



UNIVERSITY OF
SURREY

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Annual report
for 2020/21



Introduction

This report summarises our EDI activity over the past year and provides a summary of progress towards our objectives. It has been a productive year with the development of a new EDI strategy ([EDI Plan 2020-2025](#)), the launch of the Race [Equality and BAME Awarding Gap Action Plan](#), a [Disability Action Plan](#), and many other initiatives covering our five key areas of equality: gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQI+, disability and faith/belief. This document provides an update on key EDI activities between September 2020 and November 2021.

EDI covers all areas of the University's business and the EDI team's work supports all strategic objectives, in particular Learning and Teaching, Student Experience and Research. Much of our EDI work is built on the University's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 but also pays attention to our moral duty to provide an inclusive work and study environment for all members of our community. It also considers the positive business benefits of taking account of the needs of all our stakeholders and demonstrating awareness and care with regards to all protected characteristics.

EDI Team

The EDI team comprises Emily Williams who joined the EDI team as Academic Lead for EDI in April 2020. Jo McCarthy-Holland and Michael Hassell are EDI Advisors, Jocelyn Chandler-Hawkins is Race Equality Advisor and Vicky Paterson is EDI Coordinator.

We have been working with teams across the University to support students and staff and have been driving progress and change in all areas. Based on staff and student feedback, we are confident that our work is having a positive impact on supporting a positive culture change for our Surrey community.

Priority areas

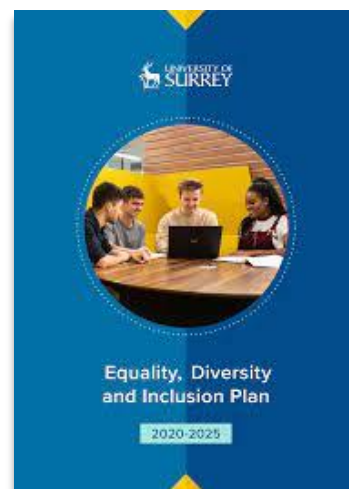
1) General EDI

Raising the profile of EDI at Surrey and strengthening our network of EDI work:

We launched our EDI Plan 2020-2025 in October 2020 to outline our key EDI strategic priorities. This was part of an important consultation from stakeholders across Surrey and has been well received by our community. We have a broad array of existing and new EDI initiatives to ensure that we are fulfilling our objectives from our EDI Plan. We have led a strong internal communications campaign this year to raise the profile of our new strategy and broader work. We hold a dynamic EDI Forum three times per year, and these have been well attended and well received. They help to cascade information about EDI to various parts of the University and keep our EDI champions up to date with EDI activity and progress. We have supported the regeneration of the Faculty EDI committees this year and continue to support much of the EDI work happening at a departmental level. We have also worked closely with the Students' Union (SU) team to ensure that our work caters most effectively to student needs. We have revised our [external EDI webpages](#), [SurreyNet](#) intranet pages and My Surrey EDI webpages to provide a space to share our work and resources to support staff and students.

Covid-19 response:

We have fed into the HR and Student Experience Covid-19 responses providing EDI perspectives and assessments for new initiatives, where relevant. As we move towards the 'new normal', we have been involved in the discussions around 'blended working' and the return to campus for staff and students.



Training:

We have redesigned much of our EDI training provision this year. We have introduced a much-improved *Diversity at Work* eLearning module. In collaboration with Advance HE, we have also developed an *Introduction to Race Equity* eLearning course, built on Surrey's own data and experiences from our staff and students. This has received exceptional feedback and we are now developing a new student *Zero Tolerance to Hate* module, in collaboration with Student Experience, the SU and Advance HE. Our existing training modules continue to be well attended and reviewed (“[this was] the most impactful training of this kind that I have seen to date”). We are working with Learning and Development to maximise impact and create a streamlined approach to accessing training and toolkits.

We are delighted that Unconscious Bias Training and LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training has returned to face-to-face delivery, both courses have been reviewed and re-energised following feedback from colleagues and discussions between members of the EDI team who deliver these sessions.

Diversity of our staff:

A key priority is to bring more diversity into our staff community. We have designed the *Diversity 200* project, which is a pan-University inclusive recruitment campaign aimed at improving the diversity of our academic staff profile, through the recruitment of new academics over a three-year period. The project will look at every stage of the recruitment process for each post recruited: analysing the advert wording and where the advert is placed; looking at the gender and ethnicity of longlisted and shortlisted candidates; reviewing the assessment and interview process; and analysing the diversity of those who are offered posts at the University.

REF 2021:

The EDI Team delivered a specific, tailored ‘Unconscious Bias Training for REF’ course for all colleagues involved in output selection. They were a member of the REF EDI Committee and was closely involved with the EDI assessment of the selection process and also involved in the preparation of the EDI report that accompanied the University's submission.

