



## **ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY**

**6 APRIL 2013 TO 31 MARCH 2014**

### **Bangor University – Strategic Equality Plan 2010-2015 Mission Statement**

Bangor University aims to provide an environment which respects and values the positive contribution of all its members so enabling them to achieve their full potential and to gain benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.

To achieve this aim the University acknowledges the following basic rights for all its members and prospective members:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- To be treated fairly
- To receive encouragement to reach their full potential

### **Bangor University - Strategic Plan 2010-2015 Mission statement**

Bangor University will be a leading research-led University with an international reputation for teaching and research, that fosters the intellectual and personal development of its students and staff, provides a supportive multicultural environment, promotes widening access and inclusiveness, and supports the economic, social and cultural well-being of Wales and the wider community it serves. Bangor University will be recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for a varied portfolio of academic programmes and for the high quality of the experience it provides for its students and staff.

## **Introduction**

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) consolidated the many pieces of existing anti-discrimination legislation, strengthening areas, removing inconsistencies and generally simplifying the approach to equality legislation. The Act laid out in the General Duties the requirement to have “*due regard*” to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Fostering good relations between people from different groups

The University recognises that it has special responsibilities for Welsh Language and culture. Although not specifically included under the Equality Act and therefore not reported under this document, the University has adopted a Welsh Language Scheme and more information about the Scheme and reporting on the Scheme can be found at the Canolfan Bedwyr web site:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/canolfanbedwyr/index.php.en>

This is the third annual report on progress with the University’s Strategic Equality Plan and covers the period 6 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

The report uses a variety of means to brief on progress to meet the Equality Objectives outlined in the University’s Strategic Equality Plan. As a result, some reports are presented in their entirety in this document if they are not available elsewhere and other are in brief with reference to how a fuller report can be accessed with a web link.

The University published its Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives in April 2012 along with a supporting Action Plan.

An electronic copy of the Strategic Equality Plan and Action Plan can be accessed at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/policy.php.en>

## **The University's Equality Objectives and Update on Progress**

Bangor University's Equality Objectives are focused on improvements that will benefit staff, students and the wider community. In addition their aim is to help the University to meet the general duties of the Equality Act with regard to eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and advancing equality of opportunity between different groups.

Progress with the Strategic Equality Plan is reported to the Equality and Diversity Task Group, which in turn reports via the Chair to the University's main decision making body, the University Executive. The University's Equality objectives are:

<b>Objective 1 - EMBED EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY to underpin positive behaviours:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Communicating Core equality Values</li> <li>1.2 Training for Staff and Students</li> <li>1.3 Visibility of the equality agenda</li> <li>1.4 Consultation and on-going dialogue</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2 - DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING to support an evidence base for decision making</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Data collection</li> <li>2.2 Data monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3 - UNIVERSITY STRATEGY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT to ensure inclusion and transparency</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Equality Impact Assessment</li> <li>3.2 Policies and Procedures</li> <li>3.3 Equal Pay</li> <li>3.4 Athena SWAN</li> <li>3.5 Student Enhancement Strategy</li> <li>3.6 International Student Experience</li> <li>3.7 Teaching and Learning Strategy</li> <li>3.8 Review of Code of Practice for Provision for Disabled Students</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT to strive to improve the physical environment</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Access Working Group Report</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 5 – External</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with the community, procurement, links with the City and visitors to the University</li> </ul>

The Action Plan is updated regularly and is also reported to the Equality and Diversity Task Group. For example, the September 2014 update can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/policy.php.en>

## **Objective 1 - EMBED EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

### **1.1 Communicating Core Value**

#### **Bangor Students' Union Equality Report 2013/14**

Equality and diversity are at the heart of the student movement and one of Bangor Students' Union's core values as an organisation. Bangor Students' Union continues to promote the equality agenda and has completed a great deal of work in this area over recent years.

#### **Time to Change**

On February 19<sup>th</sup> 2014, the University's Mental Health Day, Bangor Students' Union and Bangor University signed the organisational "Time to Change Pledge". By signing a detailed pledge the Students' Union and the University marked an institutional commitment to tackling stigma and discrimination based on mental health. The pledge committed to improving the information available to staff and students, reviewing codes of practice to ensure that barriers were reduced, running awareness raising campaigns for staff and students, furthering the availability of mental health first aid training for staff, and ensuring that activities are accessible to all. The aim of the Students' Union campaign work during 2013/14 was to encourage people to talk about mental health openly and positively, which would have long term benefits when discussing potentially harmful practices or barriers that exist for individuals with a mental health condition. The focus for their 2014/15 work will be developing mental health sensitivity training.

#### **LGBTQ+ Access and Success in Higher Education**

Bangor Students' Union was successful in applying to be a National Union of Students (NUS) partner in researching LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup> students' success and access in higher education, which was used as part of a national research report 'Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow'. This is the first time that Bangor Students' Union had participated in national research and the research shaped many conversations following the release of the report. Data from surveys and focus groups in this area has been used to inform the SU's second Annual Student Statement.

#### **Out in Sport**

The Students' Union has developed a strategy that was agreed by the University Director of Student Experience, Students' Union Senate, and Unity<sup>2</sup> Bangor. Discussions generated publicity and the focus in the upcoming academic year will be on raising awareness among clubs particularly during Varsity<sup>3</sup>. This will reduce barriers to participation in sport and raise awareness of the barriers that exist for students participating in activities when stereotypes, attitudes, or perceptions are left unchallenged.

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<sup>1</sup> **LGBT+** = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and the + indicates other gender and sexual minorities.

