



Strategic Equality Plan 2024 – 2028

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From the Vice-Chancellor



This is Bangor University's fourth Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). It sets out our objectives and priorities 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 (2024 – 2028).

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.

This Strategic Equality Plan outlines our role as an employer and higher education provider to support and promote equality, diversity and inclusion. In our [Strategy 2030](#) we have made a commitment to provide equal access, equal rights, and equal justice to all. We will promote mutual regard for the rights and liberties of diverse people and their ideas, backgrounds, and approaches to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

This Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028 will be a basis for the University to continue to develop its 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 where all members of our community feel valued, have a strong sense of belonging and are enabled to reach their full potential. It is for these reasons that I am pleased to present this Strategic Equality Plan as a key focus to deliver our commitment to equality at Bangor.

Professor Edmund Burke
Vice-Chancellor

SUMMARY AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

This Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 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 SEP details our role as it relates to our work as an employer and higher education provider to supporting and promoting equality of opportunity.

With this SEP we set 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 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?](#) 2023 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 a change to our Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 the fourth Strategic Objective of Community and Civic Mission has been removed from this SEP as we now have a standalone [Civic Engagement Strategy](#), however this SEP and that Strategy are aligned.

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

Strategic Objective 1 – Whole University

To create an inclusive community that celebrates and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and provides a safe and healthy environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We will provide equal access, equal rights, and equal justice to all. We will promote mutual regard for the rights and liberties of diverse people and their ideas, backgrounds, and approaches to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

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 all students with an inclusive, supportive and safe learning and living environment. We will champion and promote diversity and create a multi-cultural and bilingual community of tolerance, dignity and respect to provide students with an experience that is meaningful and purposeful. We will continue to work towards the elimination of discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity.

This priority contributes to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (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 provide all staff with an inclusive working environment that promotes positive values and behaviour as part of a diverse and enabling culture, creating a bilingual community of tolerance, dignity, and respect.

We aim to provide an employment-offering and environment to attract and retain a diverse workforce. We will continue to work towards the elimination of discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity, supporting staff to thrive in an inclusive and diverse, bilingual workplace.

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).

Further information on our **Strategic Equality Objectives** and **Priorities** can be found on pages 11 - 13. 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 during 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 2024 – 2028 is a statement of our ongoing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and supports our Values,

- “– Ambition
- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Respect
- Sustainability
- Transformation.”

Strategy 2030 – A Sustainable World for Future Generations

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 (Trans)
- 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 non-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 at least every 4 years.

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 fourth Strategic Equality Plan. Over the course of the previous SEPs 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 SEP 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 continued to identify and develop 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 2030](#)
- 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: [Work of the Universities UK](#) Taskforce examining violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students
- the EHRC's report '[Is Wales Fairer 2023?](#)'
- the UUK and NUS report 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: [#CLOSINGTHEGAP](#)' – [three years on](#)
- The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- the Prevent Duty
- The Wales Procurement Policy Statement
- The Welsh Government [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#)
- The Welsh Government [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#)

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 every three years.

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 and consulted with all staff, all students, the Students' Union and Trades Unions. We have done this via:

- Staff engagement surveys in 2020 and 2022
- Consultation on the Strategic Objectives via the Staff Bulletin
- The Students' Union
- The EDI & Wellbeing Committee
- The EDI Operations Group
- Staff Equality Champions network
- LGBTQ Network
- The three College Equality Committees
- The Athena SWAN Group
- The newly established Race Equality Charter Group
- The newly established Decolonising Network
- Benchmarking against Census data and the Advance HE Annual Statistical Reports (Staff and Students)
- 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

We will continue to provide equality, diversity and inclusion training to all staff, starting from their mandatory induction. This will include the mandatory online equality module and mandatory Unconscious Bias online training, Equality for Managers half-day workshop, Recruitment and Selection Training, Managing Absence and Capability 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](#) web pages and [Student Code of Conduct](#), as well as through induction activities.

