside raised awareness of the exit process, so that we can capture more qualitative data on why staff

⁵ 2021-22 turnover data has been updated to improve accuracy and consistency with previous years.

leave. We will also collect diversity monitoring data so that we can identify trends by characteristics and take action as appropriate.

Table 18: Academic Leadership protected characteristics for 2022-23

Protected characteristics	
Gender	
Female	50.00%
Male	50.00%
Ethnicity	
White	75.00%
B.A.M.E.	20.83%
Unknown	4.17%
Disaggregated Ethnicity	
White	75.00%
Black or Black British	4.17%
Asian or Asian British	2.08%
Mixed	4.17%
Other ethnic group	10.42%
Unknown	4.17%
Sexual orientation	
Heterosexual	79.17%
Gay man	2.08%
Bi	2.08%

Protected characteristics	
Unknown	16.67%
Disability	
Yes	2.08%
No	75.00%
Unknown	22.92%

80. Table 18 shows the protected characteristics of our staff filling Academic Leadership roles (refer to Appendix C for full list). This shows a 50:50 split by gender. Comparisons with the composition of the University's staff in senior grades more generally is made more complex by differential non-disclosure rates. There is a relatively higher disclosure rate within this group.

Table 19: Governing Committees by Gender

Sex	Council		Senate		USG	
	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23
Female	50.00%	43.75%	49.06%	47.06%	50.00%	50.00%
Male	50.00%	56.25%	50.94%	52.94%	50.00%	50.00%

Table 20: Governing Committees by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Council		Senate		USG	
	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23
White	77.27%	68.75%	80.00%	77.78%	90.00%	90.00%
B.A.M.E.	18.18%	25.00%	15.56%	20.00%	10.00%	10.00%
I prefer not to say	0.00%	0.00%	2.22%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

	Council		Senate		USG	
Unknown	4.55%	6.25%	2.22%	2.22%	0.00%	0.00%

- 81. Tables 19 and 20 show the gender and ethnicity composition of Council, Senate and USG. Across all three committees, the gender balance is roughly even and has remained relatively consistent across the years. The membership of all three committees comprise a majority of White staff, the proportion of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic members in both Council and Senate has increased between AY 2021-22 and AY 2022-23. Trends will continue to be monitored over time.
- 82. Efforts to make committees and groups with elected members more diverse are ongoing, through the use of positive action statements when open positions are communicated to all staff and through promotion of opportunities through staff networks.

Supporting and Celebrating Neuro-inclusion

- 83. The University Strategy 2019-28 illustrates our commitment to creating and maintaining environments that foster a sense of belonging, inclusion, well-being, resilience, and empowerment. The People Supporting Strategy to 2028 also identifies the need ‘to build a more inclusive, agile and flexible workforce’ and work is underway to expand the portfolio of policies and guidance to assist the University in better supporting neurodiversity.
- 84. A Neuro-inclusion Working Group has been created to evaluate the effectiveness of the University’s support arrangements. As a result of this work, we have identified a range of priorities to better support neuro inclusion in the workplace, including: raising awareness within the staff community; enhancing training and guidance for individuals and managers; strengthening our current recruitment, onboarding, and PDR processes; establishing employee passports to support our reasonable adjustment process; and improving disclosure rates amongst neurodivergent employees. The last meeting of the Working Group took place on 22 March 2023, with the actions for improvement being taken forward by relevant teams within People and Culture.

Supporting our Intergenerational Workplace

- 85. Following USG approval on 23 May 2023, we became the first University to sign the Centre for Ageing Better Age-friendly Employer Pledge, joining over 250 other employers to recognise and appreciate the value of a multigenerational workforce. By signing the pledge, we have committed to taking at least one action a year to improve recruitment, retention, and development for older workers. Our first action is to design a mid-life review process at the University, which will include support for employees in the areas of health, finance, and future career planning. Working with our Inclusion Champion for Age, jointly with the Centre for

Aging Better we celebrated being the first university to sign the pledge. During our first year, we will continue to build our knowledge and understanding with colleagues, academic specialists, and The Centre for Ageing Better, so that those with direct experience and understanding can help shape the direction of our continued future work in this area.

