

# **Equality Mainstreaming Report 2025**

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## Introduction

The use of the term "equality and diversity" (E&D) is commonplace in the public and private sectors, although organisations differ in what exactly the term means. Many definitions of equality and diversity share similar elements, related to the improvement of an organisation, business or community for a common good or purpose.

Equality mainstreaming is the process of embedding equality and inclusion considerations and practices in the functions and work we understand as a university. This report provides a brief summary of the continuing progress we are making to mainstream equality and inclusion as an employer and as a decision maker and should be read alongside the subsidiary documents and associated annexes.

This report is provided in relation to the requirements of [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#) listed below:

- to report on progress in making the Public Sector Equality Duty integral to the exercise of the university's functions (Regulation 3);
- to update on progress to meet equality outcomes set in 2021 (Regulation 4);
- to outline the composition of the university, our student body and workforce, and use of that information (Regulation 6), and;
- to provide information on the gender pay gap (Regulation 7)

For Abertay equality and diversity is recognising and valuing that everyone is different and respecting and appreciating those differences to bring about improvements for organisational and societal benefit. People with different backgrounds, experiences and attitudes bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and a diverse organisation such as that at Abertay can draw upon the widest range of experiences so it can listen to, meet, and provide for, the needs of its employees, students and the community the University serves. The [University's strategic plan 2020-25](#) and [Equality Policy](#) further underlines our commitment to equality and diversity in the following statements.

## Our purpose

- To offer transformational opportunities to everyone who has the ability to benefit from Abertay's approach to university education.
- To inspire and enable our student, staff and graduates to achieve their full potential and to have a positive impact on the world around us
- To prepare students for a world of work and a life of learning

## Our guiding principles

- To provide opportunities to change lives, giving our staff and student the support they need to thrive.
- To promote fairness and equality of opportunity in everything we do
- To ensure that our research and programmes continue to be relevant in a changing world
- To remain sustainable, using our funding to deliver maximum impact
- To maximise the use of digital technology across the University

## By 2025 we will be known for

- Providing an excellent student experience, giving them the skills to succeed at work
- The impact of our research and knowledge exchange on business and society more widely
- Our innovative use of digital technology across all activities
- Supporting our staff to develop in the workplace and have satisfying careers
- Being a leader in enabling access to university for students from a wide range of backgrounds

## Progress and impact

For the period 2025-2029 the University will be adopting the [SFC National Equality Outcomes](#) (see [Appendix 4](#)) as well as any further locally identified priorities, for example, successfully obtaining Race Equality and Gender Equality Charter Marks or successors thereof.

The 2025 mainstreaming report sets out the key areas in which the University has progressed over the past two years.

Items that have had the most beneficial impact on the University in relation to Equality and Diversity are:

## General Duty

The purpose of the General Duty is to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. The following provides information on measures the university takes to address its General Duty.

The University provides mandatory equality and diversity training, including unconscious bias, in recruitment and selection, Stress management (to address issues surrounding mental well-being) and diversity in the workplace (including student placements) to underpin its commitment to ensuring good relations between people of different protected characteristics.

The continued development of the 'Lead Voices' initiative to harness interest and enthusiasm from among staff in fostering good relations among those with similar and different protected characteristics. The Lead Voices have been a key driver in producing the university's '[Diversity Fest](#)' highlighting the work undertaken by staff at the university to progress diversity and inclusion.

The University has carried out biennial Staff Engagement Surveys since 2013 including comprehensive equality analysis. The survey results, including summary equality analysis is shared with staff through open staff sessions, the intranet, news items and direct emails. The equality analysis is discussed in detail with the Lead Voices and EDI groups, including the Athena Swan and Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Teams. A summary of the responses to the October 2024 survey is included under the relevant protected characteristic sections below.

The University has embedded its bystander and consent on campus modules within ABE101 (a credit module that all first-year undergraduate students take) to assist students with identifying and calling out poor behaviour to foster a safe and positive campus experience. The purpose to highlight that hate crimes and discriminatory incidents against others are not acceptable behaviour – whether the incidents happen offline, or online. Additionally, the University provides training to sports teams on bystander behaviours, Mental Health First Aid, equality and inclusion and safeguarding to address misconceptions and to provide a positive environment for all who participate in university sport.

[The Abertay Citizen Code](#) (an agreement between us as an institution and our student community) continues to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities in creating an inclusive and welcoming University, that treats everyone equitably, fairly, and with respect. Students sign up for the code at registration each year of study.

From a teaching and learning perspective Abertay will be proactive in creating a collaborative process that enables equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of teaching, learning, research, operations and support as well as the wider engagement. The aim is to create a learning community that is based on a core principle of equity that supports a global staff and student base in achieving their personal and professional

goals. Abertay's vision is to create a welcoming environment where students feel belonging regardless of their backgrounds, identities or abilities<sup>1</sup>.

### **EDI+: A Framework in Teaching and Learning in Practice**

The University Learning and Teaching Committee approved a Framework in Teaching and Learning in Practice. The framework has three pillars, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, A Commitment to Anti-Racism and Decolonising the Curriculum. The broad outline is detailed below:

#### **Pillar 1: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

The university will recognise and address difference, where present, across our community's different cultures, disabilities, gender identities, neurodivergence, sexuality or any other marginalised characteristics and remove barriers to accessing and succeeding within higher education.

#### **Pillar 2: A Commitment to Anti-Racism**

The university is dedicated to the principles of anti-racism to proactively challenge all forms of racism, whether systemic, every day, overt, or covert. The university is committed to embracing an anti-racist approach that reflects our values and removes institutional barriers to race equality within our curriculum and teaching practice.

#### **Pillar 3: Decolonising the Curriculum**

The university acknowledges that decolonisation is complex journey. Our decolonisation process is built on the practice of recognising and repairing the harms and the cultural, economic and psychological consequences of colonialism by challenging curriculum and institutional practices. This practice calls for us to critically examine our teaching and learning practices and be willing to initiate change to fulfil that process in line with the Abertay Values.

### **University Senior Management Team**

The University has a balanced Senior Management Team (50% female), and a 60/40 (female: male) split on the University Executive.

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<sup>1</sup> Abertay University's Vision for Embedding EDI within the Curriculum: Building on decolonising and anti-racist approaches, Teaching and Learning Committee, March 2022

University Court

As part of equality mainstreaming, the Scottish Government<sup>2</sup> requires University Courts to ensure the “gender representation objective” for a public board is that it has 50% of non-executive members who are women.

The current Court membership in 2024-25 conforms to the requirement of having a gender balance. University Court (the governing body) aims to have a diverse membership in terms of gender.

Court Members	Female		Male	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All	13	52%	12	48%
Independent (Lay Members)	9	53%	8	47%

Table 1: Court Membership by Gender 2024-25

Gender-Based Violence

The University is committed to tackling gender-based violence (GBV). A working group continues to review progress, process and procedures. The University uses the Scottish Governments [Equally Safe toolkit](#) as the framework for our GBV work.

As a result of previous work the University has established (and recently updated as a result of feedback) a [report and support system](#); changed the process for non-academic student misconduct to align with [sector guidance](#); and have continued with a ‘tell us’ campaign to raise awareness among student and staff of how to report GBV and access support. The university also created in 2022 and continues to maintain a public information resource on GBV within the library that continues to be a resource used by staff and students.

Gender Equality

The University has a balanced Senior Management Team with the University Principal being female (see [University Senior Management Team](#) ). There has been an improvement to the gender pay gap based on median salary from 5.6% in 2023 to 2.9% in 2024, but a

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/4/contents/enacted>



small deterioration based on average pay from 7.2% to 8.4% (see [Gender Pay Gap](#)), although the longer-term trend is down (from a baseline of 14.5% in 2018).

The student population has been for many years more males than females. The gender profile of the University in this respect is different from most other Universities in Scotland who have a majority of female students (see Appendix 1, [Figure 6](#)).

[Table 2](#) shows National Student Survey (NSS) 2024 satisfaction scores of Female and Male students (by Gender). Female students are more positive compared to their male counterparts at Abertay across 8 out of 9 themes (males are more positive for the theme of Wellbeing).

NSS 2024 by Gender		The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student Voice	Wellbeing	Overall satisfaction
Male	% Positivity	83.11	80.41	79.96	88.98	76.15	88.72	76.75	78.97	75.50
	% Sector-wide positivity	84.66	81.74	78.14	86.63	77.25	86.34	74.23	81.13	78.31
Female	% Positivity	91.16	87.17	86.94	92.04	84.24	92.36	80.04	77.23	87.46
	% Sector-wide positivity	85.94	82.82	78.37	84.86	74.10	87.28	73.86	77.02	80.36

**Table 2: NSS 2024 by Gender**

For the themes, Teaching, Learning Opportunities, Organisation and Management, and Overall Satisfaction, females are significantly more positive than their male counterparts. When comparing Abertay female students with the sector, they are significantly more positive for the themes Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support, Organisation and Management, and Overall Satisfaction. Abertay male students were more positive than males in the sector in 4 out of 9 themes. There were no themes where Abertay male students outperformed or underperformed the sector mean. In the staff survey in 2024, female staff responded marginally more favourably than male staff, with 80% and 77% engagement scores respectively. The staff survey results by gender are considered in detail by the University's Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team as well as by local Faculties and Services.

## Disability

The University has run Health Fairs and Mental Health Awareness programmes with a view to promoting good physical and mental health amongst staff and students.

The University Counselling and Mental Health Service (and Dundee University Health Centre) have worked with NHS Tayside to set up a Mental Health crisis referral route without the need to go through primary care in 2022 (currently still the only crisis pathway with a university in Scotland). [Table 3](#) shows that male students' engagement with counselling and mental health has increased slightly by 1.1% compared to 2022/23. This increase indicates progress in encouraging men to seek mental health support addressing a historically underrepresented demographic.

