

### 1. Context

- 1.1 The Equality and Diversity Statement 2020 derives from and aligns with AUB's Strategic Plan, which has a focus on values of being "innovative, collaborative, connected and passionate". These values have been the foundation of the Equality and Diversity Statement.
- 1.2 The Board of the Arts University Bournemouth is responsible for setting and monitoring the strategic direction of AUB and has ultimate responsibility for equality and diversity. The HR Committee receives a regular report on EDI activity, as well as noting the minutes of the University's Equalities Committee, which is chaired by the Director People, Inclusion and Organisational Development. The Board retains an overview of equality, diversity and inclusion. The roles and responsibilities of the Board, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor's Group are clearly understood.
- 1.3 Equalities Committee monitors progress against the EDI Action Plan. The Senior Officer (EDI), HR EDI & Wellbeing Partner, and EDI Academic Advisor as dedicated equality specialists form the EDI team, under the coordination of the University Secretary, and will both advance and promote equality and diversity across the University. However, it is understood that all members of the AUB community are responsible for promoting the general public sector equality duty in their own work areas as well as contributing to a diverse and inclusive working and learning culture.

### 2. Legal Obligations

- 2.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the general equality duty and places a legal requirement on the University to have due regard to the need to:
  - **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
  - **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.
- 2.2 In addition to this, the Equalities Act introduced three 'specific duties' concerning: publication of information; equalities objectives; and manner of publication.
- 2.3 The development of the Equality and Diversity Statement has been designed to support legal obligations and the progression of the University's strategic goals.

### 3. 2021/22 Activity and Progress

- 3.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty places a requirement on all higher education institutions to publish information on an annual basis and to prepare and publish equality objectives to continually develop one or more of the aims set out in the

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general public sector equality duty. The University's overarching equality objective, which has been published externally, is:

3.2

## Empowering all members of the AUB community to advance equality and diversity

As highlighted in the Equality and Diversity Statement through its words and actions, AUB will:

- ▶ foster a sense of belonging for all staff and students, regardless of background, and to eliminate any barriers which may inhibit this
- ▶ create a strong community of advocates where all staff and students are confident to speak up if they believe others, or AUB itself, are falling short
- ▶ endeavour to promote equity, providing according to need
- ▶ encourage 'big conversations' about discrimination, especially (but not exclusively) linked to legally protected characteristics.

3.3 AUB has also developed an equalities commitment which is shared widely.

### *AUB's Equality Commitment*

*All members of the University's community including staff, students, visitors and contractors have a responsibility to treat others fairly and respectfully regardless of the characteristics which may define their identity. These include the legally protected characteristics which are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and Civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion or belief (including lack of belief), Sex and Sexual orientation.*

*The University has committed to provide a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where discrimination of any kind is treated with the utmost seriousness.*

## 4. Compliance

4.1 AUB adheres to all its regulatory duties, namely the Public Sector Equality Duty, and additional governmental requirements to publish its Gender Equality Pay Gap Data.

4.2 AUB has complied with the specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty in respect to publishing objectives and data. These can be found on AUB's website. Updated data is reported on annually in January.

4.3 In March 2021 AUB published its latest Gender Pay Report. The reported pay gaps were as follows:

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>
All workers	14.3%	20.96%
<i>Established staff only</i>		
Academic staff	7.77%	8.45%
Professional services	8.27%	0%

4.4 AUB has analysed the data available to identify the causes of these gaps and determine what action might be taken to address them. The points from this analysis are:

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- a) As discussed in the report, the main factor in the overall pay gap is the very high proportion of student ambassadors who are female. This is consistent with the overall AUB student population, but it significantly depresses the mean and median values for female workers. The University has previously agreed that it does not wish to set artificial targets to change the gender balance of its student ambassadors, which is a valuable role for the individuals concerned.
- b) There is also a disproportionate number of female casual workers compared to male, which depresses the mean and median values for female workers. The reasons for this disparity require further investigation.
- c) In 2021, it was noted that the pay gap for established academic posts was largely attributable to the fact that there are three times as many females on Lecturer or Early Career Academic posts than males. There can be many reasons for this disparity, and this is the subject of investigation by the HR EDI & Wellbeing Partner.