Disclosure Rates and Your Profile Counts

86. The 'Your Profile Counts' campaign was relaunched in March 2023 with a blog⁶, which was followed up with targeted departmental outreach by the Inclusion team. The team attended department/faculty meetings and delivered a presentation on EDI data disclosure which outlined why EDI data disclosure is important and what the data is used for, as well as the mechanisms in place to protect staff identity and privacy.
87. To improve disclosure rates, a scenario on disclosing EDI data was added to our suite of essential training and annual booster training. This scenario gives staff information about why we ask for the data, how it is used and how it is kept safe. The scenario also directs staff to the areas on HR Organiser where they can disclose this information. As part of the REC Action Plan and Neuro-Inclusion Working Group recommendations, it has been agreed that there will be two annual comms campaigns around Your Profile Counts each year (the latest of which took place in October 2023, with the next scheduled to take place in April 2024), to ensure regular messaging on this topic. The impact of these actions in enhancing disclosure rates will be monitored closely.

Leadership Development Programmes

88. This year, central funding has been made available to support candidates to attend Aurora, Diversifying Leadership, and the Stonewall Leadership Programme, which are external programmes that support members of protected groups to develop their leadership skills.
89. Aurora is a programme run by AdvanceHE for women, up to senior lecturer level or the professional services equivalent, who would like to develop and explore issues relating to leadership roles and responsibilities. The programme contains a mix of development days and action learning sets. In AY 2023-24, four candidates will attend the Aurora programme supported by central funding.
90. The Diversifying Leadership programme run by AdvanceHE is designed to support early career academics, professional services staff, Lecturers and Senior Lecturers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds who are about to take their first steps into a

⁶ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/posts/2023/03/13/your-profile-counts>

leadership role. In AY 2023-24, three candidates will attend the Diversifying Leadership programme supported by central funding.

91. The Stonewall Leadership programme is run by Stonewall for aspiring and current LGBTQ+ leaders who want to develop their leadership skills. In AY 2023-24, one candidate will attend the Stonewall Leadership programme supported through central funding.

Embedding EDI

92. We have taken advantage of the Employers Network for Diversity and Inclusion's Talent Inclusion Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) self-assessment process. This allows members to benchmark the stage they have reached in the Inclusion Journey compared to a sector benchmark group. We were benchmarked against members from the education sector and are pleased that we were awarded the Silver Award.

Equality Objective 5: Promote our institutional commitment to an inclusive working environment to every member of our community so that we can create a workplace which enables its people to do their best (People Supporting Strategy to 2025).

Performance Indicator: Evidence 100% completion of new equality, diversity and inclusion training (How We Work at Essex) delivered through induction and annual refresher training for all staff and role holders. This will help colleagues to understand our values, shared responsibilities and to meet legislation requirements.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Within the Law

93. We are a university that values academic freedom, freedom of expression and inclusion. Academic freedom is an essential part of academic and university life, and flourishes where there is tolerance of, and respect for, a wide range of views and beliefs. We see our commitment to safeguarding and promoting academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law as an important component of our EDI objectives.
94. The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill achieved Royal Assent in May 2023. The Act establishes new duties for HE providers in relation to securing freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law, promoting the importance of freedom of speech within the law and academic freedom for academic staff, and establishing and maintaining a Code of Practice. Similar duties are also given to Student Unions.