<b>Counselling and Mental Health Service clients by self-declared Gender as %</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Female	57.9%	57.5%
Male	40.1%	41.2%
Transgender/Non-binary	2.0%	1.3%

**Table 3: Percentage of Clients accessing Counselling and Mental Health Services by self-declared Gender**

The percentage of disabled students enrolled at the University has increased by 11.6 percentage points (from 16.3% [2018/19] to 27.9% [2024/25], see appendix 1, [Figure 2a](#)).

The University has published and committed to a [BSL Action Plan 2024-2029](#).

In 2024, disabled students ([Table 4](#)) were more positive compared to the sector in all 9 themes. For 2 themes (Assessment and Feedback, and Organisation and Management) the University significantly outperformed the sector. Compared to non-disabled students studying at Abertay there were no themes where they outperformed nor underperformed in terms of positivity.

NSS 2024 by Disabled Students		The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student Voice	Wellbeing	Overall satisfaction
Disability reported	% Positivity	88.19	84.27	82.05	89.58	76.04	89.58	75.69	76.43	80.42
	% Sector-wide positivity	84.40	80.25	75.62	83.03	69.73	84.16	69.91	75.06	76.58

**Table 4: NSS 2024 by Disability**

In the 2024 staff survey, disabled staff responded less favourably than average across all themes. This is a priority issue to address and an in-depth analysis of the staff survey responses is being carried out. In its People Strategy, the University has committed to undertaking a comprehensive disability self-assessment and is working with an external organisation, the Business Disability Forum, along with Lead Voices, a new neurodiverse staff focus group, managers and staff to take that forward. Lead Voices for disability have been included in the AberTech and AberSpace groups to ensure that disabled staff are represented in consultation on IT and Estate matters and a wide range of Business Disability Forum resources, training and advice have been made available to Abertay staff since joining in 2024.

## Race Equality

Our commitment to equality and diversity was recognised in 2016 when we were the first university in Scotland to be awarded the [Race Equality Charter Mark Bronze Award](#). The University was successful in 2021 in its renewal of the award (the only university in Scotland to do so). The University is one of 61 Universities in the UK (one of four in Scotland) to achieve this accolade. As part of the application process, we developed a race equality action plan, which is now being embedded into our overall Equality Action Plan, and which we will continue to implement.

The University also promotes the module 'Union Black: Britain's Black cultures & steps to anti-racism' organised by Santander Universities UK in partnership with the Open University. Developed in response to Universities UK's 'Tackling racial harassment in higher education' report, the course has been designed to drive cultural change across the higher education sector. There is a one-hour introductory course alongside the full content, which include a mixture of videos, discussion forums, reading materials and interactive activities.

In 2024, students of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritage backgrounds (BAME)<sup>3</sup> (under the banner of all other ethnic groups combined) satisfaction rates underperformed the sector in 3 themes (Organisation and Management, Wellbeing and Overall Satisfaction) [see [Table 5](#)]. When comparing Abertay BAME students to their White counterparts these students were significantly less positive in 6 out of 9 themes (Teaching, Assessment and Feedback, Organisation and Management, Student Voice, Wellbeing and Overall Satisfaction).

For students identified as Not UK Domiciled students<sup>4</sup> there were no themes compared to the sector mean where there was a significant difference. They were also more positive than the sector mean in 3 themes (Learning Resources, Student Voice, and Wellbeing). There was only 1 theme where this group scored above the university mean with no theme being significantly above or below the university mean.

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<sup>3</sup> Number of respondents - 43

<sup>4</sup> Number of respondents - 76

NSS 2024 by Ethnicity		The teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student Voice	Wellbeing	Overall satisfaction
White	% Positivity	88.89	84.91	84.61	91.32	81.84	91.33	78.71	78.26	83.67
	% Sector-wide positivity	85.80	82.20	78.62	85.66	73.71	87.02	72.60	76.96	80.01
All other ethnic groups combined	% Positivity	76.56	78.33	77.08	85.42	67.71	87.15	69.44	68.18	68.75
	% Sector-wide positivity	84.72	82.85	78.05	84.39	77.00	86.30	74.83	79.64	78.09
Not UK domiciled	% Positivity	82.39	79.30	79.72	88.73	74.65	87.79	79.34	80.88	74.65
	% Sector-wide positivity	85.35	82.80	77.36	87.10	79.51	87.65	78.62	83.65	78.74

**Table 5: NSS 2024 by Ethnicity**

In the 2024 staff survey, BAME staff responded significantly more favourably overall, with an engagement score of 87% compared to the all staff score of 78%. BAME staff responded more favourably than average for ten of the eleven survey themes but had a slightly less favourable response on Bullying or Harassment.

The staff survey results were analysed for British, EU and non-European nationals. Non-European nationals had a higher than average engagement score (83%) and more favourable responses than average for nine of the eleven themes. EU nationals had the same or more favourable responses than average for nine themes.

## **Faith and Belief**

The University provides a multi-faith space, accessible to all who wish to use its facilities (students and staff), supported by honorary Chaplains, Imams and rabbis who provide support within the local community on a voluntary basis.

The 2024 staff survey responses were analysed in relation to religion and belief, although there are no clear patterns. Muslim staff had the highest engagement score (at 87%, compared to 78% overall), and the highest scores for eight of the 11 themes, but the lowest favourable score for the Line Management and Bullying or Harassment themes. The lowest overall engagement score was for 'Christian – Church of Scotland'.

## **LGBT+**

The University is committed to ensuring that Trans and Non-Binary Students are treated with dignity and respect and receive appropriate support. To this end, the University has developed Gender Identity policies and protocols for staff and students.

The University and Abertay Students' Association support the Dundee Pride event. Over 100 staff and students took part in the recent parade representing the University and its LGBT+ community.

Of note is the increasing percentage of student over the last few years declaring their sexuality ([Figure 5](#)). This provides a measure of confidence that LGBT+ students feel comfortable to declare their sexuality to the university.

In the 2024 staff survey, Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff had an overall engagement score of 83%, five percentage points above the all staff score, which reflected more favourable responses for the Inclusion and Engagement themes. There was no significant difference in scores for the other themes.

## Age

Part of the University's mission to widening access relates to 'mature learners'. The percentage of students aged 25 and over has increased since 2018-19 from 21% to 35% [see [Figure 1](#)].

In 2024<sup>5</sup> ([Table 6](#)) those aged 21 to 25, and 26 to 30 were significantly more positive than the sector mean for Academic Support. Additionally, those aged 26 to 30 and over 31 were also significantly more positive than the sector mean for Organisation and Management. Also of note is that those over 31 were significantly more positive for Overall Satisfaction compared to other age groups at Abertay.

The 2024 staff survey showed a fairly consistent pattern of more favourable responses from younger age groups across all themes declining with age to the least favourable responses being by those over 56.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

The University has a Flexible Working Policy, which recognises the importance for employees of achieving a balance between work and family commitments. In addition, the University has Adoption and Shared Parental Leave Policies, both of which provide for pay and benefits similar to those for Maternity Leave.

The University has developed a Pregnancy and Maternity protocol for students. The purpose is to discuss the potential impact of pregnancy and maternity on an individual's learning at University, including attending lectures and tutorials, placements, and participating in assessments and examinations. The outcome of the discussions will be the production of a plan and a risk assessment to support the student with continued learning and engagement with their academic studies.

## Gender Reassignment

The University has developed a policy and guidance to underline its commitment to ensuring that Trans employees are treated with dignity and respect and are not disadvantaged in the workplace.

The policy sets out the steps the University takes to welcome and support Trans employees and prevent discrimination. The policy covers all employees, contractors, temporary workers and job applicants and applies to all stages of the employment relationship. In addition, the University has developed a protocol to support the needs of Trans students. This includes having a named contact to ensure continuity of support.

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<sup>5</sup> Number of respondents – Under 21= 402; 21 to 25= 109; 26 to 30= 26; Over 31= 67



NSS 2024 by Age		Teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student voice	Wellbeing	Overall satisfaction
Under 21 years on entry	% Positivity	86.39	82.77	82.11	89.83	78.66	89.64	77.71	76.17	80.80
	% Sector-wide positivity	84.62	81.54	76.25	85.45	75.38	86.82	73.41	77.97	79.01
21 to 25 years on entry	% Positivity	85.86	82.98	83.23	91.41	77.78	90.40	77.10	78.13	80.61
	% Sector-wide positivity	84.92	82.06	80.17	84.74	71.89	85.76	73.56	78.41	79.28
26 to 30 years on entry	% Positivity	89.15	86.04	86.79	92.45	81.13	91.51	78.30	78.85	79.25
	% Sector-wide positivity	86.04	82.74	82.37	84.27	72.01	86.68	73.73	77.18	78.57

NSS 2024 by Age		Teaching on my course	Learning opportunities	Assessment and feedback	Academic support	Organisation and management	Learning resources	Student voice	Wellbeing	Overall satisfaction
31 years and over on entry	% Positivity	92.80	89.39	89.70	92.42	90.15	96.21	81.82	87.10	89.06
	% Sector-wide positivity	90.66	87.78	87.41	87.44	79.32	88.43	78.14	83.28	83.82

**Table 6: NSS 2024 by Age Group**

## Mainstreaming Outcomes 2021 – 2025

The purpose of this section is to outline the progress made against each Equality Mainstreaming Outcome 2021-25, supplementary to the progress reported in the interim mainstreaming report published in 2023.

### General Duty

Developing and sustaining an inclusive and supportive culture, welcoming and retaining students and staff from a diverse range of backgrounds.

**Aim 1:** Implement and sustain the ‘lead voices’ project to encourage and support staff and students who identify with particular protected characteristics to garner information and opinions and to consider the implications of University policies and procedures on their protected characteristic as well as on intersectional issues.

