



**Queen Margaret  
University**  
EDINBURGH

# **MAINSTREAMING REPORT**

*with associated*

## **Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029**

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## Introduction

Queen Margaret University is pleased to publish this report, which sets out progress on mainstreaming equality against a number of outcomes established for the period 2021-25, and establishes outcomes for the period 2025-2029.

Under the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) introduced in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, the University is required to report on how it is mainstreaming equality. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) covers discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'. In preparing this report, we refer to the 'relevant protected characteristics' as defined in the Act.

To meet the specific duties, the University is required to:

- report on progress on mainstreaming the general duty into all functions every 2 years;
- develop and publish a set of equality outcomes that cover all protected characteristics (or explain why not all protected characteristics are covered);
- assess the impact of policies and practices against the needs of the general duty;
- gather and use information on employees;
- publish gender pay gap information;
- publish statements on equal pay for gender, race and disability;
- have due regard to the general duty in specified procurement practices;
- publish information in a manner that is accessible.

In 2016, the Scottish Government amended the specific duties to introduce a new requirement on listed bodies to publish the gender composition of their boards and to produce succession plans to increase the diversity of their board.

We consider that there has been significant movement towards mainstreaming equality and diversity throughout the University in the period since the publication of the University's original report in April 2013. Equally, however, we recognise that we need to continue to establish outcomes where we have evidence to suggest inequality, with such evidence providing the basis for targeted action, including enhanced policy and practice.

Throughout this Report, the University has had due regard to the general duties as specified under the Equality Act 2010, and which require the University to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
2. Advance equality of opportunity by having due regard to removing or minimising disadvantage, meeting the needs of a particular group that are different from the needs of others and by encouraging participation in public life; and
3. Foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The equality outcomes reflect the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Faith/belief, Gender reassignment, Marriage/civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Sex and Sexual orientation.

The University also seeks to remove inequality created by social and economic deprivation in line with Scottish Government objectives and set out in the University's Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC):

<https://www.sfc.ac.uk/assurance-accountability/outcome-agreements-listing/outcome-agreements-listing-2/queen-margaret-university-outcome-agreement-2023-24/>

The Scottish Funding Council and the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Commission signed a memorandum of understanding in 2020 designed to ensure greater alignment between University Outcome Agreements and their Public Sector Equality Duty Reporting.

Academic Year 2023-24 was the final year in which SFC required colleges and universities to submit Outcome Agreements. SFC's revised approach to assurance and accountability – the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model – replaces Outcome Agreements from the Academic Year 2024-25. This framework includes a cross-cutting outcome on equalities, diversity and inclusion.

The Scottish Funding Council and the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Commission published the 'Tackling Persistent Inequalities Together Report' in January 2023 which established a set of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) alongside a series of commitments to support institutions in progressing with the NEOs and measuring impact. The NEOs are focused on inequalities which are persistent at a national scale and institutions are strongly encouraged to adopt some or all of the NEOs that are relevant to their institution. In the development of our Equality Outcomes, we have given due regard to the NEOs, as detailed in Section 3 of this report.

The University's Mainstreaming Report 2025-29 was developed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC), the membership of which represents staff and student stakeholders, and includes representation from each of the recognised Trades Unions. This report was approved by the EDC at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 and approved for publication by the University Court on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

The report is divided into three sections:

- Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality: sets out progress made in mainstreaming equality within the University.
- Section 2: Review of 2021-2025 Equality Outcomes: reflect on progress made in relation to equality outcomes established for 2021-25
- Section 3: Equality Outcomes 2025-2029: sets out revised equality outcomes for 2025-2029.

These sections are supported by management information, and by two Appendices: Staff Equalities Data and our Equal Pay Review 2025.

# **1. Section 1: Mainstreaming Equality within the University**

## **1.1 Mainstreaming Equality**

Mainstreaming describes the process by which equality and diversity are brought into the core of an institution's work and integrated into day-to-day activities. It is the process by which equality and diversity are considered in relation to all functions, including the development, implementation and review of policies and processes, supported by training and development. For Queen Margaret University, it means ensuring that equality sits at the heart of its strategy, and operational delivery, in order to create a structure and a culture that embraces and advances equality and diversity: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/abouttheuniversity/our-strategic-plan/>

It was recognised by the Scottish Ministers in their Proposals published in 2013 that “fully mainstreaming equality is a long-term improvement journey”. Queen Margaret University continues to work towards equality being embedded in the culture and structure of the University, so that it better serves its communities. As reported below, the University continues on its improvement journey, having secured some areas of significant progress. We recognise too that there is more to be done, and that is reflected in our equality outcomes going forward and in the narrative in this report.

## **1.2 Governance and Strategic Planning**

### **1.2.1 University Court and Institutional Committees**

Mainstreaming equality requires collective responsibility, but also leadership and commitment from the University Court and through the University's governance and management structures and arrangements.

Embedding equality and diversity in our governance structures and in our strategic planning process is critical to mainstreaming equality and diversity, as is defining responsibilities, setting performance measures and monitoring progress against those measures.

While responsibility for mainstreaming equality and diversity within the University rests with all staff and students, the University Court is, as a matter of law, responsible for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and for ensuring that the University meets its public sector equality duty (PSED) and the specific duties relevant to Scotland.

The University Court has a role therefore in overseeing the University's performance of its legal duties and in ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are put in place that provide the necessary assurances from the senior leadership team that legal requirements are being met.

The University Court exercises such oversight through the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC). The EDC is responsible to the University Court for the development of the strategic framework for equality in service provision and in employment across the University. The Committee reports directly to the Court on its discussions, on the development of specific initiatives, and presents policies and

procedures for Court approval. In so doing, it has a function that reflects the general duties.

The Committee is convened by the Head of Human Resources. The Vice-Principal and University Secretary, who is also Secretary to the University Court, sits on the Committee as the Senior Leadership Team Champion. Membership also includes a lay member of Court, appointed by the Court. Its wider membership is designed to reflect the staff and student body and to benefit from a range of perspectives. To that end, it has members drawn from each academic and 6 professional service areas of the University, as well as student, trades union and staff equality network representation.

The Equality and Diversity Committee has a remit to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding, thereby ensuring the University avoids the potential for discrimination on grounds of the protected equality strands.

The Committee's remit goes beyond legislative compliance however. It aims to support delivery of key elements of the University's Strategic Plan through policy development and the promotion of examples of good practice from both internal and external sources. It also seeks to develop and maintain effective networking and liaison in equality and diversity issues. This applies internally within the University and externally, with a particular focus on working relationships with professional equality experts and equality bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Advance HE.

Along with its responsibility to develop and agree the institutional mission, the University Court has a role in 'establishing a vision for equality, and in moving the agenda beyond compliance to an approach that ensures the richness and diversity of society are reflected and celebrated within the institution'.

We consider that we have made significant progress over the last 4 years in terms of the University Court's approach to its equality duties, evidenced through policy development and through systematic review of the diversity of its membership. Progress in terms of the latter is described fully within our review of Equality Outcome 1 in Section 2 below.

A number of other Committees and structures within the University are concerned with eliminating discrimination, advancing equal opportunities and fostering good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. These include the Student Experience Committee and the Research Strategy Committee, both of which are Committees of the Senate, the Widening Participation and Student Retention (WiSeR) Board. The manner in which these decision making bodies contribute to advancing equality and diversity within the University is discussed further below.

### **1.2.2 Purpose and Values**

The University published its revised Strategy in May 2020:

<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/abouttheuniversity/our-strategic-plan/>

The Strategy (and associated Delivery Plan) has been reviewed further in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. We have acknowledged in our delivery plan that we must contribute to the pandemic recovery, manage its impact, and embed lessons learned over the period of the pandemic into our future development.

We believe that, despite the impact of the pandemic, the core principles of our strategy remain relevant and achievable. Our Strategic Plan continues to reflect the University's established commitment to, amongst other things, promoting inclusiveness, equality, and a sense of community.

We reframed our Mission and Vision, and have reflected instead on our Purpose.

We see our Purpose as helping to create a better society through education, research and innovation, and by providing a supportive and creative learning environment in which students and staff thrive.

Our purpose is underpinned by our Values, which includes social justice. We embrace equality, diversity, inclusion, respect, and supporting our communities. Opportunities and access are open to all and on a fair basis.

To fulfil our purpose, we have developed a set of strategic goals, with associated outputs, that are underpinned by our values and our alignment to the internal and external environment, including how we will contribute towards the Scottish Government's drive towards excellence and equity across the education and skills landscape in Scotland.

Equality and Diversity has continued to be a focus of the University's Outcome Agreements with the Scottish Funding Council and the revised Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model. The University's Outcome Agreement 2023-24 and Self Evaluation and Action Plan 2023-24 focus on our commitment to attract and retain students from a wide range of backgrounds, and to support them to achieve successful outcomes. We have continued to adopt a definition of 'under-represented groups' that has extended beyond that of the narrow SIMD national indicator and have developed a range of initiatives to increase the participation and retention of those from a broad range of underrepresented groups.

The outcomes established in the University's Strategic Plan and Outcomes Framework are supported by a number of institutional strategies and policies.

The Student Experience Strategy exemplifies the University's commitment to delivering high quality educational programmes that satisfy a range of professional and vocational needs but which also develop individuals for a broader role, both in future employment and society. The strategy sets out to 'maximise the potential of the individual, irrespective of their background', to ensure 'sought-after' graduates and postgraduates, who are well educated, creative, independent, and reflective citizens, with transferable skills of flexibility, ready for employment, reflecting a range of academic, multi-disciplinary and transferable skills, as well as an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

It places the student at the centre of the educational provision. To support that aim, programmes 'will incorporate curricula and learning strategies that recognise

diversity in the student body'. It recognises the need for flexibility in patterns of attendance and the needs of all learners and seeks to develop academic and pastoral support structures that support the learner at all stages from pre-entry, entry, progression, graduation and post-graduation.

We are working to promote entry to, and provide education at, undergraduate and postgraduate level for all students, whatever their background. We are committed to enhancing the student experience through delivering equality across the protected characteristics and creating an inclusive learning environment; this applies to recruitment and admissions, to the curriculum, teaching and assessment, to welfare and support services, and to staff development and training.

In support of the above, we will continue to develop a range of co-ordinated performance indicators, qualitative and quantitative, that provide the basis of the evaluation of the student experience. These include:

- Application and conversion rates.
- Student retention and withdrawal measures.
- Student attainment.
- Survey results including the National Student Survey (NSS) and the QMU Student Survey.
- Module evaluation.
- Focus groups.
- Internal Staff/Student Liaison Committee feedback and/or feedback from Programme Representatives.
- Annual Programme Review report.

We have made significant progress in collecting data on each of the protected characteristics which provides for improved reporting. Further information on this is provided in section 1.2.5 below.

The Senate, Student Experience Committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee receive detailed reports on student admission, progression, completion and attainment broken down by the protected characteristics. Specific reports are produced annually that set out statistics by sex, ethnicity disability and gender reassignment in relation to students who have submitted academic appeals, have submitted a complaint under the University's formal Complaints procedure, or have been subject to action under the University's Discipline or Fitness to Practise regulations. The total numbers recorded under the latter two procedures are small, and analysis under each of these processes suggests that there are no areas of concern in terms of equality of treatment of students. The Equality and Diversity Committee considers a range of staff equality reports, including the Equal Pay Audit, and EQIAs undertaken on policy developments.

Annual Monitoring Reports are produced by both academic Schools each year. This exercise is a crucial element of the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes, providing an important opportunity for staff to evaluate the programmes for which they are responsible, and for the School Academic Board to exercise its

responsibility for assuring academic standards and enhancing the quality of the student experience.

The Student Experience Strategy also commits us to enhancing the student experience by recruiting, developing and retaining excellent staff who reflect the diversity of the student population.

We are committed to ensuring that our staff population is representative of the wider community. Monitoring of that is conducted through profiling of staffing. Evidence in support of that is presented in Section 2 and in the Appendices to this report.

Our strong commitment to equality in research is promoted in a number of different ways, including through our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and further Athena Swan recognition. Further details are set out within Section 2 below.

### **1.2.3 Equality Policy**

The University's Equality policy articulates the University's approach to Equality in relation to staff and students. Amongst its provisions are that:

- Staff and students at the University are expected to treat others with respect at all times and to challenge discriminatory behaviour, attitudes or practices whenever they occur.
- In support of the above, the University will provide opportunities for staff and students to participate in learning opportunities that enable them to consider their own prejudices and adopt good practice.
- In relation to staff, the policy confirms the University's position, which is that staff are afforded equal opportunities within employment, and that entry into employment with the institution, and progression within employment, will be determined only by personal merit and the application of criteria which are related to the duties of each particular post and the relevant salary structure.
- It is in the best interests of the University and everyone who works within the University to ensure that whenever employment opportunities arise, we consider the human resources, talents and skills available throughout the community. Within the framework of the law, we are committed, whenever practicable, to achieve and maintain a workforce that broadly reflects the community in which we operate and this will include using diverse sources of recruitment and adverts that target specific groups where permissible. The University will also provide fair and accessible opportunities for training and promotion for staff.
- In relation to students, we are committed to enhancing the student experience through delivering equality across the protected characteristics and creating an inclusive learning environment. The University encourages early disclosure of disability to allow for the provision of suitable reasonable adjustments prior to entering the institution.
- The University will operate fair and transparent procedures for student assessment, progression, attainment of awards and involvement in other University activities.

- The University will promote the use of inclusive language and avoid the use of words or phrases which are discriminatory or exclusive in all University publications and correspondence.
- The University seeks to increase student numbers from non-traditional groups; extend collaborative working relationships; promote staff understanding of diverse student groups and create an appropriately supportive infrastructure.
- The Court shall promote mainstreaming and ensure equality is an integral part of the planning process. The Court shall also take active measures to encourage diversity in membership and the business of the Court and actively involve students in decision making and policy development.
- The University will ensure a visible commitment to equality in modules and programmes and that all teaching is equality proofed. The University will celebrate and promote good practice in this regard.
- In research, the University will continue current good practice under the Research Excellence Framework and will build on this good practice in the future. The University will celebrate and promote good practice in research by the use of case studies and promotional material.
- The University will maintain its Athena Swan awards and the good practice established through the Concordat and Research Excellence Framework, and will seek to obtain further recognition to promote its good practice.
- The Equality and Diversity Committee will ensure that the Equality policy and its aims are enacted throughout the University by the scrutiny of emerging policy and procedure under the Equality Impact Assessment procedure and through reporting on mainstreaming and the equality outcomes. Student recruitment, retention and progression statistics will be monitored and feedback under student surveys reviewed to ensure the student experience is mapped to this policy. Employment statistics will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Committee and published in line with the Scottish specific duties to ensure that, in terms of employment, the University is meeting the aims under this policy.
- The University will continue to monitor its teaching and learning practice via Annual Monitoring Reports for both Schools and through the quality assurance and quality enhancement process.

#### **1.2.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Culture Review**

The period of 2021 – 2025 under review has marked a significant project undertaken by the University as part of its efforts to mainstream Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

In 2021, we established the University's Race Equality Steering Group, under the Principal's convenership, with a remit to advance the institution's commitment to race equality. This steering group commissioned an extensive and broad Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Culture Review, carried out in 2022-23, led by EDI and Anti-Racism Adviser to the Principal, Professor Paul Miller, and visiting fellows Dr Leroi Henry and Dr Kenisha Linton-Williams. The review was not commissioned as a response to any particular or negative incident, but rather from a recognition that

racism, and other forms of discrimination, exist in society and that therefore our institution is not immune to it.

Whilst the Culture Review focused in particular on the experiences of minority ethnic staff and students, the Review was conducted with an intentionally broad and intersectional approach. In doing so, QMU was the first university in the UK to undertake such a broad review into EDI issues affecting both staff and students. This EDI Culture Review was commissioned to understand:

- Staff and students' overall experience of inclusivity at the University
- Perceptions, observations and/or experiences of discrimination among staff and students
- Recruitment, selection, reward, progression, development, disciplinary and performance management practices related to staff
- Curriculum, support, and other experiences among students

The findings from this EDI Culture Review were intended to contribute to broader understanding of (i) inclusivity among QMU staff and students (ii) inclusivity in QMU processes, and (iii) to identify potential areas for improvement.

The findings from this review have been set out in the final report and informed an EDI and Anti-Racism Strategy and 5-Year Action Plan which we have begun to implement across the University: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-culture-review/>

The report identified considerable good practice. There were also recommendations relating to matters including EDI governance, communication, data, policy and curriculum. These are being taken forward in stages. As detailed in the following sections of this report, the findings and recommendations of the EDI Culture Review Report have both helped us to progress a number of our Outcomes for the period of 2021 – 2025 and informed our new Outcomes for 2025 – 2029.

### **1.2.5 Equality Impact Assessment**

As part of its mainstreaming approach, the University undertakes Equality Impact Assessments (“EQIAs”) when reviewing and developing strategy, policy and process. We recognise that not all staff are involved in the EQIA process, and that we have still more to do in terms of expanding the pool of trained staff. We have committed to auditing all formal University policy statements/regulations, with a view to producing a definitive register which sets out: policy owner, date of approval/last review and date of EQIA. While we have made progress, we recognise that we need to do more, so this remains an outcome in our Mainstreaming Report. We have made significant progress in collecting data on each of the protected characteristics which provides for improved reporting.