95. In preparation for all the provisions of the Act to come into force, a small working group has been established to take forward a range of actions. These include:
- A review of relevant policies, including the Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech policy, Speaker Code of Practice, EDI Policy, Zero Tolerance of Bullying and Harassment, Approach to Supporting Trans, Non-Binary and Gender Non-Conforming staff, Discipline, Grievance and Capability Procedures, and the Social Media Policy.
 - The Development of the University's Code of Practice.
 - Benchmarking against emerging good practice at other institutions.
 - Identifying appropriate complaints mechanisms.
 - Identifying and implementing training for staff and students. This has included the development of specific training related to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech within the law within our suite of essential training and annual booster programme for all staff. Further work is underway to identify where additional tailored training may be required for those with particular sets of responsibilities.
 - Development and approval by the University's Council of our approach to institutional assurance reporting.
96. During the next year, we will develop additional reporting mechanisms for matters relating to academic freedom and freedom of speech, including and, in particular, in relation to complaints.
97. We continue to monitor the application of our Speaker Code of Practice⁷, which outlines the proportionate and risk-based process we operate to ensure all speakers are free to speak and express views within the law. The Code applies to all speakers participating in, and contributing to, activities of the University, the University of Essex Students' Union and University of Essex Faith Centre. It sets out the expectations for all individuals speaking and participating in University activities and reflects the University's statutory obligations, alongside our commitment to supporting the right of speakers to share their views openly within the law.
98. We monitor the notifications received for external speakers. The table below provides data on all external speaker notification and approvals for 2022-23; notifications are made by students and staff. The number of approvals for external speakers has grown by over 500% since 2017-18. Mitigations are applied in cases where these are needed to enable an event to

⁷ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/visit-us/plan-your-visit/external-speakers>

proceed, for example, security being in place to protect those attending and speaking. In 2022-23, 71% of all external speaker notifications were for on-campus events.

Table 21: External speaker notifications and approvals, 2022-23

Total number of events/external speakers:	2022-23
Approved	797
Approved with mitigations or conditions	26
Referred to the highest decision maker in the provider's process	3
Requests rejected ⁸	1

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training

99. Our essential training for all staff, 'How We Work at Essex', incorporates a range of EDI-related topics including understanding direct and indirect discrimination, bystander intervention and how different biases can influence our judgements. This year we have reviewed and updated the content and added new components on what constitutes misogyny, how it can look in a workplace, and the impact that it can have on women's experiences at work. The scenarios on microaggressions were also refreshed.
100. In addition to the 'How We Work at Essex' module, there is also an annual booster that all existing staff must complete at the beginning of the academic year. The booster is intended to refresh key areas of knowledge and understanding and incorporates any new content that is added to the main course.
101. The completion rate for the 'How We Work at Essex' course developed in 2022-23 across the whole university is 99.47%. Efforts are continuing to ensure that 100% completion can be confirmed.
102. We have continued to embed training on microaggressions and privilege into the Strategic Leaders and Future Leaders programmes. This has complemented the content focused on values-led leadership and academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law.
103. We are committed to continue developing the EDI training offer, to support all members of our communities to embed principles of EDI in their practice. This year, members of the Inclusion

⁸ This event went ahead at a later date, with appropriate mitigations in place. It had been rejected initially due the notification not having been received in time to make such arrangements.

and Organisational Development teams undertook a Train the Trainer exercise on Misogyny, Sexism, and Sexual Violence, and this training will be available for staff to book on HR Organiser by 31 January 2024. Guidance on Tackling Misogyny and on 'Where to go for help if you witness or experience misogyny' has been developed for students. This training will support the implementation of our Tackling Misogyny, Sexism, Harassment, and Sexual Violence Against Women Policy and Domestic Abuse Policy. Furthermore, we have promoted the Union Black: Britain's Black cultures and steps to anti-racism training, which is a self-led, in-depth race equity training programme that is offered free of charge through Santander Scholarships and can be accessed via [the Santander Scholarship Platform](#) by both staff and students. The Course will be available until 31 May 2024.

Inclusion Champions

104. Having members of the University Steering Group as Inclusion Champions is now embedded in the way we operate as we continue to encourage greater understanding of the issues faced by marginalised groups. Our Inclusion Champions achieve this by contributing to activities and events and by sharing key messages and acting as role models, allies and advocates for equity and inclusion.
105. There has been increased activity from our Inclusion Champions in the last academic year. Our Inclusion Champions have continued willingly and enthusiastically to engage and demonstrate commitment to their roles, acting as champions and advocating for the advancement of EDI.
106. There is evidence of good engagement activities across the roles. Examples include attending events and meetings that support relevant staff and student networks, forums and working groups; being able to influence outcomes once issues are presented such as enabling more urgent progression of work to address structures which affect students and staff with disabilities (including work on accessible maps around campus); working with the Centre for Ageing Better and encouraging the University to become the first signatory of the Age-friendly Employer Pledge; and contributing to a session run by the Women's Network on applying for bonuses and increments through the annual review process. More examples on the work of our Inclusion Champions can be found in a blog by the Director of Inclusion published on 4 October 2023⁹. The Inclusion Champions have also published several blogs promoting EDI dates, activities and events related to the groups they represent, such as blogs for LGBTQ+ History Month (February 2023)¹⁰, Yom Kippur (September 2023)¹¹, Black History