**Outcome:** Completed and ongoing. Project is currently on track with staff volunteering to become ‘lead voices’. ‘Lead voices’ have been helpful in reaching out to those with protected characteristics to assist in obtaining feedback during the drafting process for new or updated policies and protocols. This in turn has assisted the University in its obligations regarding Equality Impact Assessments.

Lead voices have curated a university wide [‘Diversity Fest’](#). The latest Diversity Fest was held in November 2024 with over 100 staff and students attending twelve events over the course of one week. These included inspiring and informative talks, workshops and activities led by a mixture of staff, students and external guests, including from the Scottish Government’s Digital Accessibility team and Dundee Pride, anchored by a keynote talk from an honorary graduate. Topics led by students and Abertay Students’ Association ranged from autism in women to Asian board game designers; several staff and students engaged in story-telling and discussion of inspiring books; academic staff discussed areas of EDI-related research and the practicalities of decolonising the curriculum; and international staff shared the challenges they experience with the UK immigration system.

**Aim 2:** To ensure equitable admissions to all programmes of study.

**Outcome:** The University remains committed to promoting [a fair admissions policy](#) ensuring that we give equal consideration to applicants who apply on time, and who possess the necessary knowledge and skills, regardless of the route taken during their senior phase of studies. Building on our experience of using ‘contextual offers’ over many years, Abertay introduced the criteria in November 2016. In both 2023-24 (28.5%) and in 2024-25 (36.2%) around one third of new entrants enrolling at the University would not otherwise have been offered a place.

## Gender

**Aim 3:** To endeavour that, by 2030, no academic subject area has an extreme gender imbalance (75: 25) – in line with the Scottish Funding Council Outcome relating to Scottish domiciled undergraduate students.

**Outcome:** In 2023-24, 10 subject areas out of 18 have gender imbalances (highlighted in red). This a decrease of 1 from the previous year (2022-23) which is positive. There is a steady improvement in the gender balance for most subject areas.

CAH Level 3 Subject 2023/24	Female	Male
Mental Health Nursing	86.7%	13.3%
Biomedical Sciences	58.1%	41.9%
Sport and Exercise Sciences	33.3%	66.7%
Psychology	82.2%	17.8%
Psychology and Health	85.4%	14.6%
Food and Beverage Studies	77.2%	22.8%
Forensic and Archaeological Sciences	78.4%	21.6%
Civil Engineering	23.0%	77.0%
Software Engineering	17.8%	82.2%
Computer Games and Animation	11.2%	88.8%
Computing	15.7%	84.3%
Social Sciences	88.5%	11.5%
Sociology	72.3%	27.7%
Law	68.4%	31.6%
Business and Management	53.9%	46.1%
Marketing	55.3%	44.7%
Accounting	40.4%	59.6%

CAH Level 3 Subject 2023/24	Female	Male
Design Studies	34.8%	65.2%

The University continues with its outreach activities to address gender stereotyping in relation to subject choices (see aim 4 for details).

Carried forward to Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029.

**Aim 4:** To engage with local schools to tackle gender imbalance earlier and to tackle gender stereotypes.

**Outcome:** Ongoing. The University staff facilitate school visits to deliver workshops within local schools, particularly in subject areas with a disproportionate gender balance. The University uses current students as part of the outreach work to provide school students with positive role models they can better relate to and be enthused by. For example: Smart STEMs: The highly successful event took place at Abertay in January 2025. It brought 290 young people, aged between 10-14 years from various schools within Tayside to the university to spend the day doing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related activities. Part of the aim of the event was to try to encourage more young girls to consider a career within STEM. We were successfully able to attract 145 (50%) female attendees to the event. The day comprised of workshops and a careers fair with exhibition stands during the lunch hour, where students had the chance to visit each exhibition and talk to industry guests in attendance.

**Aim 5:** To enhance retention and completion at a subject level where there is a statistically significant gap by gender.

**Outcome:** Ongoing. The University has developed its [learner analytics tools](#) (using among other elements, attendance, VLE and assessment completions) to support retention. This has allowed professional services staff to identify (with a RAG system) students disengaging with their studies; contact students via email, phone and/or text; and implement a series of interventions. In 2021-22 the university also employed a Student Success Officer for each academic school to reach out to students identified as having poor engagement to offer support and guidance on re-engaging with their studies.

**Aim 6:** Maintain the institutional Athena Swan award.

**Outcome:** Complete and ongoing. The University was successful in renewing the [Athena Swan Bronze award](#) in 2024 and has an [action plan](#) (2024-2029) related to it.

Carried forward to Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029

**Aim 7:** Provide leadership development and mentoring for women through Aurora and other programmes to lessen the gap between men and women in senior positions within the University.

**Outcome:** The University supports staff to participate in the Aurora leadership development initiative for women in HE. Abertay has supported a cohort of participants, including both academic and professional services staff, every year since 2015. The University also provides a range leadership development and personal development opportunities through People Services managed programmes and workshops.

## Disability

**Aim 8:** Create a barrier-free campus for disabled people.

**Outcome:** Ongoing. The University carried out an access audit of the estate in 2019 with support from AccessAble. The University conforms to the Planning Advice Note PAN 78: 'Inclusive Design' which promotes the merits of an inclusive approach to the design of the built environment.

**Aim 9:** Invest in high quality infrastructure to provide an environment which will support and inspire our students and staff.

**Outcome:** Ongoing. The University is currently engaged in envisioning its estate (see [Investing in our campus for the future | Abertay University](#)) to provide facilities that are accessible and improve the teaching and learning environment.

**Aim 10:** Develop a BSL action plan in consultation with Deaf and hard-of-hearing staff, students and the local community.

**Outcome:** The University has developed a follow up [BSL Action Plan 2024-2029](#) post-2018 – 2024 plan.

Carried forward to Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029

**Aim 11:** Continue to address issues surrounding individual perceptions of declaring mental health issues for staff and students.

**Outcome:** Since 2014-15, there has been a near fivefold increase in the number of students declaring a mental health condition on enrolment from 50 to 285 in 2024-25. As a result, the University has invested in the Student Counselling and Mental Health Service, increasing the staffing complement for 2.3FTE (2018-19) to 3.5FTE (2023-24). This increase in staff has provided an additional 1000 hours of available appointments to the student community.

The Student Counselling and Mental Health Service and staff occupational health advisor work together to provide a coordinated voice and messages on World Mental Health day and other key times to promote services and support.

The University has a staff counselling service and occupational health advisor to support its staff with Mental Health concerns. A wide range of resources, guidance and sources of further information is provided for staff on the intranet. In addition, there are frequent mental health promotion activities, such as Mental Health Awareness Week events; stalls at the biennial staff health fair; and publicising 'Time to Talk Day'.

Carried forward to Equality Outcomes for 2025 - 2029

**Aim 12:** Improve the records held on disability for staff to enable meaningful analysis and identification of priorities for action.

**Outcome:** The proportion of staff known to be disabled has increased by over 40% in the last four years, rising from 4.6% to 6.6%. Data is requested as part of recruitment and onboarding, when there is an introduction to our Occupational Health Adviser providing guidance on requesting support if required. People Services regularly ask individuals to ensure their data is correct and up to date. In addition, equality analysis is undertaken of staff engagement survey responses. In the 2022 survey, responses from disabled staff were less positive than from staff as a whole. This analysis informed the new People Strategy (approved in November 2022), which includes a strategic objective to undertake a comprehensive disability self-assessment to identify challenges and priorities for action.

Carried forward to Equality Outcomes for 2025 - 2029

**Aim 13:** Improve employment outcomes for disabled students so that they are the same as their non-disabled counterparts by 2025.

**Outcome:** Completed. Upon reviewing the data on disabled students the university careers service identified that neuro-divergent students (i.e. those with Autism Spectrum Disorder) were less likely to be in employment or in graduate employment compared to other disabled students or non-disabled students. The careers service undertook a pilot project entitled 'Thinking differently' to support, advise and guide neuro-divergent students into employment. The University Careers Service offers tailored support to assist autistic students' progression to employment.

- Content centred on the lived experience of autistic people
- Workshops and presentations on relevant employability topics
- Access to resources via a dedicated MyLearningSpace area
- Peer group on Microsoft Teams

The University continues to offer career guidance and career development-related opportunities to support all disabled students to access the graduate jobs market. In 2025 the Careers Service successfully obtained 3 years of grant funding for employability activities for disabled students.

**Aim 14:** Ensure that our student profile reflects the wider community within which the University sits and maintain a disabled student population of 14% for the next four years.

**Outcome:** Completed. Since 2018-19 the university has had an increase in the percentage of students with a declared disability. In 2024-25 the percentage was 27.9% of the student population declared a disability.

## Race Equality

**Aim 15:** Implementation of the Race Equality action plan by 2024/25.

**Outcome:** Completed. The university was successful in its Race Equality Charter Mark renewal. As a result, a new action plan has been produced.

**Aim 16:** Embedding Race Equality within the curriculum by identifying at least one case study of good practice per academic division.

**Outcome:** Completed. These case studies are hosted on the University AbLE academy intranet pages. There have been AbLE seminars in 2019 and 2020 to highlight good practice to the wider University teaching community in related to embedding race equality within the curriculum (decolonising the curriculum). The case studies formed part of the successful renewal application in 2021/22.

## LGBT+

**Aim 17:** Increased provision of information for Trans staff and students.

**Outcome:** Completed. The University has published 'Guidance for Trans Staff' and a 'Gender Identity Protocol for Students'. Both were reviewed and commented on by those who identify as trans to ensure support and guidance address the needs of this community.