Equality impact assessment (EIA):

We conduct EIAs on all our new initiatives and support people across the University to undertake these assessments with training and toolkits to guide them through the process.

Involvement and consultation:

In all our work, we collaborate with our networks and equality groups to understand their priority areas or needs; these plans are communicated to the EDI Forum and approval obtained through the EDI Executive. We also work closely with the EDI Committees within faculties and departments to disseminate our work.

Recognition for EDI:

Surrey was ranked 37 out of 669 institutions for the Times Higher Education Sustainability Development Goal of Reducing Inequalities. This high ranking was partly the result of our EDI-related policies and initiatives available to staff and students.

2) Gender Equality

University Athena Swan award/submission:

We continue to implement our [University Bronze Athena SWAN Action Plan](#), progressing our delivery of agreed initiatives to advance our embedding of gender equality activities across Surrey. We aim to apply for a Silver Award in May 2023. To achieve this, amongst many initiatives, we need to make progress by narrowing our gender pay gap (a review project planned for 2022) and we need to ensure that we maximise our career progression opportunities for women.

Departmental awards:

The number of schools/departments that hold an Athena Swan award has risen to twelve – Maths and Music and Media are the latest successes. The remaining ten schools and departments without an award are all working towards submitting over the next 18 months.

Menopause Project:

[The Menopause Project](#) is a new initiative providing support for women to retain talent and to promote wellbeing. This involves a webpage of resources, a toolkit, manager guidance, a support network, menopause advocates and general awareness-raising for all about the impact of menopause at work.



Springboard Women’s Development Programme:

Springboard is the award-winning, globally recognised, personal development programme for women that we run at Surrey. This programme is running with a full cohort in Autumn 2021 and applications are open for a new cohort in Spring 2022.

Women@Surrey network:

The Women@Surrey network was re-launched in Spring 2021 with new joint Chairs covering Academic and Professional Services. We enjoyed a successful in-person event in Autumn 2021 with a lunchtime seminar featuring lifelong female educational activist, Victoria Macdonald who spoke on ‘Why does representation of women matter?’

Daphne Jackson day:

Daphne was the first UK female Professor of Physics and was based at the University of Surrey. The [Daphne Jackson Trust](#) is the UK’s leading organisation dedicated to realising the potential of returners to research careers following a career break of two years or more taken for a family, caring or health reason. A successful event was held in November 2021 in partnership with the University to celebrate Daphne Jackson Day with ‘[The Science of Food](#)’.



3) Race Equality

Race Equality Charter:

We will be applying for the Race Equality Charter bronze award in February 2022; this will further cement our commitment to addressing race inequalities. Our Steering Group and Self-Assessment Team, under the leadership of Osama Khan and Emily Williams, have been involved in the implementation of the associated action plan to deliver true change at Surrey.

Race Equality and BAME Awarding Gap action plan:

This action plan has been widely socialised across our students and staff and is published on our webpages for transparency and monitoring. 81% of the 69 action points within our Action Plan are in progress or completed, and we will be updating the action plan with new actions in 2022.

SEED staff network:

We have established the Surrey Embracing Ethnic Diversity (SEED) network to support Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. The group is chaired by Jocelyn Chandler-Hawkins, our part-time Race Equality Adviser.



The SEED network meets on a regular basis to discuss university race equality activity. In addition, to developing ways to reflect and communicate the needs and feelings of non-white staff, as a safe place to connect and support each other. The network regularly shares their experiences via the [blog](#) and on the [University of Surrey website](#). In September 2021 SEED hosted a week-long celebration of the many cultures at the University of Surrey with a wellbeing walk, video discussions and a cookbook. Our most recent event reflected on [Black History Month](#) with a panel event and a range of blog articles.

Anti-racism artwork:



A further response to the BLM movement was to commission a piece of floor art to symbolise our commitment to anti-racism. The idea, brought to us by a Surrey student Sharna Piercy, led to a student design competition that was won by Adaugo Yvonne Okenwa (a third year Law student). This beautiful piece of artwork, *The Pride of Heritage*, is on display between The Nest and The Hive on the Surrey campus.

Black History Month event:

For Black History Month, we ran an online event '[Black Excellence: Career Journeys](#)'. This panel event shone a spotlight on excellence in our Black staff, alumni and external colleagues, and offered an insight into their inspirational experiences, navigating successful careers in a range of sectors. The event was very well received with comments saying how thought-provoking it was. The recording of the event was also shared with colleagues around the University and on the EDI webpage.

Global Connections group:

The EDI team set up the Global Connections group in response to reports from the Wellbeing team that quite a few international staff were feeling isolated being away from friends and family. The group is an opportunity to meet colleagues from around the world and share experiences of moving to the UK. It's also a space to ask questions about the local area, local services and support available from the University. A member of the Wellbeing team, the HR team and some of the chaplains of various faiths also attend. The first meet up is on Tuesday 14th December 1-2pm in the Round House. The group will also use a Microsoft Teams channel for people to ask questions and network.