⁹ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/posts/2023/10/04/inclusion-champions>

¹⁰ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/posts/2023/02/15/celebrating-lgbtq+-history-month>

¹¹ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/posts/2023/09/20/sanja-bahun-is-our-new-jewish-inclusion-champion>

Month (October 2023)¹², and Menopause Awareness Month (October 2023)¹³. For details of blogs done by the Inclusion champions during 2022/23 see Appendix D.

One Essex Inclusivity and Staff Forums

107. Our staff forums and networks continue to provide support and feedback on our policies and equality programmes. The forums work collaboratively with the Inclusion team and Inclusion Champions.
108. The Chairs of the Forums meet regularly as part of the 'One Essex Inclusivity Group' to share good practice and provide feedback. An interactive EDI Calendar has been developed, which has helped us capture, link and share events taking place on Campus with staff. The EDI Calendar will help forums in avoiding clashes with events and meetings so that members who are part of more than one forum can engage with all relevant events and will help us plan for celebrations and observances throughout the year. The EDI calendar was launched through Essex Weekly on 24 November 2023.
109. From June 2023 onwards, Inclusion Champions have been invited to One Essex Inclusivity meetings to share how they have been representing and advocating for the groups that they represent. Hearing directly from the Champions has been a valuable experience for the One Essex Inclusivity Group as it has facilitated discussions of intersectional challenges with which Inclusion Champions can engage.
110. As part of Black History Month (BHM), the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff Forum held an event 'Empowering the B.A.M.E. Community through celebrating influential women,' where they invited Professor Dame Elizabeth Nneka Anionwu OM DBE FRCN to be 'in conversation' with HSC students, and University of Essex Alumna Maxine Obeng to share her career journey and strategies for students and staff. The Director of Inclusion also did an 'in conversation' piece with BHM magazine as part of this year's BHM theme '*Saluting our Sisters*', explaining what the theme means to her and signposting to work the University is doing to help increase the number of Black people entering academia.
111. As part of our work to attract a more diverse workforce, the University has developed an online profile on the BHM magazine webpage. The profile links to our recruitment pages, initiatives like the Transitions and Transformation project, as well as to information on our Inclusion Champions, highlighting examples of good practice at Essex that we would like to showcase to prospective staff.
112. The Essex Access Forum has an active membership of both staff and student members and has played an active role in our work on Neuro-inclusion and the Equality Pay Gaps Working

¹² <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/posts/2023/10/05/black-history-month>

¹³ <https://www.essex.ac.uk/blog/staff/posts/2023/10/31/menopause>

Group. The Forum has also worked on several projects this year with their Inclusion Champion, including improving accessible routes onto the Colchester Campus at all times throughout the year.

113. The Essex Women's Network arranged two roundtable events leading up to the annual review cycle, to raise awareness of the process amongst members. Separate roundtables were arranged for academic and professional staff, enabling a focus on the specific processes for each group.
114. The LGBTQ+ Staff Forum has played an active role in both planning and supporting various events and awareness campaigns across the campuses, including LGBTQ+ History Month, LGBTQ+ Pride Month and Trans Day of Remembrance. The forum was also consulted in relation to the Workplace Equality Index application and action planning processes.
115. We have recruited two co-Chairs for the newly created Trans and Non-Binary Staff and Students Forum, and the Forum officially launched in November 2023. The next focus area for the Forum will be to agree a process to disseminate funds from the Gender Affirmation Fund, which is a University of Essex community and alumni-led Initiative offering transgender, non-binary and gender-non-conforming students funding for gender affirming items such as (but not limited to) affirming clothes / underwear, chest binders, breast forms, packers, wigs, affirming sports / swimwear and makeup / nail polish.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Events

116. The Events team has led on supporting planning for various EDI observances, such as Holocaust Memorial Week, LGBTQ+ History Month, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, and Black History Month. Steering groups bring together members from across the University, including members of the Comms team, Events team, Inclusion team, SU officers, Chairs of Staff Forums, and Inclusion Champions and enable a coordinated approach to celebrating and observing important dates and contributions from staff across the University.

