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Y Drindod Dewi Sant  
UNIVERSITY OF WALES  
Trinity Saint David

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# Strategic Equality Plan

## 2012-2016

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## **FOREWORD BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR**

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David is firmly committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equality in all aspects of its activities as an employer, a provider of higher education and in its interaction with the wider community. The institution recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 as outlined in the general duty to promote equality along with the associated specific duties which are outlined in this plan.

The University regards the Strategic Equality Plan as part of its continuing effort to provide quality higher education to an increasingly diverse community of learners. It is recognised that equality is an issue for the whole University and requires action by those working at all levels within the institution, including staff and students.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David will actively promote this Strategic Equality Plan, and will implement the associated action plan. To assist with this task, the Governing Body and the Senior Management Team will provide leadership in relation to the implementation of this Strategic Equality Plan. I commend this Strategic Equality Plan to you as part of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's overall commitment to equal opportunities.

Professor Medwin Hughes  
DL DPhil DPS FRSA  
Vice Chancellor

April 2012

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As a higher education institution, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David recognises that it has a central role to play in bringing about a fair and just society. The University is committed to equality of opportunity and will promote equality in all aspects of its activities as an employer, a provider of Higher Education and in its interaction with the wider community, in order to provide a working and learning environment which is free from discrimination. It is the policy of the University to ensure that no member of the University community should receive more or less favourable treatment on any grounds which are not relevant to good educational and employment practice.

As a Community University the University of Wales Trinity Saint David is strongly committed to Social Inclusion and has within its structure a School of Social Justice and Inclusion, which demonstrates by title and teaching that it actively seeks to embrace all elements of social inclusion.

The University will endeavour to implement full equality of opportunity, and take appropriate measures to ensure that no student, member of staff or visitor is subject to unfair discrimination.

The legislative agenda in respect of Equality and Diversity has developed greatly during recent years, the most recent being the introduction of the Equality Act 2010. The University recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to eliminate any unlawful discrimination, be it direct or indirect discrimination, whether by perception or by association with a protected characteristic. In meeting previous legislative requirements, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, was required to produce specific Equality Schemes for Race, Disability and Gender. This Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) supersedes the specific schemes by mainstreaming all equality strands into a single Strategic Equality Plan. The Strategic Equality Plan is extended to include the other protected characteristics such as Age, Religion and Belief, Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity. The Plan is designed to further articulate the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity which will be accompanied by a set of objectives and priorities as outlined in the Equality Action Plan.

The University will seek to ensure that students and staff are aware of the plan and their obligation to respect the dignity and diversity of colleagues and other students and not to engage in behaviour that may be interpreted as discriminatory, harassment, bullying or showing lack of respect. All staff and students are required to recognise their responsibilities within this context. All students can expect considerate and courteous treatment from staff at all levels and, equally, to maintain a climate of mutual confidence and respect, students are expected to treat staff at all levels with the same consideration and courtesy. The principle of Dignity at Work underpins the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's approach to Equality and Diversity.

## **2. EQUALITY ACT 2010**

The Act harmonises discrimination law, and brings together the equality strands in to a single, simplified piece of legislation. The Act replaces all existing equality legislation with regards to race, disability and gender, with a single duty to promote equality for all the protected characteristics:

- Disability
- Race
- Gender

- Age
- Gender reassignment (this includes individuals who have proposed, started or completed the process)
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership (in employment)

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the introduction of a new general equality duty on the public sector, the University recognises that as a Higher Education Institution it has a duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act. (Direct discrimination also includes discrimination by perception or by association. e.g. a carer may be protected from discrimination due to association)
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

As a Welsh public authority, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David also recognises its duty in accordance with the specific public sector equality duties. These include regulations on:

- Equality objectives
- Engagement provisions
- Arrangements for collection of information about compliance with the general duty
- Impact and monitoring of policies and practices
- Training and collection of employment information
- Pay and action plans
- Strategic equality plans
- Reports by authorities on compliance with the general duty
- Public procurement

### **3. EQUALITY STATEMENT**

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David is committed to promoting equality to avoid discrimination in any of the equality strands and adopting proactive measures to address unlawful discrimination. The University seeks to provide a working and learning environment that is free from any form of harassment, intimidation, victimisation or discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic, or by perception or association with a protected characteristic.

All individuals are to be treated with dignity and respect and valued for their contribution.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David will ensure that equality is at the centre of policy making, service delivery, regulations, enforcement and employment practice. All staff and students are responsible for ensuring that the Strategic Equality Plan is put into practice.

