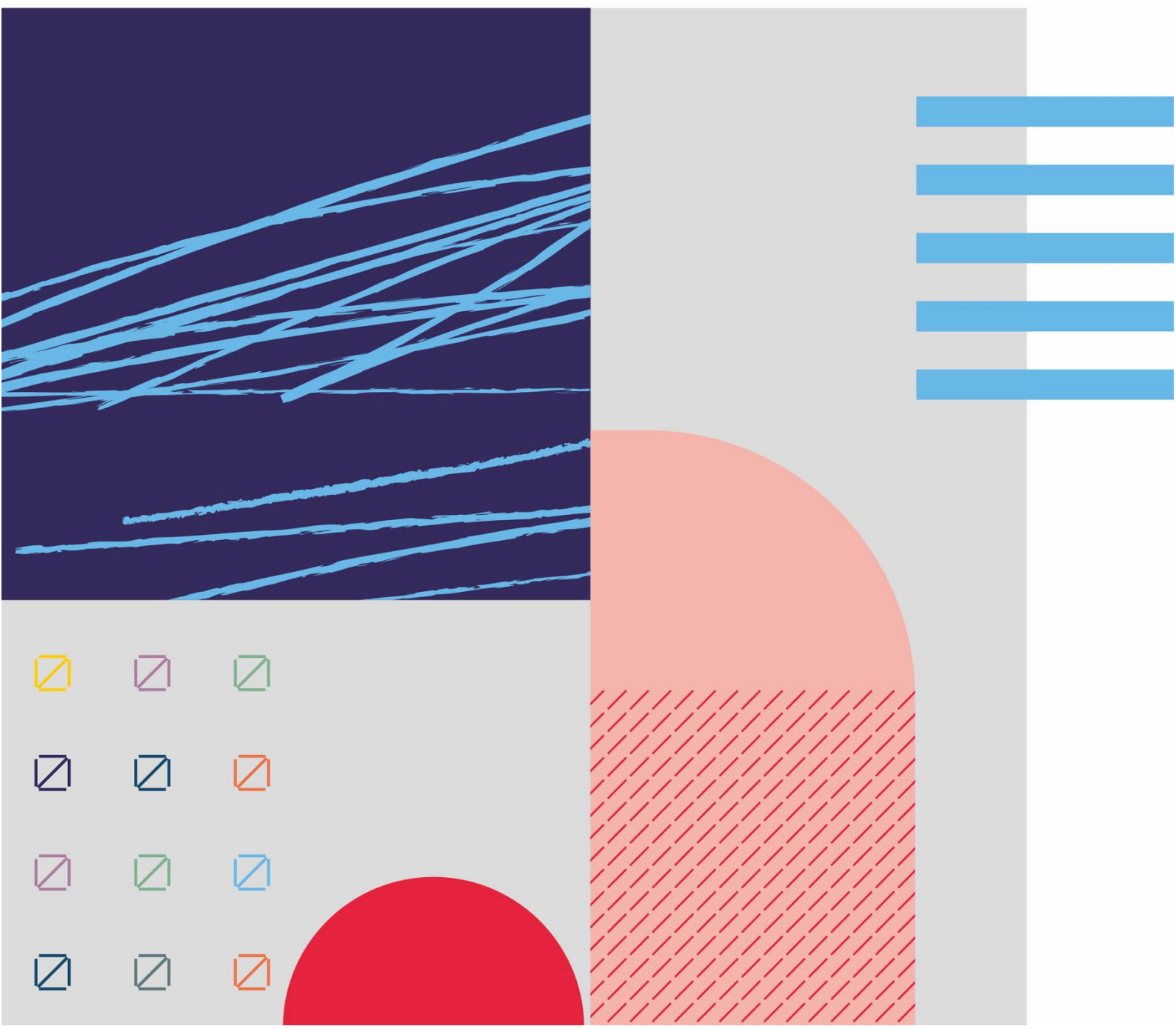




# Equality Outcomes 2025-29

**Celebrate, Challenge, Connect**



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## Foreword

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is all about people. We've taken time to involve people from across our community in the development of these Equality Outcomes 2025-29.

This document sets out a clear focus on the areas we have found to be most important to our community and beyond.

We've learned from our previous work, using that experience to refocus efforts in areas such as; understanding our baselines, marking milestones and measuring change.

