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**Glyndŵr**  
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Wrexham  
**Glyndŵr**  
UNIVERSITY

# Wrexham Glyndŵr University Strategic Equality Plan

2016-2020

## INTRODUCTION

This is Wrexham Glyndŵr University's second Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). This plan covers the period from April 2016 to March 2020 and sets out our commitment to supporting the promotion of equality and diversity within our practices, establishing an inclusive culture and environment free from discrimination.

The University seeks through its policies and actions to be an inclusive organisation, drawing good practice from Higher Education and wider sectors, supporting our aim to offer a fully inclusive curriculum allowing access for all.

As a requirement of the Equality Act 2010 Wrexham Glyndŵr University has a duty to set out its objectives for equality in a Strategic Equality Plan. The plan provides an overarching framework for advancing equality and diversity within our University for the benefit of our students, staff, stakeholders and the local community. The plan brings together and builds upon a number of delivery plans for specific strands of equality, aiming to develop a more holistic approach to covering all of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010.

The University attracts a range of staff, students and applicants and embraces the opportunity this provides to build a community who value one another, and the differing contributions this allows to achieve our mission:

### **To work in partnership to inspire and educate our students and enable social and economic success**

The plan underpins the University's Strategic Framework and supports its commitments to Equality & Diversity, in particular:

- Inclusivity - creating a community that welcomes students, staff and visitors from all backgrounds, placing them at the heart of what we do, treating them with dignity and respect and providing equality of access at all times
- Creativity – working in partnership with all who come into contact with the University, drawing on their creativity to create an inclusive curriculum and learning environment to fully support all needs
- Agility – working closely with our community to support growth and enhance student outcomes in an agile and responsive manner dependent on individual needs
- Sustainability – build mutual beneficial relationships with partner universities and further education colleges to meet regional needs in order to support our future growth; in particular in relation to equality & diversity
- Continuous Improvement – develop our culture within the University, sharing best practice in order to improve our processes and practices to foster inclusivity and develop the diversity of our University community
- Business focussed - operating in a professional and accessible manner; aiming to become a genuinely inclusive organisation acknowledging the business benefits and value derived from a diverse university population.
- Excellence – striving for excellence in all that we do, in particular striving to ensure access to opportunity for all

The University is committed to enabling all individuals benefit from higher education regardless of their personal characteristics of age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (including lack of belief) and their status of being married or in a civil partnership.

Whilst the Board of Governors has formal responsibility to ensure that the requirements of equality legislation are met, the plan is aimed at all staff and students, as it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that equality and diversity is promoted within the University, highlighting discrimination and operating flexible services, practices and procedures that take appropriate account of the needs for all students, staff and visitors.

## WHO WE ARE

### **Background:**

Established as a University in 2008 and previously the North East Wales Institute, we have a foundation that dates back to 1887.

In addition to our campus in Wrexham, we now have campuses in Northop, St Asaph and London.

Approximately 6,000 students study with us, of which 63% are full-time and 37% part-time.

We are proud of the opportunities that we provide for those from non-traditional backgrounds, helping them to enter higher education. We are one of the UK's leading universities who support students from lower socio-economic backgrounds through university due to our comprehensive Widening Participation in the local community.

The University sets out to be enterprising and open to all in everything that it does.

### **Student Profile:**

The University has approximately 6,000 students, with the total full-time student numbers down by 2% from 2014/15. The University has over 300 international students with the majority of them based at our London Campus.

An indication of the student profile is provided below:

Of Wrexham Glyndŵr University's students 52% are female and 48% are male.

### **Staff Profile:**

The University has over 500 academic and professional services staff. An indication of the staff profile is provided below:

Of Wrexham Glyndŵr University's staff 56% are female and 44% are male.

Of Wrexham Glyndŵr University staff the following breakdown relating to full/part time positions and gender has been identified:

Males in full time positions	38%	Males in part time positions	5%
Females in full time positions	47%	Females in part time positions	10%

### **Academic Profile:**

The University has a wide range of academic programmes, delivered through 4 school:

- School of Social and Life Sciences
- School of Applied Science, Computing and Engineering

- School of Creative Arts
- The North Wales Business School

Wrexham Glyndŵr University delivers hundreds of courses at different levels and via a range of study options, priding ourselves on our great facilities, flexible study options, supportive community, career focused courses and our students.

## LEGISLATION

The University endorses the principles of the Equality Act, which came into force in October 2010, required public authorities to meet both general and public duties. It consolidates previous anti-discrimination laws into one single legal framework. The Act covers individuals with the following characteristics; age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (including lack of belief) and their status of being married or in a civil partnership (in respect of employment matters). The aim of the Act was to introduce one piece of legislation that could be easily understood and applied.

The general equality duty is set out within the Equality Act 2010 (section 14). The duty ensures that the University has due regard for the following:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advancing and promoting equality of opportunity between differing groups who share protected characteristics; and
- Fostering good relations between individuals who share protected characteristics and those who don't.

The Act itself is not overly prescriptive regarding the approach a public body should take to ensuring due regard, however it does state that due regard to advancing equality should involve the following:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by individuals due to their protected characteristic;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of individuals from protected groups where these differ from the need of others; and
- Encouraging individuals from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

### **Public Sector Equality Duties (Wales)**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Specific Duties) came into force in April 2011. Its regulations are aimed at creating specific duties that help public bodies comply with the general duty and are guided by four principles; the use of evidence, consultation and involvement, transparency and leadership.