<sup>2</sup> Unity is Bangor Universities LGBTQ+ Society

<sup>3</sup> Varsity is the annual prestigious sporting challenge with Aberystwyth University

## 1.2 Training for Staff and Students

### Equality Training

The University has identified that appropriate staff training on equality and diversity is an important and effective way of fostering good relations between people from different groups, eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity. The Staff Development Team has developed a programme of equality training designed to meet the needs of specific groups of staff.

The following summarises the main achievements in the reporting period and plans for the future:

1. Two Mental Health Advisors from Student Services ran an in-house programme of Mental Health First training. This will continue during 2014/15. To date 55 members of staff have attended the 2 day training programme including all Student Wardens and Security Staff.
2. A programme of Emotional Resilience Workshops aimed at supporting staff who may be at risk of suffering from pressure was launched during early 2014. This proved successful and the provision is currently being reviewed.
3. To date over 1,000 staff members have successfully completed the University's on-line equality training programme. Since 2010 all newly appointed staff are automatically enrolled on the programme. During 2013-2014 efforts have been made to ensure all member of the University Executive, relevant task groups, Heads of Colleges and Departments and every Recruitment and Selection chair and panel members have successfully completed the online training.
4. Tailored programmes are continuously developed to meet the needs of particular groups of staff, for example, catering staff, security staff, student wardens, Students' Union sabbatical officers, staff working with international students and staff undertaking equality impact assessment. During the forthcoming 2014/15 period face to face training will be delivered to all DLO (Direct Labour Office) personnel.
5. Following a review of the provision for managers to ensure they manage fairly and equitably new external trainers were sourced for 2014. During 2014 a total of 63 managers attended the training. A further 2 sessions will be offered during 2015 with a capacity to train up to 100 further managers. A 'New to Management Programme' will be launched in October 2014 and will run 3 times a year. This training will serve to remind managers of their key areas of responsibility, including those in the area of equality and diversity and managing fairly.
6. Equality training has been embedded into Performance Reviews and Professional Development Plans.
7. The Human Resources Team have undertaken a complete review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy, procedures and supporting appendices. This provided a timely opportunity to review Recruitment and Selection Training. This is now in place and includes details of Bangor's recruitment process, best practice, and employment law and equality considerations. In addition, training received from the Equality Challenge Unit for trainers on Unconscious Bias has been incorporated into the material. It was

agreed by the Human Resource Task Group that all Chairs of a Recruitment panel must attend this training within a 12 month period so as to be eligible to chair recruitment panels in Bangor in the future. Furthermore, all other panel members must attend the training during 2015/16.

#### Women in University's Mentoring Scheme (WUMS)

Bangor University is currently managing the Women in University's Mentoring Scheme process. This year approximately 100 female staff from across Wales took part in the scheme. They were able to meet staff from, different universities thus offering opportunities for staff to link with, and learn from more senior and experienced colleagues and providing networking opportunities.

Bangor staff accounted for about 20 of the mentor and mentees and staff received the relevant mentoring training to support this process.

#### Welsh language

The University's Welsh Language Tutor last year provided training to over 100 staff and developed a Welsh language in the Workplace Certificate for staff which is geared specifically towards their work place. The Welsh Language Tutor has worked with many schools and departments on customised training, particularly for front line staff to ensure that they are able to provide a bilingual service to customers and staff.

#### LGBTQ+ Sensitivity Training

Bangor Students' Union's LGBTQ+ Society, Unity Bangor, have developed a training programme for staff and students around the issue of sexuality and gender sensitivity. The training, during the 2013/14 academic year has been delivered to more than 200 people including University Student Services staff, Bodnant Medical Centre staff, staff at Ysbyty Gwynedd, Students' Union staff and a number of student groups. The training focuses on perceptions, stereotypes and attitudes and the impact on individuals. As the training is delivered by students who define as LGBTQ+ the activities delivered as part of the training can be extremely challenging and challenges many subconsciously held stereotypes or perceptions. The focus of the next academic year will be training more staff and students and developing a train the trainer programme.

## **Objective 2 - DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING**

### **2.1 Report on Data Collection:**

Over the reporting period, significant progress has been made in the collection of data, for example in relation to collecting data for the monitoring of Religion and Belief (and no belief), sexual orientation and gender reassignment. The first reporting period of data collected on these protected characteristics will be the March 2014 to April 2015 period.

Equality data is collected for high level monitoring and for specific projects, for example relating to equal pay, the Athena SWAN action plan where data at a College and School level and across the science subjects is of particular interest and for use in Equality Impact Assessments.

#### **Student Equality Data Monitoring**

The University has traditionally, like most UK Universities, not collected student data in relation to areas such as sexuality and religion or belief. However, it has been recognised that this is a shortfall in data that would usefully be collected to advise service provision and support equality work. The Students' Union has worked with Student Services to implement additional equality data monitoring as part of online enrolment for students. This will assist in advising service delivery, help in focusing on work to reduce barriers and improve the way in which both Student's Services and the Student's Union engage with students. It is anticipated that an enhanced reporting of the University's student profile across the range of protected characteristics can be reported on in future reporting periods.

The University's data monitoring report for the period 6 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/monitoring.php.en>

## 2.2 The University's profile for the reporting period (Objective 2.2)

### Staff Profile comparisons – at a National level:

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) produce an Annual Statistical report<sup>4</sup> for both staff and students. It is a useful document for baseline data across the Higher Education sector when looking at comparing the Bangor University staff profile with UK and Welsh data, particular in project work, for example Athena SWAN reporting.

A few examples in the area of Gender and Ethnicity have been extracted from the ECU report for comparative high level data between the sector and Bangor University. These are based on the ECU reporting period 2013.