We continue to be motivated by the role we play in affecting change far beyond our campuses. We believe there is a simple underpinning 'non-negotiable': no one should feel less than, be treated as less than or achieve less than because of personal circumstances. We shouldn't allow it, and we certainly shouldn't accept it.

The next four-years will be about setting the expectation of what Edinburgh Napier will have achieved for our community by 2029.

We all have a contribution to make. We hold ourselves accountable and look forward to delivering.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Rigby'.

Professor Sue Rigby  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

# Introduction

Edinburgh Napier University's Equality Outcomes (EOs) 2025-29 are based on the [Scottish Funding Council's National Equality Outcomes \(NEOs\)](#). Published in January 2023 the NEOs outlined where persistent inequalities exist across Scottish Further and Higher Education settings.

The University agreed in 2023/24 that adapting the NEOs would support locating equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) activities within the Scottish context and better enable outcomes benefitting the University community and wider society.

The development of Edinburgh Napier University EOs 2025-29 has focused on how the University can contribute to the tackling persistent inequalities identified by the Scottish funding Council. That means looking at what we want to achieve, how we will achieve it, and what measures we will use to support progress. Our approach is firmly rooted in the Public Sector Equality Duty supporting us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across all our Equality Outcomes.

We have a simple EDI Vision:

**We want to be known as a university that celebrates difference.**

We have a simple mission:

**We are driven to be a university where every student and staff member has an excellent experience. A University community where your difference is supported, and you are included in all that the University has to offer. We are a university that celebrates, challenges and connects by being the home of the difference maker.**

We've taken time to make sure our EOs are meaningful. These Equality Outcomes are built on the foundations of the NEOs, shaped by our community and will be underpinned by measures that track progress overtime.

EDI Measures and an Equality Outcome Tracker companion document will provide the basis of how we measure progress overtime and how we keep ourselves accountable for the commitments we have made.

# Edinburgh Napier Equality Outcomes 2025-29

By April 2029 our university will have:

- E01** IMPROVED RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS AGED 25 AND ABOVE.
- E02** A SUPPORTED WORKFORCE, ACROSS ALL CAREER STAGES, WHERE DIVERSITY, EXPERIENCE AND FRESH PERSPECTIVES ARE VALUED AND COLLEAGUES FEEL SUPPORTED.
- E03** IMPROVED RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.
- E04** INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF DISABILITY IN INFLUENTIAL COMMITTEES.
- E05** A COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE TO REACH OUT FOR HELP AND BE SUPPORTED IN RECOVERY.
- E06** A TRANS COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE AND SUPPORTED AT EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY.
- E07** A GLOBAL MAJORITY COMMUNITY WHO IS CONFIDENT IN THE UNIVERSITY CULTURE AND PROCESSES TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH RACISM.
- E08** AN ANTI-RACIST UNIVERSITY THAT ADDRESSES ANY RACIAL DISADVANTAGE IN STUDENT RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES.
- E09** A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS RELIGIOUS OPENNESS AND BELONGING.
- E010** MADE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE TO THE SEX-IMBALANCES IN PRIORITY SUBJECT AREAS.
- E011** A COMMUNITY THAT IS ZERO TOLERANT TO SEX AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.
- E012** A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY.

## Age

ENU wants to make sure that people across all ages are supported to fulfil their potential. We will focus our student actions toward supporting the Scottish Funding Council's National Equality Outcome to improve retention outcomes for students aged 25 and above.

We want to make sure our employee community feels valued and supported throughout the employee journey, from when someone first considers us as an employer of choice. Focusing on competency rather than time served or 'experience' opens opportunities for progression and succession planning. Equally, rewarding achievement and success supports talent retention.

We want to make sure that we're an employer of choice for people throughout their life stages; supporting people who have had previous careers with or continue to be affiliated with the Armed Forces, those returning from a career break and those just starting out will feel and be valued at Edinburgh Napier.

We know that creating an excellent colleague experience includes activity around pay, that work is contained under separate cover and can be found on our webpages.

