

Equality Outcomes 2021 - 2025

Development of 2021 – 2025 Outcomes

These outcomes have been developed, in line with best practice provided by the Equality & Human Rights Commissions, to be evidence-based, measurable and achievable within a four-year period.

Equality Outcomes that are relevant to students (outcomes 1 – 4) have been developed through the use of equality monitoring data, considered through the University's annual equality monitoring process which is undertaken as part of the University's annual institutional appraisal. These outcomes reflect key trends amongst the student population over the past five years, and are areas that can be meaningfully addressed during the next four years. A similar approach has been taken for those equality outcomes that relate to staff (outcomes 5 – 7) which have been based on analysis of staff equality monitoring data.

The outcomes have been shared with the University's Equality & Diversity Sub-Committee and the Equality & Diversity Forum with members of both groups subsequently providing input on the development of the outlined actions that sit alongside each equality outcome.

Format of 2021 – 2025 Outcomes

The format of the University's 2021 – 2025 Equality Outcomes has been revised, to better align with best practice and sector guidance. This approach aims to deliver clear, actionable outcomes in a way that can easily be measured to ensure that meaningful progress is made.

This revised approach follows the below format:

1. A clear articulation of the Outcome that the University is seeking to achieve;
2. The inequality that has been identified to be addressed through this outcome, across multiple protected characteristics where relevant;
3. Evidence of this inequality across relevant protected characteristic groups. This includes data extracts from the University's business intelligence tool, RGU Insight;
4. How the University will measure progress against each outcome;
5. An outline of the actions that will be taken in the next four years to achieve the Outcome.

The University's Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025 are as follows:

RGU Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

The University's Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025 are as follows:

1. [Improved retention rates for those more likely to withdraw;](#)
2. [Increased achievement of Good Honours for students with characteristics with achievement below that of the University average;](#)
3. [Increase the overall satisfaction of students with characteristics that have a satisfaction rate below that of the University average;](#)
4. [Increase the proportion of male students who take up a place at the University;](#)
5. [Greater flexibility for staff, creating opportunity and maintaining an inclusive working environment;](#)
6. [Increased and more purposeful engagement with staff across all equality strands;](#)
7. [The number of applications from candidates for senior positions reflect the demographics of the University.](#)

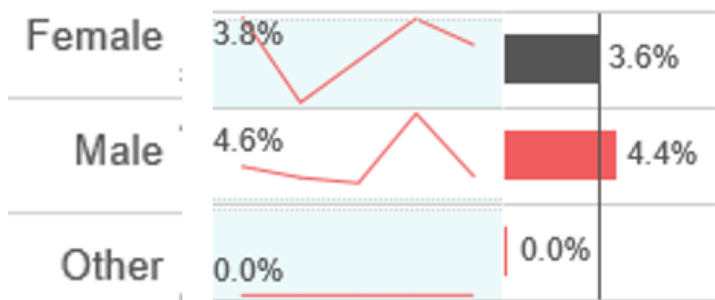
Outcome 1: Improved retention rates for those more likely to withdraw

Inequality:

The University measures withdrawal from courses as an internal measure for continuation. Over the period of the last five years there are a number of trends identifying that certain groups of students have higher withdrawal rates than the University average. This includes:

Male students:

- Although the withdrawal rate for male students declined in 2019/20 (4.4%) it has remained above the withdrawal rate for female students (3.6% in 2019/20) and above the University average for five years.
- It is also of note that the withdrawal rate for gay men (3.9%) and bisexual men (2.2%) in 2019/20 was slightly higher proportionally than the overall enrolment population of these characteristics, although this does account for a small number of individuals and is the first year in the last five that this has been the case.

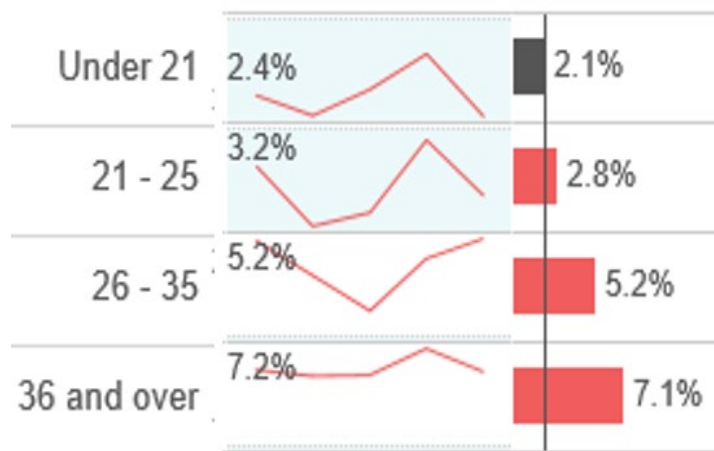


Proportion of Withdrawals at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Sex