The intention is to not only demonstrate how Bangor University's profile compares with the UK and Welsh perspective but to also show that the University has a substantial base of equality data that can be used as and when required.

#### 1. Gender

<b>ECU benchmark</b>	<b>Bangor University</b>															
<b>Percentage of females working in HE:</b>																
Working in the UK – 53.8% Working in Wales – 53.9%  In the last 9 years the proportion of women working in HE in the UK has increased by 1.4% from 52.4% in 2003/04 to 53.8% in 2011/12	Working in Bangor - 58%  Below is a progression since 2006: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Year</i></th> <th><i>Female %</i></th> <th><i>Male %</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>2006</i></td> <td><i>57.6</i></td> <td><i>42</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2011</i></td> <td><i>57.4</i></td> <td><i>42.4</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2012</i></td> <td><i>58</i></td> <td><i>41</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2013</i></td> <td><i>58</i></td> <td><i>41</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Female %</i>	<i>Male %</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>57.6</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>57.4</i>	<i>42.4</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>41</i>
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<b>Percentage of female academics working in HE:</b>																
The percentage of academic female staff has risen from 40% in 2003/04 to 44.5% in 2011/13.	The percentage of female academic staff has risen from 46% in 2012 to 52% in 2014,															

#### 2. Ethnicity

The ECU statistics breakdown UK national and non-UK national staff in ethnicity statistics. Bangor University data presents the statistics as all of staff (UK nationals and non-UK national staff together) in ethnic groups, although it is also possible to identify ethnicity by nationality. There does, therefore need to be some caution in comparing data, however some general trends can be identified.

<sup>4</sup> "Equality in higher education: statistical report"



<b>ECU benchmark</b>	<b>Bangor University</b>
<b>Percentage ethnic groups in HE:</b>	
There is a higher proportion of white staff among UK staff than non-UK staff (92.4% compared with 70.5%).	93% of all staff identified as coming from a white background. Of those staff who indicated a nationality outside of the UK and EU, 47% were from a non-white background.
<b>The three most represented ethnic groups:</b>	
Asian or Asian British: Indian – 20.9% Chinese – 17.3% Other Asian Background – 12.2%	Chinese – 20% Black or British African – 16% Asian or Asian British: Indian – 12%
<b>Proportion of staff who were from a BME background:</b>	
This has increased over the last 9 years from 4.8% in 2003/04 to 6.3% in 2011/2012.	This has increased over the period from 2005 from 3.8% in 2005 to 6% in the reporting period 2013.
<b>Staff from non-white backgrounds are most likely to be employed in the following categories:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Assistants, Clerks and General Administrative Assistants</li> <li>• Laboratory, Engineering, Building, IT and Medical Technicians (including nursing).</li> <li>• Student Welfare Workers, Careers Advisors, Vocational Training instructors, etc.</li> <li>• Artistic, Media, Public Relations, Marketing and Sporting Occupations</li> <li>• Academic Professional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Professional</li> <li>• Cleaners, Catering Assistants, Security Officers, Porters and Maintenance Workers.</li> <li>• Library Clerks and General Administrative Assistants.</li> </ul>

### Staff Profile Observations – at a local level

#### Gender profile:

- 58% of staff are women.
- More women are in part time work.
- More women are in the clerical grades with more men in the technical grades.

- There has been an increase in the percentages of women staff in senior roles, rising 2% in the senior management and professional grades and 1% across the board on the HERA grades 7 and above.
- There is a 50:50 split in the academic grades.
- More women in Grade 7 academic roles, and equal split at Grade 8 and more males in Grade 9 academic roles.
- The Athena SWAN group is taking a particular interest in putting in place strategies to support women, not just in the science subjects but by good management practices and transparency and supporting women in all areas.

#### Ethnicity profile:

Staff from a BME background are more likely to be employed in the College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences, the College of Health and Behavioural Science and by Central Services.

#### Nationality:

- 40% declared their nationality to be Welsh.
- Almost all of those indicating their nationality as Welsh were from a white ethnic background.

#### Age:

- The staff age profile peaks at 46-50 – This is a continuing trend from previous years.
- More women are in part-time working (both permanent and temporary) and this peaks in the age group 46-50. For men the peak for part time working is age 51-55.
- For women, full time working peaks at age 31-35 and for men 46-50

#### Disability

- 5% of staff declared a disability
- The number refusing or choosing not to provide information fell from 12% to 3%
- Declared disability peaks at ages 31-35 and 56-60.

#### Other areas of protected characteristics

This is the first reporting period that additional characteristics (Gender reassignment, sexual orientation and Religion and Belief (and no belief) have been reported on. It is anticipated that as staff become more used to and confident in reporting in these areas that the data will become more robust and meaningful.

A detailed report on the University's staff profile for the reporting period can be obtained electronically at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/monitoring.php.en>

Data monitoring relating to Athena SWAN reporting can be found on:  
<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/gender.php.en>

Data Monitoring relating to Equal Pay can be found on:  
<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/equalpay.php.en>

FINAL JAN 2015

**Student Profile:**

**TBA – work in progress with Debbie Hardwick**

## **Objective 3 - UNIVERSITY STRATEGY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **3.1 Report on Equality Impact Assessment**

Particularly as a result of staff equality training, there has been an increased awareness of the requirement, and the benefits, of undertaking Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). This has resulted in the University's EIA process being used in a variety of situations ranging from new policy development, policy review, restructuring and in the Research Exercise Framework (REF).

The University continues to work towards embedding EIA. Significant progress has been made with a collaborative project with Aberystwyth University to develop a template for new policy development in which the process of EIA is embedded. The project has been identified as an opportunity to consider impact in other areas, for example in sustainability and the Welsh language. Plans are now in place to trial the template and it is anticipated that this project will be completed in the current reporting period.