This Strategic Equality Plan will be reviewed annually and revised every four years taking account of what has been achieved and where to focus over the forthcoming plan period.

This Strategic Equality Plan has been developed in accordance with current legislation and with the benefit of guidance from the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU).

#### 4. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

In accordance with its commitment to equality, the University of Wales Trinity Saint David will ensure that positive steps are taken to identify and combat all forms of discrimination so that no potential or existing members of staff or students are discriminated against either directly or indirectly, or by perception or association.

This Strategic Equality Plan covers the entire University community. In this context, the term University community refers to members of the University Council, all actual and potential, full time and part time employees, students, visitors and customers. Outside organisations or contractors operating on the campus will be made aware of the University's Strategic Equality Plan and guidelines on Equality and Diversity, and will be required to act in accordance with them.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David believes that the Strategic Equality Plan is crucial to its future development and continuing success, and takes responsibility for ensuring effective implementation of the plan and associated objectives.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David will ensure that all individuals and organisations that provide services for or on behalf of the University can demonstrate a similar commitment to equality and have appropriate procedures in place.

The University will investigate any alleged breach of this Strategic Equality Plan by staff, students, contractors or service providers. If any member of staff experiences any issues in relation to equality they should bring the matter to the attention of their line manager or the Director of HR. Students who experience any issues in relation to equality should bring the matter to the attention of their Head of School or Dean of Faculty in the first instance, and can make use of the University's student grievance procedures if required.

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If the allegation is upheld, action will be taken which could result in disciplinary proceedings against staff and students. Breach of University policy or standards could result in external contractors and/or service providers being removed from the University's list of approved suppliers.

#### 5. AIMS OF THE STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

The plan has been drawn up to try and achieve a holistic approach to equality and diversity at the University and includes objectives on all equality strands

The aims of the Strategic Equality Plan are as follows:

- a) to comply with the legislation within the Equality Act 2010;
- b) to fulfil the University's statutory obligation;
- c) to consult with staff, students and where possible external contractors or visitors;
- d) to assess the impact of all University policies on students and staff:

- from different racial groups;
  - with disabilities or who have had disabilities in the past;
  - of both gender categories including those within the gender reassignment category;
  - of all ages;
  - of any religious or belief affiliations;
  - of any sexual orientation;
  - that are pregnant.
- e) to monitor student and staff equality data and address any matters arising from such monitoring;
- f) to ensure all members of the University community are aware of the Plan and have access to the results of monitoring and assessment;
- g) to identify objectives which will address all equality strands for the University to take forward for the next four years;
- h) to ensure that all potential, new and existing members of staff and students and the community are informed of the plan and its implications for their work, studies and business relationships;
- i) to establish appropriate links with outside agencies and community groups and consult with them on the effective implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan.

## 6. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's objectives recognise the need to re-dress imbalances and to change organisational culture and that such changes are best achieved by incremental developments.

The University will adopt and implement the outcome focused objectives listed below. There are one or more objectives relating to each protected characteristic as well as general objectives which cover more than one characteristic.

The University's objectives under each characteristic are:

### General

1. Ensure that staff, students and third parties comply with the University's Strategic Equality Plan and are aware of their individual responsibilities and standards of behaviour.
2. Enhance awareness and understanding of staff and students in relation to equality and diversity.
3. Develop the knowledge and skills of staff and students in relation to equality and diversity.
4. Ensure effective consultation on equality matters with both internal and external stakeholders.
5. Monitor and report on the diversity profile of staff and students annually.
6. Review, develop and implement inclusive policies, procedures and practices.

### Disability

7. Provide an accessible, safe and inclusive environment for staff, students and the wider community.
8. Enhance awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled students and staff.
9. Improve educational opportunities and employment prospects of disabled staff and students.
10. Ensure effective participation in University life by disabled staff and students. This will include all aspects related to employment or studies on or off campus.

### Race

11. Increase the ethnic diversity of the staff and student body within the University community.
12. Ensure effective participation in University life by staff and students of different ethnicities, race and nationalities.

### Gender

13. Improve gender balance in certain subject areas and non-traditional areas of work.

### Gender Re-assignment

14. Provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for transgender staff and students.
15. Promote transgender equality within the University.