### **1.2.6 Management Information**

We have in place management information capability that provides us with the basis to monitor and evaluate our performance across a wide range of indicators. We recognise though that the usefulness of such management information is reliant on our capacity to collect data and to produce resulting meaningful analysis. This is an

area in which we continue to make significant progress in terms of student data collection and analysis, and through the further development of our HR ITrent system.

In terms of student data, we have improved our capacity to collect information as suggested by the reduction in the percentage of 'unknowns'.

*Table 1: Number and percentage of 'Unknowns' within our Student Management Data*

<b>SEX</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Sex not known	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

<b>DISABILITY</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	65	1.0%	101	1.5%	140	2.0%	163	2.3%
Not known	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%

<b>ETHNICITY</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	93	1.5%	143	2.1%	171	2.4%	166	2.3%
Not known	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.0%	4	0.1%

<b>RELIGIOUS BELIEF</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
No religion	3479	54.8%	3724	54.3%	3689	51.9%	3691	51.6%
Prefer not to say	433	6.8%	540	7.9%	585	8.2%	518	7.2%
Not known	11	0.2%	1	0.0%	5	0.1%	6	0.1%

<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	391	6.2%	484	7.1%	555	7.8%	542	7.6%
Not known	552	8.7%	429	6.3%	65	0.9%	26	0.4%

<b>GENDER IDENTITY</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	87	1.4%	107	1.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Not known	862	13.6%	1027	15.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

<b>TRANSGENDER</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	199	2.8%	187	2.6%
Not known	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	335	4.7%	83	1.2%

<b>MATURE</b>	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Prefer not to say	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not known	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

## Section 2: Equality Outcomes to 2025: Evaluating Progress

As part of the mainstreaming process, and to comply with specific duties, the University is required to publish, undertake and report on progress on equality outcomes.

Equality outcomes are not targets or processes. An outcome is an aspirational end result which, in the short term, will change awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes, and in the longer term, will change behaviour, put a focus on equality in decision making and improve social and environmental conditions.

In our Mainstreaming Report 2021-2025, we established six Equality Outcomes. In this section, we evaluate our progress against each of these outcomes. The equality outcomes that form the basis of reporting in this report are:

- **Equality Outcome 1:** By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.
- **Equality Outcome 2:** Pay Gaps are eliminated where the pay gap is significant in statistical terms in favour of any group.
- **Equality Outcome 3:** By 2025, significant steps have been taken to improve the attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on gender, race, age and disability, and, where determined, the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.
- **Equality Outcome 4:** Our people policies promote inclusive employment and career advancement prospects
- **Equality Outcome 5:** Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research
- **Equality Outcome 6:** More robust and comprehensive data is available on the characteristics of our staff, with identified evidence gaps filled.

As set out in the following section of the report, we consider that we have made progress during the lifetime of our Mainstreaming Report across all areas. Not all outcomes have been achieved, and not all outcomes will be achievable in isolation - some require partnership working. Some outcomes may not be achievable at all due to larger societal influence, but it is important nevertheless to recognise those that fall into that category.

Our approach to evaluating our progress against each of the outcomes set for the period of 2021-2025 has involved reporting against each outcome in three sections:

1. Reporting on activity undertaken to progress the Outcome (in acknowledgement that reporting on activity can be useful in demonstrating how we meet the general duty)
2. Reporting on evidence of progress made against the outcome, where possible drawing on data
3. Reporting on evidence of remaining challenges, to inform our new set of Outcomes.

**Outcome 1: By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.**

**Actions we have taken to progress this outcome:**

Actions taken as a part of our EDI Culture Review apply, including:

- We have recently adopted the 'Rooney Rule' (i.e. interview minority ethnic applicants meeting the essential of the job) in 2025 – review to be conducted after 12 months.
- The Race Equality Steering Group have been monitoring organisation race data on a quarterly basis to identify any trends relating to recruitment and retention.
- We have diversified our approach to recruitment advertising by posting our advertisements on a variety of new websites in an effort to target our most underrepresented groups such as BAMEed, Teacheroo job board and The Voice.

We established a Modern Apprenticeship Policy in 2022. Since the introduction of this policy, we have employed a number of young apprentices. Our policy framework sets out a review five months prior to the end of the Modern Apprenticeship to determine the possibility and business requirement of continuing the position on an open-end basis.

We have continued to ensure our practice is in line with the Disability Confident Scheme and examined if there are additional measures that can be introduced to attract, retain, and develop disabled staff. The University currently has level 1 membership of the Disability Confident Scheme – Disability Confident Committed.

We have taken actions to encourage staff to declare their equality characteristics, as detailed in the evaluation of Equality Outcome 6.

We continue to be an accredited Living Wage employer. The Living Wage commitment sees everyone working at QMU, regardless of whether they are permanent employees or third-party contractors, receive a real Living Wage. The University's third-party contractors adopt the Living Wage as and when existing contracts are renewed.

We have undertaken work to encourage managers to review job description requirements and person specifications when recruiting for entry-level jobs. Focused work has gone into reviewing the essential requirements of these jobs, for example the ask of certain qualifications, to identify where it may be possible and appropriate to remove these as entry requirements, instead allowing applicants to work towards these qualifications or requirements on the job. In undertaking this exercise, we believe we have made good steps forward in terms of removing barriers facing young people entering the workforce at QMU.

As part of our work to improve our recruitment webpages, we undertook an external audit of our webpages with an EDI lens, conducted by TMP Worldwide. Following this audit, we have implemented the following changes:

- We have re-worded our Equality and Diversity webpage with further plans to update it to have less of a purely compliant feel to it. We have now also linked the Equality and Diversity page to our vacancies page to reflect our commitment to EDI to potential applicants.
- We made change to the web recruitment form web page and changed the imagery
- We have made our hybrid working web page visible on our website for attraction purposes, with plans in place to do more work on this, including having “spotlight” sites for particular things we know are important to people when looking for a new employer (e.g. how the university supports staff with caring responsibilities and Dignity at Work)
- We have reviewed and diversified the language used in vacancy advertisements and updated our EDI statement to encourage underrepresented groups to apply.

In May 2024, to strengthen the ability of our governing body to reflect the rich diversity of the groups we serve, we launched QMU’s Board Apprenticeship Scheme, GIVE. Open exclusively to alumni in the first instance, GIVE offers people without board experience formal training and mentoring in governance, along with the opportunity to witness the work of our governing body (the University Court) in action. It is designed to provide a pathway into full membership of the Court.

We have reviewed and diversified the language within the role specification of Court members. This has included the inclusion of EDI statements which have explicitly mentioned our ambitions to diversify our Court Membership. We have diversified our approach to advertising Court vacancies in an effort to target our most underrepresented groups by utilising websites such as Goodmoves and social media platforms.

As of academic year 24/25, we have introduced co-opted spaces on the membership of the Equality and Diversity Committee to ensure all staff equality groups are represented on the Committee.

Actions detailed under Equality Outcome 3 and 4 also apply.

### **Evidence of progress against this outcome:**

Appendix 1 of this report sets out our equalities data in relation to our academic and professional services staff.

Within this data, there is evidence of progress relating to increasing the diversity of our workforce. The data shows that between the years of 2020/21 and 2023/24, QMU has increased the representation of:

- Disabled staff from 4.7% to 8.6% of the workforce. This proportionally puts QMU above the percentage of disabled staff reported in the UK HEI Sector (7.2%).
- Minority ethnic staff from 5.5% to 8.9% of the workforce. This proportionally puts QMU above the percentage of the overall minority ethnic working age population reported in the 2022 Scotland Census (7.7%) and in almost line

with the minority ethnic working age population in Urban areas of Scotland (9%).

- LGBTQ+ staff from 5.5% to 7.6% of the workforce.
- Staff aged 16-24 from 0.7% to 4.8% of the workforce.

In relation to sex, women continue to make up the majority of our workforce (68.1%); a higher proportion than that of the UK Average (55%). Our workforce reflects a similar gender composition to that of our student population (76.6%).

Our data shows that QMU tends to outperform against the sector in terms of its Professoriate, where women are generally underrepresented. Although numbers are small, our 2023/24 data shows that women make up 62% of Professors; this marks an increase from 40% reported in 2021/22 and puts QMU significantly higher than the 30.8% average across the UK sector.

During Session 2024-25, we have maintained the gender balance required under the Gender Representation on Boards legislation. The gender balance of membership of Court was maintained at 50% female and 50% male. The lay member gender balance was 50% female and 50% male.

Equality Monitoring is in place for all Court members. Through our recruitment approach, we have increased the representation of minority ethnic and disabled Court members.

### **Challenges that remain:**

Whilst evaluation of this outcome against staff data reveals areas of progress in a number of areas, it also reveals a number of remaining challenges, as detailed below.

We continue to lack representation of minority ethnic staff in senior levels of Grade 10 or above.

Whilst representation of minority ethnic staff at QMU is above that the percentage of the minority ethnic working age population in Scotland and in line with the population in urban areas, it is below that of the population of Edinburgh (15.2%). We reflect on working towards a meaningful and ambitious target in our new Outcomes.

Whilst higher than the HE average, representation of disabled staff (8.6%) is lower than that found of the disabled working age population in Scotland in the 2022 Census data (24%). We also reflect that there are many reasons why staff may not report a disability and it is likely that the prevalence reported here is an undercount, which should be taken into consideration when developing support services for disabled staff.

We have a number of gaps within our data which limits our ability to fully evaluate our progress against this outcome, as detailed in Outcome Number 6. Our largest gaps are in the categories of sexual orientation and religion/belief.

## **Equality Outcome 2: Pay Gaps are eliminated where the pay gap is significant in statistical terms in favour of any group.**

### **Actions we have taken to progress this outcome:**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires equal pay data to be published biennially. However, in order to demonstrate the University's continued commitment towards equal pay, we have undertaken an Equal Pay Review annually in order to review the University's progress and identify if further actions are required. Annual reporting has allowed us to analyse data both in terms of long-term trends, but also in terms of any significant changes that may have occurred within a year, aiding us to identify and target any potential arising issues at an earlier stage.

We have continued to go beyond the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish gender pay gap data. Our annual Equal Pay Reviews have included analysis of pay gaps relating to gender, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

The University has in place, a pay and grading system which is used to assist in determining equal pay across the University. The pay and grading system is applied transparently, based on objective criteria to ensure that it is free from unlawful bias. The University's policies and procedures associated with pay and remuneration have been developed and implemented with a view to eliminating unlawful bias, and are systematically monitored and reviewed.

As part of our EDI Culture Review, external EDI experts conducted an in-depth analysis of pay data by ethnicity and gender in 2023. From 2024, informed by the equal pay findings of the EDI Culture Review, we expanded our Equal Pay Reporting to include analysis of intersectional (ethnicity and gender) pay gaps and disaggregated ethnicity pay gaps.

We have progressed actions set out in the annual Action Plans of our Equal Pay Reviews.

### **Evidence of progress against this outcome:**

Our Equal Pay Report 2025 demonstrates that, between the years 2020 – 2024, we have made progress in reducing a number of identified pay gaps.

Our data shows that, between 2020 – 2024, we have reduced our gender pay gap in the mean from -5.07% in favour of men to -2.92%. Our median gender pay gap has also reduced to 0.00%. Our overall gender pay gaps are no longer considered to be significant.

In terms of benchmarking our gender pay gap, QMU performs significantly better than the HEI Sector in the UK and Scotland, which are found to have a mean pay gaps of -13.7% and -16.2% and median pay gaps of -9% and -14.4% respectively.

Between 2020 – 2024, our overall disability pay gap has reduced from -22.82% to -12.71% in the mean and -30.75% to -5.72% in the median. We recognise the remaining gaps are significant but note the progress made in reducing these gaps.

There is no overall significant pay gap for sexual orientation.

Where numbers have been substantial enough to report, there is evidence of reductions in the ethnicity and disability pay gaps found within particular grades.

Our Equal Pay Reviews 2023 and 2024 identified a significant gender pay gap for our Professoriate; in our 2025 Review, there is evidence of progress in reducing this gap. The mean gender pay gap at Professor Level has decreased to -10.71% (previously -15.30% in last year's report) in favour of male professors. Likewise, the median pay gap has decreased to -13.02% (previously -21.01%) in favour of male professors. We recognise the remaining gaps are significant but note the progress made in reducing these gaps.

### **Challenges that remain:**

Data within our Equal Pay Report 2025 identified a number of pay gaps that remain significant.

As stated in the section above, this includes our overall disability pay gaps and professoriate gender pay gaps, which although reduced, remain at significant levels and require further action.

Our data shows that, between 2020 – 2024, our overall ethnicity pay gaps have widened from -3.75% to -12.08% in the mean and -2.90% and -5.72% in the median. Further analysis of this can be found in our Equal Pay Reviews.

Although it is difficult to draw conclusions due to small numbers, our disaggregated ethnicity data reveals that white staff earn more than all other ethnicity groupings. Intersectional analysis also reveals that minority ethnic women and men experience similar levels of significant pay gaps compared to white colleagues.

We have a number of gaps within our staff data which limits being able to fully evaluate our progress against this outcome, as detailed in Outcome Number 6.

**Equality Outcome 3: By 2025, significant steps have been taken to improve the attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on gender, race, age and disability, and, where determined, the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.**

***Outcome 3.1 For Students:***

**Actions we have taken to progress this Outcome**

Approaches and actions in pursuit of this Outcome outlined in our Outcome Agreements published during the reporting period apply. In reporting on progress made following our final Outcome Agreement (2023/4), we replicate some of the narrative set out in Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP).

Supported by the International Office, an International Student Society has been formed and events have been held to foster sense of belonging for our growing cohort of international students.

In 2023-24, the University Senate approved our refreshed Widening Participation Strategy. We also progressed work on a Student Retention Strategy, which will be finalised early in 2025.

Throughout the reporting period, our Widening Participation and Outreach Team have worked with a range of partners to maximise the opportunities, experience and outcomes of applicants and entrants from non-traditional groups. We have developed our access and retention agenda through school, college and community engagement, and provided tailored support to applicant and student groups whom we have identified through our research and evaluation are at a higher risk of not persisting with their studies.

The WISeR (Widening Participation and Student Retention) Board, which reports to the Student Experience Committee, had continued to review a broad set of widening participation and student retention data, and co-ordinated activities promoting best practice and facilitating joined up working across the University in support of those elements of our provision that are concerned with access and retention.

Various WISeR initiatives were progressed under the auspices of the Board during the reporting period. These included the continued implementation of our [Peer Assisted Learning Scheme \(PALS\)](#) through which trained student facilitators work to support pre-entry and transition activities. Our evaluation of the scheme demonstrates that students who participate in PALS sessions perform better overall, and we are currently researching the impact that PALS has on retention. Other recent initiatives which are pertinent to this Outcome have included:

- Student British Sign Language Classes, in collaboration with the Students' Union.
- 'Guardians of Healthcare': a targeted widening participation research project to improve public understanding, confront stereotypes and increase participation of working-class boys into caring professions.

- ‘A Slice of CAKE’: a project to address inclusivity for the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students by creating a supportive, self-sustaining community.

In 2023-24 we merged our Wellbeing and our Counselling services. This change was informed by student feedback as well as our data collection which showed that students were uncertain which service was best suited to them. Under the revised arrangements, the student is assessed and then triaged into one of the two services. This has reduced duplication of support and resulted in more responsive services and shorter waiting times.

In parallel, the Disability Service undertook a review to improve processes. This resulted in the development of a new template for Individual Learning Plans (ILP) and a new ILP guide. We also developed a new [Policy for Inclusive Learning and Teaching Materials](#), mainstreaming some of the most common reasonable adjustments for all students.

We reviewed our Extenuating Circumstances Policy, the key changes being a simplification of the process for students and associated reduction of administrative burden. The most significant change introduced is the provision for students to self-certify for up to seven days, this being a more compassionate approach and consistent with sector practice.

We initiated a review of our approach to Attendance and Engagement Monitoring, drawing on sector practice and experiences. Work is ongoing with a view to using the data to support student success, wellbeing, and persistence.

In 2023-24 we concluded phase one of our longitudinal Future Spaces project, resulting in significant changes and upgrades to our campus in Musselburgh. Two project elements were completed, the first of these being the repurposing of four existing lecture and seminar rooms to deliver two flexible sub-divisible spaces, principally for practical teaching, and the second an expansion and reconfiguration of our Learning Resource Centre (LRC). Importantly, the LRC upgrade has allowed us to increase the variety of learning spaces to better meet accessibility needs, whilst also responding to different learner preferences. These projects were informed by student and staff consultation, as well as sector benchmarking.

During the reporting period, the Students' Union identified, as one of four partnership priorities, the importance of increasing engagement from previously under-represented groups of students, including but not limited to postgraduate students, mature students, and students with children. Two new Officer roles (International and BME) were approved by the SU Board of Trustees and launched in March 2024. Other relevant initiatives in 2023-24 included new WhatsApp Groups and support for the establishment of new societies.

