

INCLUSIVE SUSSEX

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

2018-2025



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Equality, diversity and inclusion is everyone's business

Achieving equality, diversity and inclusion is fundamental to the success of the University of Sussex. We aspire not just to reduce inequalities in outcomes for individuals, but to use our expertise, commitment and courage to challenge the status quo. We will take bold action to transform the campus into one that is experienced as inclusive by all our communities. This includes understanding and addressing power relations and the intersecting inequalities that many members of our community experience. Our plans to deliver *Inclusive Sussex* include actions to transform our campus and the experiences of all our staff and students. With it we hope to create a culture where everyone thrives, making Sussex a beacon in the sector nationally and internationally.

We have much to be proud of in building an equal, diverse and fair community at Sussex. In terms of gender equality our percentage of women professors is seen as excellent for the sector and our Widening Participation programme of engagement and support has resulted in significantly reducing the attainment gap for our 'first generation scholars'. But we know from our data, research and consultations that we have much more to do to make the University truly equal and inclusive, for example, by closing the gender pay gap, improving the representation and experience of black and minority ethnic staff, closing the attainment and employment gap across different groups of students, and making our campus fully accessible.

Inclusive Sussex is the University's equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy for the next seven years. It is the first enabling strategy to emerge from *A Better University for a Better World*, the University's Strategic Framework 2018-2025.

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Our vision for Inclusive Sussex

Our vision is to become Inclusive Sussex, where all members of our community have equal access to opportunities, experience the University as one that enables them to fully meet their potential, and supports them to make a full contribution to the University. Reducing inequalities and celebrating diversity allows us all to thrive. We can achieve more together than we can apart.

This equality, diversity and inclusion strategy sets out the steps we will take to become an Inclusive Sussex. This is a collective endeavour across management, staff and students which sets out to create a fully inclusive campus by and for our whole community.

We have identified four key goals to make Sussex truly inclusive: equality, diversity, accessibility and flexibility. If we can achieve the outcomes we have defined for each then we believe we will become Inclusive Sussex by 2025.

Publishing *Inclusive Sussex* now allows the University to make EDI everyone's business. The University's blueprint for delivering Sussex 2025 has the four goals of *Inclusive Sussex* embedded in all four strands of the University's Strategic Framework- learn to transform, research with impact, engage for change, and build on strengths.

The goals of *Inclusive Sussex* are also integral to embedding the five core values the University seeks to promote: kindness, integrity, inclusion, collaboration and courage.

We are collaborating with colleagues across the University to ensure that the enabling strategies that follow build in plans to help deliver *Inclusive Sussex*.

Our four goals

To deliver an Inclusive Sussex we will:

1. **EQUAL SUSSEX**
Reduce the gap in representation, experience, progression and reward between those with and without protected characteristics.
2. **DIVERSE SUSSEX**
Be a place that celebrates diversity and tolerance and fosters good relations in our own and the wider community.
3. **ACCESSIBLE SUSSEX**
Provide equal access to excellent learning, research and employment opportunities regardless of physical or unseen disabilities.
4. **FLEXIBLE SUSSEX**
Become an organisation that is flexible by default to ensure we are inclusive in everything we do.

We believe that what is necessary for some is generally good for all. In delivering change to address inequalities for particular parts of our communities, we will strive to deliver solutions that deliver benefits to all of us.

Our measures of success

We will measure our progress towards becoming Inclusive Sussex in a number of ways including:

University KPIs

- To halve the gender pay gap by 2024.
- Year-on-year improvement in staff proud to be associated with the University

Other university measures

- Higher representation of staff with protected characteristics, including in senior leadership positions
- Continued reduction in student attainment gaps between those with and without protected characteristics to be significantly better than national averages

External recognition of our work through:

- Race Equality Charter Bronze award
- Stonewall Top 100 Employer
- Disability Confident Leader
- All Schools to hold Athena SWAN awards

Goal 1: Equal Sussex

To reduce the gap in representation, experience, progression and reward between those with and without protected characteristics.

Equal Sussex means that we will work to remove barriers to inclusion, tackle abuse of institutional power relations and reduce the gap in representation, performance, reward and experience between those with and without protected characteristics. We will work to improve attainment and employment outcomes of students with protected characteristics where data suggest that they may not be reaching their full potential. We will build on our work to date to reduce student attainment gaps for BAME students, overseas students, mature students, those who are carers and those declaring a disability.

For staff, our reviews of recruitment and promotion will help identify the changes needed to our policies and processes to ensure equality of representation. We will promote our mentoring programme and coaching for all members of staff and particularly for those from underrepresented groups. We are committed to tackling the gender pay gap identified in 2018. Closing this gap requires us to remove the obstacles faced by women, in particular, at major points of career development and progression. The actions we are taking – including the drive towards Flexible Sussex – will be designed to ensure we remove barriers to recruitment, progression and reward and proactively work to reduce inequalities for other minority groups as well.

We will be working closely with the University of Sussex Students' Union as well as with new and existing staff networks to hear the voices of a wide range of people and to fully understand and address the barriers they face to equal representation, attainment, progression and reward.

