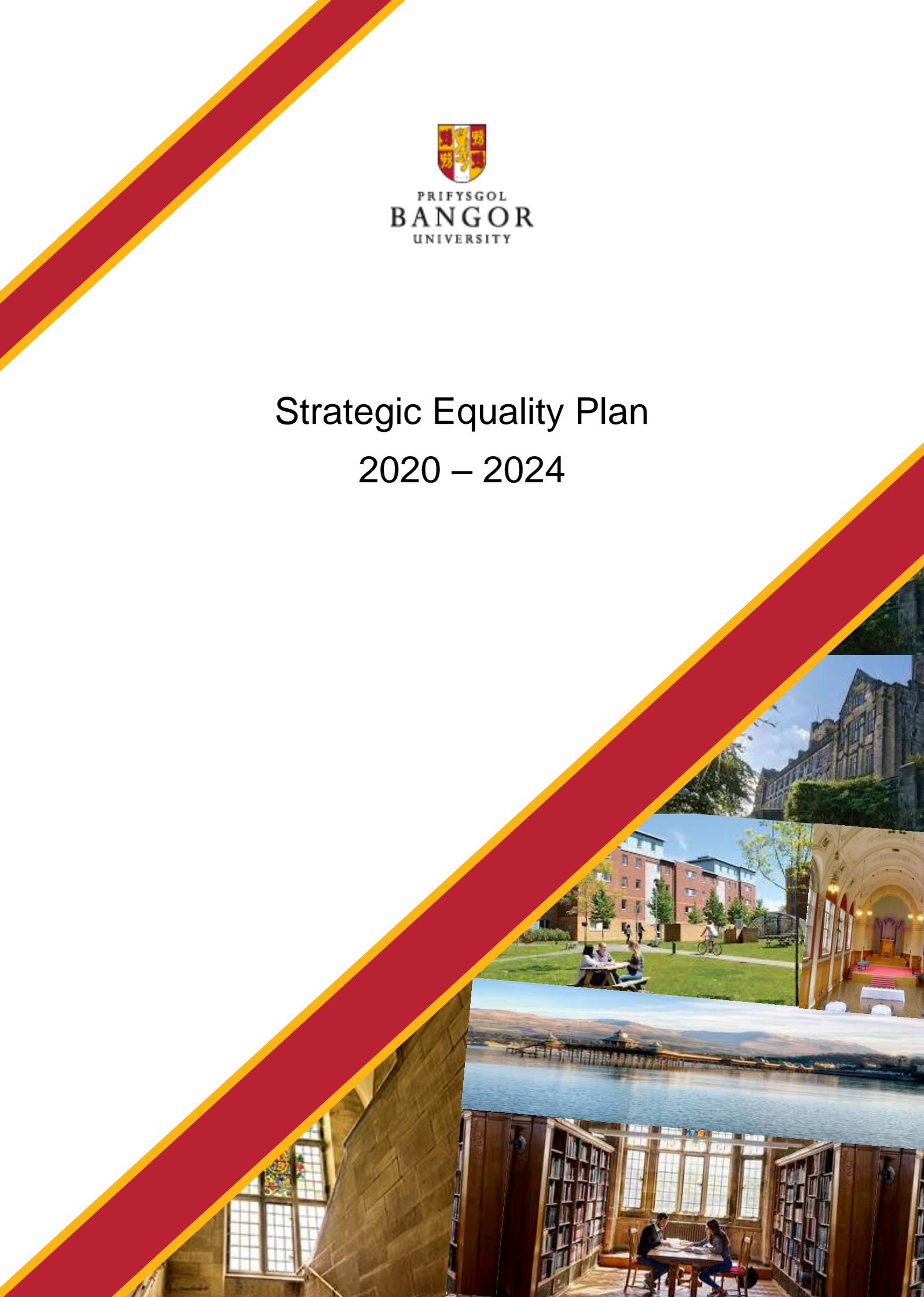




# Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024



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Bangor University has continued to support and promote equality, diversity and inclusion since the last Strategic Equality Plan. To do this we have worked closely with staff and students to support our diverse community to deliver an outstanding student experience and excellent teaching and research.