In May 2024, we published our British Sign Language Plan 2024 – 2030 in line with the duties under the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015. We have built on our 2018 – 2024 plan by streamlining our new Action Plan and identifying key responsible roles and teams for each individual action.

We have worked with our Students' Union to address the severe cost of living challenges as they impact on our students. The working group established to oversee our response promotes the various aspects of our support through social media messaging and through a dedicated webpage: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/cost-of-living-crisis-support-for-students/>

We have continued to work with partner organisations, such as alcohol and drugs services (MELDAP), local Eating Disorder Supports, Primary Mental Health Service (CWIC), and with local Women's Aid and Rape Crisis groups.

We have continued to work collaboratively with Edinburgh Universities through the GBV steering group, working with Rape Crisis in providing support to students. We are active members of the Fearless Partnership, working with a variety of stakeholders including the Universities, NHS and the Police to improve responses to GBV in the Edinburgh Area, sharing good practice and linking supports. We have also worked collaboratively through the Thrive group to strategically improve mental health among students in the Edinburgh area.

We launched and embedded the 'Report and Support' tool, which provides a platform for students to report various forms of harassment and violence. It also provides access to advice and support.

In terms of student entrants and student awarding (/attainment), we present below data to draw upon in the following sections relating to progress and challenges against this outcome.

*Table 2: Student Entrants: Scotland domiciled, UG students only*

Scotland domiciled, UG students only*	2022/3	2023/4	2024/5	Three year rolling figure	Benchmark – Report on Widening Access (22-23)
Disabled students	35.7%	35.8%	34.6%	35.3%	23.1%
Students from minority ethnic backgrounds	6.6%	7.7%	7.7%	7.3%	10.3%
Mature students	39.0%	37.8%	35.5%	37.5%	40.3%

*Table 3: Honours graduates with a 1st class or 2:1*

		2020/1	2021/2	2022/3	2023/4
All		80.6% (502/623)	81.5% (536/658)	82.5% (542/657)	80.1% (519/648)
sex	Female	82.1% (385/469)	83.2% (427/513)	84.9% (438/516)	81.3% (418/514)
	Male	75.7% (115/152)	75.2% (109/145)	73.0% (100/137)	76.0% (98/129)
	Other Sex	100.0% (2/2)	- (0/0)	100.0% (4/4)	60.0% (3/5)

Disability	Disability declared	72.1% (111/154)	79.8% (138/173)	85.0% (164/193)	78.9% (165/209)
	No disability	83.4% (391/469)	82.0% (397/484)	81.2% (368/453)	80.1% (339/423)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	- (0/0)	100.0% (1/1)	90.9% (10/11)	93.8% (15/16)

Ethnicity	Minority Ethnicity	68.2% (30/44)	63.5% (33/52)	76.6% (36/47)	60.0% (27/45)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	100.0% (2/2)	80.0% (4/5)	66.7% (6/9)	76.9% (10/13)
	White	81.5% (470/577)	83.0% (499/601)	83.2% (500/601)	81.7% (482/590)

Religious belief	No religious belief	84.8% (328/387)	83.8% (346/413)	82.2% (313/381)	81.9% (289/353)
	Religious belief	74.3% (159/214)	75.1% (157/209)	83.2% (183/220)	77.5% (183/236)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	68.2% (15/22)	91.7% (33/36)	82.1% (46/56)	79.7% (47/59)

Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual or straight	79.1% (383/484)	79.3% (384/484)	80.2% (393/490)	78.2% (369/472)
	LGB+	89.6% (60/67)	87.2% (68/78)	90.1% (109/121)	86.3% (107/124)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	81.9% (59/72)	87.5% (84/96)	87.0% (40/46)	82.7% (43/52)

Gender identity	Gender identity different from sex assigned at birth	75.0% (3/4)	100.0% (3/3)	n/a n/a	n/a n/a
	Gender identity same as sex assigned at birth	80.9% (452/559)	81.7% (477/584)	n/a n/a	n/a n/a
	Unknown incl. PNTS	78.3% (47/60)	78.9% (56/71)	n/a n/a	n/a n/a

Transgender	Considers self to be trans, or have a trans history	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	100.0% (5/5)	88.9% (8/9)
	Does not consider self to be trans, or have a trans history	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	82.3% (526/639)	80.1% (491/613)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	n/a n/a	n/a n/a	84.6% (11/13)	76.9% (20/26)

Marital status	Co-habiting	74.1% (20/27)	90.0% (27/30)	96.7% (29/30)	79.2% (19/24)
	Divorced or formerly in a CP now legally dissolved	66.7% (2/3)	75.0% (3/4)	40.0% (2/5)	100.0% (3/3)
	Married or in a registered civil partnership	95.2% (20/21)	79.4% (27/34)	75.0% (33/44)	84.2% (32/38)
	Separated (but still legally married or in CP)	75.0% (3/4)	66.7% (2/3)	50.0% (1/2)	60.0% (6/10)
	Single (Never married and never registered in CP)	79.7% (408/512)	81.5% (415/509)	83.0% (434/523)	80.4% (415/516)
	Unknown incl. PNTS	87.3% (48/55)	79.2% (61/77)	80.8% (42/52)	77.2% (44/57)
	Widowed or surviving partner from registered CP	100.0% (1/1)	100.0% (1/1)	100.0% (1/1)	- (0/0)

Mature	Mature Student	82.8% (159/192)	80.0% (176/220)	79.2% (175/221)	75.6% (167/221)
	Other	79.6% (343/431)	82.2% (360/438)	84.2% (367/436)	82.4% (352/427)

**Table 4: 2023/4 Retention Data derived from undergraduate Annual Monitoring Report**

		2023/4		
		Matriculated Students	Students Not Retained	Retention Rate
Students		3118	285	91%
Entrants		956	104	89%
Fee Status	Home/EU	2742	258	91%
	RUK	229	15	93%
	International	147	12	92%
Sex	Female	2434	209	91%
	Male	670	76	89%
	Other	14		100%
Widening Participation	Mature	1115	125	89%
	Minority Ethnicity	319	37	88%
	SIMD20	309	38	88%
	Disabled	1042	107	90%
	Care Experienced	55	7	87%
	Carer	208	28	87%
Other	Direct Entry	237	27	89%

*Table 5: Retention Rates for the School of Arts, Social Sciences and Management (ASSaM)*

		2023/4			2022/23	
		Matriculated Students	Students Not Retained	Retention Rate	Students Not Retained	Retention Rate
Students		1867	176	91%	203	90%
Entrants		543	64	<b>88%</b>	92	<b>83%</b>
Fee Status	Home/EU	1701	164	90%	191	90%
	RUK	51	4	92%	3	94%
	International	115	8	93%	9	85%
Sex	Female	1399	125	91%	133	91%
	Male	455	51	89%	70	85%
	Other	13		100%		100%
Widening Participation	Mature	480	58	88%	74	87%
	Minority Ethnicity	196	19	90%	26	85%
	SIMD20	182	27	85%	24	87%
	Disabled	621	79	87%	64	91%
	Care Experienced	34	5	85%	18	64%
	Carer	95	11	88%	12	89%
Other	Direct Entry	203	25	88%	28	88%

*Table 6: Retention Rates for the School of Health Sciences (SHS)*

		2023/4			2022/3	
		Matriculated Students	Students Not Retained	Retention Rate	Students Not Retained	Retention Rate
Students		1251	109	91%	137	89%
Entrants		413	40	90%	56	85%
Fee Status	Home/EU	1041	94	91%	118	89%
	RUK	178	11	94%	16	90%
	International	32	4	88%	3	92%
Sex	Female	1035	84	92%	111	89%
	Male	215	25	88%	26	89%
	Other	1		100%		100%
Widening Participation	Mature	635	67	89%	90	87%
	Minority Ethnicity	123	18	85%	16	86%
	SIMD20	127	11	91%	15	87%
	Disabled	421	28	93%	44	90%
	Care Experienced	21	2	90%	3	79%
	Carer	113	17	85%	15	87%
Other	Direct Entry	34	2	94%	3	90%

## Evidence of progress against this Outcome

The data above demonstrates we have made significant progress in reducing the awarding (/attainment) gap reduced for disabled students. The awarding (/attainment) difference between disabled and non-disabled students has reduced from 11.3% in 2020/1 to 1.2% in 2023/4. We note there have been some fluctuations within the reporting period; notably that in 2022/3, the awarding (/attainment) gap was reversed whereby more disabled students achieved a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2:1 compared to non-disabled students.

Benchmarking against data from the Report on Widening Access (22-23 data), we continue to outperform the sector in terms of our percentage of disabled students (UG Scotland Domiciled). It is noted that the sector average of students with a declared disability is steadily increasing. We have committed to recruit and retain students with declared disabilities at a level above the rest of the Scottish University sector and have continued to achieve that level. The percentage of disabled students remains high, reflecting our continuing efforts to identify students with disabilities, and students becoming more confident in self-declaring.

Between 2022/3, the awarding (/attainment) difference between men and women (in favour of women) reduced from 11.9% to 5.3%.

The consultants who conducted our EDI Culture Review identified two areas of good practice relating to this Outcome:

- “students describe the Help Zone offered by the Students’ Union as an inclusive and supportive space for them”
- “staff and students acknowledge the work of the PALS team in supporting the successful orientation and integration of international students”

### **Challenges that remain:**

Whilst evaluation of this outcome against staff data reveals areas of progress in a number of areas, it also reveals a number of remaining challenges, as detailed below.

In benchmarking against data from the Report on Widening Access (22-23 data), we recognise our percentages of minority ethnic and mature students (UG Scotland Domiciled) are slightly lower than that of the sector.

Despite evidence of our ethnicity awarding (/attainment) gap narrowing in our 2022/3 data, our 2023/4 data reveal a significant ethnicity awarding (/attainment) gap, with some 21.7% difference between minority ethnic and white students.

Although, as above, we have seen a positive change in our awarding (/attainment) gap by sex in 2023/4, we note that there is still some 5.3% difference between the number of men and women achieving a 2:1 or 1<sup>st</sup>.

The percentage of Mature students achieving a 2:1 or 1<sup>st</sup> has dropped year on year since 2020/1, with an awarding (/attainment) gap of 6.8% in 2023/4.

Analysis of the UG entrant retention rate for the School of ASSaM reveals an overall retention rate of 88%, with retention challenges for mature (88%), SIMD20 (85%), disabled (87%), care-experienced (88%), carer (88%), and direct-entry students (88%).

The School of Health Sciences UG entrant retention rate rose to 90%, with lower rates among international (88%), male (88%), minority ethnicity (85%) and carers (85%).

Retention data from the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) showed that 27% of UKES and 32% of PTES respondents had considered leaving their programme, with poor mental health being the primary reason for undergraduate students considering withdrawal.

### **3.2 For Staff:**

#### **Actions we have taken to progress this Outcome**

Actions listed under Outcome 1, 2 and 4 apply.

We have remained committed to promoting female career development through established programmes, including Aurora, Athena Swan, DEVELOP, and ensure equal access by all staff to promotion opportunities through the management of Performance Enhancement Review (PER) and Reward and Recognition.

We have continued to support the funding of staff through the Aurora programme, increasing the funded places to 9 per academic year. Funded places have ranged across both academic and professional services staff from 29 different work areas and across different grades within the university. A review of the internal Aurora application system has also been conducted at the university, which has resulted in a much more accessible process for staff. Our internal Aurora network has organised a number of events including a variety of 'In Conversation With...' events for International Women's Day.

We have continued to ensure that our revised Reward and Recognition Policy and Procedure provides transparent process for reward and promotion of all staff by conducting an annual Equality Impact Assessment of the Reward and Recognition process. In the most recent EQIA of the process, analysis of the applications received and the outcomes did not conclusively suggest patterns of unfair bias to any particular group of staff due to a protected characteristic. We have also introduced a Mitigating Circumstances process to our Reward and Recognition Policy and Procedure.

Alongside updating guidance on Reasonable Adjustments for staff, we have supported the establishment of a new Neurodivergent and Disabled Staff Network. This Network has representation on the Equality and Diversity Committee.

We have launched a consultation on Academic Careers and Pay Spine Updates, appointed a new QMU Women in Research Champion and relaunched new criteria for Significant Responsibility for Research (SIGRES) for REF 2029.

### **Evidence of progress against this Outcome and Challenges**

Relating to staff, the progress and challenges identified under Outcome 1, 2 and 4 apply.

## **Equality Outcome 4: Our People Policies promote inclusive employment and career advancement prospects**

### **Actions we have taken to progress this outcome:**

As an outcome of our EDI Culture Review, we reviewed Academic Promotions Policy & Applications Guide and Appropriate Contract Use Policy, and we launched our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2028: <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/equality-and-diversity/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-culture-review/edi-strategy-2023-2028>

In response to findings from the Staff Facilitated Conversations of our EDI Culture Review, we conducted a review of our family related and special leave policies and introduced several sector-leading enhancements to existing special and family leave entitlements as well as new entitlements for staff.

Having observed an increase in the number of staff requesting reasonable adjustments and support for neurodivergent staff, we have developed guidance on disclosing a disability and providing reasonable adjustments to support staff, managers and the HR team.

Alongside launching a new Human Resources Sharepoint Site and People Policies and Procedures Page, we have started issuing regular email updates to all staff to raise awareness, understanding and involvement with our suite of People Policies at QMU.

In 2022, we have reviewed and developed our flexible working processes and introduced our 'Hybrid Working' Statement and guidelines to support work-life balance.

The University published Menopause Guidelines in 2022 with the purpose of increasing awareness and ensure a greater understanding about the menopause and highlight support available at the University to staff and managers. Alongside the publication of the Menopause Guidelines, a '(Meno) pausitivity @ QMU' event was held on campus in January 2023 in collaboration with colleagues from Over the Bloody Moon.

Developed in collaboration with Diversity Mackenzie, in 2024 we launched our new Dignity in Work and Study Policy, with a purpose to strive to promote equality of opportunity for all, value difference and create a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all our staff and students are both considered and respected.

We have conducted a review of Academic Career Pathways, aligning promotions criteria with AdvanceHE Professional Standards Framework (PSF) 2023, in order to place equal value and parity of esteem on teaching and scholarship alongside teaching and research in our career structure, therefore maximising the potential to recognise and value the widest pool of staff. At the time of reporting, we have concluded an extensive consultation with staff with plans to launch the Revised Pathways in Academic Year 2025/6.

In 2022, we introduced an annual Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Calendar, which marks a number of significant religious and EDI-related dates. Monthly newsletters have been sent out to staff and students which highlight EDI activity and events on campus.

We have continued to offer a diversity of training opportunities to staff through our DEVELOP calendar.

Throughout the reporting period, we have also updated and introduced a number of policies which support this Outcome, including:

- Updating our Managing Stress at Work Policy (2024)
- Updating our Acting Up Policy (2024)
- Introducing our New Regrading Policy and Procedure (2025)
- Introducing our Market Supplements Policy (2022)
- Introduced our Modern Apprenticeships Policy and Guidance (2022)
- Introducing new Post Approval Request process (2024) and workforce planning SharePoint site (2025)

We have introduced new early and mid-career research leadership training and continue to benefit from participation in the British Academy ECR Scotland Network, as well as a new Research and KE Centre Female Leadership Programme to support newly appointed female research leads in developing their leadership skills.

We have continued to develop our annual QMU Researcher Development Training Programme, taking into consideration part-time/caring responsibilities/school holidays, with shorter courses, lunch time sessions and on-demand online courses which can be completed in an individual's time.

### **Evidence of progress against this outcome:**

The outcome of our EDI Culture Review found that “Staff and students generally consider the University to be an inclusive environment”. Overall, staff who participated in the Facilitated Conversations of the EDI Culture Review suggested that the University is an inclusive institution and a positive environment in which to work. Some expressed the University has a “remarkable consistent commitment to EDI” and is “persistently learning and continually improving as the world shifts”.

Our staff survey results found that our hybrid and flexible working arrangements are greatly appreciated by staff, particularly by parents/carers of under-18s.

We believe that the achievement of the following charter marks demonstrate tangible progress against this outcome:

- In December 2021, the School of Arts, Social Sciences and Management (ASSAM) was awarded Silver Charter status from LGBT Youth Scotland
- In February 2025, we successfully conferred our Institutional Athena Swan Bronze Renewal Award, endorsing our continued dedication to fostering gender parity and the advancement of the careers of women.
- In 2024, QMU became the first university in Scotland to achieve the Bereavement Charter Mark. This significant milestone is part of our University

Hospice Partnership and endorses our commitment to supporting bereaved individuals within our community.

**Challenges that remain:**

In our Staff Survey 2024 Results, one of the lowest scoring statements was: “My career development aspirations are being met at QMU”. 41% responded positively to this statement, compared to a higher education sector benchmark of 46%.

Although at the time of reporting, full analysis of staff survey results by protected characteristic is still to be undertaken, we are aware of high-level differential responses when comparing answers by some characteristics. For example, for statements under the category of Health and Wellbeing, we can report that:

- Results for staff with an impairment, health condition or learning difference are 16pp less favourable than the overall QMU response favourability.
- 9% of survey respondents said their ethnicity was other than white. The response favourability for this group in the balance and wellbeing theme was 46% compared to the overall QMU response favourability of 54% so some 8pp less favourable.