Inclusivity Leads

117. Inclusivity Leads are embedded in each academic Department and play an important role in implementing EDI initiatives at a local level. The Inclusion team has enhanced its engagement with Inclusivity Leads over the past year, taking over the responsibility for drafting monthly newsletters and arranging networking events with the Inclusivity Leads.
118. The first networking session was arranged on 31 May 2023 and was an opportunity for the Inclusion team to formally introduce themselves and raise awareness of current projects, as well as hearing about initiatives being promoted at departmental level. A further networking session will take place on 11 December 2023.
119. Monthly newsletters, called Info Blasts, contain information about University-wide EDI initiatives, information about upcoming internal and external EDI training, as well as

information about support mechanisms for both staff and students. The newsletters are also an opportunity for Inclusivity Leads to showcase any initiatives and events on which they are working.

Tackling Anti-Semitism

120. The University received a visit from, Lord Mann (HM Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism) and Amanda Sefton (Union of Jewish Students) as part of the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism on 21 October 2022. Information was shared about the University's approach, with a number of examples of good practice featuring subsequently in the Groups report, which was published on 22 May 2023. References to the positive work we have undertaken were made in both the full report, *Understanding Jewish Experience in Higher Education*¹⁴ and in the accompanying good practice guide, *A Good Practice Guide: Eight Simple Steps for Facilitating Jewish Life and Tackling Antisemitism in Higher Education*¹⁵. These included our Speaker Notification procedures, our Holocaust Memorial Day education and events, our Inclusion Champions and our Bystander Intervention training.

Tackling Islamophobia

121. Our work on tackling Islamophobia started with a consultation on adopting an institutional definition of Islamophobia. On 18 May 2023, we launched our staff and student consultation on Tackling Islamophobia. The survey asked Muslim staff and students about their experiences at the University. Themes covered included access to space for prayer and religious activity, whether other staff and students are respectful towards Muslim students' faith, and whether Muslim staff and students have experienced any bullying and harassment. The survey also included questions on options for adoption of an institutional definition of Islamophobia.
122. On 5 July 2023, members of the Inclusion team met with representatives from the Aziz Foundation, who are a leading advocate for creating more inclusive cultures for Muslim staff and students. The meeting gave important insights on what other actions we can take to ensure that our campuses are inclusive for Muslim staff and students.
123. Following the conclusion of our consultation exercise, recommendations for action to tackle Islamophobia will be brought forward during the Spring term.

¹⁴ <https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Understanding-Jewish-Experience-in-Higher-Education.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/A-Good-Practice-Guide.pdf>

YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) Work Package 9 (Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity) update

124. In December 2022, the YUFE consortium, of which Essex is a member, entered the second phase of its development, having successfully applied for follow-on funding from the European Commission. Essex continues to lead YUFE's work on equity, diversity and inclusivity, which is divided into four main areas:
- YUFE ED&I policy development
 - YUFE ED&I Ambassadors
 - YUFE ED&I training
 - YUFE ED&I monitoring
125. A different YUFE partner has responsibility for delivering the actions needed in each of the four areas – Essex has responsibility for delivering actions in the area of YUFE ED&I training. Recent developments have included:
- The development and launch of an online EDI course, hosted on Open Essex¹⁶. To date, 202 people have completed the course. It is compulsory for all YUFE students (who cannot sign up for any YUFE activities until they have completed the course) and is open to all staff and students from all YUFE partners. Work is underway to develop additional 'in-depth' content to supplement the existing 'core knowledge' components;
 - The development and delivery of a 'Kind and Inclusive Leadership' workshop to YUFE Strategic Council members in September 2023. A schedule of EDI training for the YUFE Strategic Council, Executive Committee and Work Package Leads for the calendar years 2024 to 2026 is being developed.
126. As part of our Work Package lead responsibilities, the University continues to support the EDI Work-package Taskforce (which comprises staff and students from all YUFE partners). The Taskforce will work on the revision of the YUFE D&I Strategy (developed during the pilot phase of the consortium) and accompanying action plan and discuss ways to overcome resistance to implementing ED&I initiatives within partner institutions.