### Sexual Orientation

16. Provide an inclusive and supportive environment for staff and students in relation to sexual orientation.

### Age

17. Provide an inclusive environment for staff and students irrespective of age.

### Religion and belief

18. Ensure provision of an inclusive and supportive environment which meets the religion and belief needs of a diverse staff and student body

### Marriage and civil partnership

19. Ensure that staff who are married or in a civil partnership do not suffer from discrimination.

### Pregnancy and maternity

20. Provide a supportive environment to staff and students in relation to pregnancy and maternity.

## Gender Pay

21. Ensure that pay issues relating to equality are monitored and addressed where appropriate.

The objectives will be met by specific actions which are shown in the Equality Action Plan (Appendix A). The University will ensure that the action plan is adequately resourced to demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan.

In terms of evaluation, the equality objectives will be reviewed annually by the University's Equality & Diversity Committee.

## **7. STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN: COMMUNICATION AND PUBLISHING**

The University will publish the Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives which describes the steps the University will take to meet equality challenges. The University will:

- a) publish the Strategic Equality Plan and Action Plan on the University's internet under the Human Resources section. For staff who do not have regular IT access, hard copies will be made available within the department or may be obtained from the HR department.
- b) ensure that the plan is available in a variety of alternative and accessible formats;
- c) ensure the Strategic Equality Plan is published bilingually and distributed throughout the University;
- d) ensure the Strategic Equality Plan is distributed to new members of staff during the induction process;
- e) ensure that copies of the University's Dignity at Work statement are displayed on the University intranet and on notice boards throughout the University;
- f) publish the results of monitoring on an annual basis, along with the results of any equality impact assessments that show substantial impact on certain groups.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY: FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The University recognises that successful implementation of the plan requires clear understanding and commitment throughout the University community.

Overall responsibility for ensuring the consistent application of the Strategic Equality Plan resides with the Vice-Chancellor who as Chief Executive is accountable to the University Council. The Senior Management Team of the University has responsibility for managing the implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan. A member of the SMT chairs the University's Equality and Diversity committee.

From a governance perspective, the University Council has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with equality legislation.

Under delegated arrangements from the Vice Chancellor, the Director of Student Services and the Director of Human Resources have responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Strategic

Equality Plan, together with the Deans of Faculties, Heads of School and Heads of Unit.

In addition, Chairs of committees also have responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Strategic Equality Plan and to ensure that meeting arrangements do not discriminate against any individual attending the meeting who shares a protected characteristic.

All managers and staff with supervisory accountabilities are responsible for ensuring that their staff are compliant with this Strategic Equality Plan and are encouraged to promote equality and diversity to staff and students across the University. They also have a responsibility for ensuring that procedures are carried out in compliance with the Strategic Equality Plan.

The size of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, its organisational structure and the diversity of its operations requires arrangements to be established on both a central and departmental basis. These arrangements are as follows:

The Registry is responsible for maintaining and providing accurate statistical records of the representation and progress of students from different groups.

The Deans of Faculty, Heads of School / Unit are responsible for compliance with, and management of the Strategic Equality Plan, codes of practice and related legislation within all aspects of their specified duties and responsibilities.

**Every member of the University community must be aware that they are individually responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct, working practices and relationships are in accordance with the Strategic Equality Plan. They have a duty to comply with the Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Action Plan which is underpinned by the principle of Dignity at Work. Failure to comply with this Strategic Equality Plan could result in disciplinary action. Discrimination or harassment can also result in an individual facing legal action. Individuals who breach legislation can and often do face criminal charges.**

## 9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The University's Equality and Diversity Committee is charged with ensuring that equality and diversity issues are scrutinized and monitored in the interests of all staff and students and that the Strategic Equality Plan is overseen. There is an opportunity for all areas of University life and activity to be represented on this committee through engagement with the equality focus groups.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of Student Services. Membership includes one representative Dean of Faculty, two staff representatives from each Faculty and the Director of Human Resources. The Students' Union is represented on the Equality and Diversity Committee and the University works closely with the Students' Union in the preparation and delivery of equality and diversity training sessions. Additional or specialist members will be co-opted members as and when required. The committee meets once each term and reports to the Senate. The Committee will report annually on progress of the Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Action Plan.