### **E01: IMPROVED RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS AGED 25 AND ABOVE.**

We will do this by:

- application and enrolment processes that support students of all ages
- support services that are fit for purpose for students of all ages
- processes to specifically support students aged 25 and above who are at risk of leaving their course
- developing role model and mentoring networks for students aged 25yrs and above



**EO2: A SUPPORTED WORKFORCE, ACROSS ALL CAREER STAGES, WHERE DIVERSITY, EXPERIENCE AND FRESH PERSPECTIVES ARE VALUED AND COLLEAGUES FEEL SUPPORTED.**

We will do this by:

- Encouraging personal development and celebrating recognition.
- Ensuring recruitment processes that are fair and unbiased, ensuring individuals secure roles based on skills and qualifications.
- Providing opportunities for colleagues to reach their full potential with personal career journey/pathways.
- Being a university where great performance is expected and where there are mechanisms in place to acknowledge it.

# Disability

Edinburgh Napier wants to be known as a university that celebrates difference, that means creating a space where people feel safe to be different. Our students identify in many different ways and we know that sometimes labels don't feel helpful, that's certainly the case for many of our students and colleagues who come under the banner of having long-term and affecting circumstances. These circumstances can be wrapped-up in the disability protected characteristic which is helpful for providing protections and support but can feel limiting for individuals. This can particularly be the case for people who maybe neurodivergent. That's why part of our day-to-day activities will always look to providing universal coverage for our community.

We particularly want to make sure that our students, and colleagues, feel supported to declare a mental health condition.

## **EO3: IMPROVED RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.**

We will do this by:

- providing training for the University community on Disability and Mental Health Awareness
- providing early and regular opportunities to disclose mental health related conditions
- demonstrating positive impact from disclosure and support activities to address and remove stigma
- ensuring routes to support and support provided are cognisant of neurodiversity
- providing early and regular interventions to prevent attrition
- providing support to employees to responds to student wellbeing
- creating varied routes for feedback
- responding to feedback, making changes where necessary

## **EO4: INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF DISABILITY IN INFLUENTIAL COMMITTEES.**

We will do this by:

- identifying influential committees, engaging with committee Chairs and encouraging disclosure of personal characteristics
- encouraging engagement between SLT, ULT and the University Court with Staff Inclusion Networks
- leading by example – Demonstrating difference in leadership



We want to be a University community where everyone feels supported and safe. That means recognising that we have a varied community where no one set of circumstances is the same for individuals or groups.

For example, we want to make sure men in our community are supported to access mental health support. We already take forward specific work related to mental health, including signposting for people [experiencing suicidal thoughts](#), and a [Mental Health Strategy](#).

We know that by providing a supportive space for some groups can have the benefit of better supporting everyone.

**E05: A COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE TO REACH OUT FOR HELP AND BE SUPPORTED IN RECOVERY.**

We will do this by

- refreshing the University's Mental Health Strategy
- creating visible and accessible materials to support men's mental health
- creating a culture that supports challenging conversations and taking action

## Gender Reassignment

We know that there is a shortage of data about people considering and undergoing gender reassignment. What we do know is that transitioning, whether medically or socially, can be a difficult and complex time. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming community where people are enabled to meet their full potential and are respected as individuals.

### **E06: A TRANS COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE AND SUPPORTED AT EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY.**

We will do this by:

- taking steps to support building community for trans students and colleagues including building networks
- creating responsive university services to improve the ENU offering
- completing re-drafting Gender Transitioning Guidance and supporting material
- extending our zero tolerance approach to all forms of hate

## Race

We know that some people face disadvantage as result of their ethnicity or race. At Edinburgh Napier we recognise that people from groups described as BME or BAME are part of the 'global majority'. We want to better understand our place and the place of our community in the world around us, creating open spaces for addressing difficult topics. To achieve that we need to know the challenges that people from global majority backgrounds face and extend our activities to incorporate aspects of religion and belief in anti-racist activities. Our efforts will be supported by a diverse leadership unafraid to address challenging topics.

