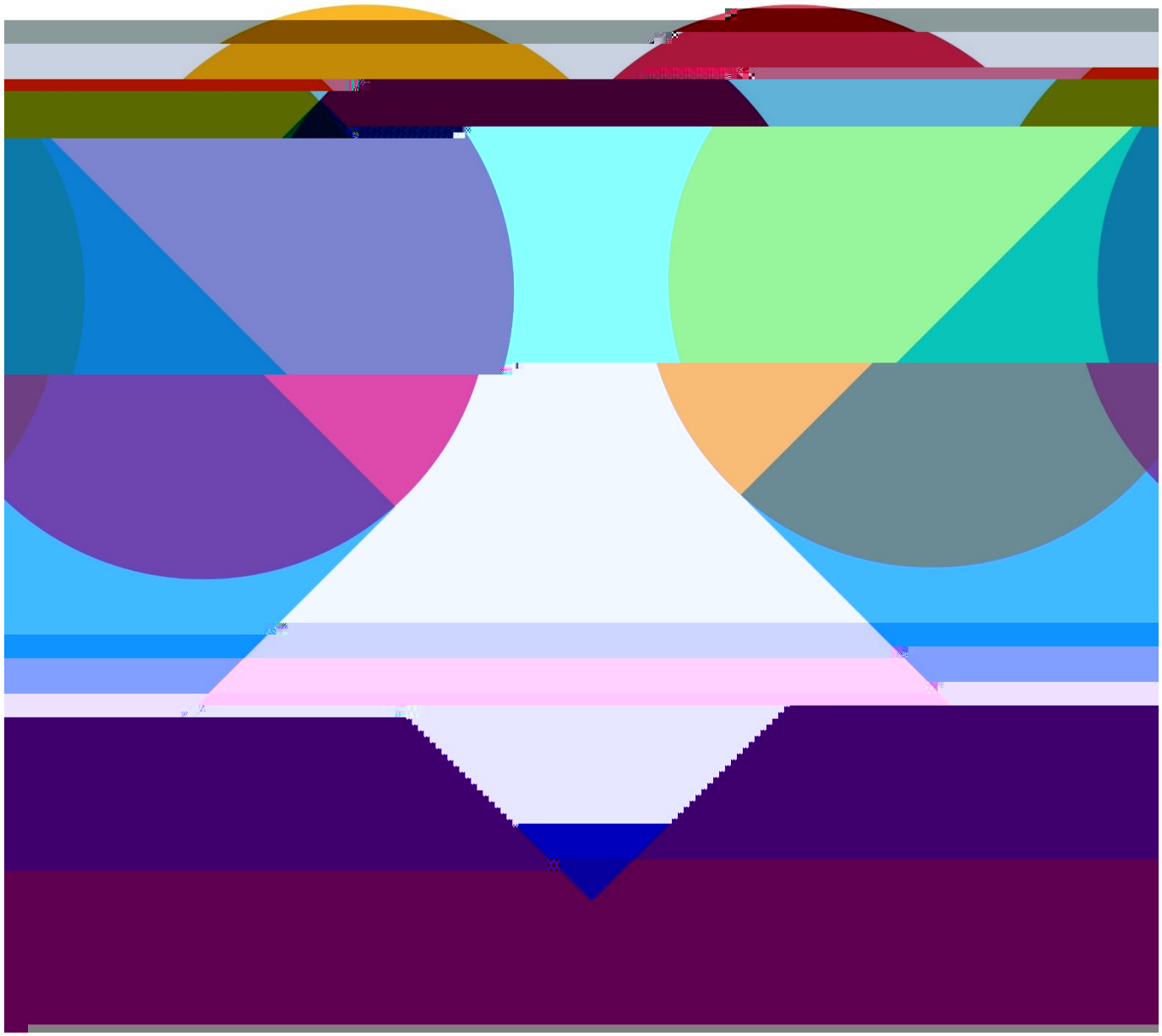
INCLUSIVE SUSSEX



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

2018-2025

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What is equality, diversity and i

In July 2018, the University of Sussex published Inclusive Sussex, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It was published at the same time as A Better University For a Better World Sussex 2025, -2025. Inclusive Sussex was the first enabling strategy to emerge from the Sussex 2025 Strategy and as such its high level ambitions did not have the benefit of consideration alongside other enabling strategies.