## 10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The purpose of the equality impact assessment process is to ensure that every policy, procedure, practice, plan and strategy of the University is systematically reviewed and

evaluated to ensure that they are not discriminatory and that they are making a positive contribution to equality.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David recognises its responsibilities and statutory obligations to undertake an equality impact assessment exercise of all policies and procedures to ensure that they do not discriminate or impact adversely against individuals or groups who share protected characteristics.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David will:

- a) Assess whether University policies help to achieve equality for students and staff from all protected groups and whether they have, or could have, an adverse impact on such groups;
- b) Utilise these assessments to review equality aims, targets and strategies and to influence and guide planning and decision making in all aspects of the University's arrangements;
- c) Publish the result of any equality impact assessments that show that the impact on certain groups is likely to be 'substantial';
- d) The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has resolved that equality and diversity matters will be considered as part of the regular audit cycle of academic schools and support units. This will help to ensure a planned programme of equality impact assessments.

## **11. STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING**

The University recognises that staff development and training enhances the knowledge, understanding and skills of staff so that they can more readily discharge their responsibilities to develop and sustain a culture of equality in the working and learning environment. The University delivers equality training to ensure continued awareness. Mandatory equality and diversity training for all staff is a regular feature in the Staff Development Programme held every September.

The University intends to further develop employees' knowledge and understanding of the general and specific duties by using performance appraisal systems to address the training needs of its employees.

## **12. DATA MONITORING**

In order to monitor equality progress effectively, statistics are collected on the composition of student and staff bodies. The monitoring of staff data and those of potential employees are undertaken on an ongoing basis by the HR department. Student data is monitored by the Registry. These statistics will be published in the Equality and Diversity Annual Report.

An assessment of equality data currently held by the University along with the diversity profile of staff and students is attached in Appendix B.

The University will:

- a) monitor all stages of the student admission, progress, achievements, attainment, take-up of work placements and targeted programmes and grievances for all protected characteristics
- b) monitor all activities that relate to staff profile, staff recruitment and selection, career development, participation in training and development, opportunities for promotion, leavers, grievances and disciplinary procedures, dismissals and redundancies.
- c) regularly assess all monitoring information to evaluate progress towards meeting targets and aims as identified in the objectives.

The data used is the data submitted to HESA, the data collected from equal opportunities recruitment monitoring forms, and from the Information Systems department for student monitoring data. Staff data is updated on an annual basis to ensure staff data is correct and up to date.

### **13. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Consultation, engagement and communication are essential to the success of this Strategic Equality Plan and objectives, and central to the development and implementation of the Plan. To inform the development of the Plan, three key stakeholder groups were identified:

- students
- staff
- community groups both of and for people with protected characteristics

The University has consulted on and engaged with staff, students and community groups on the content of the plan and the objectives set, and will seek to continue consulting and engaging with staff, students and other interested parties on this plan, the objectives and other equality initiatives. Meaningful consultation includes talking to staff and students from different groups and active dialogue with staff Trade Union representatives, student representatives and the Students' Union.

Further involvement of both staff and students takes place through the equality focus group which covers all equality strands. Representation from staff and students is encouraged so that issues relating to all equality strands within the University community can be discussed. This group, which meets once a term and reports to the Equality and Diversity Committee, has provided an excellent forum for identifying equality issues.

The information gathered during the production and implementation of previous schemes, the most recent being the Disability Equality Scheme, has also been used to inform the development of this scheme.

An annual questionnaire which can be returned anonymously is also a valuable source of additional feedback. Two separate questionnaires are prepared for staff and students. The student questionnaire is distributed to all students using the virtual learning environment. Additional input from students is achieved through collaboration with the Students' Union.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David is represented on the ECU's Welsh liaison group, which provides support on equality issues and is an opportunity to share good practice with Higher Education Institutions across Wales.

#### **14. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORTING**

In order to meet specific duties the University will publish an Annual Report which will report on progress and summarise the steps taken to meet the objectives. The statistics collected in order to monitor the composition of student and staff bodies for equality strands will also be included in the Annual Report.

#### **15. CONCLUSION**

This Strategic Equality Plan is designed to support the positive focus and lead offered by the University towards equality of opportunity, whilst meeting legislative requirements. The University will seek to select, develop, appraise, promote and otherwise treat individuals on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential.

The University is committed to equality and diversity and will continue in its endeavour to ensure that students and staff are aware of this Strategic Equality Plan and their obligation to respect the dignity and diversity of colleagues and other students and not to engage in behaviour that may be interpreted as discriminatory, harassment, bullying or showing lack of respect.



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### **RELATED POLICIES**

Dignity at Work Statement

Anti Bullying and Anti Harassment Policy