### **E07: A GLOBAL MAJORITY COMMUNITY WHO IS CONFIDENT IN THE UNIVERSITY CULTURE AND PROCESSES TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH RACISM.**

We will do this by:

- creating spaces to elevate discussions around race and racism
- Spread awareness and understanding of the role the University plays in addressing racism, including how we tackle incidents
- actively celebrate racial diversity encouraging visibility across the community from undergraduates to alumni and role modelling in professional services
- extending our zero tolerance approach to all forms of hate

### **E08: AN ANTI-RACIST UNIVERSITY THAT ADDRESSES ANY RACIAL DISADVANTAGE IN STUDENT RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES.**

We will do this by:

- taking forward activities to support organisational anti-racism including elevating the voices of people with lived experience through staff and student networks, self-assessment and active anti-racism campaigns
- identifying and addressing any racial disadvantage in awards (degrees)
- celebrating difference, recognising intersections across our communities through culture, country of origin and heritage

## Religion or Belief

We know that Religion and Belief can be a critical part of individual identity and a supportive environment can enhance a sense of belonging. We want to make sure that we are known as a place of religious tolerance where we tackle intolerance and support community building.

### **E09: A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS RELIGIOUS OPENNESS AND BELONGING.**

We will do this by:

- creating an environment that supports religious openness through disclosure routes and celebrating our communities
- supporting a vibrant chaplaincy that provides for all faith and non-belief communities

## Sex

The NEOs focus on issues surrounding sex and gender-based violence, creating supportive and fit for purpose processes for tackling incidents, supporting men's mental health particularly suicide prevention and subject sex-imbalance. We recognise these persistent inequalities as part of a broader landscape of sex-based inequalities. Our work supporting the Sex NEOs focus on the Edinburgh Napier contribution.

### Tackling subject sex-imbalance

Student intake across subject areas remains a challenge. The Scottish Funding Council published a gender action plan in 2019 outlining that, by 2030, no individual subject at a Scottish college or university shall have a gender imbalance greater than 75:25, and that the gap between overall male and female participation in undergraduate study shall be reduced to 5%. While the Gender Action Plan is now defunct, the 25:75 gender balance continues to be pursued across Scottish FE and HE.

#### EO10: MADE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE TO THE SEX-IMBALANCES IN PRIORITY SUBJECT AREAS.

We will do this by:

- identifying gaps in student recruitment and developing strategies to support improvement
- exploring partnership working to maximise alternative pathways relevant to subject areas
- involve students and academic bodies in addressing imbalances

### Sex and gender-based violence

Our work addressing sex and gender-based violence is connected through a range of mechanisms including guidance on sexual assault and harassment, zero tolerance, report and support and safeguarding activities. We want to continue our progress in this area.

#### EO11: A COMMUNITY THAT IS ZERO TOLERANT TO SEX AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.

We will do this by:

- providing clear routes to reporting alongside support in coming forward

- providing awareness raising, capacity building and commitment to addressing sex and gender-based violence
- creating an organisation that supports marginalised voices, encourages reporting and makes sure to take action that demonstrates zero tolerance
- creating a resilient organisational culture that supports challenging conversations and taking action



## Sexual Orientation

We want to be a university where our words and intentions are matched in our culture. When we say we want all of our community to be free to be their authentic selves that means we have to take steps to make that the case.

### **EO12: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY.**

We will do this by:

- creating a safe space for all of our community, encouraging disclosure
- building community through staff and student networks
- extending our zero tolerance approach to all forms of hate
- visibly celebrating our LGBTQ+ community through role modelling

## EDI as part of our everyday

Our Equality Outcomes and associated actions are underpinned by the Scottish Funding Council's National Equality Outcomes. Our commitment to progressing EDI is rooted in Edinburgh Napier, its in our Bones.

We know that there are some ways of working that will be impactful across all protected groups, and that we want to measure improvement in those areas. This is about making sure that EDI is part of our everyday.

While these areas of focus don't sit under our Equality Outcomes, they are part of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We want Edinburgh Napier to be a university where:

- every student has an excellent student experience
- every student has excellent support services from application to award
- every employee has an excellent employee journey through open and transparent recruitment, progression and promotion processes

## Appendix: Edinburgh Napier Equality Outcomes Mapped to the National Equality Outcomes

Protected Characteristic	Persistent Inequality	National equality outcome	Edinburgh Napier Equality Outcome
Age	The outcomes of students, as evidenced by SFC and HESA data, by age group shows consistent under-achievement for students aged 25 and over in the university sector and for students under 19 in the college sector.	The retention outcomes for university students aged 25 and over will improve. (The success rates for college students aged under 19 will improve)	EO1: IMPROVED RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS AGED 25 AND ABOVE.  EO2: A SUPPORTED WORKFORCE, ACROSS ALL CAREER STAGES, WHERE DIVERSITY, EXPERIENCE AND FRESH PERSPECTIVES ARE VALUED AND COLLEAGUES FEEL SUPPORTED.