Outcome 1: Improved retention rates for those more likely to withdraw

Mature students:

- The withdrawal rate for students aged 26-35 (5.2% in 2019/20) and those aged 36 and over (7.1% in 2019/20) have both consistently been higher than the University average although the withdrawal rate for those aged 26-25 did decrease in 2017/28.
- The highest proportion of both male and female students amongst all age groups who withdrew between 2015/16 and 2019/20 were aged 36+. However, this proportion has decreased for male students from a fall of 41.5% of all male students who withdrew in 2017/18 to 35.4% in 2019/20. As opposed to this, the withdrawal rate for female students aged 36+ has increased since 2017/18 when 35.6% of all female withdrawals were aged 36+ to 38.4% in 2019/20.



Proportion of Withdrawals at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Age on Entry

Outcome 1: Improved retention rates for those more likely to withdraw

Students with a declared disability:

- Withdrawal for students with a declared disability has increased proportionally year on year since 2016/17 (4.2%) to 2019/20 (4.7%) and has been above the University average withdrawal rate since 2016/17.
- For the majority of categories of detailed disability the withdrawal rate was above the university average (4.0% in 2019/20) however several of these categories includes figures >5 resulting in fluctuating trends over the past five years.
- It is of note that the withdrawal rate of those with a declared mental health disability has increased year on year since 2017/18, however



Proportion of withdrawals at an Institutional Level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by declared disability

Outcome 1: Improved retention rates for those more likely to withdraw

Measuring progress:

- Annual equality monitoring
- Course appraisal (including module achievement)

Actions:

- To scope and develop targeted support for male students as part of the 2021 Enhancement Theme project, 'Promoting retention and success through inclusive practice'.
- To deliver an enhanced, targeted study support offer through the RGU Success Programme to intake students identified as being at risk of early withdrawal.
- To undertake a series of focus groups to better understand the lived experience and barriers faced by these students to further inform targeted and meaningful actions.

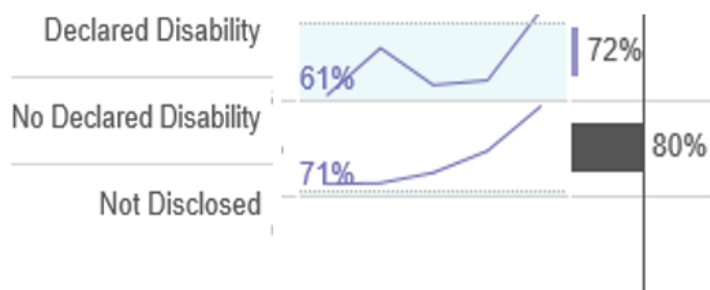
Outcome 2: Increase the proportion of disabled, Black, Asian, and male students who achieve Good Honours

Inequality

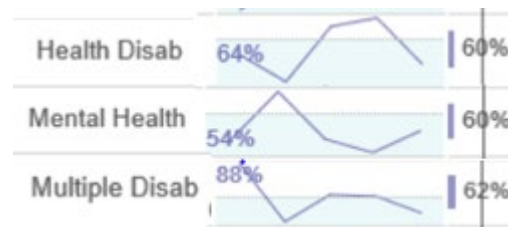
Good Honours accounts for students achieving a classification of 1 or 2.1 of all those who achieved Honours. Over the period of the last five years the following groups of students a trend can be identified showing the following groups of students have achieved Good Honours at a proportion below the University average (79% in 2019/20). This includes the following:

Students with a declared disability:

- The proportion of students with a declared disability who have achieved Good Honours has increased steadily since 2015/16 (61%) to 2019/20 (72%). However this continues to be below the University average and below the achievement rate of those with no declared disability.
- There are three groups of detailed disability which have an identifiable trend of achievement of Good Honours significantly below the University average between 2015/16 and 2019/20, this includes those with a declared health disability, those with a mental health disability and those who have declared multiple disabilities.