Universities play an important role in progressing the equality agenda within Wales. We are fully committed to our responsibilities to deliver the general duties of the Equality Act 2010 and the duties specific to Wales. In particular the University is also committed to the objectives outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015). We regard our commitment to equality and inclusion as being key to our long-term sustainability and success.

In developing our new equality objectives, we have reflected on our progress since the last Strategic Equality Plan. To this end we have consulted with staff and students about their views regarding equality in the University and what actions they wish to see implemented.

The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 will be a basis for the University to continue to develop the equality agenda. It will be a catalyst for change as we embed our commitment to equality in everything that we do.

It is important to acknowledge that whilst we have made progress we know that we have work to do to promote Bangor University as a fair and inclusive place to study and work. It is for this reason that I am extremely pleased to present this Strategic Equality Plan as a key focus to deliver our commitment to equality at Bangor.

**Professor Iwan Davies**

**Vice-Chancellor**

## SUMMARY AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

This Strategic Equality Plan sets out the approach Bangor University will take to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations amongst our staff, our students and the wider community over the next four years. The Plan details our role as it relates to our work as an employer and higher education provider to supporting and promoting equality of opportunity.

This Strategic Equality Plan sets out our commitment to providing the highest quality, sustainable environment for employment, research and study and to ensuring the wellbeing of our 2000 staff and 10,000 students. We aim to provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for our staff, students and the community we serve.

We understand that our activities have economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts and that sustainable development is the process of improving well-being in all four aspects in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.

The challenge to secure equality and inclusion for all in higher education is one being faced by all Universities. It requires an examination of both culture and practice in order to identify and address complex problems and bring about the changes required to end disadvantage and discrimination.

Some issues are generic in the higher education sector, such as the need to secure greater diversity including gender balance at professorial and senior management levels, and to consider intersectional inequalities. Other issues are particular to individual institutions, including for us the key priority of playing a leading role in Welsh language and culture, both locally and nationally.

The University welcomes Welsh Government's decision to implement the socio-economic duty of the Equality Act 2010 in Wales. The evidence from the [Is Wales Fairer?](#) report clearly demonstrates that people from protected groups are statistically more likely to be poorer than the rest of society and we are committed to encouraging and enabling students from underrepresented groups to access and succeed in higher education.

In this context our Strategic Equality Plan is set out under four Strategic Objectives:

### **Strategic Objective 1 – Whole University**

To embed equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do across the University to ensure that we deliver on the equality duties of eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and promoting advancement of opportunity for all. To acknowledge this as an integral part of 'the way we do things' as a Sustainable University to contribute to 'a more equal Wales' and the UN SD Goals 5 and 10.

### **Strategic Objective 2 – Student-focused**

To provide students with an inclusive and supportive learning and living environment.

This priority contributes to the WFGA goals of 'A more equal Wales' and 'A Wales of cohesive communities and a Healthier Wales'. It also contributes to the SD goals 4 (Quality Education), goal 5 (Gender equality) and goal 10 (reduced inequalities).

This priority is closely linked to the Teaching and Learning Strategy and the Student Experience strategy

### **Strategic Objective 3 - Staff-focused**

To attract and retain staff in an inclusive and diverse workplace where everyone can thrive.

This priority contributes to the WFGA goals of 'A more equal Wales' and 'A Wales of cohesive communities and a Healthier Wales'. It also contributes to the SD goals 4 (Quality Education), goal 5 (Gender equality) and goal 10 (reduced inequalities).

### **Strategic Objective 4 – Community and civic**

Collaborate and engage with groups that have not traditionally engaged with the University.

This priority dovetails with the Civic Engagement Strategy and contributes to the UN SD goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

Further information on our Strategic Equality Objectives and priorities can be found on pages 11 - 14. The Strategic Objectives and priorities will be underpinned by an Action Plan with SMART targets, progress against which will be reported in our Annual Equality Report and published in March each year.

