Equality & Diversity Annual Monitoring Report 2014

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Present information about successes, achievements and good practice around the University.

2. Present data on protected characteristics (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Gender, Sexual Orientation) for Newcastle University staff. Where possible comparisons have been made against local and national comparator data.

3. Present data on age, disability, ethnic origin, sex, and various socio-economic characteristics for Newcastle University students.

4. Update on our approach to publication of equality information and equality objectives in line with public sector equality duties.

1. Successes, Achievements and Good Practice

Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport

Harry Boddy, a Biomedical Science student is a member of the Elite Athletes Squad & a Santander Sports Scholar who represented England Powerchair Football team. Harry receives support and specialised strength & conditioning support from Coaches in the Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport (CPRS).

Anna Nicholson, a Chemical Engineering student is also a member of the Elite Athletes Squad & a Recruitment Sports Scholar. Anna is a Disability Athlete with a UK junior ranking of 1 in discus and shot put in 2013.

Estate Support Services

The process of funding specific adaptations for students has recently been simplified with the responsibility for providing funding now with the four principal budget holders and not with the individual schools/unit.

A range of developments have been undertaken to improve facilities on campus:

- A programme of upgrading induction loops, predominantly within the larger teaching rooms, all of which NUITS now maintain. Better provision to take into account the future needs of students, staff and visitors is included within all developments and refurbishments.
- Fire alarm warning systems are currently backed up with a vibrating pager system which is issued on a person by person basis. Fire alarm systems are being upgraded during renewal programmes to provide visual as well as audible warnings.
- There has been recent investment in refuge communication systems and refuges across the University where disabled people can go and communicate with emergency contacts in the event of an emergency.
- Accessible toilet provision is being improved across campus with a programme of works starting in the Old Library building and Merz Court.

Gender Equality Initiatives

Newcastle University is committed to the Athena SWAN Charter, and currently holds a bronze award which recognises what we have done to encourage the employment and career progression of women employed in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine.
There has been progress with achieving departmental awards with the Institute of Genetic Medicine obtaining a bronze award and the Institute for Health and Society renewing its silver award. In addition the Schools of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Civil Engineering and Geosciences received the first bronze departmental awards in the Faculty of Science, Agriculture and Engineering. All remaining schools and institutes in these faculties are currently working towards submitting departmental award applications.

Five schools in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences have expressed interest in participating in the Equality Challenge Unit’s Gender Equality Charter Mark when it is launched in 2015. The gender equality charter mark aims to address gender inequalities and imbalance in the arts, humanities and social sciences, in particular the underrepresentation of women in senior roles.

**Marketing and Student Recruitment**

The University has made consistently good progress towards the HESA Widening Participation (WP) benchmarks for recruitment, and exceeds the WP benchmarks from students in this region. In the last three years (2011 – 2013 data) the University has seen a significant increase in the proportion of students from state schools and colleges, lower socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods. In addition, there has been an encouraging increase in the number of students from a black and minority ethnic group and those declaring a disability.

In order to extend this progress further, and encourage participation from under-represented groups from across the country, the University is expanding its PARTNERS Programme support entry route nationally in Spring 2015 to enable any eligible state school student in England to apply.

Newcastle University also leads on both the national, award-winning Realising Opportunities partnership of 15 research-intensive universities and the regional Raising Aspirations Partnership of five universities.

**Students’ Union**

The Students’ Union developed a Mind the Gap Society designed to support students with mental health difficulties and to educate about the issues these students face. The society holds a variety of activities such as stress busting events and works with local mental health charities, organisations, local GPs and mental health trusts. The society organised a mental health conference in May 2014 which was open to students, staff and members of the public.

**Student Wellbeing**

Development and Alumni Relations Office have secured funding from our Alumni to help students who struggle with the transition to settle at University. This funding is available to support students who are experiencing difficulties irrespective of whether they have a diagnosis of any disability/specific learning difficulty/mental health condition and a number of
events have been held over the last academic year to support students. One particularly successful event has been the Transition Event, which provided students, who have a mental health or Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, with the opportunity to settle into their accommodation and participate in workshops/social events in the week before the new student intake arrived for Fresher’s week. The feedback from this event has been so positive, as has the reaction of parents and prospective students at subsequent Visit Days, that this event is to be repeated before Fresher’s Week next academic year and will be widened to encompass appropriate events for students who have physical and/or sensory impairments.

In December 2013 Student Wellbeing organised the second of its programme of events for students staying in Newcastle over the Christmas period. The events included an afternoon of ice skating, football at St James Park and a 2 course Christmas dinner cooked by the Chaplaincy on Christmas Day. These events were attended by 395 Home and International students from our University.

2. Staff Equality and Diversity Monitoring

Analysis of staff data for 2012/13 can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.

3. Student Equality and Diversity Monitoring

Analysis of student data can be found in Appendix 3.

4. Public Sector Equality Duty

The public sector equality duty requires that public bodies:

• eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

• advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;

• foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The University’s commitment to these and the 3 year action plan are described in the Equality Strategy which can be found on the Equality and Diversity website

Specific Duties require public bodies to:

• Publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty The publication of this report and its appendices are evidence of compliance with the Equality Duty to publish information. In addition statistical data, reports of staff and student surveys, and relevant staff and student policies are also available.


For queries about this report, please contact: Jan Halliburton, HR Adviser (Policy and Projects) Ext. 85974, jan.halliburton@ncl.ac.uk