¹⁶ <https://open.essex.ac.uk/enrol/index.php?id=341>.

EDI Priorities for AY 2023-24

127. There is still much to do in advancing and embedding EDI throughout the University and a number of different workstreams are underway to benefit staff and students. To continue to enhance the impact of our initiatives, over the coming year we will be:
- Working to deliver our Institutional REC and Athena Swan action plans.
 - Continuing work on our Transition and Transformation project, which is now in its second year.
 - Progressing our work on Tackling Islamophobia by completing the consultation process and making recommendations on appropriate actions to take, including consideration of the adoption of an institutional definition.
 - Maintaining our preparatory work for the full enactment of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. We have taken a proactive approach in preparing for this and are confident in the progress being made.
 - Continuing with appropriate EDI training on issues such as tackling misogyny, race equity and LGBTQ+ Inclusion and ensuring staff complete their essential and booster training, maintaining the high levels of completion in 2022/23.
 - Delivering actions recommended by the Equality Pay Gaps Working Group to continue to narrow pay gaps and improve disclosure rates.
 - Exploring alternative and more inclusive reporting categories for ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Conclusion

128. We are pleased that progress on our equality objectives is continuing to be made, with new initiatives being embedded progressively into our business-as-usual activities. We are pleased to have been the first institution to have signed the Age-friendly Employer pledge and with the steady progress we are making in preparing for the requirements of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.
129. The submission and successful outcome of our Race Equality Charter application has been a highlight this year, alongside our work to prepare submissions for the Mental Health Charter and our Athena Swan renewal application.
130. Finally, we remain committed to ensure every member of our community who studies or works at Essex receives a positive outcome and are enabled through our actions to achieve their full potential.

Appendix A: The University approach to external assurance and benchmarking diversity schemes

Background

1. The Minister of State for Higher and Further Education, Michelle Donelan, wrote to the University on 27 June 2022 following the third reading of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill in the House of Commons. The letter highlighted a 'growing concern that a 'chilling effect' on university campuses leaves students, staff, and academics unable to freely express their lawful views without fear of repercussion'. As part of the University's statutory duty to take steps that are reasonably practicable to ensure freedom of speech within the law, the letter asked universities to carefully consider their participation in external assurance and benchmarking diversity schemes.
2. The University currently participates in a range of charters and benchmarks related to equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as utilising other external standards to ensure we deliver excellence in research and education. Current examples are: the HR Excellence in Research framework; the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, which recognises the need to improve the ways in which researchers and the outputs of scholarly research are evaluated); the Athena SWAN award; and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Diversity Programme.
3. This paper addresses the issues raised by the letter from the Department of Education and sets out the University of Essex approach to managing these risks.
4. The concerns raised in the Minister's letter were as follows:
 - Whether membership of a scheme is potentially in tension with the creation of an environment that promotes and protects free speech?
 - How membership of a scheme is genuinely the best way of achieving our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, rather than addressing the issues independently?
 - Universities should not feel they are being pressured to take part in such initiatives to demonstrate their support for the cause the scheme addresses and demonstrate how this is the case.
 - Universities should 'be thinking carefully and independently about their free speech duty when signing up to these sorts of schemes' and demonstrate how this is the case.

- Membership of these schemes, the initiatives that flow from them, and the creation of new, highly paid, management roles should represent good value for money for taxpayers or students and a value for money case should be made.

Whether membership of a scheme is potentially in tension with the creation of an environment that promotes and protects free speech?