Although further research and analysis by protected characteristic is required, we believe these initial high level findings to be significant.

After examining several data sources, our Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team identified ‘Improving opportunities for career progression’ in its 2024 application as an area that required prioritised action to improve our work towards gender equality. This has informed one of six gender equality priorities within our Athena Swan 5-Year Action Plan.

## **Equality Outcome 5: Equality and diversity is embedded fully in the curriculum and in research**

### **Actions we have taken to progress this outcome:**

#### *In relation to Curriculum:*

To progress this outcome, a significant overarching priority has been the work that we have started on the development of our new Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy, which will sit alongside and complement our Student Experience Strategy. Developed with extensive consultation from staff and student representatives, feedback from this consultation has highlighted the value that staff and students place on community and sense of belonging at QMU. Community is one of five ambition statements within the draft Strategy, the others being: student aspirations, staff development, enhanced programme design and delivery, and digitally enabled LTA infrastructure. The Strategy also identifies decolonisation, anti-racism, anti-ableism and neuro-affirming practices in its priorities. The final draft of the new Strategy will be presented for consideration and approval at the meetings of the Student Experience Committee and the Senate in May 2025.

We have developed and introduced an EDI, Decolonising and Sustainability Validation Toolkit to support the course validation and review process and to embed the three strands of social, racial and climate justice that align with the QMU Student Experience Strategy. These are: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI); Decolonising the Curriculum and Sustainability. Since its introduction, the LEAD Centre have held workshops with programme teams and international partners to support them utilising the toolkit for validation reviews.

In response to the recommendations of our EDI Culture Review, we have established a cross-institutional 'Decolonising the QMU Curriculum' Working Group in 2024. Amongst its activities, in November 2024, members piloted a 'Decolonising the Curriculum' session on the TLA in TE short course, with a plan to make this a standing addition to the offer which already includes another session on Inclusive Teaching and Learning.

Through our LEAD Centre, we have offered staff two routes to Advance HE Fellowship. The QMU CPD Fellowship Scheme (ASPIRE) accredits D1, D2 and D3 and recently gained a Major Change Accreditation to make more inclusive changes to practice such as offering a presentation route rather than written. Our Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) in Tertiary Education Course accredits at D1 and is the first module of the new PgCAP which is being developed for September 2025 delivery. We evaluate the effectiveness of these opportunities through participant surveys, consideration of Advance HE benchmark data and External Examiner feedback.

The LEAD Centre has offered a range of support on assessment for programme teams and individuals, including a series of workshops focusing on programme assessment design; a talk series that provides a platform for QMU staff and students to share research and practice; and workshops in our staff development weeks. We have drawn on a wide evidence base to inform our activities, including programme

team feedback on their priorities, survey data, external reference points and review reports.

In 2025, the LEAD Centre employed 13 Student Changemakers to work on two projects: Student Partnerships and Neurodivergent Learners. The Changemakers will be working with course teams to support inclusive practice across QMU.

*In relation to Research:*

We launched our 5-Year Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KEIF) Strategy 2025. In this strategy, QMU has been progressive in its approach, using the KEIF Strategy to lead and drive systemic and structural change in EDI via:

- Placing Community Wealth Building (CWB) and our anchor institution role at the centre of our mission-led focus and promoting and growing Inclusive, Democratic Business Models (IDBMs).
- Proposing additional QMU KPIs that augment our commitment to understanding and addressing EDI barriers.
- Appointment of a new Entrepreneur in Residence in collaboration with Heriot-Watt University to specifically champion Race, Gender, and Intersectionality in KE culture.
- Commitment to Social Justice and Service Innovation as an institutional challenge area.
- Entrepreneurship as an enabler of Social Mobility.
- Skills and FE/HE collaboration in targeting sectors with significant structural inequalities, such as Health, Care and Wellbeing
- Alignment of the widening access agenda and the KE&I, learning and teaching, and employability nexus.
- Celebrating and supporting gender equality in KE&I leadership, given our unique staff and student profile.
- Investing our unique areas of academic strength in Applied, Participatory and Complex Interventions, including identity, social inclusion/ exclusion, citizenship, and social participation.

We have launched and progressed our Concordat for Researcher Development Action Plan 2022-2025, confirming our commitments to enhancing environment and culture, employment, and professional and career development. Our annual Researcher Development Training Programme has continued to grow and extend collaborative provision with other HEIs. EDI features as an underpinning theme in new institutional Action Plans for the Concordat for Research Integrity and Knowledge Exchange.

We have launched and embedded a new Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 22-27 with a stronger emphasis on people to ensure equality of opportunity in the development and capacity of all our researchers and their contributions. An enhanced research culture section on our website offered a summary of key development initiatives.

We have continued to offer researcher development training and mentoring; funded initiatives; interdisciplinary events; support for external collaboration; enterprise and

innovation services; grant writing support; and career and professional resources to enhance employability, with opportunities to meet others and become part of our vibrant research community.

Between February and July 2024, RKEDU in collaboration with our Strategic Research and KE Centres, facilitated an interim internal mentoring scheme for research staff. In addition, we have continued to promote participation in alternative mentorship schemes available through sector networks including the British Academy Early Career Researcher (ECR) Network (Scotland), Scottish KE & Innovation Mentoring (SKEIM), and the Cross-Institution Mentoring Scheme (CIMS).

In 2024, a QMU REF 2029 Associate Academic Lead – Women in Research Champion was appointed to support the institution's REF 2029 submission strategy and review in line with our commitment to progressing EDI in Research Careers. This was open to all women mid-career researchers. The role was recruited through an open and transparent process to allow all women mid-career researchers the chance to put themselves forward. The REF 2029 Women in Research Champion plays a key role in advocating for women researchers and promoting equality of opportunity in agreed aspects of our REF 2029 submission, enhancing our research and KE culture.

We have been committed to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and institutional subscription to the UK Research Integrity Office. We were one of the UK HEIs to take part in the UKRIO online Research Integrity Court pilot which ran from May 2024 – March 2025.

We facilitated the “Research and Integrity Culture Week” (10 – 14 March 2025) in collaboration with the University of Strathclyde, Heriot-Watt University, and the University of Dundee, with the aim to enrich research culture and integrity practices across partner institutions.

We have expanded our commitment to place-based research collaboration as a new anchor institute signature to the East Lothian Community Wealth Building (CWB) Charter.

In 2024 QMU signed a 3-year agreement to bring Edinburgh Napier University's Bright Red Triangle Enterprise support service and Startup Studio to QMU and Edinburgh College, building on QMU's long-term alliance with East Lothian Council via the Business Gateway East Lothian Service. The Collaboration aims to strengthen regional capacity and provide new enhanced HE/FE infrastructure across a unique cross-institutional interdisciplinary portfolio of expertise.

### **Evidence of progress against this Outcome:**

There is evidence of progress in terms of embedding the EDI, Decolonising and Sustainability Validation Toolkit into our programme validation process. Anecdotally, we have noted a raising of awareness amongst our colleagues and international partners of the importance of these strands. Notably, in 2023/4 there were more references in the validation overview to sustainability, EDI and decolonising the

curriculum than in previous sessions, and we have begun collecting case studies of good practice from colleagues who have implemented the toolkit effectively in their own programme validations.

We believe that the inclusion of priorities such as decolonisation, anti-racism, anti-ableism and neuro-affirming practices in our new LTA Strategy demonstrates progress in terms of embedding equality and diversity within the curriculum at a strategic level.

We believe the inclusion of EDI KPIs within our new KEIF Strategy, alongside the introduction of our Women in Research Champion and our QMU Entrepreneur in Residence, demonstrate progress within research against this outcome at a strategic level.

The work of the 'Decolonising Now' group was identified by the consultants of our EDI Culture Review as an area of good practice and was noted to be 'constructive and beneficial to staff and students interested in work on decolonising the curriculum'.

Evidence of the impact and progress being made at a strategic level by the Decolonising Working Group is evidenced by a recent commitment for the Senior Leadership Team and Governors to attend a Decolonising Workshop.

### **Challenges that remain:**

In recognition that curriculum is an important factor in student retention and awarding (attainment) rates, we consider the awarding (/attainment) gaps and retention data reported as challenges in Outcome 3 as a remaining challenge against this Outcome.

One of the overall findings from our EDI Culture Review (22-23) was the "Some students didn't always feel their curriculum is inclusive".

While QMU sample of CEDARS 2023 is too small for robust sub-group analysis, findings indicate that, at QMU, women tend to be less positive about their experiences in key areas of assessment (employment, professional and career development, environment and culture) than men.

At the time of reporting, we have just launched our KEIF Strategy and are in the final development stages of our new LTA Strategy. It is therefore too early to have embedded these strategies or assess their impacts against this Outcome.

**Equality Outcome 6: More robust and comprehensive data is available on the characteristics of our staff, with identified evidence gaps filled.**

**Actions we have taken to progress this outcome:**

To enhance our data collection and reporting systems, we invested resource for a new 1FTE HR Data and Systems Partner role, introduced in 2022.

We reformatted our New Starter Information form in 2023 to include language explaining the importance of collecting equality data, whilst also reassuring employees of confidentiality.

In 2023, we opted to include an entry on transgender identity on our revised monitoring form for staff.

We have begun work to improve our ability to report on the intersectionality of staff characteristics. This has included some intersectional reporting and analysis being used to inform our Athena Swan Institutional Bronze Application (2024) and our Equal Pay Reports 2024 and 2025.

Throughout May and June 2024, coinciding with HESA collection and reporting timescales, we ran email campaigns to staff which highlighted the benefits of providing equalities related data and provided confidentiality and data protection assurances.

In October 2024, we rolled out our Staff Engagement Survey, the first such survey since 2015.

In December 2024, we updated the accessibility of our monitoring data forms on iTrent so that staff are able to update their data at any point in the year.

**Evidence of progress:**

Analysis of our staff data demonstrates evidence of reductions in some of our identified data gaps, although we recognise the remaining gaps are still significant.

Between 2020/21 and 2023/24, we have reduced the number of 'unknowns' within our staff data from:

- 33% to 26.6% for Sexual Orientation
- 42.8% to 25.7% for Religion & Belief

We also believe the updates introduced to our Equal Pay Reviews 2024 and 2025, which include intersectional analysis by gender and ethnicity and disaggregated ethnicity data, demonstrate areas of improvement to the comprehensiveness of our staff data and analysis.

**Challenges that remain:**

As stated above, despite some reductions, the remaining data gaps for Sexual Orientation and Religion and Belief remain significant and require further attention.

For other characteristics, we recognise that our data gaps have slightly widened. For example, between 2020/21 and 2023/4, the percentage of 'unknowns' within our staff data has increased from:

- 9.1% to 9.3% for Disability
- 2.3% to 3.8% for Ethnicity

### **Section 3: Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029**

On the basis of our review of progress 2021 – 2025, we have established the following Equality Outcomes for the period of 2025 – 2029:

**Outcome 1:** By 2029, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves, with current evidence gaps filled. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.

**Outcome 2:** Equality and diversity and anti-racism are embedded in the curriculum and in research.

**Outcome 3:** By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the retention and attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population who experience poorer outcomes.

**Outcome 4:** By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the outcomes of those groups with a protected characteristic within our workforce who experience poorer outcomes.

**Outcome 5:** Our policies and practices promote an inclusive and safe culture for those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes.

**Outcome 6:** By 2029, we will have taken significant steps to address the gender imbalances of our courses.

Paying due regard to the National Equality Outcomes (NEOs), we have taken the approach of adopting the majority of the NEOs within our institutional Outcomes listed above. In some cases, this means that we have adopted several of the NEOs under one Equality Outcome. We have taken this approach to allow for intersectional approaches where possible; in recognition that a number of the separate NEOs are fundamentally linked, and that joined-up approaches should allow for the progression of multiple outcomes.

In the following section, we have listed each of the NEOs that we are adopting under each Outcome. Where possible, in line with SFC and EHRC Guidance, we have provided institutional baseline data for each adopted NEO, although this has not been possible for all NEOs.

We note that the SFC and EHRC aim to support institutions in addressing the NEOs where data is not as readily available. The SFC and EHRC are doing this through thematic reviews. These thematic reviews aim to be a first step to expanding understanding of, and approaches to, tackling issues relating to feelings of safety and sense of belonging for students and staff as well as staff representation. When available, we will use the findings of these thematic reviews to inform our data gaps for the NEOs.

We have adopted all but one of the NEOs within our Outcomes for 2025-2029. The NEO 'Age: The success rates for college students aged under 19 will improve' is not applicable to our institution and has not been adopted.

**Outcome 1: By 2029, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves, with current evidence gaps filled. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.**

### **Adopted National Equality Outcomes**

Under this Outcome, we have adopted and will work towards the following National Equality Outcomes:

- Disability – ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college boards and university courts’
  - QMU baseline: In 2023/24, disabled staff made up 8.6% of the workforce. Disabled students made up 27.2% of the student population in the same year.
- Race – ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of court members and address any racial diversity issues in college boards.’
- Race – ‘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.’
  - QMU baseline: In 2023/24, minority ethnic staff made up 8.9% of the workforce. Minority ethnic students made up 7.7% of Scotland domiciled, UG students and 15.6% of the overall student population in the same year.

### **Why have we set this Outcome?**

In setting this outcome for the period of 2025 – 2029, we continue Outcome 1 from the period of 2021 – 2025 with a revision. We have revised this Outcome to combine it with Outcome 6 (2021 – 2025), in the acknowledgement that these two outcomes are fundamentally linked; we cannot fully assess the diversity of our workforce when data gaps remain.

Whilst our evaluation of Equality Outcome 1 and Equality Outcome 6 (2021 – 2025) found evidence of positive progress, it also identified a number of remaining challenges which suggest further targeted work is required to achieve these Outcomes.

Data identified as challenges in the evaluation of Equality Outcome 1 & 6 (2021 – 2025) has been used to inform specific target measures below.

### **Actions we will take to progress this Outcome**

We will progress related actions within our EDI Culture Review Action Plan.

We will continue to monitor minority ethnic staff data on a quarterly basis through the Race Equality Steering Group.

We will continue with our adoption of the Rooney Principle in recruitment, with a plan to review its impact after 12 months.

We will progress actions relating to increasing the representation of minority ethnic women through the priority set out in our Athena Swan action plan.

We will progress actions relating to improving EDI data and narrowing data gaps as set out in our Athena Swan action plan.

We will continue to be members of the Disability Confident Scheme. We will develop a Staff Disability Policy to provide support to our disabled workforce and encourage declarations.

We will develop and launch a Trans Inclusive Policy on campus to provide support to our LGBTQ+ workforce and encourage declarations.

We will continue to advertise recruitment posts in a diversity of places and require recruiters, where used, to return a diverse shortlist of candidates. We will further develop equality statements in recruitment adverts.

We will expand the equality statements in our Court job descriptions to explicitly encourage applications from disabled applicants.

We will continue to develop approaches to encouraging staff to declare their equalities data. We will use communications through the Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Calendar to showcase to staff how this data is used for positive interventions.

We will review and streamline the way in which monitoring data for Court members is collected and shared between the Court Office and Human Resources to ensure we have comprehensive reporting on the diversity of our Court.

### **Our targets:**

We will continue to monitor our workforce data by all protected characteristics. We have set particular targets where our current data suggests work need to be prioritised.

We will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measures:

- A decrease in the 'Unknowns' within our data. Unknowns in the categories of Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief, where we currently have the biggest data gaps, are reduced to below **7.5%**.
- An increase in staff who declare LGB+ or Trans Identity characteristics.
- An increase in the percentage of staff who declare a disability.
- An increase in the diversity of Court members across all protected characteristics.
- An increase in the percentage of minority ethnic staff. Reflecting on our current data, we set the ambitious target of **12%** of the workforce being from minority ethnic backgrounds by 2029. Accounting for our campus location in

Musselburgh, we have set a target that is between the Census 2022 minority ethnic populations for urban areas in Scotland (9%) and Edinburgh (15%).

## **Outcome 2: Equality and diversity and anti-racism are embedded in the curriculum and in research**

### **Adopted National Equality Outcomes**

Under this Outcome, we have adopted and will work towards the following National Equality Outcome:

- Race: 'Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.'
  - o QMU Baseline Data: In 2023/24, our data shows a 21.7% awarding gap between white and minority ethnic graduates achieving a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2:1.

### **Why have we set this Outcome?**

In setting this outcome for the period of 2025 – 2029, we continue Outcome 5 from the period of 2021 – 2025 with a revision. We have revised this Outcome to reference embedding anti-racism in the curriculum and research.

The addition of anti-racism into this Outcome has been made based on the following considerations:

- It reflects the priorities set out on a national scale through the NEOs.
- Anti-racism has been identified as an institutional priority through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Culture Review and the work of our Race Equality Steering Group and Decolonising the Curriculum Working Group.
- Our data shows that our ethnicity awarding gap was our widest gap in 2023/4.

Whilst our evaluation of Equality Outcome 5 (2021 – 2025) found evidence of positive progress, it also identified a number of remaining challenges which suggest further targeted work is required to achieve this Outcome.

We recognise that embedding EDI and anti-racism into the curriculum and research is a long-term process and will take longer than one reporting cycle to achieve impact. At the time of reporting, we have recently launched our Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KEIF) 5-Year Strategy and are in the final stages of developing and launching our new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. In continuing this Outcome for the period 2025-2029, we will be able to assess the impact of these strategies.