**Aim 18:** Improve the representation, progression and success of LGBT+ staff and students.

**Outcomes:** Completed. The development of the 'Lead Voices' has provided an opportunity for the LGBT+ community to highlight concerns. It was recently announced that one of the LGBT+ lead voices will set up an LGBT+ staff network. This will assist in identifying further measures to ensure long term sustainable equality outcomes for the LGBT+ community.



The University has also provided an online training module to raise awareness among staff related to Transgender/Non-binary people.

**Aim 19:** Increased provision of ‘all gender’ or ‘gender neutral’ bathroom facilities on campus.

**Outcome:** Completed. The university as part of refurbishments, where possible, has provided single occupancy facilities that accommodate all.

**Aim 20:** Greater partnership working between University support services and the LGBT+ community, particularly around mental health.

**Outcome:** Completed. The University Counselling and Mental Health Service has worked with the LGBT+ society to produce online information addressing a range of issues including mental health. The staff continue to work with the LGBT+ society to identify areas where they can work collaboratively.

## Faith and Belief

**Aim 21:** Continue to provide a modern ‘fit for purpose’ service for staff and students that reflects the needs of the University and the community within it sits.

**Outcome:** Completed. The University continues to engage with a range of faiths and religions in Dundee. This includes the community providing honorary chaplains, imams and rabbis to address the faith needs of staff and students.

**Aim 22:** Provision of multi-faith facilities and contemplation space for those with no faith or belief.

**Outcome:** Completed. The University provides and multi faith space that can be booked by any faith. There are also Islamic prayer rooms with washing facilities and a contemplation room for all faiths and none.

## Age

**Aim 23:** Improve the retention of ‘mature’<sup>6</sup> students to that of younger students.

**Outcome:** Based on data on university data in 2023-24 the percentage of mature learners continuing was 79% (compared to 83% of young learners). To note: This data is no longer collected by HESA so there are no benchmarks.

Carried forward to the 2025-2029 Equality Outcomes.

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<sup>6</sup> [Mature Students | What Is A Mature Student? How Do You Get Started?](#)

## Pregnancy and Maternity

**Aim 24:** Improve support for staff and students before, during and after maternity/adoption/parental leave.

**Outcome:** Completed. The University has developed a Pregnancy and Maternity protocol for students. This identifies a named contact whose role is to develop a support plan before, during and after maternity/adoption/parental leave. In addition, the University funded a small research project to further understand the needs of students before, during and after maternity/adoption/parental leave. One success of these two developments is staff have formed a support network for those who are pregnant or returning to work or their studies.

Lead Voices for Pregnancy and Maternity is an established group providing a network and voice for staff, which has been expanded to include staff who are carers.

**Aim 25:** Include the needs of pregnant staff and maternity/adoption/parental leave returners in the Sabbatical Leave Policy and mentoring provision.

**Outcome:** Completed. The Sabbatical Leave Policy specifically focuses on this group, stating that particular consideration will be given to applications for sabbatical leave following a period of maternity/adoption or parental leave to help re-establish the employee's career. It states, too, that sabbatical leave may also be granted as a form of positive action to promote career development for under-represented groups. The University provides mentoring through the TRAM scheme for academic staff and mentors are provided for those undertaking the PG Certificate in Academic Practice and the Aurora women's leadership programme. The TRAM scheme encourages both mentors and mentees to indicate their experience and interests, including career break management and work-life balance. Similarly, Aurora participants are matched with mentors to suit their particular areas of focus.

## Pay Gap Reporting

### Gender Pay Gap

The overall gender pay gap at the University – based on average salary at 31 July - has decreased from 13.7% in 2019 to 8.4% in 2024. The median pay gap in July 2024 was 2.9%. There are no significant gaps within grades, indicating that the reason for this pay gap is vertical occupational segregation i.e. the higher proportion of women in the lower paid jobs and the higher proportion of men in higher paid jobs. It should be noted that the University does not outsource cleaning, catering or similar services, so the full range of

staff, and the associated vertical occupational segregation, are reflected in the overall pay gap figure.

The University has developed robust performance, development and reward policies and procedures to underpin equitable and fair pay for all university staff. The University's pay and grading structures are underpinned by a systematic and analytical approach to job evaluation, using industry standard tools. These are designed to measure the relative value of roles in a transparent, consistent and fair way.

The University is committed to undertaking further work to address the gender pay gap. In particular, this is through the Athena Swan charter framework for the promotion of gender equality in Higher Education.

	Female		Male		
	No.	FTE salary	No.	FTE salary	<b>Pay gap</b>
Average salary	325	£38,538	301	£42,066	8.4%
Median salary	325	£36,024	301	£37,099	2.9%

**Table 6a: Gender Pay Gap 2024-25**

#### **BAME (Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic) Pay Gap**

From 2019 to 2021 BAME staff were on average paid higher than white staff, based on both mean and median salary. This pay gap was a result of a larger proportion of BAME staff in higher paid academic roles. This has changed since 2022, with the average BAME staff salary dropping below that of white staff, although the median pay of BAME staff remains higher than white. There has been a large increase in BAME staff since 2021 including a number of Abertay students, employed as Student Event Helpers. As this role is a Grade 1, the average salary for BAME staff has been lowered compared to previous years.

	BAME		White		
	No.	FTE salary	No.	FTE salary	<b>Pay gap</b>
Average salary	73	£36,808	526	£40,798	9.8%
Median salary	73	£37,099	526	£36,024	-3.0%

**Table 6b: BAME Staff Pay Gap 2024-25**

Disability Pay Gap

The disability pay gap reflects those staff who have declared a disability. The pay gap shows that disabled staff were paid on average 15.2% less than their non-disabled counterparts in July 2024. This represents an increase to the disability pay gap in recent years, from a negative pay gap in 2020 and 2021. The number of staff recorded as disabled has increased substantially during the period and the pay gap may reflect increasing numbers of students employed in hourly-paid roles at low grades.

	Disabled		Not known to be disabled		
	No.	FTE salary	No.	FTE salary	Pay gap
Average salary	67	34,691	559	40,899	15.2%
Median salary	67	27,979	559	36,024	22.3%

Table 6c: Disabled Staff Pay Gap 2024-25

Appendix 1: Equality Data, Student Population

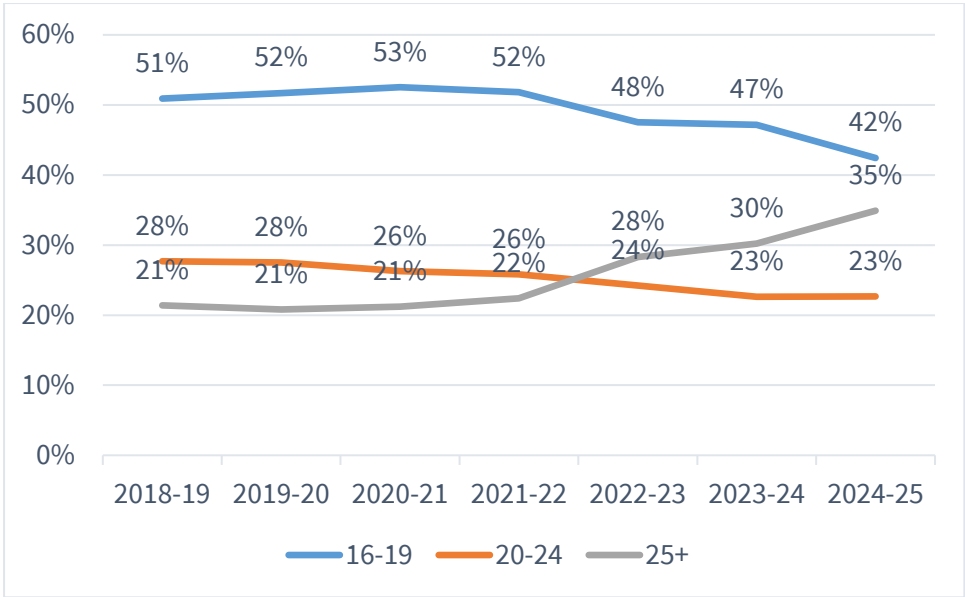


Figure 1: Age of Student Population (on entry) by percentage, 2018 – 2025

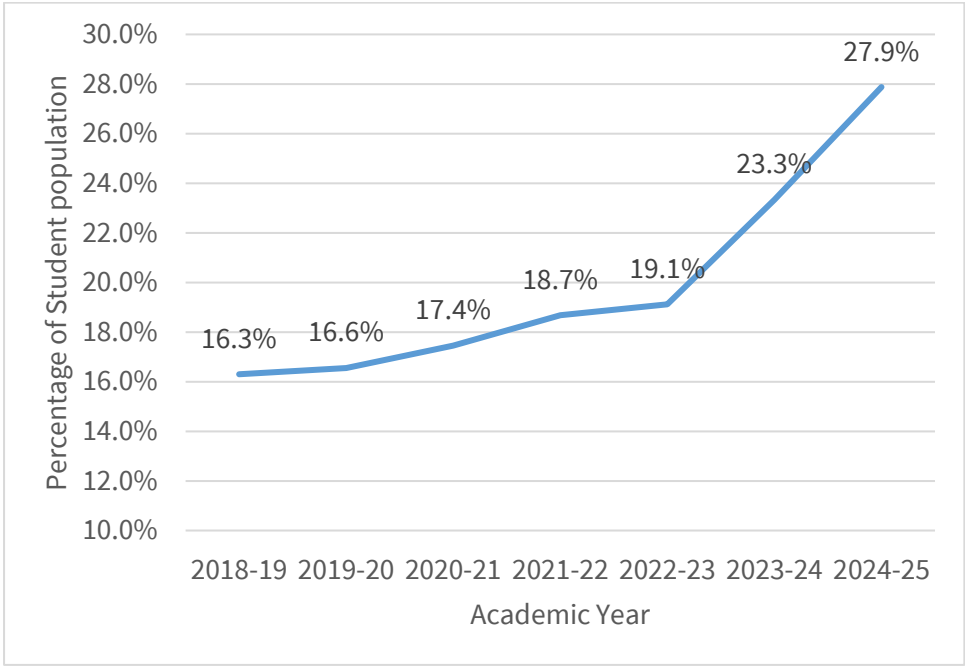


Figure 2a: Declared Disability as a percentage of the student population, 2018 – 2025