5. All our inclusion work takes place within the wider institutional context for staff and students, where we have statutory duties both to uphold academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law and as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The actions taken in response to the Reindorf Review have been undertaken in the context of and used to reflect and to reinforce the University's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law. These actions include the revisions to the Speaker Code of Practice and External Speaker form, training, and risk review process.
6. The University's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law provides the context for the exploration of the benefits and disbenefits of the University's relationship with the use of charters and benchmarks as a whole, within which the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is situated.

How membership of a scheme is genuinely the best way of achieving our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, rather than addressing the issues independently?

7. External charters and benchmarks are tools that can be used to shape inclusion work, particularly when organisations are at an early stage of maturity in relation to an area of equality and diversity, as is the case at the University. External charters are only one part of the wider inclusion agenda at the University, but provide an external framework, constructive challenge and access to best practice in other organisations facing similar challenges. Risks emerge when charters are implemented uncritically and seen as a 'tick box' exercise, rather than a structured and time-limited approach to promoting cultural change. There is ample evidence that engagement with external charters has led to an improved understanding of the barriers facing groups with particular shared protected characteristics and promoted inclusive practices.
8. An appropriate use of charters and benchmarks as a component of the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion through which a plurality of voices can be heard on our campuses, is therefore the best current means of securing expert evaluation of the University's practices to support its commitments and obligations in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Universities should not feel they are being pressured to take part in such initiatives to demonstrate their support for the cause the scheme addresses and demonstrate how this is the case, and should ‘be thinking carefully and independently about their free speech duty when signing up to these sort of schemes’ and demonstrate how this is the case.

9. External benchmarking supports a process of self-evaluation, on the basis of which the University makes conscious choices about which areas of further work are relevant to and contribute to our strategic aims. This is part of the University’s portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion which supports and works alongside mechanisms to support academic freedom and freedom of expression within the law, including our arrangements for external speakers. Which charters to submit to, and any resulting action plans, are agreed through the University’s governance or management structures, where there is a clear understanding and commitment to upholding the statutory duties of the University in relation to both freedom of speech and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
10. These checks and balances ensure that the use of charters and benchmarks is judicious and appropriate, and that safeguards are in place to promote academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law and that these safeguards are understood and effective. The approvals processes required prior to the use of a particular charter or benchmark being agreed enable explicit and independent consideration to be given to the risks and benefits of use of the charter. Proposals for actions as a result of the charter self-evaluation process are also carefully considered, to ensure that they contribute to, and do not create any unnecessary tensions with, the University’s duty to uphold academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law.

Membership of these schemes, the initiatives that flow from them, and the creation of new, highly paid, management roles should represent good value for money for taxpayers or students and a value for money case should be made

11. The portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion requires that the components of that portfolio are open to scrutiny and challenge. The portfolio itself and the way that it is delivered are expected to change over time, as new voices emerge, and the University’s practices and culture develop.
12. The Minister also raised specific concerns about value for money, including where delivery of charters and benchmarks led to the creation of ‘new, highly paid management roles’. No new management roles have been created at the University to deliver charters or benchmarks,

and where additional resources have been needed these have been supported through bids to the rigorous annual planning round, as for all other new posts. Where new initiatives are identified as part of a charter, in addition to those identified through the standard annual planning processes, action plans are drawn up and given appropriate scrutiny, including whether they represent good value for money, through the University's management or governance structures.

13. While regular review is built into the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, it is recommended that regular reviews are established as an explicit requirement for all charters, benchmarks and the posts that support them to ensure they continue to be relevant to the University's needs, remain the best means of evaluating our practices and provide value for money for the University in pursuing its mission and charitable objects.