Proportion of Good Honours achievement at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Disability



Proportion of Good Honours Achievement at an Institutional level between 2015/16 by 3 detailed disabilities

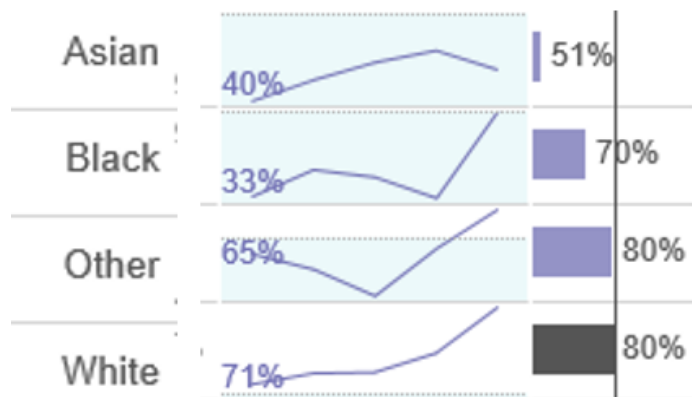
Outcome 2: Increase the proportion of disabled, Black, Asian, and male students who achieve Good Honours

Black Students:

- The proportion of Black students who have achieved Good Honours saw a significant increase between 2018/19 (32%) and 2019/20 (70%) however this remains below the University average, which in 2019/20 was 79%.

Asian Students:

- The proportion of Asian students who have achieved Good Honours had been increasing between 2015/16 and 2017/18, however remained significantly below the University average. A decrease was recorded between 2018/19 (57%) and 2019/20 (51%).

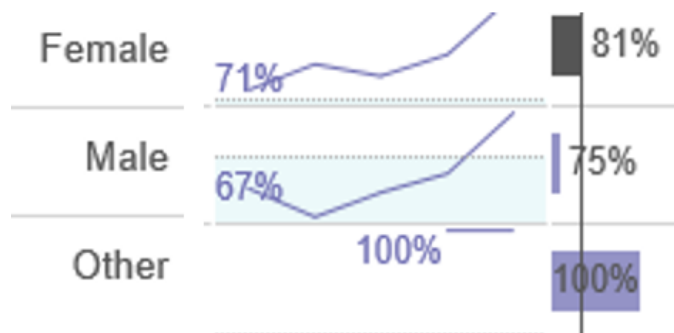


Proportion of Good Honours achievement at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Ethnicity

Outcome 2: Increase the proportion of disabled, Black, Asian, and male students who achieve Good Honours

Male students

- Although the proportion of male students who have achieved Good Honours has increased steadily between 2016/17 (64%) and 2019/20 (75%) the proportion remains consistently below that of the University average and below that of female students achieving Good Honours. This ties in to the overall trend that has been identified in previous equality monitoring reports that across the majority of measures, female students have better outcomes than male students.



Proportion of Good Honours achievement at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Sex

Outcome 2: Increase the proportion of disabled, Black, Asian, and male students who achieve Good Honours

Measuring progress:

- Course Appraisal (including module achievement)
- Annual equality monitoring

Likely Actions:

- To undertake a series of focus groups to better understand the lived experience and barriers faced by these students to further inform targeted and meaningful actions.
- Further actions will be determined in light of this first important step.

Outcome 3: Increase the overall satisfaction of students with characteristics that have a satisfaction rate below that of the University average.

Inequality:

The University measures overall satisfaction through the National Student Survey which provides a split by age, disability, ethnicity and sex. Ethnicity is aggregated in the NSS to: Asian, Black, Other and White. This data is provided from 2017 onwards as a change in questions means earlier years are not comparable. The overall satisfaction of the following groups is lower than the University average:

Students with a disability (excluding a specific learning disability):

- Overall satisfaction for those with a disability (excluding a specific learning disability) has decreased year on year from 2018, counter to that of the overall University trend. It is of note that the overall satisfaction of those with a specific learning disability has increased year on year and is at a four year high, above the University average.
- The University's internal measure of satisfaction, the Student Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) for semester 1 in 2020/21 indicated that 79% of respondents with a declared disability were overall satisfied, as opposed to 81% of those with no declared disability.