Details of the University's Equality Impact Assessment process can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/eia.php.en>

### **3.2 Policies and Procedures**

#### **Recruitment and Selection:**

The University acknowledges its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to recruitment and selection. The Human Resources Department have undertaken a significant piece of work to review the University's Recruitment and Selection Policy. As a result, not only has the Policy been reviewed but a set of procedures and supporting appendices have been developed to support the recruitment process from the earliest point of the process right through to engagement.

The University has made a commitment to provide appropriate training to those involved in the recruitment and selection activities and a training programme will commence during the next reporting period.

The Policy and supporting documents can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/humanresources/policies/recruitpolicies.php.en>

#### **Family Friendly:**

There is no simple definition of family or family friendly. The University believes that the definition of the family unit should be broad and inclusive given that individuals have different definitions for different purposes. For this reason the University has recently renamed the suite of policies from 'Family Friendly' to 'Employee Support'.

The University undertakes an annual audit of all its employee support policies and procedures not only to ensure compliance with legislation, but also to ensure best practice. Employee Support extends beyond maternity, paternity and adoption support and includes:

- Tax efficient ways of purchasing childcare vouchers and nursery places
- Tax efficient purchase of additional annual leave
- Flexible working
- Well-being support, including access to a free and independent counselling service.

Looking forward into the next report period, the University aims to:

- Continue to monitor and analyse the take-up of flexible working applications following the introduction of the new legislation.
- Increase awareness and publicise further the University nursery facilities.
- Proactively communicate the changes in parental leave legislation coming into effect April 2015 and what they will mean for staff, and clearly express support for the new arrangements.
- Flexible work planning to accommodate parental leave by both mothers and fathers, and ensuring that no employees are made to feel that their parental leave is disruptive to the workplace.

Full details about Employee Support can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/humanresources/family.php.en>

### Student Preferred Names

The use of students' preferred name is an important issue for trans<sup>5</sup> students in particular. For transitioning students, using their given name rather than their preferred name can act as a barrier for students participating in lectures, seminars and other events and opportunities. The Students' Union has worked with the University to ensure that students are able to provide a preferred name to tutors and staff. This issue was also highlighted by LGBTQ+ students as part of our LGBTQ+ in HE report and featured as a recommendation in the Students' Union Annual Student Statement.

### Student Policy - Zero Tolerance to Harassment

The University and the Students' Union are committed to providing an environment that is free from any form of harassment. This reporting period has seen work on a student specific commitment and Policy – Zero Tolerance to Harassment. The Students' Union have been working with the University to develop a reporting system, and will also continue to work with commercial services arm of the University to develop guidance for staff at Academi<sup>6</sup> to

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<sup>5</sup> *Trans\** is an umbrella term that refers to all of the identities within the gender identity spectrum.

<sup>6</sup> [Academi](#) nightclub and night-time entertainment

raise awareness of the policy and the ability to challenge harassment and discrimination when it occurs.

### **3.3 Report on Equal Pay**

Equal pay data is drawn on an annual basis and is reported to the Equal Pay Working Group, the key relevant decision making Task Groups, (Human Resources and the Equality and Diversity) and Senior Remuneration Committee. Reports on equal pay can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/monitoring.php.en>

### **3.4 Report on Gender Equality – Athena SWAN**

Bangor currently holds a University Bronze award and will be resubmitting for a bronze award in a re-accreditation process in November 2014. Looking ahead to the next reporting period, the University's STEM<sup>7</sup> colleges and schools are applying for departmental awards. The colleges have their own Athena SWAN groups leading on local initiatives and applications.

In 2013/14 the University held an organisational culture survey with academic staff to examine how male and female staff experience their working environment and what, if any, improvements may be needed to ensure equality of opportunity. A survey was also held with PhD students to examine the various reasons why students undertake a PhD and perspectives regarding potential career choices following completion of their PhD, particularly in the context of gender perspectives. Action in 2014/15 will concentrate on the findings of these two reports.

The Athena SWAN application and action plan can be found at:

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hr/equalitydiversity/gender.php.en>

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<sup>7</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics

### **3.5 Report on Student Services (including Action plan points 3.5 and 3.8)**

This section includes reports from the Disability Services' and the Counselling Service.

#### **Disability Services' Annual Report**

##### Overview:

The University's disability services ensure that the experience of disabled students, including those with enduring health conditions, specific learning differences (SpLDs) and mental health difficulties, is equitable to that of their non-disabled peers. They work with and on behalf of individual students and applicants, many of whom present with highly complex and challenging support requirements, to identify strategies to remove barriers; this is done within a legislative context. By collaborating with students, academic and support staff, Disability Services enable students to access course content, participate in learning activities and demonstrate their knowledge and strengths at assessment. The service also works strategically to promote inclusive practice across the institution in order to lessen the need for individual adjustments.

The following University services are available to disabled students:

#### **Bangor University Access Centre**

The purpose of the Access Centre is to carry out study needs assessments for students who are eligible for Disabled Students Allowances (DSAs). The Centre is accredited and operates within the DSA Quality Assurance Framework; it is also responsible for overseeing the work of its Outreach Centre based at Aberystwyth University.

Between 1 August 2013 and 1 April 2014 a total of 361 students (231 Bangor University, 130 Aberystwyth Outreach Centre) have been assessed for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). This compares to a total 326 for the same period last year (216 Bangor University, 110 Aberystwyth Outreach Centre).

The Access Centre works towards two main key performance indicators, these are:

- Study Needs report issued within 10 working days
- Study Needs assessments within 15 working days

Over the past twelve months all students have been offered an assessment within 15 working days, waiting an average of 8 working days for an appointment.