Conclusions

14. At its meeting on 14 July 2022, Council noted the specific consideration to the risks and opportunities arising from the use of charters and benchmarks as a feature of the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and, in particular:
 - Noted the context provided by the University's commitment to promoting academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law, within which the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is situated, as outlined in the paper.
 - Endorsed the appropriate use of charters and benchmarks as a component of the University's portfolio approach to equality, diversity and inclusion through which a plurality of voices can be heard on our campuses, as the best current means of securing expert evaluation of the University's practices to support its commitments and obligations in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - Noted the checks and balances in place to ensure that the use of charters and benchmarks is judicious and appropriate, and that safeguards are in place to protect and promote academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law, and that these safeguards are understood and effective.
 - Noted the approvals processes required prior to the use of a particular charter or benchmark being agreed, enabling explicit and independent consideration to be given to the risks and benefits of use of the charter. Proposals for actions as a result of the charter self-evaluation process are also carefully considered, to ensure that they contribute to and do not create any unnecessary tensions with the University's duty to uphold academic freedom and freedom of speech within the law.
 - Endorsed the need for periodic reviews of the utility and value for money of the use of individual charters, benchmarks and the posts that support them, to ensure that they continue to be relevant to the University's needs, remain the best means of evaluating our practices and provide value for money for the University in pursuing its mission and charitable objects.

Appendix B

Department	Current award held	Date of next submission
Faculty of Science and Health		
Psychology	Silver	March 2026
Department of Health and Human Sciences (now Health and Social Care)	Silver	September 2028
School of Life Sciences	Silver	November 2025
Sports, Rehabilitation and Exercise Science	Bronze	September 2026
Department of Mathematical Sciences	Silver	December 2028
School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering	Bronze	January 2025
Faculty of Social Sciences		
Language and Linguistics	Bronze	March 2025
Sociology	Bronze	May 2024
Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies	Bronze	September 2025
Department of Government	Bronze	January 2026
Department of Economics	Bronze	September 2026
Essex Business School	Bronze	July 2025
Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER)	Bronze	March 2027
Faculty of Arts and Humanities		
Literature, Film and Theatre Studies	Bronze	November 2028

Department	Current award held	Date of next submission
Department of History	Bronze	These departments were merged from 2023/24. The submission date will be confirmed after they are merged.
School of Philosophy and Art History	In progress	
Law	In progress	May 2024
East 15 Acting School	In progress	January 2025

Appendix C: Table 21: Academic Leadership roles considered in Table 18

Academic Leadership Roles
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Pro-Vice-Chancellors
Executive Deans
University Deans
University Deputy Deans
Faculty Deans
Heads of Department
Institute Directors

Appendix D: Blogs by Inclusion Champions in Reporting Period

Date	Inclusion Champion	Blog Title	Subject
18/11/2022	Chris Greer	Transgender Day of Remembrance	Transgender Day of Remembrance
07/12/2022	Andrew Le Sueur (Andrew Fagan) (Joanna Rzepa)	Holocaust Memorial Week	Holocaust Memorial Week
15/02/2023	Monica Illsley Chris Greer (Riley Iles)	Celebrating LGBTQ+ History Month	LGBTQ+ History
14/03/2023	Andrew Keeble	Being Inclusive During Ramadan	Ramadan
21/03/2023	Nancy Kula	2023 Gender Pay Gap report	Gender Pay Gap
18/05/2023	Andrew Keeble	Tackling Islamophobia	Islamophobia
15/06/2023	Andrew Le Sueur	Understanding Jewish experience in Higher Education	Jewish Students and Staff
20/09/2023	Sanja Bahun	Greetings from Professor Sanja Bahun, our new Inclusion Champion for Jewish students and staff	Inclusion Champion for Jewish Students and Staff
05/10/2023	Madeline Eacott	Black History Month	Black History Month
12/10/2023	Bryn Morris	Invisible Disabilities Week	Invisible Disabilities

Date	Inclusion Champion	Blog Title	Subject
31/10/2023	Prof Nancy Kula	<u>Menopause Awareness Month</u>	Menopause
09/11/2023	Andrew Keeble	<u>The Festival of Lights: Celebrating Diwali at the University of Essex</u>	Diwali
15/11/2023	Chris Greer	<u>Trans Awareness Week and Trans Day of Remembrance</u>	Trans Awareness Week and Trans Day of Remembrance
23/11/2023	Prof Nancy Kula	<u>Ending the cycle: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women</u>	Violence Against Women