Although we address retention and attainment for groups directly in Outcome Number 3 2025-2029, we also consider curriculum as an important factor in student retention and attainment rates. We therefore consider the challenges identified relating to attainment (/awarding) gaps within our data as important factor in setting this Outcome.

### **Actions we will take to progress this Outcome:**

#### *In relation to the Curriculum:*

We will progress related actions in our EDI Culture Review Action Plan.

We will launch and progress actions to embed our new LTA Strategy, which identifies decolonisation, anti-racism, anti-ableism and neuro-affirming practices as priorities.

We will continue to develop staff and student feedback literacy and will finalise and implement an assessment tracker.

We will continue to deliver a variety of staff development opportunities in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

We will seek to further embed the work of the Decolonising the Curriculum Working Group. The group are developing plans to deliver workshops to the Senior Leadership Team and Court members, with further dissemination planned.

We will conduct develop capacity building initiatives in data analysis. The capabilities of a number of university systems and processes are currently under-utilised in terms of the identification and tracking of groups of students who may be considered at risk in retention and attainment terms.

We will collaborate on LTA projects with students through the newly appointed cohort of 'Students as Changemakers'.

*In relation to research:*

We will embed and progress actions set out in our KEIF Strategy.

We will continue to embed and progress actions set out in our Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2022 – 2027.

We will develop and work towards a new Action Plan for the Concordat for Researcher Development 2025 – 2028.

We will consider equality and diversity at all stages of the REF 2029 round through the use of Equality Impact Assessments, EDI training for members of staff in decision making roles, and the Code of Practice, and through the work of the Women in Research Champion.

We will develop and launch our Code of Practice for Research and Knowledge Exchange and our Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research.

We will continue to offer a variety of researcher training and development opportunities.

We will continue to support and increase QMU engagement in the BRT Start-Up Huddle – a trusted support network for women and non-binary entrepreneurs.

**Success Measures:**

We will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measures:

- The narrowing of awarding (attainment) gaps, where current data suggests we have significant gaps by protected characteristic, by 2029. We will

particularly focus on narrowing the ethnicity gap, which is currently our widest gap.

- The achievement of success measures set in our new Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- The achievement of EDI-related KPIs set in our KEIF.
- An increase in staff participation in training development programmes across all disciplines.
- Achievement of success measures set out in our Concordat for Researcher Development and Research Integrity Action Plans.

**Outcome 3: By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the retention and attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population who experience poorer outcomes.**

### **Adopted National Equality Outcomes**

Under this Outcome, we have adopted and will work towards the following National Equality Outcomes:

- Age – ‘The retention outcomes for university students aged 25 and over will improve.’
  - o QMU Baseline: In 2023/24, our data shows a 6.8% awarding gap for mature students, and an 89% retention rate for mature undergraduate students (compared to 91% overall).
- Disability – ‘The success and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve’
  - o QMU Baseline data: increase from 4.9% (2020/1) to 6.6% (2023/4) declaring mental health condition (NB those declaring multiple disabilities not included in this data)
  - o QMU Baseline: In 2023/24, our data shows a 1.2% awarding gap for disabled students.
  - o Retention data from the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) showed that 27% of UKES and 32% of PTES respondents had considered leaving their programme, with poor mental health being the primary reason for undergraduate students considering withdrawal.
- Ethnicity – ‘Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.’
  - o QMU Baseline: In 2023/24, our data shows a 21.7% awarding gap between white and minority ethnic graduates achieving a 1st or 2:1.

### **Why have we set this Outcome?**

In setting this outcome for the period of 2025 – 2029, we continue Outcome 3 from the period of 2021 – 2025 with revisions. We have revised Outcome 3 by setting separate outcomes relating to students and staff to allow for more focused approaches. We also refer directly in this Outcome to retention and attainment, in line with the priorities set out in the NEOs.

Whilst our evaluation of Equality Outcome 3 (2021 – 2025) found evidence of positive progress in terms of the outcomes of students, particularly for disabled students, it also identified a number of remaining challenges which suggest further targeted work is required to achieve this Outcome. In particular, we are alive to the differential outcomes in our attainment data by protected characteristic, the widest gap being experienced by minority ethnic students.

### **Actions we will take to progress this Outcome**

We will implement and embed our new Student Retention Strategy, and progressing the programme of targeted activity set out within the Strategy 2024 - 2027. This

Student Retention Strategy recognises that the student life cycle provides a number of key phases and areas for intervention as follows:

- Pre-entry and Admission
  - o raising aspirations but matching expectations;
  - o clear and accessible information;
  - o pre-entry and admissions guidance;
  - o diagnostic assessment;
  - o careful match to programmes.
- Entry
  - o transition and induction;
  - o student orientation and 'belonging';
  - o student financial, wellbeing and welfare support;
  - o bridging the culture and skills gap.
- Academic
  - o academic skills support;
  - o academic partnerships (internal and external);
  - o academic and support team collaboration;
  - o adapting academic practices to reduce disadvantage;
  - o staff awareness and development;
  - o first year teaching: experienced staff.
- Institutional
  - o recognising strategic and policy conflicts;
  - o provision of valid data and statistics, to include exit interviews on withdrawal;
  - o annual review and evaluation.

We will continue to take a holistic approach to enhancing student engagement, persistence and retention. Transition, programme bridging, peer mentoring, the promotion of good scholarship, and the provision of academic skills support, within a framework of curriculum development and assessment review, are key aspects of the University's student retention approach.

We will continue to embed the Widening Participation Strategy and progress its programme of activities. The Strategy focuses in particular on:

- Increasing student numbers from non-traditional groups
- Extending collaborative working relationships
- Promoting staff understanding of diverse student groups
- Creating an appropriately supportive infrastructure

We will develop attendance and engagement monitoring processes to enhance communications and interventions in support of student persistence and wellbeing.

We will continue to review timetabling arrangements in response to student feedback, with the aim of delivering of a student-friendly timetable that meets the changing needs of the student population.

We will continue to implement the Employability Strategy, ensuring high quality employability support for students leading to positive graduate destinations.

We will continue to work with the SU to develop approaches to representation to reflect the diversity of the student population.

We will conduct develop capacity building initiatives in data analysis. The capabilities of a number of university systems and processes are currently under-utilised in terms of the identification and tracking of groups of students who may be considered at risk in retention and attainment terms.

### **Success Measures**

We will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measures:

- The narrowing of awarding (/attainment) gaps where our current data identifies significant gaps for groups with a protected characteristic. We will continue to monitor attainment by all protected characteristics, and will pay due regard to disability, age and ethnicity in line with the NEOs.
- Enhanced retention rates for groups identified in our current data with lower rates through continued oversight of data and resulting interventions.

**Outcome 4: By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the outcomes of those groups with a protected characteristic within our workforce who experience poorer outcomes.**

### **Adopted National Equality Outcomes**

Outcomes relating to staff listed under Equality Outcome 5 apply, in the acknowledgement that staff from different groups feeling safe and supported will have an impact on this Outcome.

### **Why have we set this Outcome?**

As with the previous Outcome, in setting this outcome for the period of 2025 – 2029, we continue Outcome 3 from the period of 2021 – 2025 with revisions. We have revised Outcome 3 by setting separate outcomes relating to students and staff to allow for more focused approaches.

In this revised Outcome, we address the remaining challenges found in the evaluation of the Outcomes 2 and 4 of the 2021-2025 reporting period, particularly those issues relating to career progression and significant pay gaps identified.

### **Actions we will take to progress this Outcome**

We will conduct analysis of staff survey results by protected characteristic. Where there is evidence of differential experiences for groups with a protected characteristic, we will seek to identify actions to improve these experiences.

We will progress actions identified in our Staff Survey Action Plan under the Priority of 'Professional Development'.

We will continue to conduct annual Equal Pay Reviews and will progress actions identified in the related Action Plans to reduce pay gaps.

We will progress work relating to improving opportunities for career progression through the identified priority within our Athena Swan Action Plan.

We will introduce and embed our revised Academic Career Pathways in 2025/6. We will conduct a full EQIA of the new Pathways and will continue to monitor equality implications.

### **Success measures**

We will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measures:

- A reduction in pay gaps by protected characteristic to insignificant levels where current data shows significant gaps.
- An improvement in the response to the 'my career aspirations at QMU are being met' statement within the staff survey.
- An improvement in staff survey results for any groups of protected characteristics with significant differential responses.
- Success measures set out in Athena Swan Action Plan met.
- Success measures set out in the Staff Survey Action Plan met.

**Outcome 5: Our policies and practices promote an inclusive and safe culture for those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population and workforce who experience poorer outcomes.**

**Adopted National Equality Outcomes**

Under this Outcome, we have adopted and will work towards the following National Equality Outcomes:

- Disability – ‘Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.’
  - o QMU Baseline: In 2023/4, disabled staff made up 8.6% of our workforce. In the same year, disabled students made up 27.2% of the student population.
- Race – ‘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.’
- Religion or Belief – ‘Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.’
- Sex – ‘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.’
- Sex – ‘Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.’
- Sex – ‘Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).’
- Sexual Orientation – ‘Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being ‘out’ at university and college.’
  - o QMU Baseline: the number of students declaring LGB+ characteristics has grown year on year – from 11.1% (2020/1) to 14.1% (2023/4).
  - o QMU Baseline: the number of staff declaring LGB+ characteristics has increased between 2020/21 to 2023/24 from 5.5% to 7.6% of the workforce.
- Gender Identity – ‘Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system.’
  - o QMU Baseline: the number of students declaring trans identity has grown year on year – from 0.9% (2020/1) to 1.0% (2023/4).
  - o QMU Baseline: At the time of reporting, there are no staff within our workforce data declaring trans identity – although we only recently started to collect this data in 2024.

**Why have we set this Outcome?**

We have set this Outcome in recognition that a number of the National Equality Outcomes relate to feelings of safety and reporting mechanisms being fit for purpose for groups of staff and students with protected characteristics.

Our data shows a year-on-year increase in the percentage of staff and students declaring protected characteristics, particularly for disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation and trans identity. Increasing declarations could indicate that these feel safe and supported at QMU to declare, but we cannot be sure of the driver behind the increasing declarations. In addition, we recognise that not all staff and students will have declared these characteristics for a variety of factors, both internal and external to QMU. For this reason, we must anticipate that our current numbers relating to certain protected characteristics are likely to be an undercount. This, along with our increasing declarations for certain groups, must be considered when developing support and reporting mechanisms for these groups.

In 2022, we launched our 'Report and Support' tool. This platform allows staff and students to report various forms of harassment and violence. It also provides access to advice and support. Reports can be made anonymously or with contact details. Whilst we can collect data on the reports made through this tool, this is only one of a variety of ways in which staff and students can report. We encourage staff and students to make their reports in any way they are comfortable with. In prioritising disclosure and support seeking, we provide multiple routes for reporting which does mean we have less comprehensive data available to provide baseline data against the related NEOs.

One of the overall findings from our EDI Culture Review was that 'Systems for reporting discrimination are not well known by staff and students'. Since the Review was conducted, we have undertaken a number of activities with the aim of raising awareness of reporting mechanisms available at QMU.

### **Actions we will take to progress this outcome**

We will progress related actions in our EDI Culture Review Action Plan.

We will conduct analysis of staff survey results by protected characteristic. Where there is evidence of differential experiences for groups with a protected characteristic, we will seek to identify actions to improve these experiences.

We will progress actions to prevent sexual harassment in line with the new duties of the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023.

We will progress actions under the priority 'Supporting LGBTQ+ (particularly trans and non-binary) staff and students' in our Athena Swan Action Plan.

We will develop and launch policies on Trans Inclusion and Disability for staff. We will develop and embed an Anti-Ableist Action Plan.

We will develop an Inclusive Language Guide in collaboration with the Students' Union.

We will provide Mental Health First Aid training to staff and develop a pool of QMU Mental Health First Aiders.

We will consider approaches to data collection and analysis of reports within Student Services and Human Resources given the variety of formal and informal ways in which reporting can occur.

We will continue to progress actions to raise awareness of the reporting tools available to staff and students.

### **Success Measures**

In acknowledgement of our own data gaps and the sectorial data gaps identified by SFC and EHRC in this area, we welcome the thematic reviews being conducted to inform gaps on feelings of safety/sense of belonging. We will use the outcomes of these reviews, when available, to identify informed success measures for this Outcome.

With the currently limited data available, we will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measures:

- Meeting the success measures set out in our Athena Swan Action Plan relating to LGBTQ+ support.
- An improvement in staff survey results for any groups of protected characteristics with differential responses to the statement “I can be myself at work”
- An improvement in staff and student’s knowledge of reporting mechanisms in future Facilitated Conversations as part of our EDI Culture Review Action Plan
- Effective monitoring and data of our reporting mechanisms are in place by 2029

## **Outcome 6: By 2029, we will have taken significant steps to address the gender imbalances of our courses.**

### **Adopted National Equality Outcomes:**

Under this Outcome, we have adopted and will work towards the following National Equality Outcome:

- Sex: Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.
  - o QMU Baseline Data: Data on Total UG, PGT and PGR students by sex and division can be found in Table 7 below (Page 54). This data demonstrates that within every division, there is an underrepresentation of men. In 2022/3, the representation of men was highest in Business, Enterprise and Management (37%) and lowest in Occupational Therapy & Arts Therapies (11%).

### **Why have we set this Outcome?**

In consideration of our gender imbalance of our student and staff populations, we have set this Outcome in the acknowledgement of and with an ambition to redress the underrepresentation of men within our course offering at QMU.

We believe that the gender balance on the courses offered at QMU is in-part due to two key areas:

1. Our academic focuses: except for Business, Enterprise and Management, all disciplines offered at QMU are female dominated within society and its professions, and across the HE Sector
2. Our history: Originally a women-only college, we believe our history of supporting women through education continues to influence and attract female staff and students alike

We are committed to widening participation of men in disciplines and professions where they are underrepresented due to social, economic or cultural reasons, particularly Nursing, Allied Health professions and Primary Teaching. In acknowledgement that the underrepresentation of men within these disciplines extends beyond QMU and the HE sector, to the professions and society as a whole, our work to actively address this area is focused within our equality outcomes and widening participation strategies. We understand the need to work with a range of partners, including schools, colleges, community groups, third sector and voluntary agencies, and local authorities to encourage male access to these professions.

We believe we are already progressing areas of good practice in re-dressing this area of underrepresentation. This includes the establishment of 'Healthfest' at QMU, a health science festival which gives pupils an insight into the range of healthcare and health science degree programmes, and 'Guardians of Healthcare', a targeted widening participation research project to improve public understanding, confront stereotypes and increase participation of working-class boys into caring professions.

**Actions we will take to progress this outcome**

We commit to the continued investment of WARF funding to further develop targeted outreach activities in this area.

We will progress actions through our Widening Participation Strategy.

We will ensure images of men are included in promotion materials for courses where they are most underrepresented. We will spotlight staff stories of men within these courses on our website.

We will work with the WISeR Board to identify and progress actions to address the underrepresentation of men in these courses.

**Success Measures:**

We will evaluate and monitor the progress of this Outcome through the following success measure:

- An increase in the percentage of men across all of our courses, but particularly those where our data suggests they are currently most underrepresented.