4) LGBTQI+ Equality

Trans and Gender Identity policy:

We introduced our new Trans and Gender Identity Policy for staff and students this year. This work involved extensive consultation across the University. A student friendly version of the policy FAQs is currently being produced to help make the information more accessible.

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (SWEI):

We submitted our application for the 2022 WEI in October 2021. The result is expected in January 2022. We have built on our previous work. Highlights since our last submission two years ago are: the introduction of the Rainbow Crossing (the first University to have one), the launch of the Rainbow Allies scheme and the expansion of the LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training.



LGBT+ History month

The EDI Team coordinated a broad range of online activities for LGBT+ History Month 2021 and is already involved in organising face-to-face events for February 2022. These events will include a talk on the History of the Trans Community and a talk by an author – Alex Reeve which is being organised in conjunction with the School of Literature and Languages.

Trans Day of Remembrance:

The University commemorates Trans Day of Remembrance every year. In 2021 the EDI team supported the LGBTQI+ Student Society in organising a memorial event at the Alan Turin statue on campus. All attendees were invited to light a candle in memory of all the members who had lost their lives.



LGBTQI+ STEM event:

An event was held to celebrate LGBTQI+ in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Day on the 24th of November. A number of speakers delivered presentations about their experience as a member of the LGBTQI+ community in relation to being an academic or researcher in the STEM fields. The event was chaired by Sara Trinder from the School of

Biosciences and Medicine. Sean Langton from the Vet School, who is the current chair of the LGBTQIA+ Equality Group, spoke. There were also guest speakers from Imperial College, London.

5) Disability Equality

Disability action plan:

We have consulted widely to create a clear action plan for increasingly making Surrey disability-smart and ensuring adjustments/support are in place for all who require them. Our work has been guided by the Disability Standard from leading disability membership organisation, [Business Disability Forum](#).

Surrey Sunflower initiative:



We have launched the [Surrey Sunflower initiative](#) to support the needs of people with hidden disabilities/invisible illnesses. Wearing the sunflower discreetly indicates to people around the wearer that they may need extra support, understanding or time. Anyone wanting to a sunflower lanyard/pin badge/wallet card can collect one from points across campus.

Disability toolkits:

We have purchased a subscription to [the Business Disability Forum](#) that provides People Manager toolkits for staff; these are accessible through our new EDI intranet pages. The toolkits provide online guidance on managing new starters, the processes of making adjustments and performance management, managing people remotely and managing grievance, disciplinary and capability proceedings.



Employment Works:

Employment Works is an award-winning project run in partnership between the University and social care provider, Surrey Choices, and helps to find work placements, training, volunteer opportunities and paid work for people who have autism or a learning, physical or sensory disability.

The University has been a part of the Employment Works project for almost 12 years and during that time more than 75 young people from local colleges and special educational schools have completed work experience within a range of University departments.



Many of those young people have gone on to paid work or apprenticeships, with the remaining students returning mostly to further education to develop a vocational skill. We continue our partnership with Surrey Choices after a brief pause due to Covid and lockdown and look forward to welcoming participants onto campus in 2022.

'It has been a really positive experience to be part of the Employment Works programme, not only for the benefits and opportunities it brings to the young people involved but for the teamworking skills of our staff and the diversity of the team. We have had some outstanding young people work with us, some of whom have gone on to secure ongoing employment. The job coach is on hand to help prepare us and the young people for working together and to support us through the process. It has been a really worthwhile project to be part of and we will continue to be involved.'

Valerie Perfect, Hospitality and Catering Services

Neurodiversity network:

The Neurodiversity Network was set up in 2021 by Daisy Shearer with support from the EDI team. The network provides support and raises awareness for neurodivergent people at Surrey. It is also intended to offer a space to celebrate the strengths that a neurodiverse workforce and community can bring. The [Neurodiversity at Surrey blog](#) and the [neurodiversity resources Padlet](#) are regularly updated with resources suggested by network members. People can also join the steering committee.

6) Religious Life and Belief

The Centre for Religious Life and Belief has been incredibly active with a College of Chaplains that has grown to include 19 representatives of different faiths and beliefs. Strong links have been forged with the Students' Union, Wellbeing Services and key departments that impact on student experience to ensure excellence in provision of support for religious observance, adjustments and spiritual wellbeing. A Board of Advisors has been established with strategic and diverse religious leaders to advise and consult on matters associated with religious life and belief at Surrey. A new strategy document is in development outlining key projects for the year ahead.

Next Steps

We will continue with the implementation of our action plans and work towards the submission of our equality charters. We will continue to work alongside staff and student groups at the University to respond to the needs of our community.

Further Information

Further information on all our work, including our EDI Plan 2020-2025 and our Race Equality and BAME Awarding Gap Action Plan can be found on our [EDI webpages](#).