## WHO WE ARE

Bangor University was created as a direct result of a campaign in the late nineteenth century for higher education provision in Wales. Funds were raised by public subscription to establish a college of university rank in Bangor. An important feature of its foundation was the voluntary contributions made by local people, including farmers and quarrymen, from their weekly wages over a period of time.

The University was founded as the University College of North Wales. It opened its doors on 18 October 1884 in an old coaching inn on the banks of the Menai Strait with 58 students and 10 members of staff. In North Wales there was great enthusiasm for the cause of women's education. Of the first students to be registered at the College, a third were women.

The students received degrees from the University of London until 1893 when the University of Wales, Bangor became one of the three original constituent colleges of the University of Wales. The University now awards its own degrees.

Today, we are around 10,000 students and 2,000 members of staff across three Colleges and eight Professional Service Departments. Bangor University is committed to providing teaching of the highest quality, conducting research of the highest quality, taking good care of its students and playing a full role in the wider community of Wales.

During the life of our strategic plan 2015 – 2020 the Welsh Government's Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) 2015 Act became law and although we as a University do not have a direct duty under this legislation we have chosen to adopt the framework of the Act as a tool to demonstrate our commitment to sustainability. In particular, this strategy focusses on 'A more equal Wales' – and a more equal University.

Inclusion has been at the heart of our institution since its inception and this Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 is a statement of our ongoing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and supports our mission to be,

**“A strong confident institution recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for its varied portfolio of teaching and research, and for the unique multicultural, inclusive experience it provides for its staff and students”**

*Building on Success 2015 – 2020*

## THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

As a Higher Education Institution (HEI) we are a public body and have statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in the UK in October 2010 and places an equality duty on public sector bodies such as Bangor University (the 'general duty').

The aim of the general duty is to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in their day-to-day activities. The duty ensures that equality considerations are built into the design of policies and the delivery of services and that they are kept under review.

In the exercise of its functions, a public body must have due regard to the need to:

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

The general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership (in respect of eliminating discrimination)
- Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation

In addition to the general duty, there are specific Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales that are set out in the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. The specific equality duties in Wales were guided by four principles: **the use of evidence, consultation and involvement, transparency and leadership.**

To meet the specific duties, Welsh public sector organisations, including Bangor University must:

- Create an evidence base relevant to their functions
- Engage staff, students and others
- Assess the impact of policies and practices
- Develop pay difference objectives
- Develop equality objectives
- Report on compliance with the duty and
- Embed equality into all functions.

To evidence how they are meeting the general and specific duties, public bodies in Wales are required to develop and publish a Strategic Equality Plan.

## WELSH LANGUAGE

Bangor University's Welsh Language Policy enables the University to achieve its strategic aim of being a bilingual organisation that contributes proactively to the development of the Welsh language and bilingual agenda in the University, the surrounding area, nationally and internationally. The policy also allows the University to implement the Welsh Language Standards placed on us by the Welsh Language Commissioner. Canolfan Bedwyr, a department within the University, publishes a Welsh Language Standards Report on its webpages annually.

## POLICY AND STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS

This is Bangor University's third Strategic Equality Plan. Over the course of the previous two Plans we have learned that an inclusive approach in line with the Public Sector Equality Duties is the most effective route to delivering long-term and sustained progress in achieving our equality objectives. Therefore, in this Plan we have identified high-level strategic aims and objectives that are underpinned by an Action Plan, we will report against the Action Plan annually within our Annual Equality Report. This approach will enable us to deliver our current objectives while still being able to adapt and be able to respond to emerging priorities.

Since our first Strategic Equality Plan in 2012 – 2016 we have identified the equality information we require and have grown our evidence base, this information has helped us determine what our equality objectives should be.

The Strategic Equality Plan objectives have been developed not only within the context of the University's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Wales-specific duties, but also with particular reference to:

- the University's Strategy 'Building on Success' 2015-2020;
- the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015;
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals – especially goals 5 (Gender equality), Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities) and goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals);
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015;
- Changing the Culture: Report of the Universities UK Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students 2016;
- the EHRC's report 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018';
- the UUK and NUS report 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #CLOSINGTHEGAP';
- The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018;
- the Prevent Duty; and
- The Wales Procurement Policy Statement.

The Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements do not apply to public authorities within Wales, however, as Bangor University is committed to equality of opportunity and transparency, since March 2019 we have and will continue to publish details of our Gender Pay Gap in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 which are mandatory in England. We will continue to carry out and publish an Equal Pay Audit but will do this every three years rather than annually as we have done up to now.

This Strategic Equality Plan contributes to the University's Sustainability Strategy.

## USING INFORMATION, ENGAGEMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Since our first Strategic Equality Plan we have identified and collected data from both staff, and students and data on potential staff and students not previously captured. For some protected characteristics, although information is requested it is not always given. For some protected characteristics information has only been requested relatively recently and it is likely to be a number of years before it is significantly robust enough for accurate monitoring.

In the development of this Strategic Equality Plan we have engaged with all staff, all students, the Students' Union and Trades Unions. We have done this via:

- Staff equality survey 2019 (with another staff engagement survey incorporating equality being run in January 2020, analysis not yet complete)
- Staff focus groups
- Staff qualitative data
- Benchmarking against Census data and the Advance HE Annual Statistical Reports (Staff and Students)
- The University Equality & Diversity Strategy Group
- The Athena SWAN Group
- Staff Equality Champions network
- LGBTQ Network
- The Chaplaincy
- Disability Services
- Surveys and focus groups through the Student Engagement Unit, Student Services service feedback and student representation through Undeb Bangor, including the annual Student Survey
- Widening Access engagement with the local community via established groups and networks.

We will continue to provide equality, diversity and inclusion training to all staff, starting from their mandatory induction. This will include the mandatory equality module, Equality for Managers half-day workshop, Recruitment and Selection Training, Managing Absence and Capability Training, Unconscious Bias online training, and support and guidance in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments. We will also continue to provide bespoke equality training to particular staff groups on request.

Students are made aware of the University's commitment to equality and diversity through the Inclusive Community website (<https://www.bangor.ac.uk/inclusive-community>) and Student Code of Conduct, as well as through induction activities.

Our Equality Impact Assessment form and guidance is available on our webpages and support is provided by the HR Equality Officer to policy and practice etc. owners in carrying out these assessments. We will continue to use an inclusive impact assessment approach that incorporates the Welsh Language Standards Regulations 2017 within our Equality Impact Assessments.

## Strategic Objective 1 – Whole University

To embed equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do across the University to ensure that we deliver on the equality duties of eliminating discrimination, fostering good relations and promoting advancement of opportunity for all.

### Priorities

- 1.1) Champion an inclusive community that celebrates and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and provides a safe environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and protected from harassment, bullying victimisation and discrimination at work and study.
- 1.2) Strengthen the awareness of our leaders and staff regarding equality, diversity and inclusion and best practice.
- 1.3) Ensure that equality is embedded in all our strategies and is a key consideration by decision-making groups across the University.
- 1.4) Ensure a broad understanding of the relationship between equality and sustainability.
- 1.5) Improve the information we have regarding people with protected characteristics to enable informed decision-making and better understanding of the needs and obstacles that face people from protected groups and raise awareness of the Social Model of Disability.
- 1.6) Work to develop and implement wellbeing action plans for staff and students in line with [HEFCW's Policy Statement on Wellbeing and Health in HE](#).
- 1.7) Continue to promote the use of Equality Impact Assessments to continue to improve uptake and quality to ensure informed decision-making.
- 1.8) Ensure that procurement data is in place to evidence diversity in procurement.
- 1.9) Increase accessibility for all across the estate both physically and digitally.
- 1.10) To create a supportive working environment for female staff including acting to reduce the gender pay gap and expand our analysis to consider other gaps in protected characteristics.
- 1.11) Ensure that all Schools have applied for, or are working towards, Athena SWAN awards by 2022.

## Strategic Objective 2 – Student-focused

To provide students with an inclusive, supportive and safe learning and living environment.