Over the past twelve months all students have received their Study Needs Report within 10 working days, waiting an average of approximately 5 working days for their Report.

At Bangor it takes an average of 13 working days compared to the national KPI benchmark of 25 working days for students to receive their support plans.

The Access Centre is currently developing a set of resources for Access Centre staff to assist progression towards the ATIP (*Assistive Technology Implementation Practitioner*) Competency Framework.

### Miles Dyslexia Centre's Student Service (MDC)

The MDC's Student Service provides all-round support for Bangor University students with dyslexia, and other specific learning differences such as dyspraxia and ADD /AD(H)D<sup>8</sup>. The team works closely with university staff, providing information and helping to build Bangor's inclusive learning environment. In 2013/14, 702 students registered at the MDC, 146 students were screened for Specific Learning Differences and 191 students underwent a full diagnostic assessment.

The Service's Student Survey again received excellent feedback highlighting the positive impact the Service has had upon students' experience at university. Of the students who responded to the question, 75.4% said they found the support that the MDC Student Service offered to be very helpful. 14.8% found the individual specialist support quite helpful. The vast majority (80.7%) thought that reasonable adjustments were being implemented. 75% of respondents reported that their exam and assessment adjustments were being implemented; 4 students said that they were not being implemented and a further 14 students said they were either partly implemented or adjustments did not apply to them.

### Disability Service

In the past year, there has been a 28% increase in the overall number of students registered with the Disability Service, bringing the number to 629 students. This is on top of last year's 14% increase in student numbers. Once again, the largest increase in disabled students is those with mental health difficulties (29% increase). The upward trend in applicants declaring mental health difficulties also continues. Students will also come forward for support during the year who either have no history of mental health difficulties or who chose not to 'declare' during admissions, we can predict therefore that numbers will continue to grow. To cope with this anticipated demand, the University has increased the hours of our Mental Health Advisers.

Funding has been secured so that the service can continue to roll out Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training over the next academic year in keeping with targets from the University's Mental Health Strategy. 49 key front-line staff members across the university are now qualified Mental Health First Aiders.

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<sup>8</sup> Short form for the particular spectrums of difficulties with concentration, organising and focusing

Numbers of students on the autism spectrum continue to rise. This has contributed to an increased demand for specialist mentoring support and as a consequence the Service has secured additional Disability Adviser hours to co-ordinate mentor supervision and development. A new *Socialeyes*<sup>9</sup> programme has been established affording the opportunity for students on the autism spectrum to learn new social skills and develop social understanding. Funding from the Bangor Alumni Fund was secured for a Disability Adviser to undergo *Socialeyes* facilitators' training and to roll out the training programme. The Service's Student Survey again received excellent feedback highlighting the positive impact the Service has had upon students' experience at university, enabling continuation or completion of their studies: 82% of respondents felt that the Disability Service has helped them to achieve their learning goals, with 4% disagreeing. The survey also resulted in an 87% rating of good or excellent.

### Support Worker Scheme

This last year, 13,000+ hours of support worker assistance was provided to 169 DSA-funded students. This compares to 9,666 hours in the previous year. The average hours of support per student also increased - from 67 hours to 72 hours per student per year. The number of students receiving mentoring support continued to rise and note-taking support increased in correlation to the increase in student numbers. Despite this 34% increase in output, the end of year survey yielded many positive comments from students and overall 80% positive responses.

The Scheme is required to outsource some of its core administrative functions in relation to: Recruitment; Payroll; Invoicing and associated support services for hourly paid Learner Support Workers retained via Contracts for Services. The Service re-tendered this provision for the period June 2014 – July 2015 (inclusive) to Randstad Student & Worker Support.

In accordance to guidance from funding bodies, the Service has aligned support worker roles to the Student Finance England's Non-Medical Help Services Reference Manual. The Service has continued to make improvements to the scheme, including recruitment, retention, training and supervision processes.

### DSA statistics

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publishes a series of performance indicators annually to provide an objective measure of how an HEI is performing. In relation to the percentage of disabled students, the indicator used is the proportion of students who are in receipt of DSA, as this is considered more robust than the proportions of students who declare that they are disabled. A sector average is adjusted for each institution to take into account some of the factors which contribute to the differences between HEIs, including subject of study, qualifications on entry and age on entry

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<sup>9</sup> *Socialeyes* is an innovative approach to learning social skills and developing social understanding for people on the autism spectrum

(young or mature). Latest published HESA figures demonstrate that the University continues to perform above its adjusted benchmark performance indicator achieving 9.0% full-time undergraduate students in receipt of DSA (adjusted benchmark for the university is 6.5%). The following table shows that Bangor has consistently performed over and above this indicator and continues to improve year on year:

<b>No. students (DSA)</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
No. students in receipt of DSA	753	733	736	665	596
FT UG in receipt of DSA	Tba	9.0%	8.7%	7.7%	6.4%
Adjusted benchmark for BU	Tba	6.5%	5.9%	5.3%	4.8%
UK %age FT UG	tba	6.5%	7%	5.3%	4.8%

2011/12 HESA data reveals that disabled students who received DSAs were more likely to obtain a first class or upper second class honours degree (64.6%) than those who did not receive DSA (63.3%).

#### Working with Students

Student Services worked closely with the Students' Union, for example: to increase student feedback to improve accessibility of SU clubs and societies. The student group continued to meet once a term and students participated on the Disability Working Group, the Physical Access Working Group and the Student Mental Health Strategy Group influencing policy and procedure and effecting change.