<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■The outcomes of students, as evidenced by SFC and HESA data, shows consistent under-achievement for students who declared a mental health condition. The numbers of students disclosing this information is also increasing.</li> <li>■Feedback from students to Lead Scotland, input from students into the SG/SAAS Disability</li> <li>■Related Student Support Review and input into the Disabled Students Employment Action Plan all outline issues from disabled students in relation to the access and implementation of reasonable adjustments</li> <li>■Scottish Hate Crime Statistics evidence increased harassment to people with a disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■The success and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve.</li> <li>■ Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system</li> <li>■ Disabled students report feeling satisfied with the overall support and reasonable adjustments received, including from teaching staff, while on their course</li> <li>■ Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system</li> </ul>	<p>EO3: IMPROVED RETENTION AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.</p> <p>EO5: A COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE TO REACH OUT FOR HELP AND BE SUPPORTED IN RECOVERY.</p>
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<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disabled people are under-represented in College Boards and Courts</li> <li>▪ The proportion of disabled support and professional staff are not always in line with the local travel to work population (outlined in the 2022 Census) and are not in line with the national census</li> </ul>	Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on College Boards and University Courts.	EO4: INCREASED REPRESENTATION OF DISABILITY IN INFLUENTIAL COMMITTEES
<b>Gender Re-assignment</b>	There is limited quantitative data about the outcomes for trans students. Research from Stonewall and TransEdu suggests that Trans students face harassment from students and staff on account of their trans status.	Trans students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system	EO6: A TRANS COMMUNITY WHO FEELS SAFE AND SUPPORTED AT EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY.
<b>Race</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As outlined in the EHRC Racial Harassment Inquiry</li> <li>▪ Staff data and student data from both sectors and data on representation at Court level outlines under- representation issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and students feel safe and are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress</li> <li>▪ Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.</li> </ul>	EO7: A GLOBAL MAJORITY COMMUNITY WHO IS CONFIDENT IN THE UNIVERSITY CULTURE AND PROCESSES TO DEAL WITH RACISM  EO8: AN ANTI-RACIST UNIVERSITY THAT ADDRESSES ANY RACIAL DISADVANTAGE IN



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of Court members and address any racial diversity issues in college Boards.</li> <li>• During the assessment of data and discussions with the Persistent Inequality and Outcomes Group several race related issues were raised including:</li> <li>• A lack of racial diversity of college Board members and a lack of national data Racial diversity issues in the university system – although the university system appeared to have good representation comparative to the student data and representation, it was reported that this may not be consistent across grades and areas of work within the sector The NEOs have been based on the actual data but institutions should consider issues relating to racial diversity in depth across their institution.</li> </ul>	STUDENT RETENTION RATES AND OUTCOMES.
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	There is limited quantitative data about outcomes based on religion and belief. We have used research presented by the Jewish Union of Students, and the lived experiences of people of faith in the development of the race equality project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.</li> <li>• Institutions should note the intersectionality outlined under the race NEO.</li> </ul>	EO9: A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS RELIGIOUS OPENNESS AND BELONGING





<b>Sex</b>	<p>■Evidenced from the Scottish Government’s Equally Safe strategy including issues, predominately from women, relating to accessing support and reporting issues.</p> <p>■Statistical data outlines that men in society are three times more likely than women to die by suicide. Men are less likely to access mental health support.</p> <p>■Statistical data shows that course choice and sex imbalance on courses remain an issue. However, the specific targets of the past have not had the required impact. Institutions have asked for flexibility to focus on key subjects where they could make an impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff and students know how to access support about violence, harassment and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so because the services are fit for purpose.</li> <li>• Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.</li> <li>• Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group. Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.</li> </ul>	<p>EO10: MADE A TANGIBLE DIFFERENCE TO THE SEX-IMBALANCES IN PRIORITY SUBJECT AREAS</p> <p>EO11: A COMMUNITY THAT IS ZERO TOLERANT TO SEX AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE</p>
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<p>Stonewall Research suggests some LGBT students hide their identities in universities and that staff experience barriers that prevent them from being out at work.</p>	<p>Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being ‘out’ at university and college.</p>	<p>EO12: A VISIBLE AND SUPPORTED LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY</p>



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