Table 7: Total UG, PGT and PGR Students (excluding based overseas in collaborative partner organisations) by sex and division

	2017/8			2018/9			2019/0			2020/1			2021/2			2022/3		
DIVISION	M	Other Sex	F	M	Other Sex	F	M	Other Sex	F	M	Other Sex	F	M	Other Sex	F	M	Other Sex	F
Business, Enterprise & Management	294	0	642 (69%)	293	0	625 (68%)	243	0	501 (67%)	206	0	466 (69%)	222	0	482 (68%)	239	1	410 (63%)
DNB, Podiatry, Physio & Radiography	396	0	1211 (75%)	461	0	1242 (73%)	445	1	1134 (71%)	440	1	1071 (71%)	471	1	1116 (70%)	413	1	1033 (71%)
Institute for Global Health & Development	39	0	72 (65%)	32	0	52 (62%)	22	1	56 (71%)	21	0	58 (73%)	25	0	71 (74%)	34	0	104 (75%)
Media, Communication & Performing Arts	237	6	650 (73%)	254	5	666 (72%)	276	9	688 (71%)	306	12	730 (70%)	315	12	761 (70%)	343	13	724 (67%)
Nursing & Paramedic Science <sup>1</sup>	97	0	920 (90%)	113	0	828 (88%)	120	0	939 (89%)	167	0	1240 (88%)	193	1	1370 (88%)	206	1	1465 (88%)
Occupational Therapy & Arts Therapies	33	0	369 (92%)	43	0	376 (90%)	42	2	385 (89%)	35	2	386 (91%)	55	5	397 (87%)	53	1	454 (89%)
Psychology, Sociology and Education <sup>2</sup>	83	3	368 (81%)	97	4	368 (81%)	110	3	534 (83%)	151	7	711 (82%)	166	8	878 (83%)	174	7	987 (85%)
Speech and Hearing Sciences	61	0	277 (82%)	55	0	306 (85%)	47	0	285 (86%)	50	1	288 (85%)	55	1	257 (82%)	67	2	287 (81%)

<sup>1</sup> Paramedic Science students are included in this dataset from 19/20, when this course was introduced at QMU

<sup>2</sup> Initial Teaching Education (ITE) students are included in this dataset from 19/20, when this course was introduced at QMU

## Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029: Summary Table

Outcome	National Equality Outcomes adopted within this Outcome	Evidence Base / Success Measures	Protected Characteristics & General Duty	Overall Responsibility
<b>Equality Outcome 1</b>  By 2029, our workforce will have increased in diversity to better reflect the communities it serves, with current evidence gaps filled. This diversity is represented on decision making bodies of the University.	Disability – ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college boards and university courts’  Race – ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of court members and address any racial diversity issues in college boards.’  Race – ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching staff to align with student	A decrease in the ‘Unknowns’ within our data.  Unknowns in the categories of Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief, where we currently have the biggest data gaps, are reduced to below 7.5%.  An increase in staff who declare LGB+ or Trans Identity characteristics.  An increase in the percentage of staff who declare a disability.  An increase in the diversity of Court members across all protected characteristics.  An increase in the percentage of minority ethnic staff – 12% target by 2029.	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Religion & Belief  Eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity	Head of Human Resources  University Secretary

	representation in the sector.'			
<b>Equality Outcome 2:</b> Equality and diversity and anti-racism are embedded in the curriculum and research	Race: 'Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.	The narrowing of awarding (attainment) gaps, where current data suggests we have significant gaps by protected characteristic  The achievement of EDI-related KPIs set out in our KEIF strategy  An increase in staff participation in training development programmes  Achievement of success measures set out in our Concordat for Researcher Development and Research Integrity Action Plans.  Achievement of success measures set out in the Learning and Teaching Strategy	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity  Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity	Deputy Principal, Deans of School, Director of LEAD, Director or Research and Knowledge Exchange
<b>Equality Outcome 3:</b> By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the retention and attainment of those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population who experience	Age – 'The retention outcomes for university students aged 25 and over will improve  Disability – 'The success and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve'	The narrowing of awarding (/attainment) gaps where current data identifies significant gaps for groups with a protected characteristic  Enhanced retention rates for groups identified in our current data with lower rates	Age, Disability, Gender Assignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and maternity, Faith and belief, Marriage & Civil partnership  Eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity	University Secretary, Student Retention and Surveys Team, Widening Participation Team, WISeR Board

poorer outcomes	Ethnicity – ‘Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.’			
<b>Equality Outcome 4:</b> By 2029, significant steps have been taken to improve the outcomes of those groups with a protected characteristic within our workforce who experience poorer outcomes	National Equality Outcomes relating to staff in Outcome 5 apply.	<p>A reduction in pay gaps by protected characteristic where current data shows significant gaps.</p> <p>An improvement in the response to the ‘my career aspirations at QMU are being met’ statement in the staff survey.</p> <p>An improvement in staff survey results for any groups with significant differential responses.</p> <p>Success measures set out in Athena Swan Action Plan met.</p> <p>Success measures set out in Staff Survey Action Plan met.</p>	<p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Faith and Belief</p> <p>Advancing equality of opportunity; eliminating unlawful discrimination</p>	Head of Human Resources
<b>Equality Outcome 5:</b> Our policies and practices promote an inclusive and safe culture for those groups with a protected characteristic in our student population	<p>Disability - ‘Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.’</p> <p>Race – ‘Staff and students feel supported and safe and are confident</p>	<p>Meeting the success measures set out in our Athena Swan Action Plan relating to LGBTQ+ support.</p> <p>An improvement in staff survey results for any groups of protected characteristics with differential</p>	<p>Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity</p> <p>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, foster good</p>	University Secretary, Head of HR, Head of Student Services

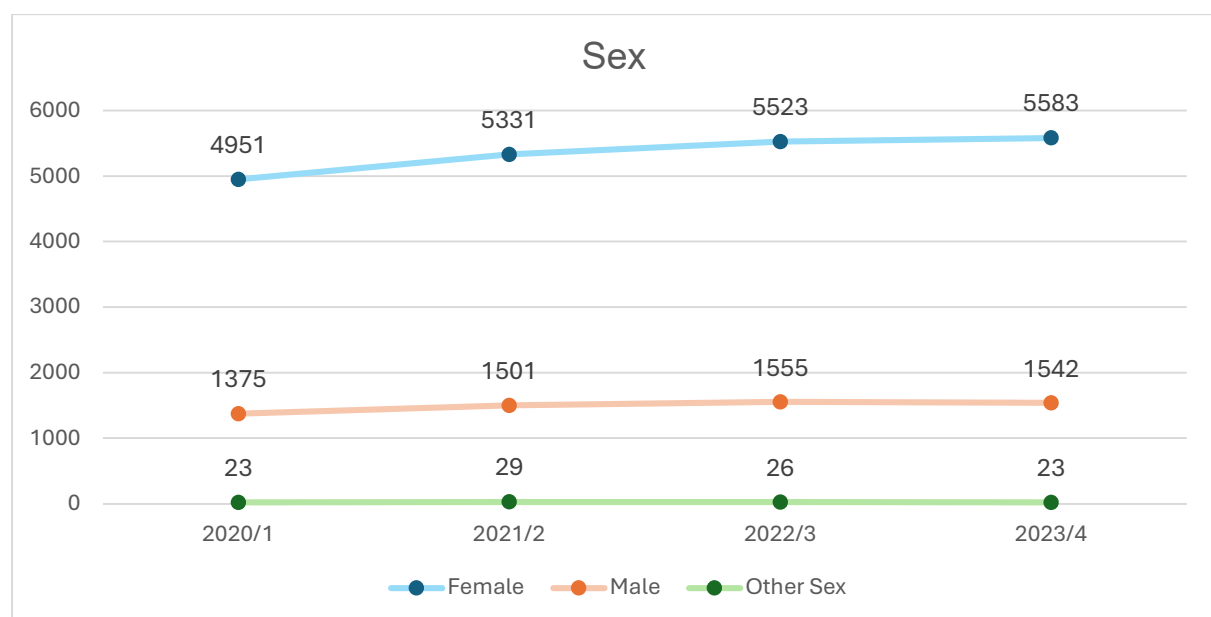
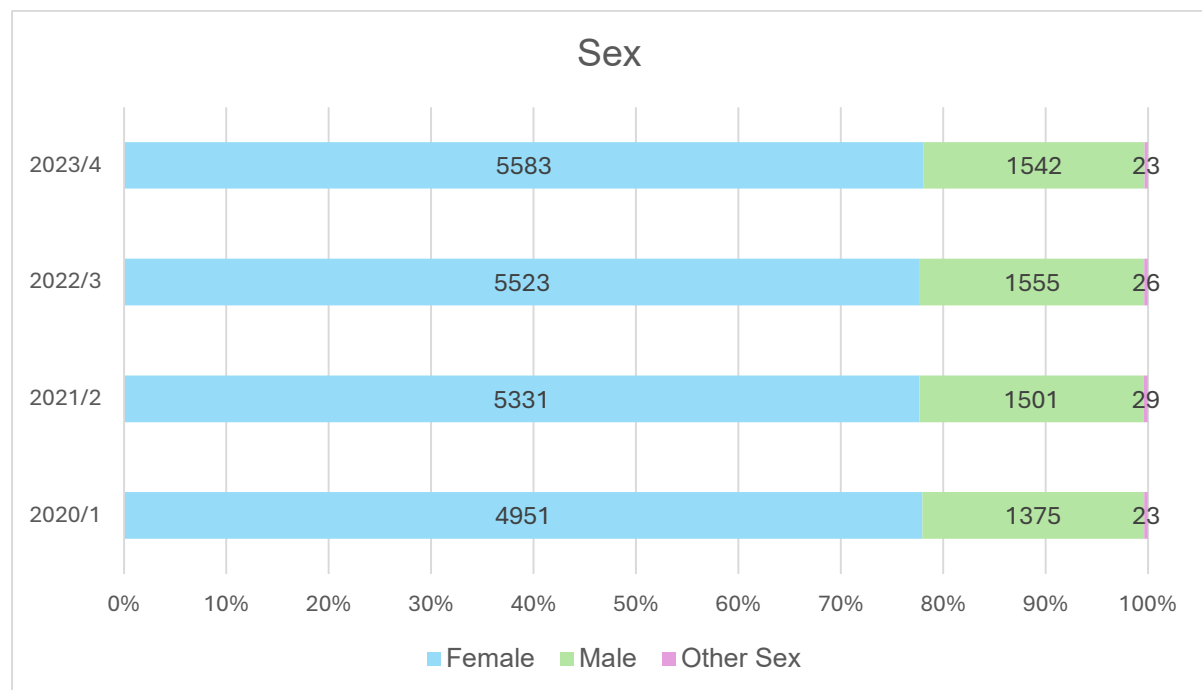
and workforce who experience poorer outcomes	<p>that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress.'</p> <p>Religion or Belief – 'Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.'</p> <p>Sex – '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> <p>Sex – 'Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.'</p>	<p>responses to the statement "I can be myself at work".</p> <p>An improvement in staff and student knowledge of reporting mechanisms through Facilitated Conversations</p> <p>Effective monitoring and data of our reporting mechanisms are in place by 2029</p>	relations and advance equality of opportunity	
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	<p>Sex – ‘Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).’</p> <p>Sexual Orientation – ‘Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being ‘out’ at university and college.’</p> <p>Gender Identity – ‘Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system.’</p>			
<p><b>Equality Outcome 6:</b> By 2029, we will have taken significant steps to address the gender imbalances of our courses</p>	<p>Sex – ‘Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and taken action to address it.</p>	<p>An increase in the percentage of men across all courses at QMU, but particularly those where our data suggests the largest underrepresentation</p>	<p>Sex Advance equality of opportunity</p>	<p>University Secretary, Widening Participation Team, WISeR Board</p>

## Section 4: Appendix: Management Information – Student Population Head Count (Excluding based overseas in collaborative partnership organisations)

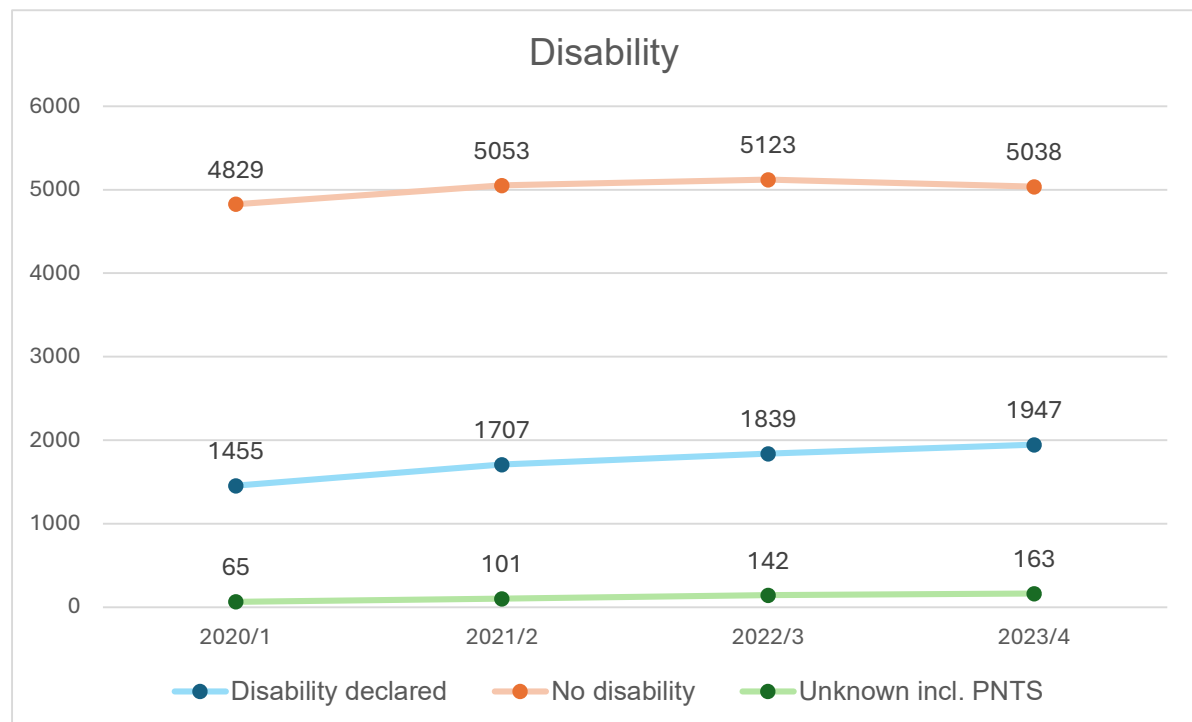
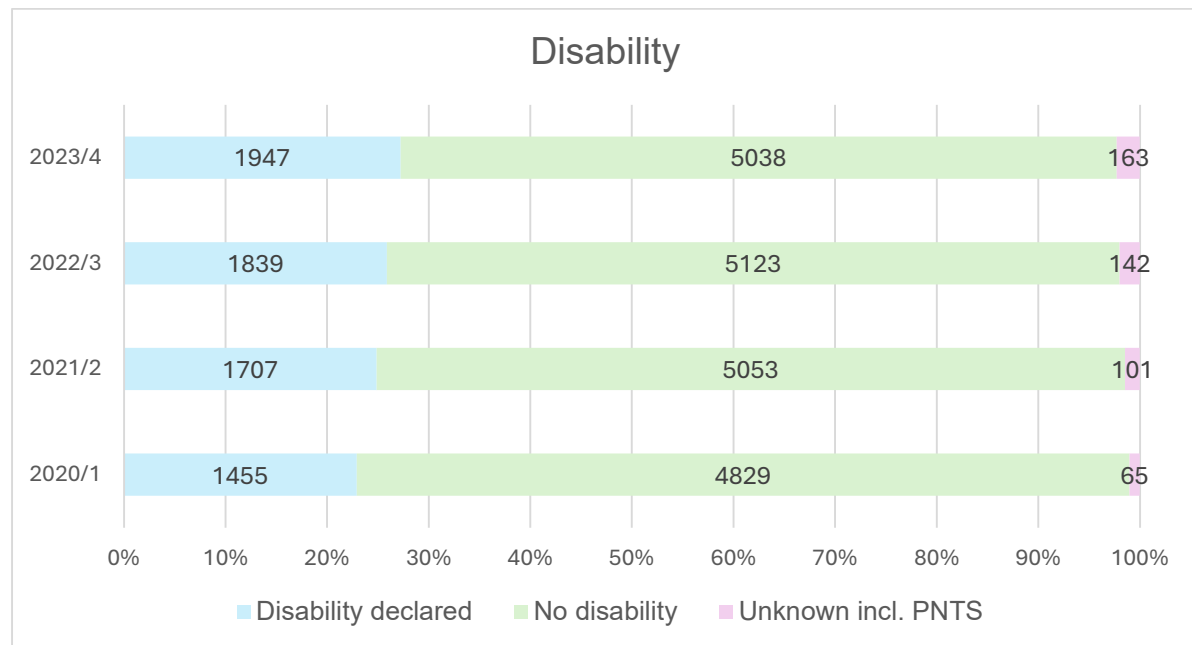
### 4.1: Sex

SEX	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Female	4951	78.0%	5331	77.7%	5523	77.7%	5583	78.1%
Male	1375	21.7%	1501	21.9%	1555	21.9%	1542	21.6%
Other Sex	23	0.4%	29	0.4%	26	0.4%	23	0.3%
Unknown	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	