#### Working with Academic Schools

Student Services continued to work with academic schools in relation to identifying and implementing individual reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment activities, as well as managing complex situations. Services worked closely with the School of Education on core competences in relation to initial teacher training courses. The MDC delivered a successful workshop on marking the work of students with SpLDs and produced new guidance. The Disability Contacts Group met with Disability Services once each Semester to review and inform practice. Additional drop-in lunch time sessions were held in order to discuss pertinent issues and share good practice. Presentations were made to students in their academic schools during Welcome Week, including Lifelong Learning, School of Healthcare Sciences, as well as to first year Modern Language students prior to their study abroad.

#### Working across the Institution

Disability services continues to drive forward the disability equality agenda, improve accessibility and enhance inclusion. It did this in various ways by:

- Informing policy and procedure in relation to institution-wide provision for disabled students, including: rewriting the Code of Practice on Inclusive Provision for Disabled Students; contributing to the development of the Mental Health Strategy and the implementation of the Time to Change pledge, and meeting related service targets; contributing to the University's Strategic Equality Plan; contributing to the work of the Equality & Diversity and Student Services Task Groups as well as a number of working groups.

- Continuing work on the Bid & Risk Register prioritising physical access works across the University's Estate.
- Contributing to the teaching qualification - Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCertHE): developing resources; involvement in the Induction programme, Exam Board and Programme Board, and facilitating a workshop on inclusive teaching to ensure new teachers are better equipped to make inclusive provision from the outset.
- In line with targets identified in the Learning & Teaching Strategy, and in collaboration with the Centre for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, set up a steering group to develop resources on writing inclusive learning outcomes.
- Informing the development of the tutorial application within MyBangor<sup>10</sup> to support disabled students within schools and central services.

The Disability Working Group (DWG) is responsible for monitoring policy, procedure and practice in relation to disabled students. The DWG is chaired by the Director of Student Experience and membership includes students, Students' Union VP (Education & Welfare), Students' Union Access Senator, representatives from Disability Services and key contacts from academic schools, central services as well as representation from Arfon Access Group. The DWG reports to the Student Services Task Group and issues raised are reported to the relevant Task Group by the Chair. During the last academic year six students sat on the DWG providing invaluable insight on the student experience helping inform policy and procedure.

The Head of Disability Services works strategically to promote inclusive practice across the institution and is a member of a number of institutional committees and working groups and works closely with the Students' Union.

#### Working outside the Institution

Maintaining an overview of relevant developments in a dynamic environment necessitated involvement with different networks external to the University, including:

- N Wales DSA Group to network with external DSA stakeholders
- National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) HE Heads Group to inform professional practice at national level
- NNAC (National Network of Assessment Centres)
- DSA-QAG (DSA Quality Assurance Group)
- AMOSSHE: the Student Services Association
- UMHAN (University Mental Health Advisers Network)
- NMH Charter Group to self-regulate establishing quality standards across the sector in relation to non-medical help (Learner Support Workers)
- ADSHE (Association of Dyslexia Specialists in Higher Education)

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<sup>10</sup> Information and on line services for Bangor Students

The Service was involved in Student Finance Wales staff training in April and two Bangor students sat on a panel to share their experiences of DSA funding.

The Service hosted a meeting between Equality Challenge Unit researchers and representatives from N Wales Initial Teacher Education or Training (ITET) providers to look at the interaction between reasonable adjustments and competence standards within ITET courses.

Working with Disability Sports Wales and the Students' Union, the Service explored strategies to improve access to clubs and societies and to promote disability sport provision at the University.

The Service collaborated with the clinical psychology team at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) to implement and evaluate the Socialeyes programme. Links were also maintained with a wide network of partner organisations in order to share knowledge, skills and experience. Liaison with a wide range of external partners and collaborations with Mind, National Autistic Society, Community Mental Health Teams, community psychiatric nurses and General Practitioners informed individual student support as well as professional practice and decision-making.

#### Future Developments

Service enhancements in areas such as feedback, monitoring and operational planning will continue to be aligned with the Matrix Quality Standard in readiness for the Student Services' Matrix accreditation review. Continued refinements will be made to administrative systems to meet demands of the service, with particular emphasis placed upon MyBangor PLSP app, BI system and Oracle database. We will progress improvements to data collection and identify shortfall or data gaps in relation to disabled applicants and students.

In conjunction with CELT (Centre for Enhancement to Learning & Teaching) and in line with targets identified in the Learning & Teaching Strategy, the Service will:

- Produce guidelines/website information on writing inclusive learning outcomes and course descriptions. Supporting workshops for module leaders will be delivered with CELT.
- Continue to build upon the Service's work with academic schools with particular emphasis on supporting schools in the development of inclusive practice and will continue to develop knowledge and skills around learning and teaching strategies to support students with mental health conditions.
- Continue to promote mental health wellbeing, working alongside the Counselling Service and Students' Union in connection to planning activities for the University Mental Health Day. Rolling out MHFA training to key members of staff across the University will continue to be a priority.

- With the Information Technology Services, the Service will oversee the implementation, evaluation and ongoing development of the PLSP app in myBangor.
- In light of the forthcoming changes to DSA, the Service will develop a sustainable model for supporting disabled students, including integrating support for students with SpLDs into Disability Services in readiness for the academic year 2015-16. This will include alignment of DSA administrative and operational processes.