## **5. External accreditation**

- 5.1 The University's action plan confirms that AUB will seek external accreditation of its equality activity where appropriate; and that it will seek to be 'chartermark-ready'. Unfortunately, the current criteria for Advance HE Equality Charters mitigate against applications by smaller institutions which necessarily have limited data sets. Advance HE recognises this problem and has committed on more than one occasion to review the requirements so that they are suitable for smaller HEIs, and AUB are now part of the design group which is running for a year, and is responsible for providing feedback and ideas to Advance HE to enable them to develop approaches to Charters such that they are an appropriate tool for smaller institutions to engage with.
- 5.2 AUB also sat on a roundtable with Newcastle University who were awarded collaborative funding from Advance HE to review a more holistic approach to EDI accreditation for smaller institutions. This looked at an accreditation that encompassed EDI as a whole, rather than just one area such as the Race Equality Charter (REC).
- 5.3 In the meantime, as members of Inclusive Employers, we are able to apply for their EDI accreditation, the Inclusive Employers Standard. This is an evidence-based workplace accreditation tool for inclusion and diversity. Inclusive Employers then measure where a business is at on their EDI journey and provide focused feedback to help assist in their EDI journey.
- 5.4 Inclusive Employers also have a foundation assessment for those at the start of their EDI journey. This assessment is measured in much the same way as the Standard but is not subject to set timeframes and does not provide an accreditation. It is a tool to receive comprehensive feedback and guidance on next steps and action planning.
- 5.5 It is AUB's intention to start the Foundation Assessment in early in 2023 and look to undertake the formal assessment from September 2024.

## **6. Update on 2020-21 commitments**

- 6.1 During 2020 AUB committed to 6 actions to condemn racism and inequality. An update on these commitments is given below.

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- i) AUB continues to work towards an equal and diverse campus and curriculum that is fair and that is conscious about the differential academic outcomes and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students at AUB. The EDI team has planned a series of training for the academic year 2022/3. A specific strand of training related to learning and teaching aims to raise awareness of and build confidence in tackling unconscious bias and other issues which lead to our racialised awarding gap. Over 2020/21 new and revalidated courses were audited for how well their courses had embedded values and content on equality and diversity in their curriculum by the EDIAA. The EDIAA also led a Focus Group with undergraduate tutors to evaluate the efficacy of diversifying and strengthening the curriculum through this method. The report on the findings will be released to relevant committees and groups in Autumn 2022. AUB continues to support our staff and students' wellbeing and mental health. We continue to make available resources such as the *Headspace Wellbeing* app to all staff and students and are launching an AXA Health app to staff. Student Services continue to provide counselling and wellbeing support and staff can seek counselling and wellbeing support through AUB's Employee Assistance Programme and via our staff counsellor. We are developing our partnership with AXA to establish a new wellbeing programme for staff which will introduce health assessment days, webinars and a range of resources to support staff health and wellbeing.
- ii) AUB has increased funding towards widening participation and towards financially supporting BAME students through our Access and Participation Plan. Significant budget was committed to the EDI training programme which includes raising awareness of and addressing issues such as our racialised awarding gap. Over 2021/22 the EDI AA has worked with the EDI staff collaboration group, the SU and Access BEAF to plan a series of Black History Month Film Screenings on campus for students to further visible celebrations of diversity on campus, with AUB backing.
- iii) AUB will use our social media platforms to raise awareness, to educate and make students aware that the university is supporting them. The library and EDIAA have over 2021/22 planned an EDI Reading Group, primarily for academic staff, which will discuss and debate articles to develop staff understanding of diversity and inclusion in relation to arts education and diversify course reading lists.
- iv) We will strive to influence our external partners and industry contacts to develop inclusive and diverse practices within the creative and cultural industries. We have become members of Inclusive Employers to enhance our learning and provide access to external expertise to ensure our EDI initiatives are contemporary and fit for purpose.
- v) AUB will actively develop all our staff: unconscious bias training has been made mandatory and we are introducing a programme of webinars and workshops to facilitate understanding around confident EDI conversations and gender identity as we acknowledge the support required by trans and non-binary members of our community. Training programmes will be developed upon during the next academic year.

6.2 Although the process and shared curriculum elements of the C21 initiative have been paused, academic innovation in relation to EDI continues and the EDIAA sits on the Curriculum Innovation Group, as well as Learning and Teaching Quality Committee. The EDIAA intention is to create a more comprehensive Inclusive Curriculum Framework for building a diverse and equitable curriculum at AUB and

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looks to take this forwards when the new Executive Director for Academic Innovation is in post. Meanwhile the EDIAA continues to review new and revalidated academic courses (excluding online MAs generated with external partners) for their inclusivity. As above the EDIAA is reviewing this way of writing EDI into the curriculum, a report on which will be shared in Autumn 2022. The University's 'Curriculum 21' project is explicitly designed to respond to the need to create graduates who are ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the employment environment which awaits them. There is a strong focus on collaboration between disciplines, but also the foregrounding of key global challenges such as environmental sustainability, and equality and diversity. The new academic appointment will work with course teams to consider both content and learning design and ensure that there is an explicit appreciation of the assumptions which underpin the curriculum, and a rationale for these.