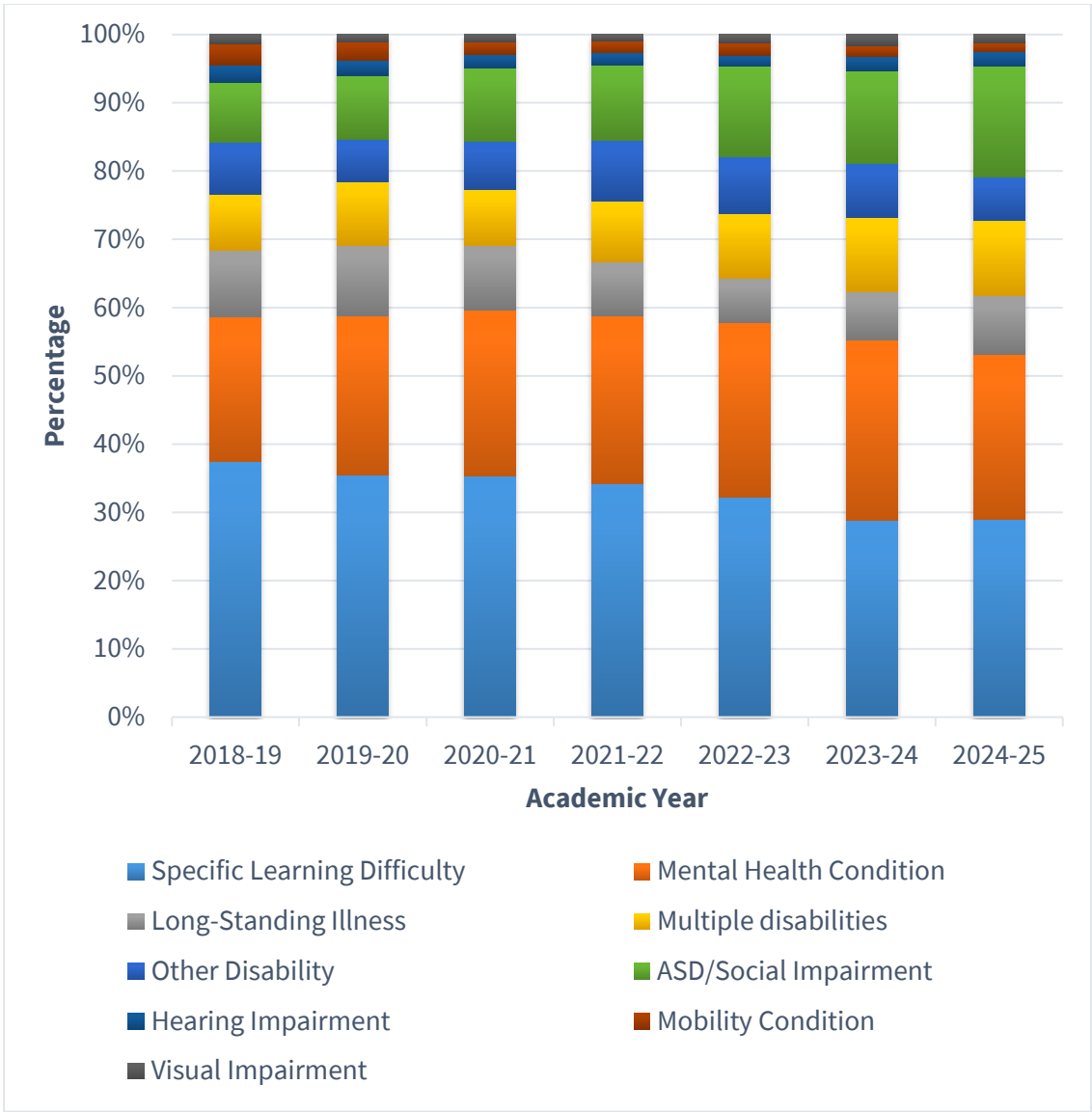


Figure 2b: Declared Disability, 2018 – 2025

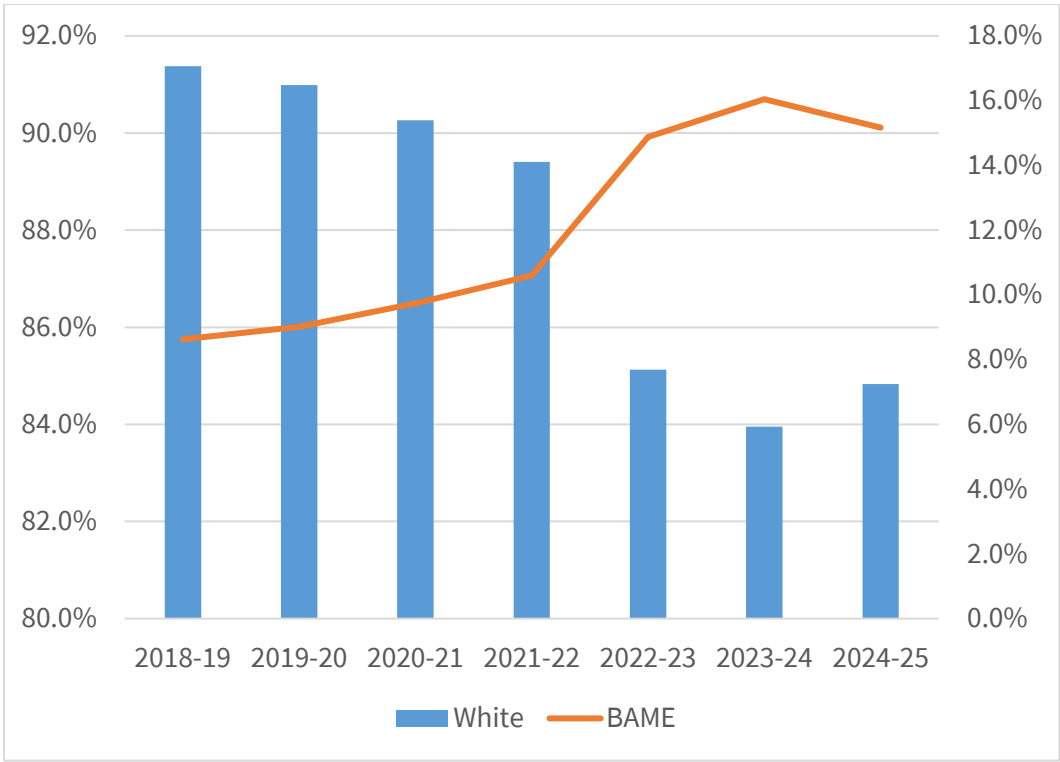


Figure 3a: Ethnicity as a Percentage of the Student Population, 2018 - 2025

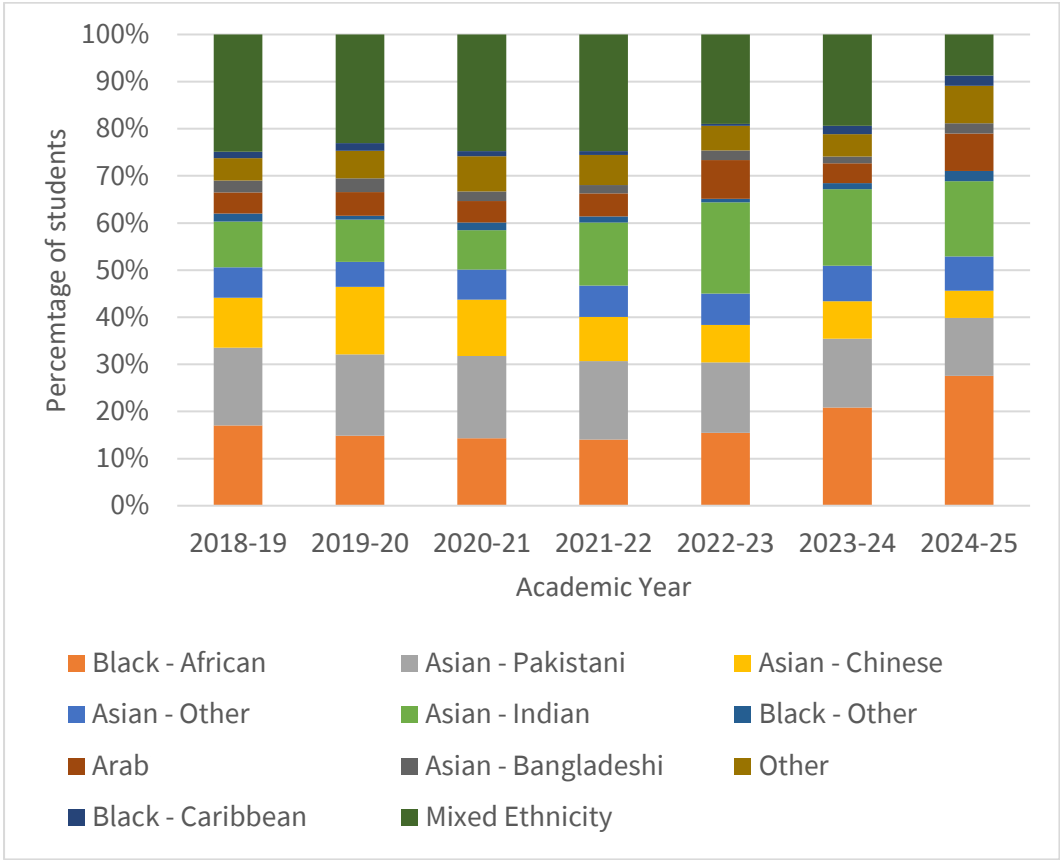