### **The Counselling Service's Annual Report**

The Counselling Service provides services for students with mental health difficulties, and from a diverse range of backgrounds. Their overall operational aim is:

'To provide a range of effective therapeutic approaches to students in a responsive and flexible way. Use the professional expertise in the team to provide psychological help that is acceptable, timely, equitable, appropriate and effective, in order to support students through their University experience

- Effectively prioritise resources to help those most in need
- Provide and monitor an accessible service to students of diverse needs who may otherwise find it difficult to obtain help.
- Measure and demonstrate the impact and value of our service to the University and its students
- Involve service users and stakeholders in strategy development
- Prioritise improvements to our built environment
- Maintain professional competencies of staff to enable them to meet service demands and provision
- Maintain effective referrals and collaborative ways of working with other teams, services and departments'

The trend of increasing numbers of students with mental health difficulties has required the Counselling Service to respond to greater demand, and offer an increasing range of services for a student population who have increasing needs and greater complexity of psychological difficulties.

In 2013-14 the Service saw 505 clients for individual counselling. This is an increase of about 13%. In addition, approximately 200 students attended various groups and workshops provided by the Service, and 367 people accessed the on-line CalmU self-help package<sup>11</sup>.

The Service continues to see a significant number of clients who have longstanding difficulties in a number of areas in their lives. Client scored ratings indicated that 95.4% of clients were 'above clinical cut off' at intake – a percentage above the national average for HE Counselling Service clients. 58% of clients completing the Service's survey felt that their psychological concerns had significantly affected their studies.

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<sup>11</sup>Electronic link to CalmU [www.bangor.ac.uk/studentservices/counselling/calmu.php.en](http://www.bangor.ac.uk/studentservices/counselling/calmu.php.en)

In terms of 'advancing equality of opportunity between people from different groups' the Service collect and analyse demographic data from clients each year and use these to inform service delivery and to ensure that there are no barriers to access for anyone from the 'protected characteristics' groups. The information is used to plan future Service developments- for example, the scope of iCan<sup>12</sup> workshops and groups, (which attract a higher proportion of International and BME students), opening times, (eg for people who cannot attend at other times) any Continuous Personal Development (CPD) needs that the Counselling team have, (for example this could be CPD inputs on working inter culturally, or with trans gender students).

Accessibility has been enhanced in a number of ways, for example, via evening session and through Welsh medium provision.

It has been noted that the MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) group attracted more International students, as did topic specific iCan workshops. A welcoming statement is posted on the Service webpages, so that students know the Service encourages all people regardless of age, gender (actual or perceived), sexual orientation, disability, race, marital status, and religion/ beliefs. Bangor University has remote campus students and since August 2013 there have been had formal agreements in place with Glyndwr and Westminster Universities to provide counselling for students based on the Wrexham campus, and at the London Centre of the Bangor Business School. Finally, the demographic reports from CalmU seem to indicate that this resource is used more frequently than face to face appointments by International and EU students, BME students, and those taking a year out or working away on placement.

As well as attendance at University-wide groups such as the Student Welfare Coordinating Group and the Student Services Task Group, the Head of Service has had meetings with the University's designated police officers to discuss ways in which working together can support students who come into contact with the police whilst in a mental health crisis- and how best to support those students who have been admitted to, and discharged from hospital.

A new initiative for the past year has been the work done by the Service to support Nightline<sup>13</sup> staff. Counselling Service Staff have offered 'reflective practice groups' sessions for the committee members of Nightline. In addition the Service has provided training inputs to Nightline for their new volunteers. One outcome of this work was the Service being nominated for and winning the 2014 Student led Teaching Award for best Student Service, another was being awarded two Students' Union Societies awards. Other work impacting upon the wider institution has been offering regular contact with the Students' Union Sabbatical Officer for Welfare and Education, and a presentation on

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<sup>12</sup> A series of workshops to help deal with the stresses and strains of student life

<sup>13</sup> **Nightline** is an information and non-advisory listening service run by students, for students. It is open every night during term time, from 8pm to 8am.

support for students with mental health difficulties to the University's Equality and Diversity Task Group in October 2013

It has also been important to work to develop professional partnerships with external agencies that provide mental health support for students. In both the Student Mental Health Strategy and the Counselling Service's operational plans, the importance of building and maintaining links with external resources is emphasised. The Head of Service attends the Welsh Government Mental Health Leaders Collaborative as the representative for Higher Education Institutions in Wales. This body provides a forum to express concerns / views for HEIs in Wales about mental health provision for Welsh students.

Other external links and networks are maintained through membership of HUCS, (Heads of University Counselling Services UK) and WHUCS (Welsh Heads of University Counselling Service, AMOSSHE (Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education and the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board PTMB (Psychological Therapies Management Board) - stakeholders group.

In spite of several challenges, the Counselling Service has continued to offer a high quality, professional, responsive and accessible service to students. The team has worked hard to be adaptive, flexible, and creative with their time and personal resources. The Service plans to continue to be open to feedback; not least from the 'student voice' and to use this to inform future strategic and operational developments

#### Student Mental Health Strategy:

The strategy has the following aims and objectives:

- To create an inclusive environment that promotes mental well-being among its students.
- To support students experiencing mental health difficulties in order to help them to have a positive and productive student experience.

There are three main strands in this strategy: Supporting Students with Mental Health Difficulties, Promoting Mental Well-being and Supporting Staff.

The Strategy is a working document, developed by the Student Mental Health Strategy Group. The group convenes on a regular basis to review and evaluate actions and outcomes, which may then lead to recommendations for changes to the Strategy. The Group's terms of reference are:

- Devise the University's Student Mental Health Strategy
- Oversee the implementation and review of the SMH Strategy
- Incorporate broader views from across the University and from external stakeholders
- Disseminate best practice in the area of student mental health
- Collate and disseminate information from existing mental health services
- Promote activities designed to enhance mental well-being amongst students



- Report to the Student Services Task Group
- Ensure that the SMH Strategy aligns with other University legislation and strategies

Outcomes from the Strategy include the setting up and provision of mental health First Aid training for staff across the University, a 'Mental Health First Aid' flow chart for all staff (office hours and out of hours) and improved links with Students' Union and external agencies (e.g. through the "Time to Change" Agenda launched in February 2014, which the SMHSG will monitor and review over the coming year).