We are seeking the same independent recognition of our work on race, disability, sexual orientation and gender reassignment that we have achieved through the Athena SWAN Charter. In addition to our ambition to become a Disability Confident Leader we will also aim to hold a Race Equality Charter Bronze award and be ranked in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers. These schemes are for us not tick-box exercises but important tools which give leverage to address issues substantively and with support from all parts of the institution.

Goal 2: Diverse Sussex

To be a place that celebrates diversity and tolerance and fosters good relations in our own and the wider community.

Diverse Sussex means that the University will celebrate diversity and actively foster a culture of good relations between all members of our campus – including but not restricted to identity, nationality, faith and political groups. The University is firmly committed to creating and sustaining a positive environment promoting diversity and inclusion. We will work with the findings of the Changing University Cultures (CHUCL) project to promote an institutional culture and individual behaviours characterised by inclusion, kindness, integrity, courage and collaboration.

The University has clear expectations of how all members of its community treat – and are treated by – others. We will not tolerate bullying, harassment and violence, including sexual violence and hate crime. Incidents of these will be dealt with swiftly and decisively and we will provide support for those affected. We are reviewing our policies on bullying and harassment and will publish a new Dignity and Respect Policy which will link to our policy on violence and our new processes and procedures for supporting those who experience sexual violence.

We are proud of our diverse Sussex community, but we realise that we are not yet as diverse as we could be. We will continue to encourage and celebrate diversity within the University, and to promote the benefits of diversity across our local, national and global communities. We will seek to foster good relations across communities, both within the University and outside it - including with our local community. We will actively promote awareness and understanding of a wide range of groups, giving a voice to them to share their perspectives.

Goal 3: Accessible Sussex

To provide equal access to excellent learning, research and employment opportunities regardless of physical or unseen disabilities.

Accessible Sussex means that disabled people in our community can do what they need to do in a similar amount of time and with the same amount of effort as someone who is not disabled. It means that people are empowered, can be independent, and will not be frustrated by something that is poorly designed or implemented.

We aim to be the most accessible University in the UK, transforming the University so that all members of our campus community have a fully inclusive experience, providing the kind of environment where people can achieve their ambitions and potential. We will provide equal access to excellent learning, research and employment opportunities regardless of physical or unseen disabilities. We will focus on all aspects of accessibility and move towards a campus where no areas are 'out of bounds' to people with disabilities. Our belief that what is necessary for some is generally good for all will be at the heart of how we design our services and facilities.

We are proud of our campus which offers a stunning location and unique architectural heritage. But we acknowledge the constraints and barriers to accessibility that our campus presents. We will address some difficult issues by actively embracing the challenge of delivering innovative approaches to improve accessibility. Our new estate strategy will articulate our plans to develop our estate. In implementing that we will collaborate with experts in this field to identify affordable solutions that provide accessibility without compromising the beauty and heritage of our estate. The accessibility challenges we face on campus are not simple to overcome and will take time and financial investment. In the short term we will continue to make practical improvements in line with the needs and requests of disabled staff and students.

Our digital strategy will set out how we can support all our students and staff and increase accessibility. A robust and innovative digital architecture opens new and exciting opportunities to deliver greater accessibility. Technology will enable us to introduce new ways to deliver our services and for students and staff to engage with us.

We will use the Disability Confident scheme as a framework to shape our approaches to accessibility for our employees. Our aim is to provide seamless, joined-up solutions to applicants, staff and students accessing support for physical or unseen disabilities. We will work to raise awareness of a range of accessibility issues. Our aim is to improve understanding of how these issues impact our staff and students, what we are doing to address them and how everybody can become part of the solutions through kindness, collaboration and courage.

Goal 4: Flexible Sussex

To become an organisation that is flexible by default to ensure we are inclusive in everything we do.

Flexible Sussex means that we will take a proactive approach to flexible working, encouraging and supporting individuals who want greater flexibility, making things easy to arrange and change. We will promote a culture where we say 'yes' to flexible working, unless there is a good reason to say 'no', and all new positions will be advertised as suitable for flexible working, unless there is a clear business reason for not doing so. Sussex is powered by its people and they are our strength in delivering Sussex 2025. Embracing an agile and flexible approach to work will enable us to attract, retain, support and develop an excellent and diverse workforce.

Flexible Sussex will be central to our plans to reduce inequality and improve accessibility. We seek to improve the representation of women and support carers working at Sussex by improving retention and progression for staff working flexibly. Feedback from staff in 2017 highlighted the need to improve our current approaches to flexible working. We believe that enabling better flexible working within the University will be a key to reducing our gender pay gap. Flexible working is also one of the most effective forms of reasonable adjustment available to support staff with a disability. This will enable us to increase accessibility to opportunity and progression throughout the University.

Flexible Sussex is also about enabling flexible and agile ways of working to improve our services and sustainability. Flexibility in how services are delivered will enable us to reflect a diverse range of needs. During 2017 we undertook fundamental reviews of how we work through the Review of Services Supporting the Student Experience and the Changing University Cultures Project (CHUCL). These, along with the Student and Academic Administration Transformation (SAAT) programme, present a huge opportunity for us to transform how we work to improve the experience for students and staff. We will ensure that flexible, equal, accessible and inclusive policies and procedures shape these changes.

Through the transformative power of education, research and engagement,
and Inclusive Sussex, we work for a better university for a better world

Signed off by Council, June 2018