- 6.3 As part of the planned actions, it was also agreed that the University Secretary and the SU President would work with interested parties to consider how the EDI agenda might be covered in a more innovative and participatory way. This is one example of AUB's key values of being "innovative, collaborative, connected and passionate" and shows the alignment between AUB's EDI commitments and its core values. One initial open meeting was held during May 2021, and further opportunities to open out the diversity conversation will be planned for the next year.
- 6.4 The University has established its first EDI Staff Collaboration Group which has held 3 meetings during the 2021-2022 academic year and strives to give employees a voice regarding EDI issues, ensuring collaboration and connection between the EDI team and staff, and amongst peers within the group. We continually develop this collaborative approach and commit to establishing a group of EDI Student Ambassadors to complement our work with the Student Union and listen to the student voice.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 Since the inception of the EDI team, much work has been done in relation to AUB's EDI aspirations and the current objectives within the EDI Action Plan. AUB, through the EDI team, has been in a position to focus on what is needed to drive our EDI ambition forward in a positive and meaningful way, through training and collaboration with staff on what matters to them and what they need to see to feel truly included at work. The next step for AUB is to include student voice in these conversations and to connect staff and students in EDI initiatives going forward so the inclusive nature of AUB extends to the student body too.
- 7.2 It must be noted that AUB is still very much in its infancy in its EDI journey and so any measures of success are still sometime away from being useful statistically. It will be important to develop a reliable way of measuring the impact of what we do in an EDI sphere going forward as a way to challenge our actions and the work that we do.

Appendix 1

**2021/22 Progress report**

Theme	Intervention	Success Measure	Owner	Progress
<b>Belonging</b>	<p>Consider how and where we might gather robust data on staff and students' sense of belonging</p> <p>Consider how to measure this data to ensure that the actions arising from it serve to ensure inclusion and belonging</p>	<p>Baseline data sets identified, and reports scheduled to go to Equalities Committee</p> <p>Clear measurable actions set</p>	<p>Equalities Committee / Senior Officer (EDI)</p>	<p>Progress has been limited in the last year, but the EDI action plan suggests alternative approaches to this agenda. Additional qualitative data opportunities may arise from this. In the meantime, quantitative data is collected and published for external bodies is considered robust.</p>
<b>Equality to Equity</b>	<p>Consider the implications of EDI 'champions' on more committees and working groups. How can we strengthen and promote the EDI agenda if there are not more opportunities for discussion</p> <p>Consider utilising experienced members of the Equalities Committee (or other suitable candidates) to act as observers on recruiting panels (spot checks) to monitor the success of Unconscious Bias training</p>	<p>Decision made on how to promote EDI</p> <p>Unconscious Bias 'audits' carried out</p>	<p>Equalities Committee / Senior Officer (EDI)</p>	<p>The full EDI team was appointed and started work in Autumn 2021. The team has promoted its work through webinars, engagement with different groups across AUB, and has now implemented a comprehensive staff training programme.</p>

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<p><b>External Recognition</b></p>	<p>Continue to participate in the design group with Advacne HE to assist in a new design of the REC that supports applications from smaller institutions.</p> <p>Undertaking Inclusive Employers Foundation Assessment and/or Standard.</p>	<p>The introduction of an alternative format of the REC that makes it possible for smaller institutions to meet the benchmarks set and for AUB to be successful in an application of the same.</p> <p>A successful application and positive feedback from Inclusive Employers.</p>	<p>Equalities Committee / Senior Officer (EDE)</p>	<p>An annual review of external recognition opportunities forms part of the EDI action plan.</p>
<p><b>Community of Advocates</b></p>	<p>Seek to understand the gaps in people's knowledge and confidence by being connected to and collaborating with staff and students.</p> <p>Consider if it would be appropriate to measure an individual's contribution to EDI as part of the SPR process.</p>	<p>Identify gaps and supportive training in development</p>	<p>Equalities Committee / Senior Officer (EDI)</p>	<p>AUB remains committed to mandated equalities training which is given at point of induction and on a 3 yearly cycle thereafter. Mandatory training includes Equalities Overview and Unconscious Bias training. The EDI action plan encourages a review of training, especially identifying approaches which have proved successful across the sector.</p>
<p><b>Any Impact Welcomed</b></p>	<p>Consider mechanisms to communicate the EDI agenda widely (Is it appropriate to capitalise on the success of 'Paul's Place'? Would a 'Town Hall' encourage engagement?)</p> <p>If sessions are run, how can we ensure everyone leaves with an</p>	<p>Events with an equalities focused widely attended</p>	<p>VC Office / Senior Officer (EDI)</p>	<p>The changing circumstances due to Covid has meant that these communication forums have been focused on delivering operational information. However, the VCs messages have clearly</p>

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	action (large or small) to participate in			communicated his commitment to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging and additional support for staff and students is often publicised via these communications.
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