Subsequently, our Access and Participation Plan for 2020/21 to 2024/25 was published in 2019, our Estates and Digital Strategies were published in November 2019 and our Sustainability Strategy was published in June 2021. Our People Strategy was approved by Council earlier this year. Alongside this, in October 2021, we appointed our first permanent Pro-Vice Chancellor for Culture, Equality and Inclusion.

Midway through the 7 year strategy and in light of these developments we have taken the opportunity to refresh Inclusive Sussex to provide that additional context and link to the other enabling strategies and delivery programmes across the University. These strategies and programmes are designed to help us meet our goals and ensure that equality, diversity and

changes and initiatives to reflect the changing environment.

The world has changed a lot since we launched in July 2018. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that some work on Sussex 2025 had to be put on hold, some continued as planned and some was fast-tracked, as the University responded to student and staff needs. In addition, the effects of Brexit as well as an uncertain climate for higher education mean that the university reviewed its priorities against its overall strategy to ensure that we achieve our ambitions of being a thriving and vibrant place to study and work.

However, our desire and commitment to do that inclusively, embracing the five core values the University seeks to (promote: kindness, integrity, inclusion, collaboration and courage), has not changed. The creation of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Culture, Equality and Inclusion) ensures strategic oversight at executive level. With the development and publication of all of our enabling strategies to deliver Sussex 2025 we can now articulate how these strategies play a role in delivering Inclusive Sussex. This means that every member of our University Executive Group is committed to ensuring that they deliver their part of our vision for Sussex 2025 inclusively and that equality, diversity and inclusion is a responsibility for everyone within our community.

Professor David Maguire	Professor David Ruebain
Interim Vice-Chancellor	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Culture, Equality and Inclusion)

Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion

Review modes of teaching delivery in order to enhance our pedagogic practices.

For Staff

We have committed in our People Strategy to improving inclusivity by driving forward the actions that will result in reduced pay gaps and a pay framework, benefits and promotional criteria that are open, transparent and foster equality. We will ensure that our remuneration, reward and recognition offer is fair, transparent and effectively delivered with clear review processes and clear criteria for promotion, job evaluation and pay increases.

We will promote and facilitate fair, inclusive, transparent people practice through all the stages of the employee experience. The revision of our HR policies will proactively address inclusivity and allow a diverse workforce to be the best version of themselves, feeling valued for their input and equal in their ability to succeed and be recognised for their successes. We want to be renowned in the sector for our inclusive policies and being a champion of best practice around inclusivity and diversity, leading to improved engagement with our people.

We have made good progress towards our vision and goals. We analyse our staff data as part of our self-assessment process within our programmes of work related to charter applications. This process identifies the barriers we need to address at different points in the employee lifecycle and experience to

Clear criteria for promotion, evaluation and pay increases

Introduce enhanced shared-parental pay provisions

Revised guidance on starting salaries to reduce unconscious bias in these decisions

Analysis of ethnicity/disability pay gap data to identify drivers and recommend actions

Publish intersectional ethnicity and gender pay gap data

Conduct a full equal pay audit

Introduction of an e-recruitment system that supports fair and inclusive recruitment policies and processes.

Goal 2: Diverse Sussex

Be a place that celebrates and proactively supports and encourages diversity.

Diverse Sussex means that the University is firmly committed to creating and sustaining a positive environment promoting diversity and inclusion. We will continue to encourage and celebrate diversity throughout the University.

We are proud of our diverse Sussex community, but we realise that we are not as diverse as we could be and we need to ensure that the working and learning experience we offer is inclusive and supports all members of our community. We will work towards this, mindful of 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, racial harassment and hate crime. Reported incidents will be dealt with swiftly and decisively and we will provide support for those affected. We reviewed our policies on bullying and harassment and published a new Dignity and Respect Policy which will link to our policy on addressing violence and our new processes and procedures for supporting those who experience sexual violence. We have a team of trained Dignity and Respect Champions who provide support to staff who have concerns about dignity and respect at Sussex. We have introduced an online Report and Support tool where students and staff can report unacceptable behaviour either anonymously or by giving their contact details.