Figure 3b: Ethnicity by number of students, 2018 - 2025

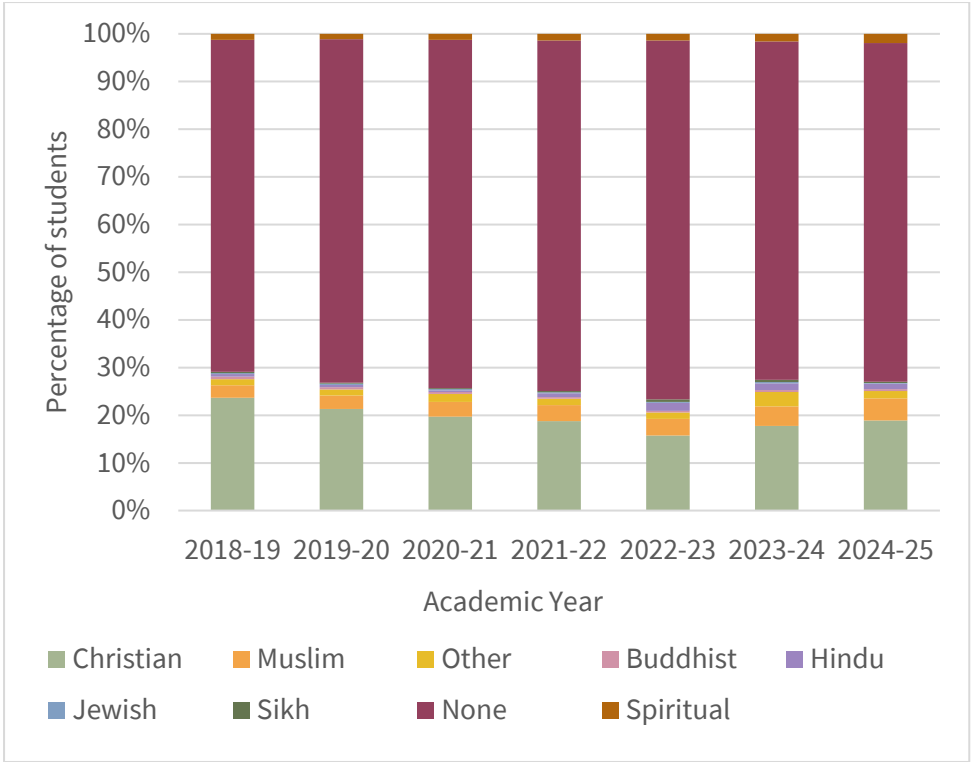


Figure 4a: Faith and Belief, 2018 - 2025

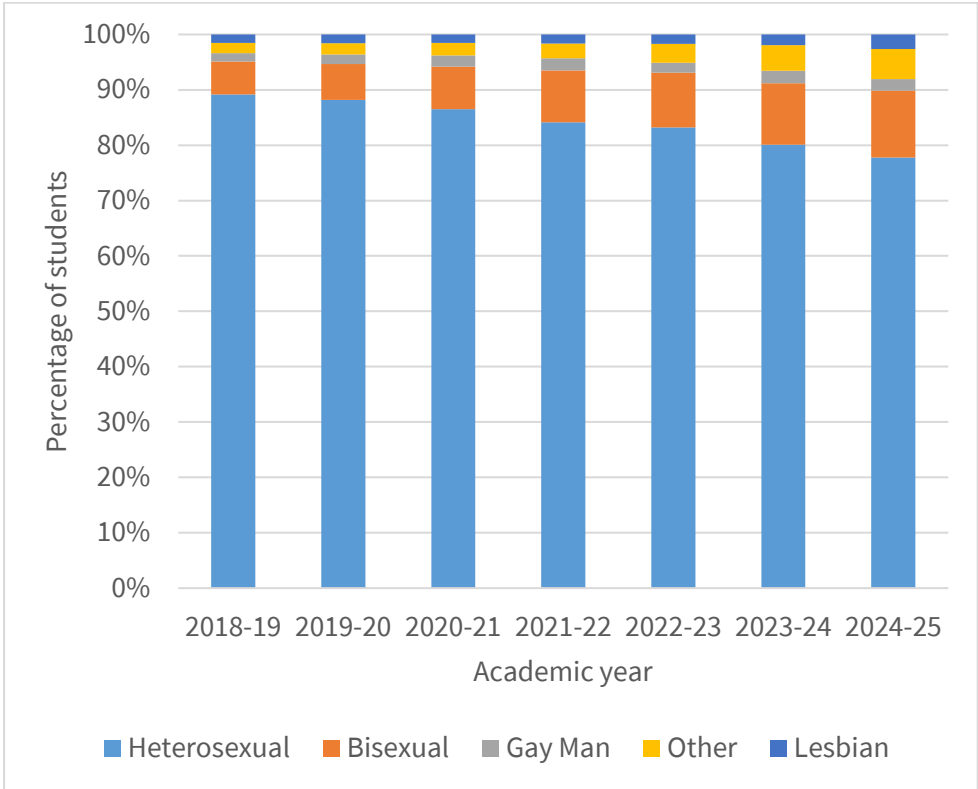
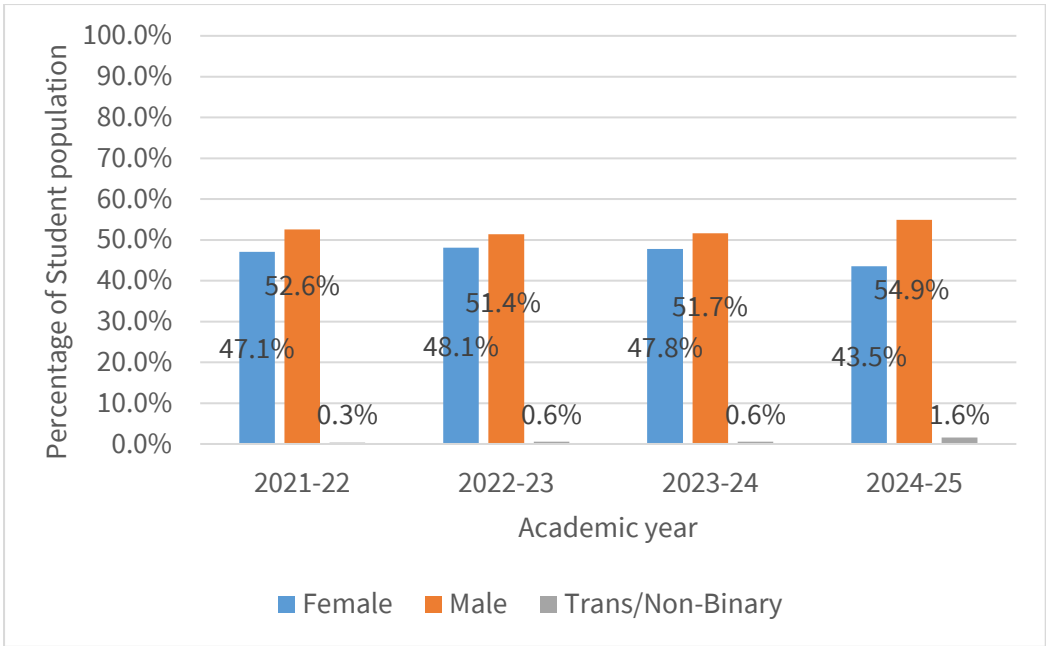