The mental health mentoring scheme is on its way to being approved as a post graduate qualification, at levels 3 and 4 for DSA funding and MHAs have been given additional hours.

The priorities for the coming year are proposed as:

- Monitor and review the Students' Union 'Time to Change' campaign
- Continue to deliver a programme of mental health First Aid training to staff across the University
- Update web pages for staff to assist them in supporting students
- Improve collaboration with partner agencies
- Continue to collect relevant data that assists our knowledge of student mental health concerns and prevalence

Plans are already underway for new web pages for the SMHS, with a new 'public document' draft agreed.

### **3.6 Report on the International Office**

The International Education Centre (IEC) coordinates all aspects of internationalisation at the University, dealing with a range of issues relating to recruitment, admissions, marketing, study abroad and support.

The latter is coordinated via the International Student Support Office, whose remit is to ensure that international students and their families benefit from the same opportunities as home/UK students and have the chance to integrate into both University and local community life. This is achieved through the promotion of an inclusive programme of events, which aims to introduce international students to the wider student community and the culture of Wales.

#### Feedback

To inform the work of the Office three surveys were undertaken during 2013/14 to gauge student opinion on the:

- ELCOS (English Language Courses for Overseas Students) summer social programme
- Admissions/Arrival experience
- Annual trips & Events programme

The aim was to collect information from students on the provision offered by the IEC and whether it was relevant, efficient and effective in providing opportunities. Information gained from all three surveys has led to developments and improvements to subsequent provision.

#### Integration

In line with the University's Student Experience Enhancement Strategy, the IEC aims to ensure, as far as possible, that International students integrate into the wider student community. During 2013/14, initiatives included:

- Annual social programme & Welcome Week orientation. In 2013/14, region specific study skills sessions were introduced.
- The Culture challenge competition was run again – giving students from different nationalities the opportunity to compete together in a culture quiz. The winning team were awarded a 10-day trip to China.
- International Gala was held at the end of March, with students from all over the world performing and showcasing their particular cultures.

The ELCOS summer social programme was further developed, with the use of a student intern. More student volunteers were recruited to assist with the running of the programme and this, in itself, facilitated integration and a more inclusive community.

In addition, opportunities were provided to integrate with the local community via:

- Afternoon tea experience – students meeting local residents in their homes
- Rotary Club international dinner – annual event where students invited to share their cultures
- NWAMI event in November 2013 – joint international concert between students and the community

### Equality

The Office was involved in the:

- Bangor Pride University & Student's Group
- Inclusive Community Working group
- Staff Development sessions – internationalisation, Warden & Learning Advisers training
- Faith centre opened at the beginning of the 2013/14 Academic Year.  
The office contributed to publicising and promoting the resource.

### Welfare Support

The International Support Office of the IEC provided a range of welfare advice and support to international students during the year. Many were of a difficult nature, with some related specifically to equality of opportunity and others to what could be classed as 'hate crime'. All instances were dealt with sensitively and in conjunction with other, relevant, departments.

Providing such a service assists international students with the 'settling down' process and any cases of culture shock. The advice and support available goes a long way in ensuring that students (and their families) integrate as much as possible into the University and have an inclusive experience.

## **3.7 Teaching and Learning Strategy**

In the University's Strategic Plan 2010-2015, there is a clear commitment to an accessible curriculum and the embracing of the widening access agenda. The University places a significant role in the society and economy on North Wales and is active in outreach initiatives especially in the Communities First<sup>14</sup> areas.

The Widening Access Centre was established in 2013 to coordinate and outreach activities and create a hub for gathering information. An annual report on progress with Widening Access activities and progress goes to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

Further information about Widening Access initiatives can be found at:

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<sup>14</sup> Welsh Government initiative to narrow the economic, education/skills and health gaps between the most deprived and more affluent areas of Wales.

## **Objective 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

The Physical Access Working Group (PAWG), with reference to the Bid and Risk Register developed following consultation, continues to oversee the targeting of priority improvements across the University's estate and thus improve accessibility. This period's reporting has seen improvements to pathways, emergency refuge points for disabled students and accessible toilet facilities.

## **Objective 5 – EXTERNAL**

The new arts and innovation centre, Pontio, continues to dominate discussions and access groups, comprising of staff and students within the University and members of the public have been actively involved in developing a centre that meets the needs of a wide and varied user group. It is anticipated that the Pontio project will come to fruition in the next reporting period.

The University is very pleased to be able to call on the experience of the Arfon Access Group. Input has been sought not only during the development of the Pontio project, but also via the Physical Access Working Group when refurbishment projects are undertaken.

## **And Finally**

The University is committed to the general duties as laid out in the Equality Act and to the commitment it has made in its Strategic Equality Plan mission statement. Significant progress has been made towards achieving the University's identified equality objectives as laid out in the Action Plan accompanying the Strategic Equality Plan.

This could not be achieved if it was not for all those professionals and their teams who work to various equality fields and have contributed to the compiling of this report.

The commitment and loyalty of all staff and students is recognised and everyone takes an active role in contributing to the University's equality mission statement and making Bangor University a place in which we are all proud to work and study.

The key equality groups are beginning to look ahead to a full review of the University's Strategic Equality Plan and the identified equality objectives. It is anticipated that work in this area will commence during 2015 and will build on achievements, experience, knowledge and lessons learnt during the life of the existing Strategic Equality Plan