How we will deliver Diverse Sussex

Our institutional culture and the behaviours of those in our community are characterised by our core values of inclusion, kindness, integrity, courage and collaboration. We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for every member of our community. We published our Dignity and Respect Policy in 2019. All members of our University community staff, students and visitors can expect to: be valued for their skills, abilities and contributions and be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy; study, work and live on a campus free from bullying, harassment or victimisation or violence and experience no form of unlawful discrimination. The University takes a zero tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, bullying and harassment, and violence. In 2021 we launched the Report and Support tool for staff and students to report unacceptable behaviours either anonymously or by giving their contact details. The tool will better help us to understand and remove the barriers to people reporting incidents of bullying and harassment. This tool will give us better insight and understanding of what the issues are and what we can do to address them and prevent future incidents.

In our People Strategy we have committed to develop a programme of coordinated work across staff experience to address the concern of staff in relation to witnessed and received bullying, micro-aggressions and harassment/disrespectful behaviour. We will use staff survey data to identify underlying causes and set targets for improvement. We will enhance our leadership capability and capacity and promote greater diversity at all levels of institutional leadership by adopting proactive strategies to identify and nurture talent early, to support effective succession planning in building the next generation of academic and professional leaders.

As part of our Learn to Transform Strategy we are developing ways to ensure what and how we teach is as inclusive as possible. Decolonising the Curriculum at Sussex is a collaborative university-wide project informed by insights drawn from research, educational policy and lived experience. We will look to build on this approach to explore the curriculum through further perspectives to make it as inclusive as possible.

Our outcomes in delivering Diverse Sussex will be:

- Staff/students who respect each other, and who are equipped with the tools to address poor behaviour when they see it
- A curriculum which is inclusive and promotes diversity of thought

Activities

Develop a Wellbeing Strategy

Revised Stress Management Policy

Provide clarity on use of the term BAME and how and when we use it and where possible provide better alternative language

Review the process for collection and analysis of feedback from staff in exit interviews/in exit questionnaires to see whether issues relating to protected characteristics are a causal or contributory factor

Improve University external pages and pages for those considering joining the university to showcase our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Black Alumni Project

Publish staff-facing resources to support decolonising the curriculum

Initiatives to increase the diversity of Council and key governance committees to better reflect our diverse community

Goal 4: Accessible Sussex

Provide equal access to excellent learning, research and employment opportunities for all with particular regard to disability and also recognising the accessibility needs of those with other protected characteristics.

Accessible[1] Sussex means that everybody in our community can do what they need to do in a similar amount of time and with the same amount of effort. It means that people are empowered, can be independent, and will not be frustrated by something that is poorly designed or implemented.

Notwithstanding the challenges raised by the topography of our campus, we aim to be fully accessible, 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 impairments and other identities. 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 articulates 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 staff and students.

Our digital strategy sets 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 impairments and other requirements. 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 though kindness, collaboration and courage.

[1] Accessible Sussex does not include access issues covered by the AAP. It relates to physical and virtual accessibility of our services and teaching for staff, students, applicants and visitors

How we will deliver Accessible Sussex

In Building for the Next Generation, the Sussex 2025 estates strategy, we have committed to ensure that the estate is fully accessible for all our staff, students and local communities. An

Goal 5: Flexible Sussex

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, unless there is a good reason, flexible working and all new positions are 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 is 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. We will transform how we work to improve the experience for students and staff.

We have undertaken a range of reviews of how we deliver our services (1PS) /P42d 61 0 0 1 165.5 331.85 Tm

ensures that a diverse range of student needs can be met. We launched our pedagogic revolution in 2019 to encourage dialogue for innovative practice to underpin that flexibility.

We have made good progress towards our vision and goals. Smart Sussex (one of the enabling strategies of Sussex 2025) emphasises the University's ambition to pioneer the use of virtual and augmented reality technologies to deliver a distinctive learning experience for our students. While some progress had already begun on providing a digitally enhanced learning experience, the Covid-19 pandemic escalated the adoption of significant changes to its teaching and learning approaches. Students now have the flexibility to log into Sussex systems remotely and complete their work or studies away from the campus. We have embraced a range of technologies to enable remote study and collaboration for students: Canvas learning-management platform; Panopto lecture-capture software; Zoom video conferencing technology; and LinkedIn Learning.

Our outcomes in delivering Flexible Sussex for students will be:

- Ways of working which improve the experience for students
- Flexible learning pathways (within a range of choices)

Activities

Pedagogic Revolution

Review modes of teaching delivery

Grow alternative and flexible delivery methods

Use IT to enable new ways to deliver our services for students

New ways to access university services

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, July 2022