The aim of the specific duty is to ensure that public bodies consider how they can contribute to a fairer community through advancing equality and fostering good relations in their daily activities. The duties for Wales include:

- Setting and publishing equality objectives for each protected characteristic;
- Publishing steps it has taken or intends to take to achieve the equality objectives and the time frame for doing so;

- Involving and consulting with individuals who share or represent those with one or more of the protected characteristics as far as is practicable;
- Monitor employment data for each protected characteristic;
- Assessing and monitoring the equality impact of policies, processes and procedures;
- Publishing an annual report;
- Where gender pay differences have been identified, to publish an objective to address the reason for the difference and if necessary publish an action plan to address pay differences.

## STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

We aspire to deliver a strategy, action plan and policies that reflect the needs of the differing needs of all individuals who come into contact with the University. This strategy and its objectives aim to integrate the principles of equal treatment and the promotion of diversity under three main themes:

- **Our Students Experience**
  - To enable fair access to higher education, ensuring that individuals from all background & groups have equal access to learning.
  - To address under representation of protected groups.
  - To address equality & diversity issues, providing a supportive environment for our students
  
- **Our Staffs Experience**
  - To create an environment where everyone can contribute and feel valued.
  - To have a diverse and motivated workforce, where staff are treated with dignity, respect and have appropriate autonomy.
  - To promote an inclusive culture where diversity is valued.
  
- **Our Community Experience**
  - To ensure that individuals from all backgrounds and groups have equal access to higher education; developing projects on widening participation, student engagement and workforce development.
  - To understand how our community accesses our services; addressing barriers and inequalities identified.
  - To engage with protected groups who are currently under represented.

## PROMOTING THE GENERAL EQUALITY DUTY

The Equality and Diversity internet page which will be accessible to staff, students and the general public will be the main method to disseminate a range of information which will include:

- The Strategic Equality Plan, with objectives and supporting Equality Action Plan;
- An annual report on progress made against the Equality Action Plan;
- An annual statistical report on employment information and student data;
- Results of any impact assessments undertaken;
- Policies reflecting the University's work to embed equality and diversity across the organisation.

Information will be available in alternative formats on request.

We recognise that having and valuing a diverse workforce and student population will provide a wealth of benefits; with a range of representation strengthening our ability to promote greater mutual understanding, allowing us to fully utilise the talents and experiences that every individual can bring to our University.

We have a suite of policies and procedures that support inclusion and we aim to encourage our staff to take responsibility for ensuring that we have a fair and inclusive curriculum free from discrimination and bullying. Staff are made aware of their duties under equality legislation during their induction programme and refresher training sessions. Due regard to equality and diversity is included within discussion that supports the annual Performance and Development Review.

## ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The equality legislation identifies the importance of consulting and engaging with people with protected characteristics in order to ensure that practice identifies and considers the needs of all stakeholders.

For the development of this Strategic Equality Plan and the associated Equality and Diversity Objectives consultation has taken place with:

- The Senior Leadership Team
- Academic and Professional Services staff members
- The Equality & Diversity Action Group
- Trade Unions
- Staff with student facing roles
- Representatives from the Student Union
- Members of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network

The University will continue to seek the views of staff, students and organisations representing people with protected characteristics to further the development of its equality objectives and inform the action plan.

## MONITORING PROGRESS

The University views this plan as an evolving document and, as such it will be reviewed annually to take account of significant developments as they occur.

As part of our duty we are required to produce a Strategic Equality Plan every four years, reporting annually against progress made. It is particularly pertinent that our strategy remains a working document in order to support the Wellbeing for Future Generations (Wales) Act, with its aim of ensuring “A more equal Wales”.

The University has an Equality & Diversity Action Group that meets at least 4 times per year. The membership of the group is chaired by the Director of Human Resources, with the membership made up from an academic member of staff from each of the Schools, professional services staff representing each functional area, student and trade union representation and members of the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network. In order to ensure that the representation within the group reflects the Glyndŵr community, the group consists of 9 females and 10 males. The group also includes individuals with protected characteristics, however due to the low numbers involved and data protection legality it is not possible to disclose this detail.

The purpose of the group is to inform the University's policies, procedures, plans and processes and supports the Equality & Diversity Policy for staff and students. The group will review the equality objectives annually to ensure that they remain relevant. This document is supported by an Equality Action Plan, which is a working document that will be reviewed and updated with revised actions included when required.

Equality Impact Assessments have been incorporated into policy development and decision making processes, enabling the University to identify the impact of our processes on differing groups and put in place actions to make improvements.

An annual report detailing progress made towards achieving the equality objectives will be provided to compliment the University's reporting cycle and will be presented to the Board of Governors prior to being published.

The Strategic Equality Plan will formally be reviewed every four years.

## EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

An Equality Action Plan has been developed to outline the steps that will be taken to achieve the objectives. The plan details the reasons why the actions are necessary and the areas responsible for ensuring successful completion of those actions.

The Equality Action Plan is available on our website and can be requested in alternative formats if required.

## CONTACT DETAILS

For further information relating to the Wrexham Glyndŵr University Strategic Equality Plan please contact:

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