



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Executive summary

The University of Stirling Students' Union exists to help provide an excellent student experience at the University of Stirling and our vision is 'To Make Students' Lives Better'. The Students' Union is an independent charity with a diverse and active membership who choose to study at the University of Stirling from across the UK and the world. Across the Students' Union, our staff and our members are already carrying out some great work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Equality is about ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity to succeed or to access services, and is not or discriminated against because of their characteristics. Diversity is about taking account of the differences between people and groups of people, and placing a positive value on those differences. Inclusion is seen as a universal human right. The aim of inclusion is to embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, age or other protected characteristics. It is about giving equal access and opportunities and removing discrimination and intolerance.

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy is supported by our organisational values; Creative, Sense of Belonging, Ambitious, Equality, and Responsibility. With Equality being one of the Student Union's organisational values, this Strategy compliments the Union's Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021.



Introduction

Our vision is that all students at the University of Stirling will have the opportunity to succeed, participate in, and enjoy their time at University. It is our responsibility to provide a voice for all students, it is essential we do this with an understanding of and commitment to the diverse student population. All students are an integral part of the Stirling community – what we gain from diversity is immeasurable.

This Strategy will help us to ensure that the Union is in the best position possible for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to thrive at the University of Stirling. We will ensure that ED&I is embedded in all of our activities and creates an open-minded and safe environment where our employees and members feel valued, have a sense of belonging, motivated and fairly treated. We are committed to the development of a fairer society where diversity is respected, valued and celebrated and where people do not face discrimination, prejudice and oppression but can flourish and reach their potential.

We will create a learning, social and living environment that will enable and encourage all students to experience and celebrate diverse cultures, knowledge and identities. We believe that the changes we implement should be led and informed by the people who it affects the most.

Therefore this Strategy was developed with stakeholder engagement every step of the way and will continue that engagement throughout the implementation stage. Four strategic themes have been identified to achieve this vision.



Strategic Objectives



To ensure that our vision is delivered, four strategic objectives have been created which are concerned with leadership, championing, inclusive spaces and embedding in the curriculum and University policies, procedures and processes. Objectives are outlined below along with the priorities which will support the implementation of each strategic objective respectively.

Committed, visible and vocal Leadership support on ED&I issues and upholding ED&I values

ED&I values will be upheld in all areas of the organisation and will be championed by those in positions of leadership. The Students' Union leadership team will have visible and vocal commitment to supporting ED&I.

Strategic Priorities:

- Ensure all leaders are trained in ED&I and understand their responsibility to seek out and implement best practice.
- Leaders will understand their responsibility to foster an inclusive environment.
- Embedding ED&I in our policies and activities. Make the Student Union's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion vision easily accessible and known to staff.
- Ensuring that ED&I policies are being put into practice and are effective.
- Monitor ED&I performance (using staff engagement survey, equal opportunities monitoring form) and use this data to inform change.

Strategic Objectives

Develop and empower our people to have the knowledge and confidence to champion and challenge effectively

Student Union staff, officers, volunteers and members will be confident and able to champion ED&I and to challenge decisions or situations where this is inconsistent with the Union's values and this Strategy.

Strategic Priorities:

- Invest in ED&I training for staff, officers and volunteers to ensure that they have accurate and up to date knowledge.
- Give staff, officers and volunteers the tools and guidance to enable ED&I to be embedded in all parts of the organisation.
- Highlight and value good practices in respect to ED&I to show a commitment to, and further develop, good practice.
- Deliver a diverse programme of events to raise awareness of ED&I which is open to all members.



Strategic Objectives

Cultivate inclusive spaces and culture to reduce any barriers to engagement and participation

The Union will work to reduce any barriers to engagement and participation in all of its activities. Anyone who wants to participate will be able to, creating a more diverse and inclusive Union.

Strategic Priorities:

- Remove physical barriers to participation and engagement in Student Union activities.
- Create an inclusive atmosphere which nurtures a sense of belonging for all members by communicating effective messages in relation to ED&I.
- Invite challenge and feedback and continually improve and update our practices and remain accountable to our members.
- Celebrate diversity to highlight the benefits of an equal, inclusive and diverse environment.
- Champion and highlight the diversity of the student body.



Strategic Objectives

Embed ED&I into the curriculum and University structures

The Union will influence institutional decision making within the University to ensure that ED&I is embedded into the curriculum and University policies, procedures and processes.

Strategic Priorities:

- Work with the University and lobby for an ED&I approach to curriculum design and policies, procedures and processes therefore embedding E,D and I in the curriculum.
- Encourage University to conduct Equality Impact Assessments on all aspects of curriculum delivery, including assessment, feedback, programme approval, content.
- Ensure consistency in relation to Listen Again, academic adjustments, extensions and extenuating circumstances.



Enablers



Several enablers have been identified which will support, facilitate, and implement the Student Union Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. These three enablers are People, Communication, and Finance and Resources.

People

Embedded in a culture of ED&I we will develop and nurture our people in line with individual and shared objectives, helping individuals realise their full potential.

Communication

Adopting a strategic approach we will communicate through inclusive practices to all of our members ensuring students stay well informed. We will provide simple and clear messages that unite various areas of activity being mindful of ED&I.

Finance and Resources

The Union will commit sufficient levels of resource and the support required to fulfil the aims of this Strategy. The Union will develop a budget line for ED&I.

Student Partnership Agreement

The Students' Union and the University will continue to work on and uphold the actions and activities detailed in the Student Partnership Agreement. This will be ongoing process agreement will be a vehicle to support the implementation of the strategic objectives.

Managing Performance



To ensure that the strategic priorities are realised and make an impact, success will be monitored with the use of several impact indicators:

- Achieving "Leaders in Diversity" accreditation through significant measurable improvement in terms of our ED&I practices.
- The ED&I Steering Group and Champions Group pushing forward the ED&I Agenda and regularly monitor that the Strategy is being delivered.
- Increased involvement from those with protected characteristics will serve as a quantitative measure resulting in qualitative impact in regards to the input and influence that members will contribute.
- Greater awareness of and representation on ED&I issues which will increase stakeholder understanding of the Student Unions' values and create a more inclusive space.
- A greater diversity of staff.

The ED&I strategy will be monitored by the ED&I Steering Group which comprises of the Union President, Chief Executive, Chair of the Trustee Board, VP Education, VP Communities, Sports President, as well as two of the part time Equality Officers.

The ED&I Steering Group will monitor progress and ensure that the Strategy is delivered. Reports of the work being undertaken will be reported to the Union's Trustee Board.

The Union President holds the responsibility for ensuring that the ED&I Agenda and Strategy are progressed. The Union President is expected to work closely with the Dean of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University to ensure that work is not duplicated and there is a joined up approach where appropriate.



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