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| A specific learning disa.. | 82.46% | 88.46% | 89.71% | 91.80% |
| No known disability | 86.14% | 84.19% | 88.58% | 90.20% |
| Other disability (Exclud.. | 84.29% | 90.80% | 87.37% | 86.23% |
| Total | 85.63% | 85.05% | 88.61% | 89.96% |

NSS Overall Satisfaction % Agree by declared disability

Outcome 3: Increase the overall satisfaction of students with characteristics that have a satisfaction rate below that of the University average.

Black Students:

- The overall satisfaction rate for black respondents to the NSS has fluctuated over the past four years and in 2020 was at a four year high of 85.19%, however across all years this has been below the University average. The semester one SEQ for 2020/21 indicated that 78% of Black respondents were overall satisfied.

Asian Students:

- The overall satisfaction rate for Asian respondents, with the exception of a four year high in 2019, has been below the University average for overall satisfaction. The semester one SEQ for 2020/21 indicated that 82% of Asian respondents were overall satisfied, slightly higher than the University score of 81%.

Other

- The overall satisfaction rate for respondents in the other category have consistently been below that of the University average. The semester one SEQ for 2020/21 indicated that 73% of Other respondents were overall satisfied.

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Asian | 83.33% | 77.27% | 91.95% | 87.21% |
| Black | 82.93% | 84.00% | 83.33% | 85.19% |
| Other | 84.38% | 80.77% | 85.29% | 83.72% |
| White | 85.87% | 85.76% | 88.66% | 90.55% |
| Total | 85.63% | 85.05% | 88.61% | 89.96% |

NSS Overall Satisfaction % Agree by ethnicity

3. Increase the overall satisfaction of disabled, BME and male students

Measuring progress:

- Monitor through NSS and SEQ results.
- Course appraisal
- Annual equality monitoring

Actions:

- To carry out an interim review of student feedback mechanisms ahead of 2021/22, and substantive review thereafter, and consider appropriate content related to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- To extend the 'Annual Appraisal Report of Institutional Student Feedback Mechanisms' for 2021 to include analysis of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- To extend bi-annual school dialogue sessions on institutional feedback mechanisms to include analysis of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- To evaluate the extent to which student representative characteristics are reflective of RGU's student communities and draw upon this to guide future student partnership activities.
- To undertake a series of focus groups to better understand the lived experience and barriers faced by these students to further inform targeted and meaningful actions.

Outcome 4: Increase the proportion of male students who take up a place at the University.

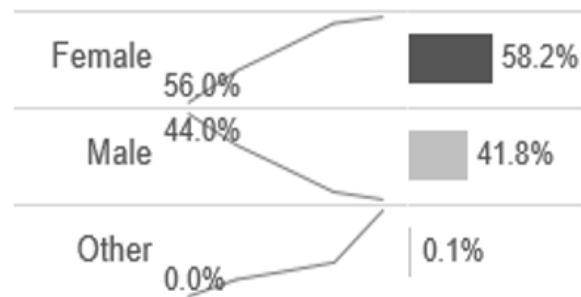
Inequality:

Male students:

- The University overall sees a higher proportion of applications from female applicants than from male applicants although the gap did decrease in 2020/21. The overall gender split of the region (based on 2011 Census data) is slightly lower than Scotland overall. overall gender split within the local area is slightly less than the national (49.4 Male/50.6 Female in Aberdeen City/Shire as opposed to 48.5/51.5 in Scotland).
- The overall difference in the proportion of offers made to male and female applicants has declined year on year since 2017/18 however the proportion of acceptances of those offers continues to be imbalanced. The University has also continued to have a gender imbalance amongst those enrolled, a key area of national improvement through the SFC's gender action plan guidance.

| Application | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Female | 57.16% | 56.86% | 57.29% | 55.29% |
| Male | 42.80% | 43.05% | 42.56% | 44.44% |
| Offers | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
| Female | 54.45% | 53.94% | 53.88% | 51.57% |
| Male | 45.51% | 45.98% | 46.04% | 48.26% |
| Acceptances | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 |
| Female | 52.38% | 51.88% | 51.04% | 52.02% |
| Male | 47.60% | 48.03% | 48.86% | 47.84% |

Proportion of semester one applications, offers, acceptances by sex between 2018/18 and 2020/21



Proportion of Enrolments at an Institutional level between 2015/16 and 2019/20 by Sex

Outcome 4: Increase the proportion of male students who take up a place at the University.