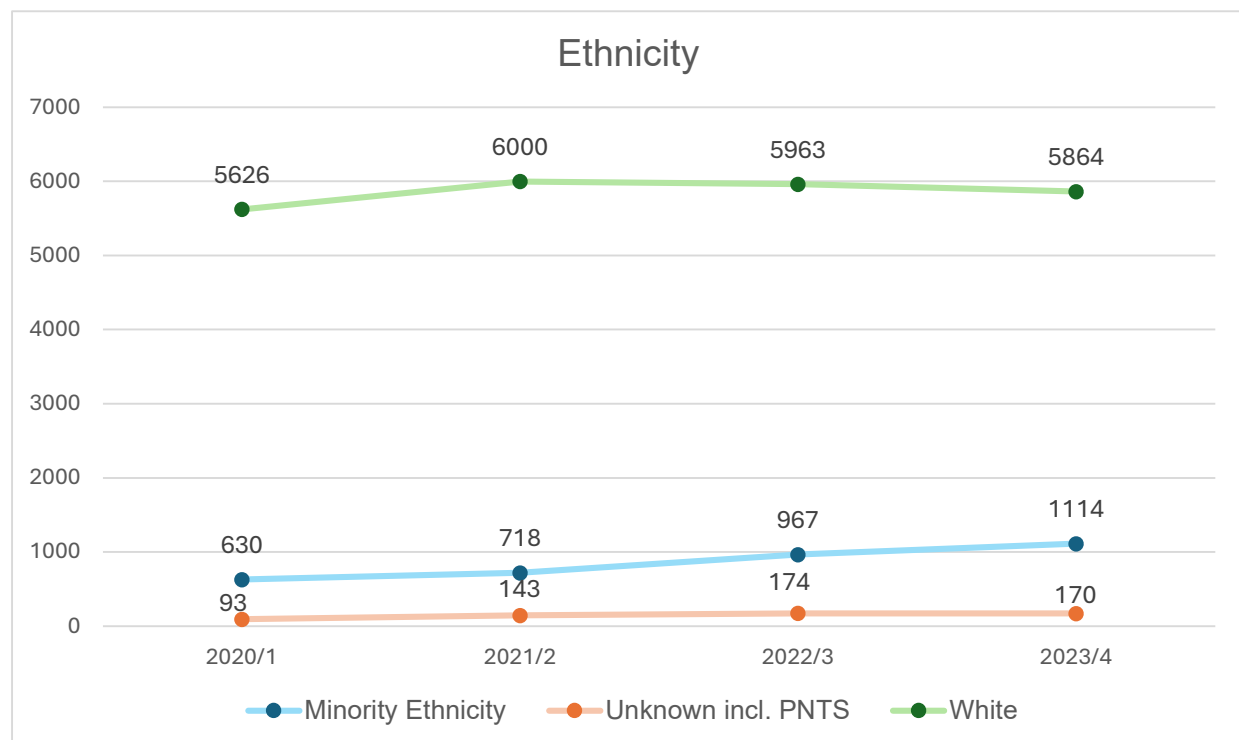
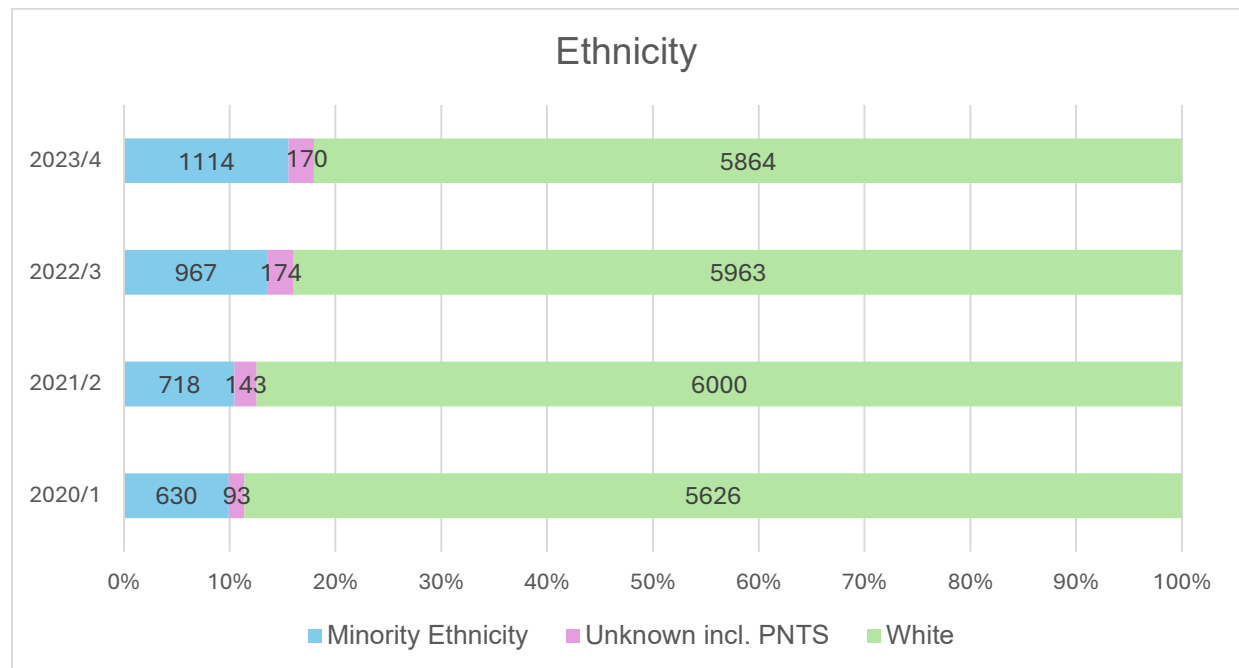
## 4.2: Disability

DISABILITY GROUP	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Disability declared	1455	22.9%	1707	24.9%	1839	25.9%	1947	27.2%
No disability	4829	76.1%	5053	73.6%	5123	72.1%	5038	70.5%
Unknown incl. PNTS	65	1.0%	101	1.5%	142	2.0%	163	2.3%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	



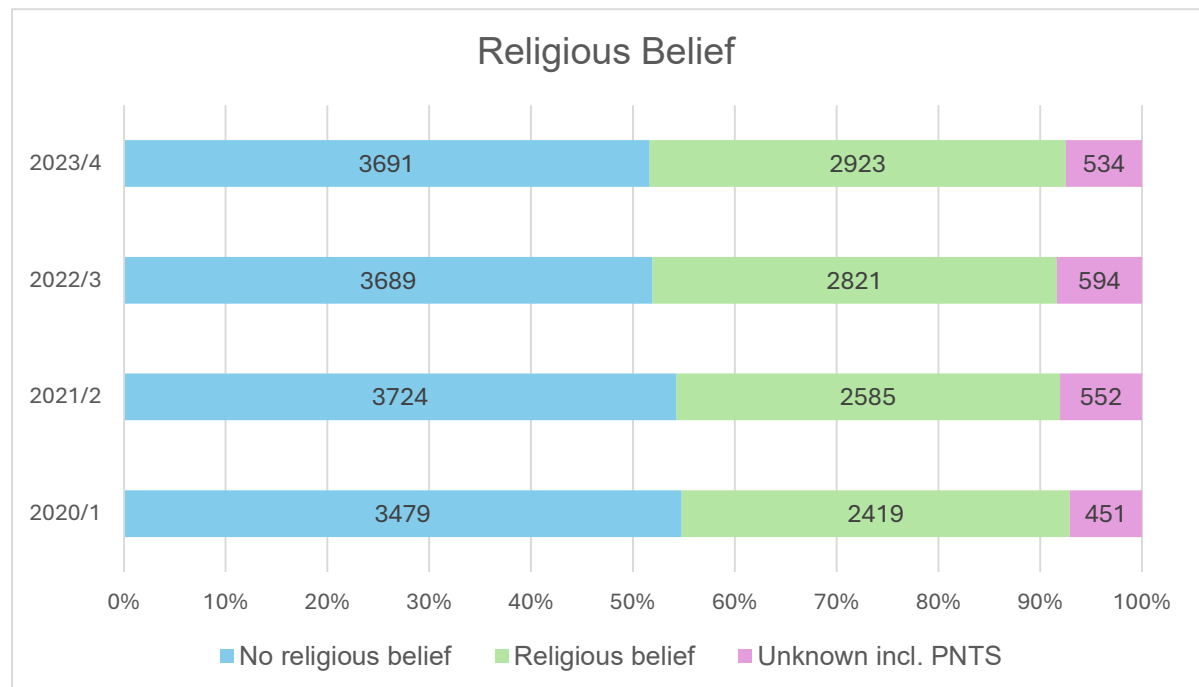
### 4.3 Ethnicity

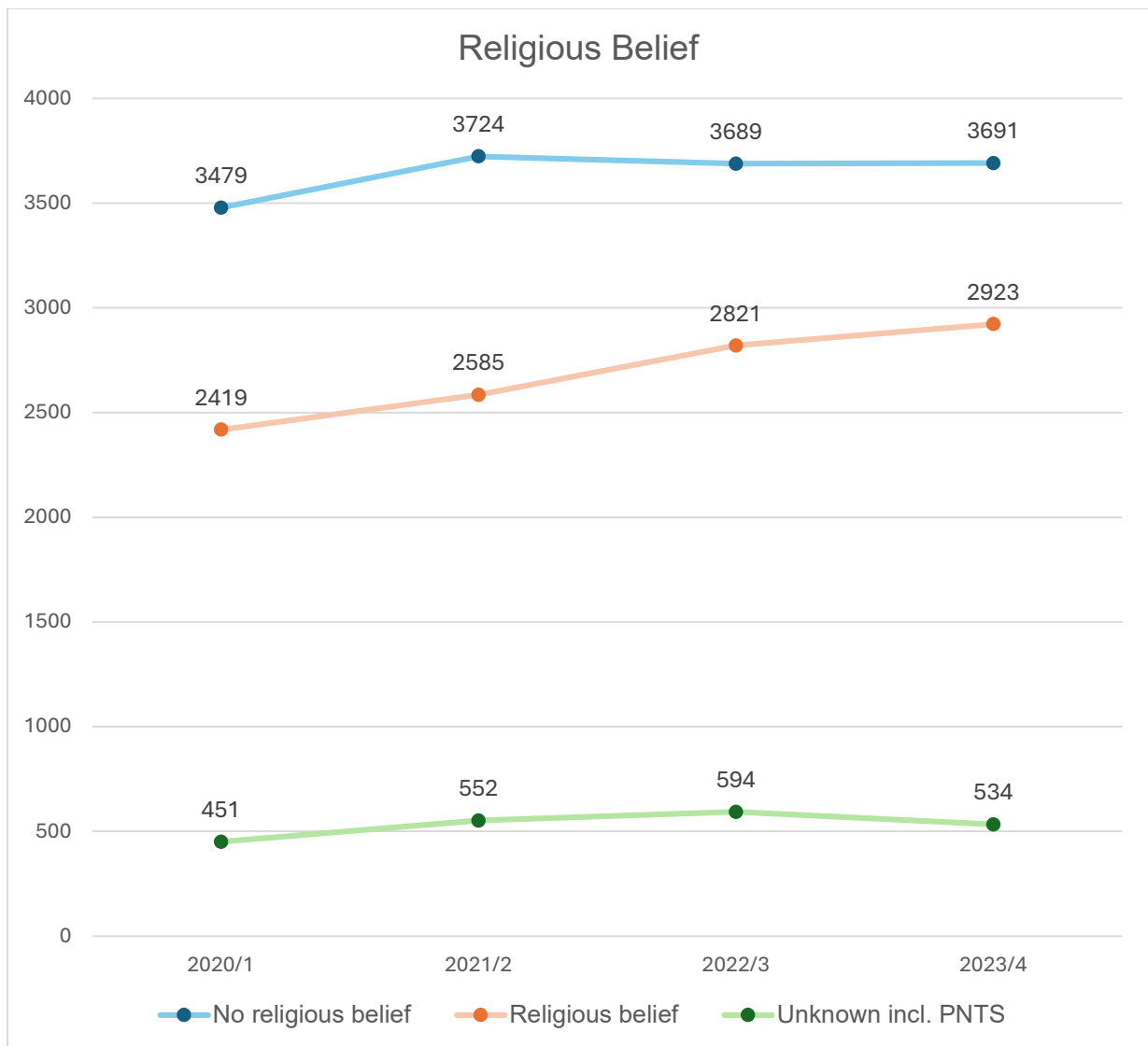
ETHNICITY	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Minority Ethnicity	630	9.9%	718	10.5%	967	13.6%	1114	15.6%
Unknown incl. PNTS	93	1.5%	143	2.1%	174	2.4%	170	2.4%
White	5626	88.6%	6000	87.5%	5963	83.9%	5864	82.0%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	



#### 4.4 Religious Belief

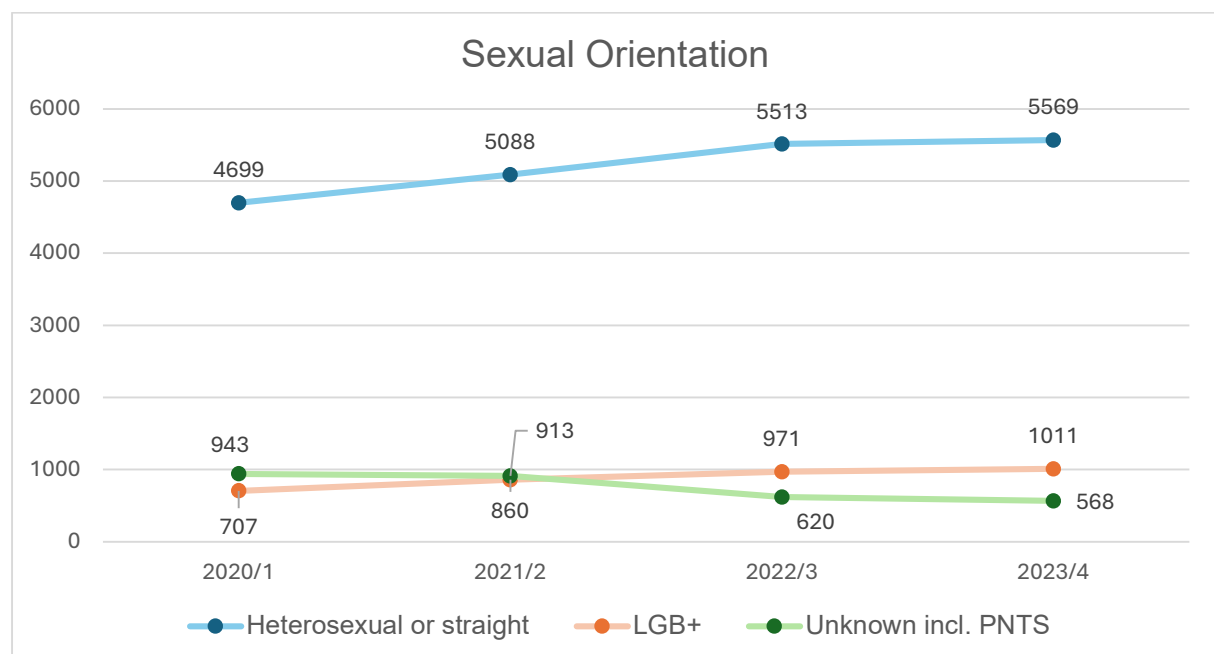
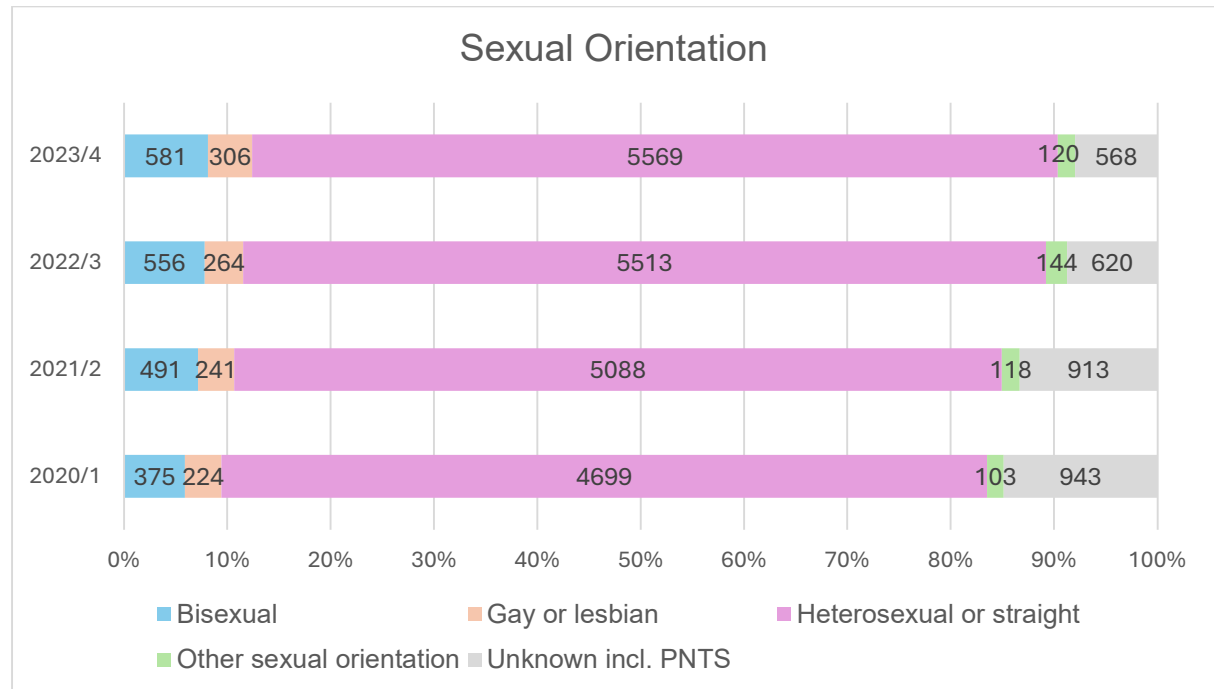
RELIGIOUS BELIEF	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Any other religion or belief	83	1.3%	100	1.5%	110	1.5%	122	1.7%
Buddhist	26	0.4%	35	0.5%	33	0.5%	39	0.5%
Christian		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Christian - Catholic	576	9.1%	338	4.9%	16	0.2%	7	0.1%
Christian - Church of Scotland	487	7.7%	532	7.8%	556	7.8%	525	7.3%
Christian - Other denomination	555	8.7%	652	9.5%	770	10.8%	852	11.9%
Christian - Roman Catholic	395	6.2%	614	8.9%	980	13.8%	985	13.8%
Hindu	38	0.6%	59	0.9%	87	1.2%	90	1.3%
Jewish	9	0.1%	12	0.2%	17	0.2%	17	0.2%
Muslim	154	2.4%	166	2.4%	196	2.8%	228	3.2%
No religion	3479	54.8%	3724	54.3%	3689	51.9%	3691	51.6%
Pagan	19	0.3%	24	0.3%	36	0.5%	34	0.5%
Sikh	10	0.2%	11	0.2%	13	0.2%	19	0.3%
Spiritual	65	1.0%	41	0.6%	5	0.1%		0.0%
Unknown incl. PNTS	451	7.1%	552	8.0%	594	8.4%	534	7.5%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	