Our [Equality Impact Assessment template form and guidance](#) is available on our webpages and support is provided by the Senior HR Equality Officer to policy and practice etc. owners in carrying out these assessments.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Strategic Objective 1 - Whole University	
To create an inclusive community that celebrates and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and provides a safe and healthy environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We will provide equal access, equal rights, and equal justice to all. We will promote mutual regard for the rights and liberties of diverse people and their ideas, backgrounds, and approaches to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.	
	Priorities
i.	Ensure that all our staff, students and stakeholders are aware of and actively engaged in the delivery of this Strategic Equality Plan.
ii.	Provide a safe environment, free from harassment, for all.
iii.	Create a Bangor University community that supports the positive mental health and wellbeing of our staff and students.
iv.	Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded into the development of all our strategies and is a key consideration by decision-making groups across the University while continuing to promote the use of Equality Impact Assessments to improve the quality of decision-making.
v.	Strengthen the awareness of our leaders, decision-makers, managers and staff regarding equality, diversity and inclusion best practice. Achieve representative diversity in governance, management and leadership.
vi.	Increase accessibility for all across the University estate, both physically and digitally.
vii.	Review and improve the information we capture and hold regarding people with protected characteristics, including intersectional data, to enable informed decision-making and better understanding of the needs and obstacles people face.
viii.	Support good relations on campus and proportionate decision making in respect of free speech, harassment and discrimination, and in response to incidents.
ix.	Ensure that procurement policies and data are in place to evidence diversity in procurement.
x.	Ensure a broad understanding of the relationships between equality and our sustainability strategy and civic mission strategy.
xi.	Athena Swan Silver award – ensure the delivery of our Action Plan.
xii.	Race Equality Charter – apply for a Bronze award and ensure the delivery of our emerging Action Plan.
xiii.	As a Disability Confident ‘Employer’ continue to review and improve the support we provide for staff, students and prospective staff and students who have impairments by removing barriers to employment and study, in accordance with the Social Model of Disability.

Strategic Objective 2 - **Student Focused**

To provide all students with an inclusive, supportive and safe learning and living environment. We will champion and promote diversity and create a multi-cultural and bilingual community of tolerance, dignity and respect to provide students with an experience that is meaningful and purposeful. We will continue to work towards the elimination of discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity.

Priorities	
i.	Attracting students – improve our visibility as an inclusive and supportive place to study, ensuring we provide a diverse representation of the University as a place to study to prospective students to demonstrate our diversity e.g. at open days.
ii.	Developing and providing inclusive teaching, learning and assessment. Supporting the work of the Decolonisation Network.
iii.	Continue to provide and prioritise high quality wellbeing services for students e.g. Personal Learning Support Plans, counselling.
iv.	Monitor student retention and experience to understand and remove barriers to enable students to complete their studies and achieve their best.
v.	Analyse and understand the student awarding gap and identify actions to address inequalities of outcome.
vi.	Provide high quality employability and career support.
vii.	The elimination of all types of harassment.
viii.	Tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence
ix.	Provide an excellent Pastoral care system/personal tutors.

Strategic Objective 3 - **Staff Focused**

To provide all staff with an inclusive working environment that promotes positive values and behaviour as part of a diverse and enabling culture, creating a bilingual community of tolerance, dignity, and respect.

We aim to provide an employment-offering and environment to attract and retain a diverse workforce. We will continue to work towards the elimination of discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity, supporting staff to thrive in an inclusive and diverse, bilingual workplace.

Priorities	
i.	Improve our visibility as an inclusive and supportive place to work.
ii.	Increase workplace diversity by being an employer of choice, and attracting, retaining, and supporting a diverse staff group at all organisational levels, thus addressing the under-representation that exists within senior management and senior academic roles.
iii.	Identify opportunities and eliminate employment-based barriers in recruitment and promotion that prevent staff from all backgrounds from reaching their potential.
iv.	Enhance inclusion through improved people management across the University.
v.	Promote and advance consistent employee support/family friendly/dynamic working practice and provision for improved work life balance in line with sector leaders.
vi.	Take action to reduce pay gaps for protected groups at all levels within Bangor University.
vii.	Raise awareness of domestic abuse and provide support to staff experiencing domestic abuse.

MONITORING AND PUBLICATION

This Strategic Equality Plan is owned by the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Wellbeing Committee chaired by Pro Vice-chancellor Professor Andrew Edwards. The Committee reports directly to the University Executive.

The Committee meets a minimum of four times per year and at each meeting measures progress against the Strategic Equality Objectives and associated priorities. 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 any of the following people:

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