Measuring progress:

- Applications to enrolment monitoring
- Annual equality monitoring

Actions:

- Work with primary and secondary schools within the region to challenge gender stereotyping in curriculum choices
- Work with professional bodies to promote initiatives that support and encourage gender balance on university courses and into employment
- Keep admissions policies under regular review to ensure that unconscious bias is removed from applications processes
- Ensure promotional materials and recruitment activities do not perpetuate gender stereotyping
- Develop a programme of support to individual students who are applying to gender imbalanced subjects where there are in a minority gender group

Outcome 5: Greater flexibility for staff, creating opportunity and maintaining an inclusive working environment

Inequality

The effects of the coronavirus pandemic have had a nationally disproportionate effect on the working habits of women who have disproportionately taken a greater share of childcare and caring responsibilities. This has exacerbated existing inequalities and may lead to an increase in the overall gender pay gap. Additionally, it is recognised that flexible working arrangements can be of benefit to staff with mobility impairments. Finally, instances of mental health issues have increased in the UK as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic which again necessitates a review of working models to ensure we are supporting staff work life balance.

- The University currently has a gender pay gap of 9.84% (mean) / 16.17% (median)

Measuring progress:

- Monitoring of flexible working applications with an equality analysis;

Actions:

- A review of all working patterns with a view to maximising staff work-life balance;
- A review of flexible and home working opportunities;
- A review of reward and recognition for Professional & Support staff.

Outcome 6: Increased and more purposeful engagement with staff across all equality strands

Inequality

Although the University has in place several mechanisms to engage with staff on equality & diversity matters, not all equality strands are equally represented and involved in decision making processes. The University has staff equality champions and a number of staff networks although in terms of the champions several posts are vacant and the staff networks vary in size, scope and purpose. Additionally, the central support for each staff network differs, impacting on the activities and reach of each of the staff networks.

- There are three staff networks currently: LGBT+ network, the women's network and the race equality network
- The equality champion posts currently vacant include age and faith and belief

Outcome 6: Increased and more purposeful engagement with staff across all equality strands

Measuring progress:

- Monitoring the uptake of staff equality champion roles and engaging with those individuals to seek feedback on their role.
- Monitoring staff network engagement in University decision making processes.

Actions:

- Explore option of a dedicated staff resource to advise on equality & diversity initiatives and staff engagement;
- Create opportunities to involve staff in decisions that affect them by developing equality strand action groups;
- Recalibrate role of staff equality champions with staff engagement and representation re-set as role purpose;
- Where appropriate, work with existing staff networks to encourage structure, purpose and cross university representation i.e. are all staff groups represented .

Outcome 7: The number of applications from candidates for senior positions reflect the demographics of the University

Inequality

The University has no BAME staff at the Senior Management Level, which is out of keeping with the University's overall profile. Additionally, there is a low proportion of staff with declared disabilities in promoted positions.

| Grade | Number of Staff | | Percentage of Staff | |
|-------|-----------------|----------|---------------------|----------|
| | BAME | NON BAME | BAME | NON BAME |
| 1 | 23 | 137 | 13.45% | 80.12% |
| 2 | 3 | 72 | 3.90% | 93.51% |
| 3 | 7 | 134 | 4.79% | 91.78% |
| 4 | 2 | 78 | 2.41% | 93.98% |
| 5 | 23 | 122 | 15.54% | 82.43% |
| 6 | 15 | 105 | 12.10% | 84.68% |
| 7 | 20 | 142 | 11.83% | 84.02% |
| 8 | 61 | 369 | 13.68% | 82.74% |
| 9 | 8 | 60 | 11.59% | 86.96% |
| 10 | 3 | 29 | 9.38% | 90.63% |
| Prof | 5 | 19 | 20.00% | 76.00% |
| SMG | 0 | 32 | 0.00% | 96.97% |

Outcome 7: The University's senior management is more reflective of the demography of the University

Measuring progress:

- Monitoring of staff profile by equality characteristics
- Monitoring of promoted positions and the profile of applicants, interviews and acceptances.

Actions:

- In the interests of transparency, publish occupational segregation information for all equality strands;
- Carry out reviews to establish why some equality strands are under-represented at senior level;
- Review practice in relation to succession planning with a view to encouraging staff to work towards and apply for promoted positions;
- Review job advertising and recruitment processes to ensure it reflects the inclusive culture of the university.