Figure 5: LGBT+ Student Population 2018 - 2025





**Figure 6: Student Population by Gender 2018 - 2025 (as %)**

Appendix 2: Equality Data, Staff Population

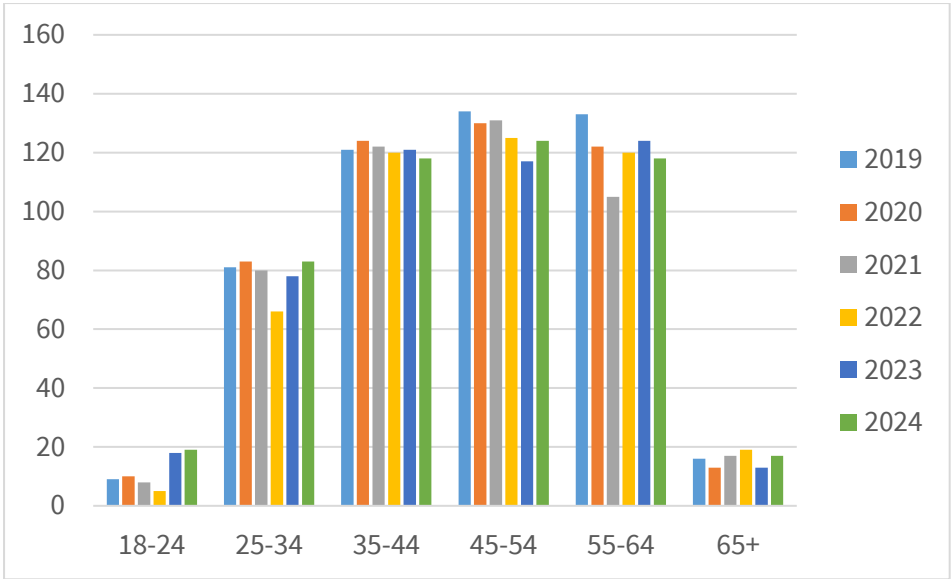


Figure 7: Age of Staff Population, 2019- 2024

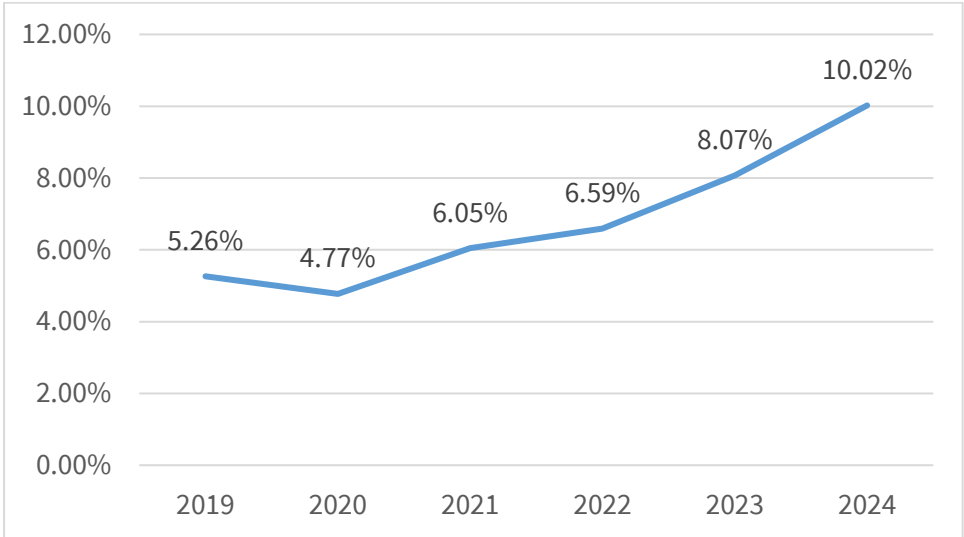


Figure 8: Declared Disability as a percentage of the staff population, 2019 - 2024

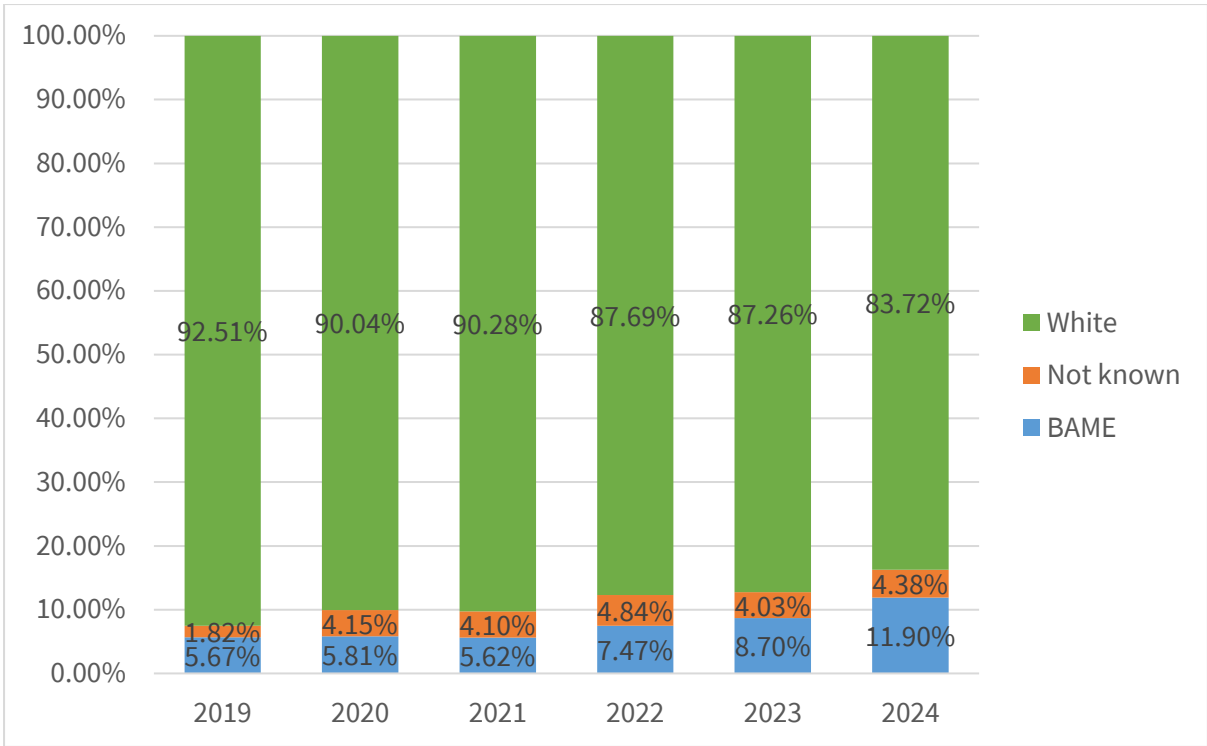


Figure 9: Percentage of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic in Staff Population 2019 - 2024