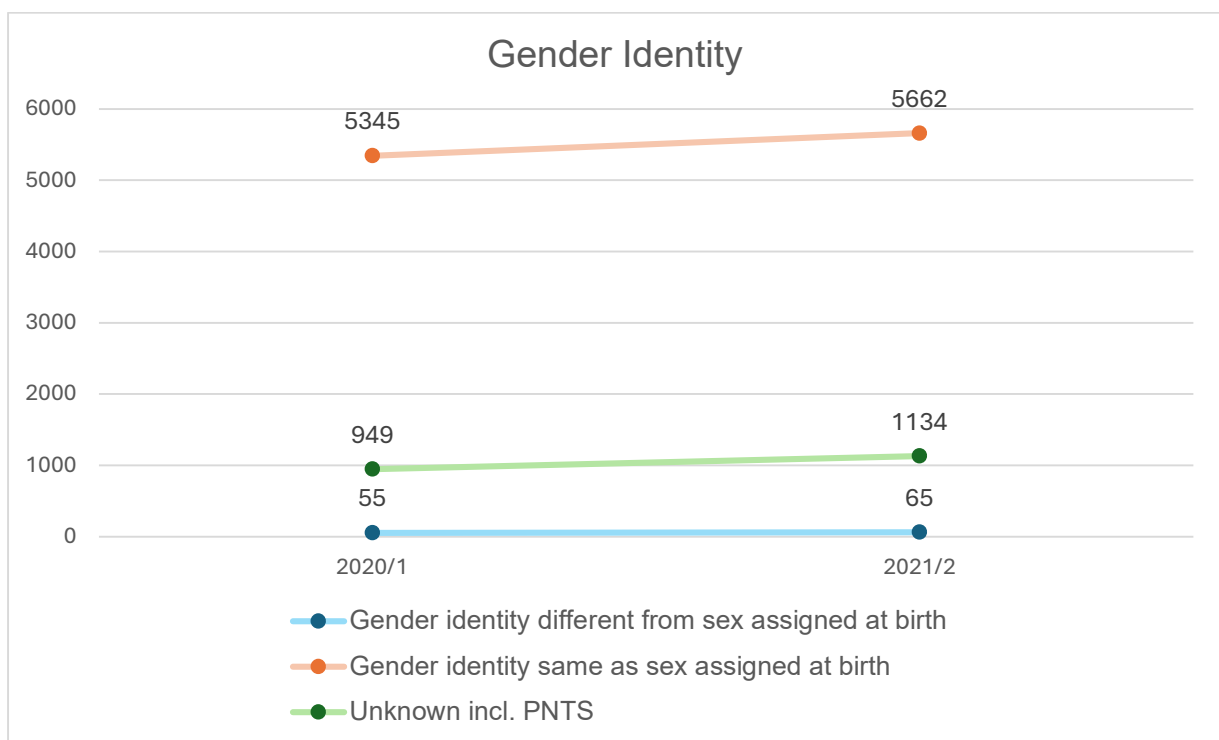
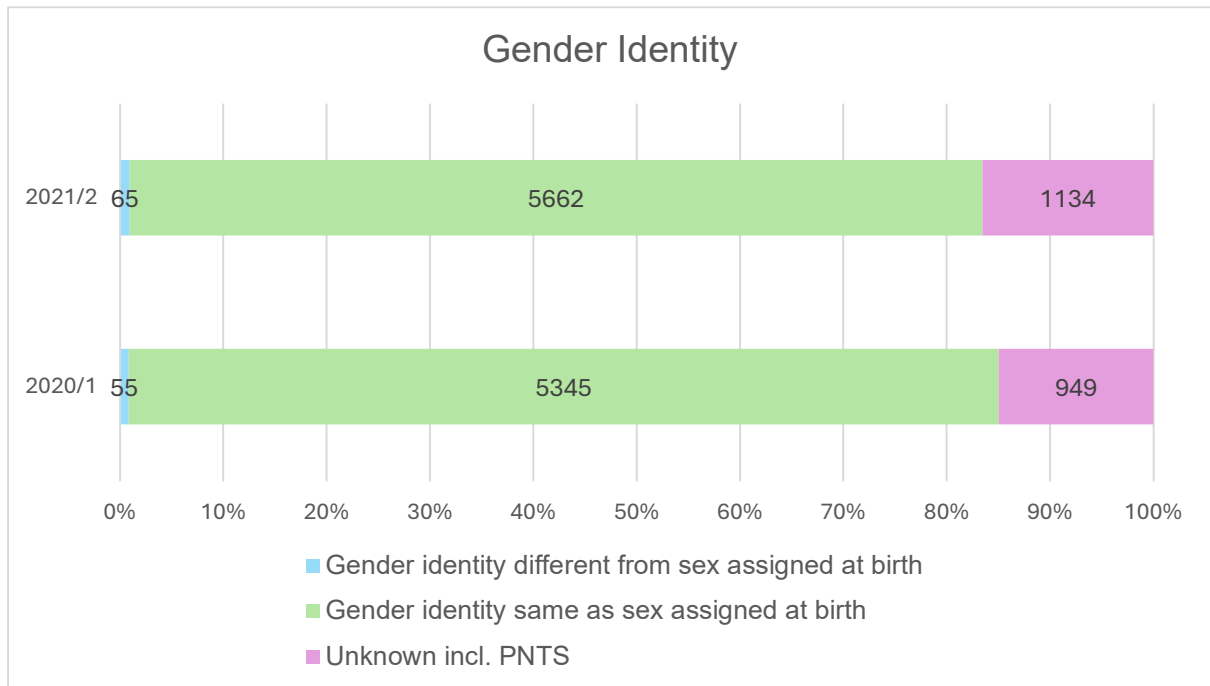
## 4.5 Sexual Orientation

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Bisexual	375	5.9%	491	7.2%	556	7.8%	581	8.1%
Gay or lesbian	224	3.5%	241	3.5%	264	3.7%	306	4.3%
Heterosexual or straight	4699	74.0%	5088	74.2%	5513	77.6%	5569	77.9%
Not available	5	0.1%	10	0.1%	7	0.1%		0.1%
Other sexual orientation	103	1.6%	118	1.7%	144	2.0%	120	1.7%
Unknown incl. PNTS	943	14.9%	913	13.3%	620	8.7%	568	7.9%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	



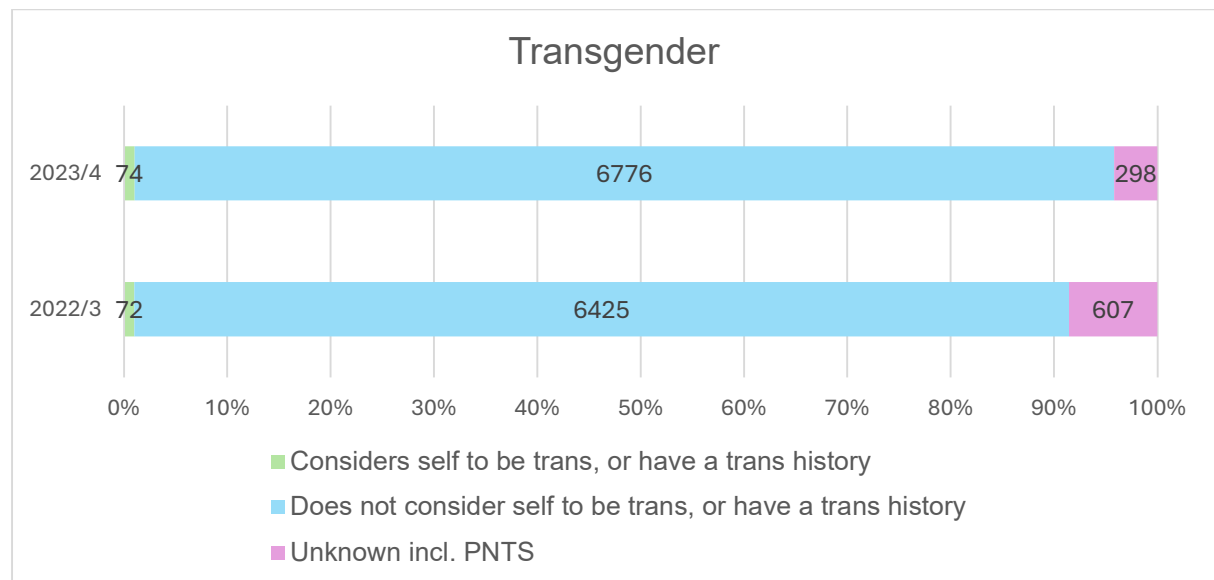
## 4.6 Gender Identity

GENDER IDENTITY	2020/1		2021/2	
Gender identity different from sex assigned at birth	55	0.9%	65	0.9%
Gender identity same as sex assigned at birth	5345	84.2%	5662	82.5%
Unknown incl. PNTS	949	14.9%	1134	16.5%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>	



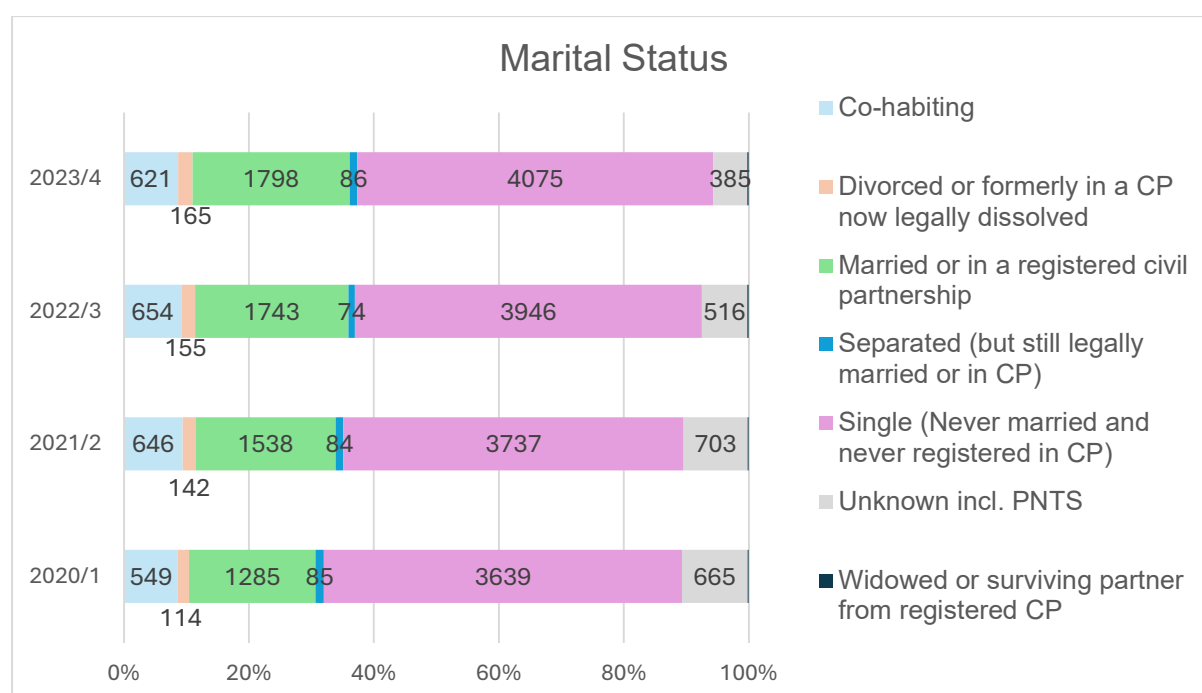
## 4.7 Transgender

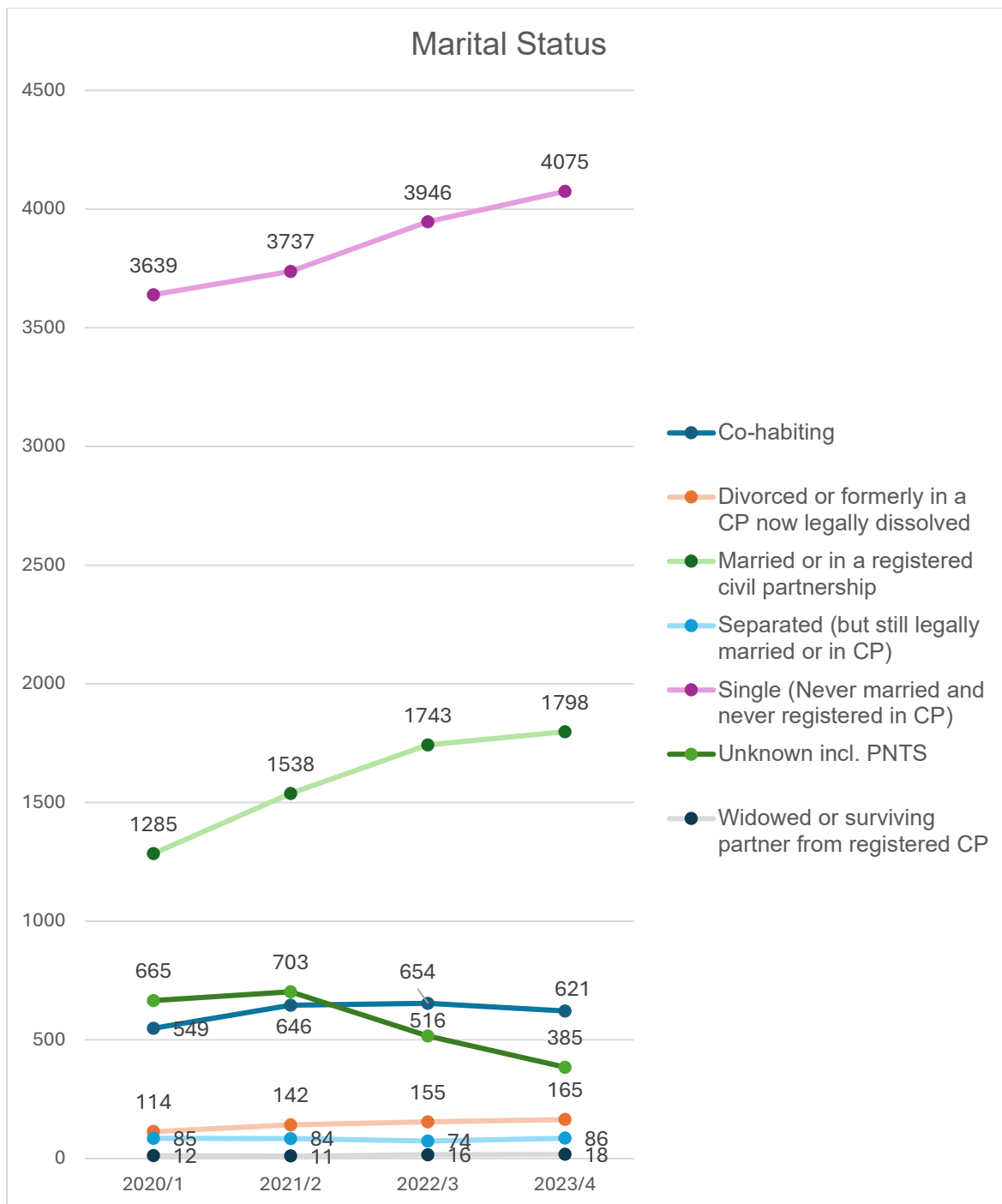
TRANSGENDER	2022/3		2023/4	
Considers self to be trans, or have a trans history	72	1.0%	74	1.0%
Does not consider self to be trans, or have a trans history	6425	90.4%	6776	94.8%
Unknown incl. PNTS	607	8.5%	298	4.2%
	<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	



## 4.8 Marital Status

MARITAL STATUS	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Co-habiting	549	8.6%	646	9.4%	654	9.2%	621	8.7%
Divorced or formerly in a CP now legally dissolved	114	1.8%	142	2.1%	155	2.2%	165	2.3%
Married or in a registered civil partnership	1285	20.2%	1538	22.4%	1743	24.5%	1798	25.2%
Separated (but still legally married or in CP)	85	1.3%	84	1.2%	74	1.0%	86	1.2%
Single (Never married and never registered in CP)	3639	57.3%	3737	54.5%	3946	55.5%	4075	57.0%
Unknown incl. PNTS	665	10.5%	703	10.2%	516	7.3%	385	5.4%
Widowed or surviving partner from registered CP	12	0.2%	11	0.2%	16	0.2%	18	0.3%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	





## 4.9 Age

MATURE	2020/1		2021/2		2022/3		2023/4	
Mature Student	4140	65.2%	4632	67.5%	4935	69.5%	5000	69.9%
Other	2209	34.8%	2229	32.5%	2169	30.5%	2148	30.1%
	<b>6349</b>		<b>6861</b>		<b>7104</b>		<b>7148</b>	