### Priorities

- 2.1) Champion an inclusive community which celebrates and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion at the University. Strive to ensure that all students feel respected and valued and have equal access to all University and Students' Union services. Promote and celebrate the diversity of our students and student groups and promote an inclusive culture and our Student Harassment Policy.
- 2.2) Fully include students, regardless of their disability, gender identity, origin/ethnicity and all protected characteristics in all aspects of University life and promote a positive University experience for all.
- 2.3) Create a University community that supports positive mental health and wellbeing by supporting students to develop knowledge and understanding of mental health issues in accordance with the [Student-led Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy](#).
- 2.4) Ensure there is diversity within the curriculum and academic representation and that teaching and assessment is accessible and broadly focused so as to include all groups of people from all backgrounds and cultures and with all characteristics and identities.
- 2.5) Decrease the attainment gap between students from a BAME background and white students.
- 2.6) Work towards the full inclusion of disabled students within the academic and social community, fostering resilience and self-reliance. Remove barriers and promote equality of teaching & learning for disabled students by embedding inclusivity and promoting the Social Model of Disability.
- 2.7) Provide an inclusive student employability offer which takes into account the barriers faced by students with diverse backgrounds, cultures and identities.
- 2.8) Increase the support we provide for estranged students to overcome disadvantage.

### Strategic Objective 3 - Staff-focused

To attract and retain all staff in an inclusive and diverse workplace where everyone can thrive.

#### Priorities

- 3.1) Identify opportunities and barriers to recruitment, progression and management of a diverse body of staff.
- 3.2) Enhance inclusion through improved people management across the University.
- 3.3) Work to encourage and achieve greater diversity in governance, management and leadership.
- 3.4) Continue to progress our action plan to reduce the [Gender Pay Gap](#) and expand our analysis to consider other protected characteristics.
- 3.5) Continue to progress our [Athena SWAN Action Plan](#).
- 3.6) Improve Bangor University's visibility as an inclusive and supportive place to work and raise awareness of the support available.
- 3.7) Promote and advance consistent employee support/family-friendly practice and provision for improved work-life balance in line with sector leaders.
- 3.8) Create a University community that supports positive mental health and wellbeing by supporting staff to develop knowledge and understanding of mental health issues.
- 3.9) Promote an inclusive, welcoming community for international staff members.
- 3.10) Consider actions to accommodate an ageing workforce and a potential shortage of labour.
- 3.11) Explore reasons behind low disclosure rates in relation to some protected characteristics i.e. sexual orientation and religion and belief (and non-belief). Seek to improve staff disclosures of protected characteristics and increase awareness and visibility of these protected groups.

## **Strategic Objective 4 – Community and civic mission**

Collaborate and engage with groups that have not traditionally engaged with the University.

### **Priorities**

- 4.1)** Attract and retain students and prospective students from underrepresented groups, which may include students from less advantaged backgrounds and students with protected characteristics, carers and care leavers.
- 4.2)** Raise educational aspirations and develop skills which prepare students from underrepresented groups for higher education.
- 4.3)** Ensure our staff are trained and able to support students with a range of learning styles from all backgrounds.
- 4.4)** Obtain evidence through equality monitoring that our community engagement is representative of the National 2021 population census of Wales.
- 4.5)** The University will include community benefits in all relevant procurement contracts in line with the Wales Procurement Policy Statement.

## MONITORING AND PUBLICATION

This Strategic Equality Plan is owned by the University Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, chaired by Pro Vice-chancellor Professor Carol Tully. The Group reports directly to the University Executive.

The Group meets three times per year and at each meeting measures progress against the Strategic Equality Aims and associated objectives. Progress and staff and student data will be documented in the Annual Equality Report and published at the end of March each year on our Equality webpage which is visible to staff, students and the public.

## CONTACT US

If you have any queries or comments about this Strategic Equality Plan or anything related to equality, diversity and inclusion at the University please contact either the:

Human Resources Equality Officer [n.blackwell@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:n.blackwell@bangor.ac.uk)

or the

Student Equality Officer [h.munro@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:h.munro@bangor.ac.uk)