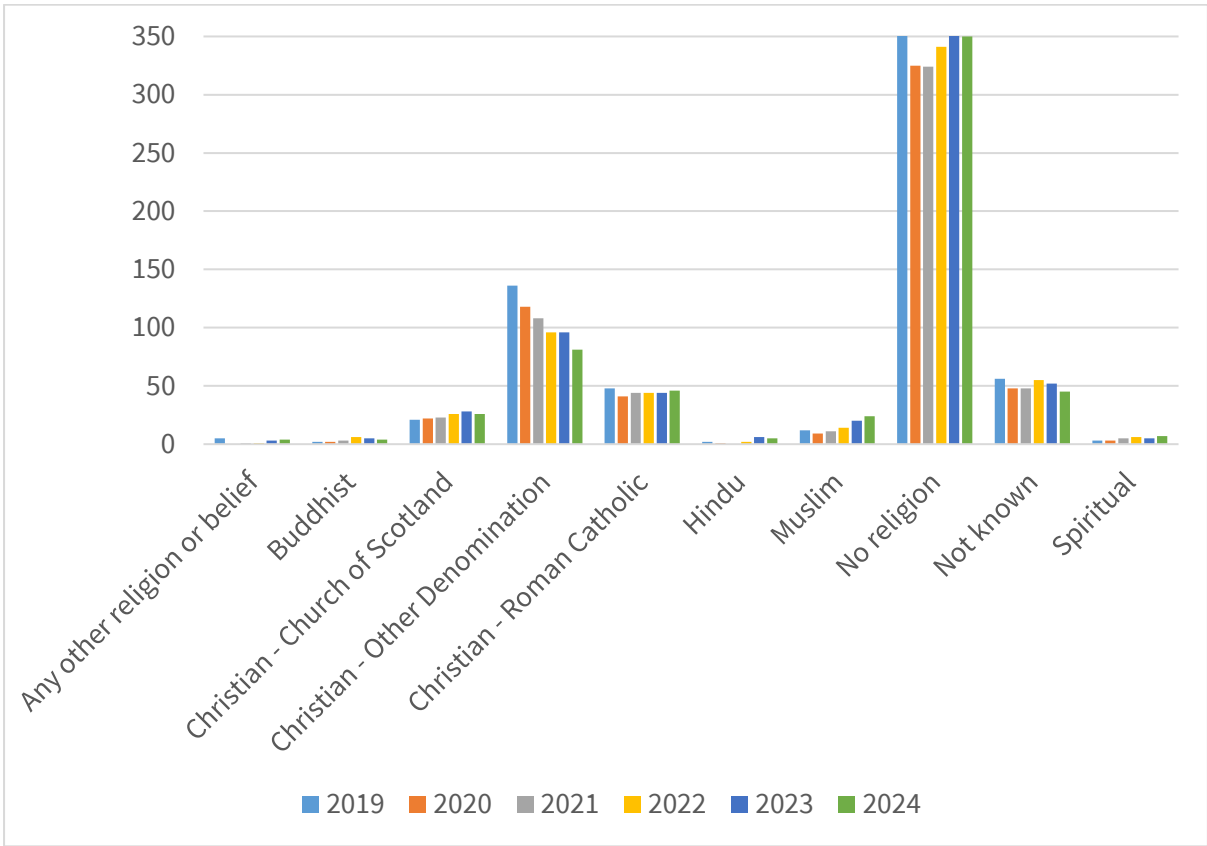


Figure 10: Faith and Belief, 2019 -2024, by number

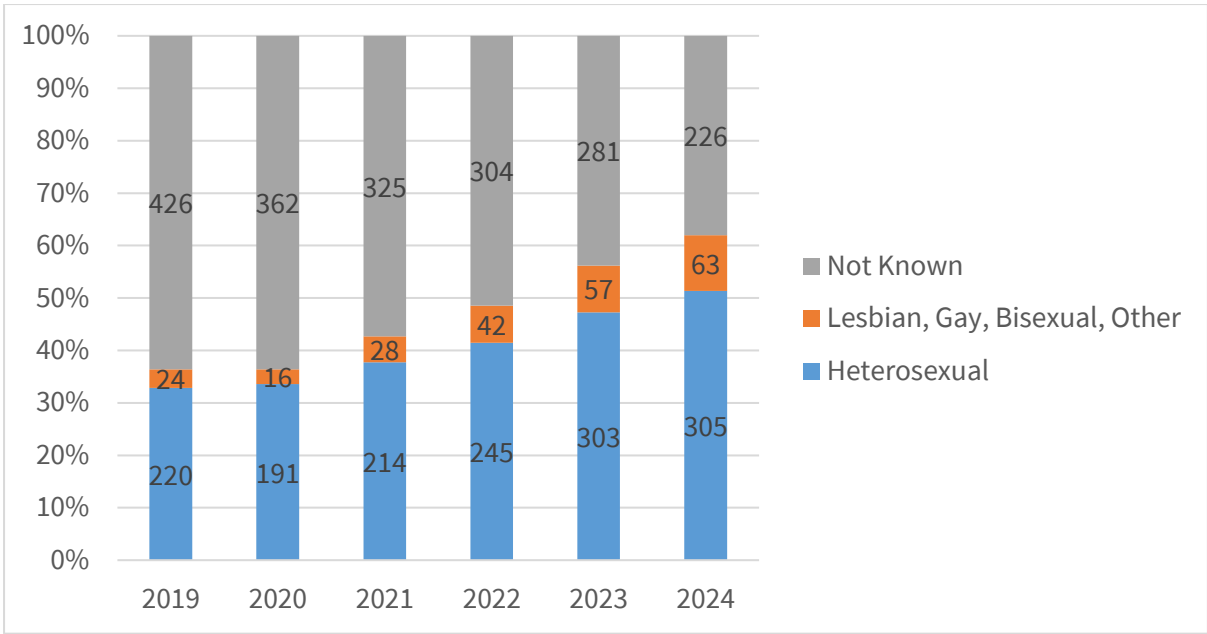


Figure 11: LGBT+ Staff Population 2019 - 2024

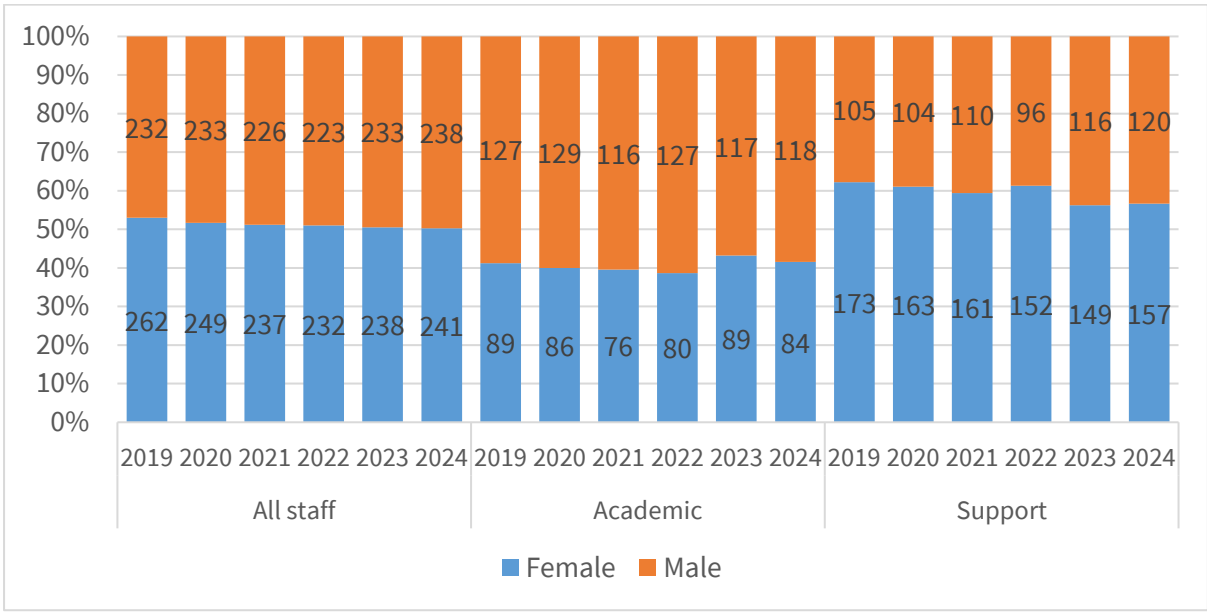


Figure 12: Staff population by Gender 2019 -2024

## Appendix 3: Mainstreaming Outcomes 2021-2025

### General Duty

Developing and sustaining an inclusive and supportive culture, welcoming and retaining students and staff from a diverse range of backgrounds.

**Aim 1:** Implement and sustain the ‘lead voices’ to encourage and support staff and students who identify with particular protected characteristics to garner information and opinions and to consider the implications of University policies and procedures on their protected characteristic as well as on intersectional issues.

**Aim 2:** Ensure equitable admissions and attainment outcomes for all programmes of study.

### Gender

**Aim 3:** To endeavour that, by 2030, no academic subject area has an extreme gender imbalance (75: 25) – in line with the Scottish Funding Council Outcome relating to Scottish domiciled undergraduate students.

**Aim 4:** To engage with local schools to tackle gender imbalance earlier and to tackle gender stereotypes.

**Aim 5:** To enhance retention and completion at a subject level where there is a statistically significant gap by gender.

**Aim 6:** Maintain the institutional Athena Swan award.

**Aim 7:** Provide leadership development and mentoring for women through Aurora and other programmes to lessen the gap between men and women in senior positions within the University.

### Disability

**Aim 8:** Create a barrier free campus for disabled people.

**Aim 9:** Invest in high quality infrastructure to provide an environment which will support and inspire our students and staff.

**Aim 10:** Develop a BSL action plan by 2018 in consultation with Deaf and hard-of-hearing staff, students and the local community.

**Aim 11:** Continue to address issues surrounding individual perceptions of declaring mental health issues for staff and students.

**Aim 12:** Improve the records held on disability for staff to enable meaningful analysis and identification of priorities for action.

**Aim 13:** Improve employment outcomes for disabled students so that they are the same as their nondisabled counterparts by 2021.

**Aim 14:** Ensure that our student profile reflects the wider community within which the University sits and maintain a disabled student population of 14% for the next four years.

### Race Equality

**Aim 15:** Implementation of the Race Equality action plan by 2024/25.

**Aim 16:** Embedding Race Equality within the curriculum by identifying at least one case study of good practice per academic division.

### LGBTQ+

**Aim 17:** Increased provision of information for 'Trans' staff and students.

**Aim 18:** Improve the representation, progression and success of LGBTQ+ staff and students.

**Aim 19:** Increased provision of 'all gender' or 'gender neutral' bathroom facilities on campus.

**Aim 20:** Greater partnership working between University support services and the LGBTQ+ community, particularly around mental health.

### Faith and Belief

**Aim 21:** Continue to provide a modern fit for purpose service for staff and students that reflects the needs of the University and the community within it sits.

**Aim 22:** Provision of multi-faith facilities and contemplation space for those with no faith or belief.

### Age

**Aim 23:** Improve the retention of 'mature' students to that of younger students.

### Pregnancy and Maternity

**Aim 24:** Improve support for staff and students before, during and after maternity/adoption/parental leave.

**Aim 25:** Include the needs of pregnant staff and maternity/adoption/parental leave returners in the Sabbatical Leave Policy and mentoring provision.

#### Appendix 4: Mainstreaming Outcomes 2025 - 2029

University Action Plan 2025 - 2029	National Equality Outcome	University Outcome and Measure
<b>Age</b>	The retention outcomes for university students aged 25 and over will improve.	Percentage of 25 and over of undergraduate students studying at the university after their first year of study is comparable to the overall student population
<b>Disabled People</b>	The success and retention rates of university students who declare a mental health condition will improve.	Percentage of students studying at the university after their first year of study is comparable to the overall student population; and the percentage of students with a good degree is comparable to the overall student population
	Disabled students report feeling satisfied with the overall support and reasonable adjustments received, including from teaching staff, while on their course.	The results of the National Student Survey (NSS) will exceed the sector benchmark and/or comparable to the overall student population
	Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.	Increased percentage of student declarations. Increased % of disabled staff respond favourably to “I feel safe and secure in my physical working environment” in staff survey. [Benchmark 67% in 2024]



University Action Plan 2025 - 2029	National Equality Outcome	University Outcome and Measure
	Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on University Court	Increased in the percentage of disabled staff in the workforce, and court members that is reflective of the university staff population
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system [University Measure: Increased percentage of declarations].	Increased percentage of declarations
<b>Race</b>	Staff and students feel supported and 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.	Number of complaints and non-academic disciplinarys and their outcomes compared to all complaints and non-academic disciplinarys  Improvement to favourable response by BAME staff to Bullying or Harassment theme in staff survey [Benchmark 70% favourable in 2024].
	Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.	Percentage of students with a good degree is comparable to the overall student population

University Action Plan 2025 - 2029	National Equality Outcome	University Outcome and Measure
	Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of court members.	Increased percentage of court members that is reflective of the local population
	Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching staff to align with student representation in the sector.	The percentage is proportionate to the local population amongst academic and non-academic staff.
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.	<p>Number of complaints and non-academic disciplinarys and their outcomes compared to all complaints and non-academic disciplinarys</p> <p>Improvement to favourable responses to Bullying or Harassment theme in staff survey [Benchmark 73% favourable (all staff) in 2024]</p>

University Action Plan 2025 - 2029	National Equality Outcome	University Outcome and Measure
<b>Sex</b>	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.	<p>Number of complaints and non-academic disciplinarys and their outcomes compared to all complaints and non-academic disciplinarys</p> <p>Improvement to favourable responses to Bullying or Harassment theme in staff survey [Benchmark 73% Female, 74% Male favourable in 2024]</p>
	Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.	<p>Number of complaints and non-academic disciplinarys and their outcomes compared to all complaints and non-academic disciplinarys</p> <p>Continuing evidence of approaches at Abertay.</p>
	Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).	Percentage of men accessing Counselling and Mental Health Services for students; and Counselling service for staff.

University Action Plan 2025 - 2029	National Equality Outcome	University Outcome and Measure
	Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.	Percentage of a subject area is a spilt of 75:25 or better
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university	<p>Increase in the percentage of students declaring</p> <p>LGB staff continue to have a comparable favourable response to all staff for relevant staff survey measures.</p>
<b>University Equality Outcomes Carried Forward from 2020-25 (Not listed above)</b>		<p>Maintain the institutional Athena Swan award and implement the associated action plan 2024-2029</p> <p>Implement the BSL Action Plan 2024-2029</p> <p>Implementation of the Race Equality action plan (2020-2025) and apply for renewal of the Race Equality Charter Mark in 2026</p>