

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

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Meeting: Board of Governors

Meeting date: Friday, 31 January 2025

Summary: The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report provides an update on the key initiatives and activities that Falmouth has advanced during the 2023/24 academic year, in line with the objectives outlined in our [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement of Commitment](#).

This year, our focus has remained on the three identified priority areas: (1) delivering on Falmouth's [Access and Participation Plan](#) (APP), (2) achieving University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) accreditation and (3) workforce enablement. These efforts reflect our whole-University approach and our ongoing response to both community and societal needs, further reaffirming our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report will be published on the Falmouth University website¹ following review by University Management Committee, Academic Board and the Board of Governors.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** The purpose of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report is to provide assurance regarding our Public Sector Equality Duty, which involves taking steps to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share and those who do not share a protected characteristic; and
 - foster good relations between people who share and those who do not share a protected characteristic.
- 1.2** During this period the University has paid due regard to the above duty as part of decision-making processes. This is evidenced by systematic consideration of equality impacts in committee papers and policies, as well as the regular assessment and consideration of relevant risks in the University's key decision-making forums.
- 1.3** Following a review of the University's strategic approach to fulfilling its Equality Duty, the Board of Governors approved the [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement of Commitment](#) in May 2023.

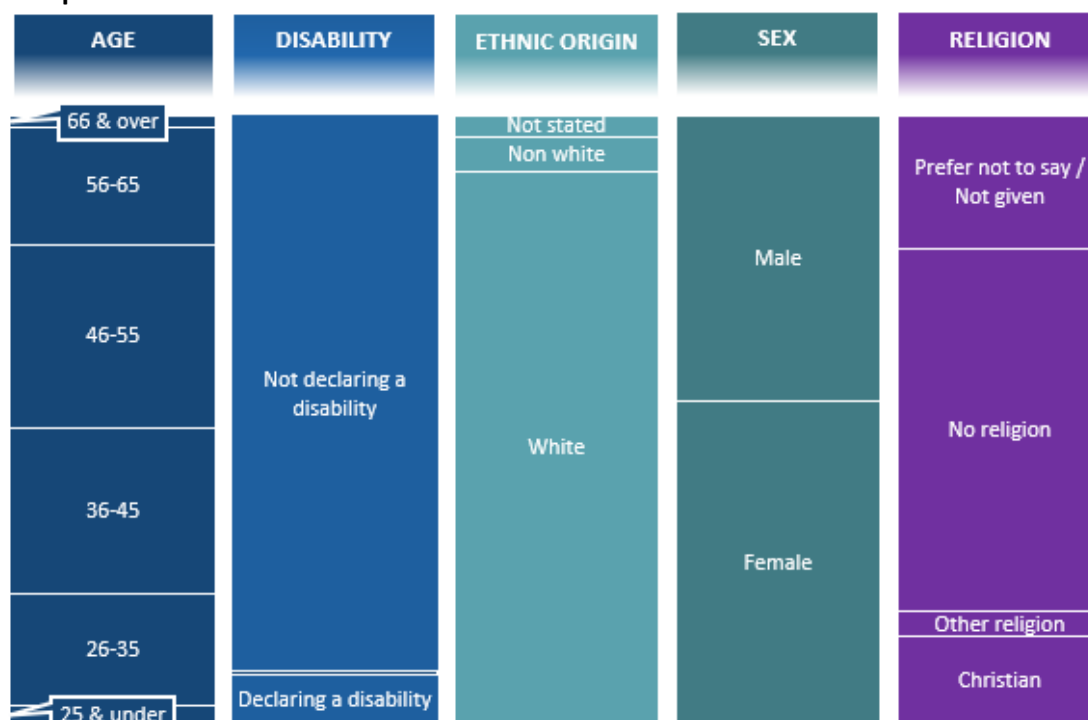
¹ A requirement of the Equality Act 2010

- 1.4 This statement, which aligns with the University’s Mission, Vision and Values, was collaboratively developed by staff and student representatives.
- 1.5 Three major, multi-year, cross-institutional activity strands were identified as core objectives, and work on these three areas has continued in 2023/24. This report provides a summary of progress in these three areas.
- 1.6 Established project steering groups are in place for the Access & Participation Plan and University Mental Health Charter Programmes, with the University Management Committee and Academic Board overseeing risks and developments relevant to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion more broadly.

STAFF PROFILE

2.1 Staff Profile by protected characteristics (%): This chart provides an illustrative overview of Falmouth’s staff profile, categorised by protected characteristics. The accompanying narrative offers a detailed description of the figures and trends depicted in the chart. The data is based on a total staff headcount of 855, with a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 575, including 144 hourly paid staff such as Associate Lecturers and Online Tutors.

Staff profile:



AGE

As in previous years, it is noted that Falmouth’s academic staff group has an older age profile than the national average for the same staff group. Falmouth has a much smaller percentage of its academic staff group in the under 35 age groups than the national average at 12.04% (reflecting a headcount of 50, or 25 FTE) compared to 28.12% nationally, and compared to 14.59% at Falmouth in the previous year. The percentage of academic staff at or above the minimum retirement age of 55 at Falmouth is 28.94% (reflecting a headcount of 125, or 65 FTE) which has remained relatively stable from the previous year (28.79%). The age profile for Falmouth’s non-academic

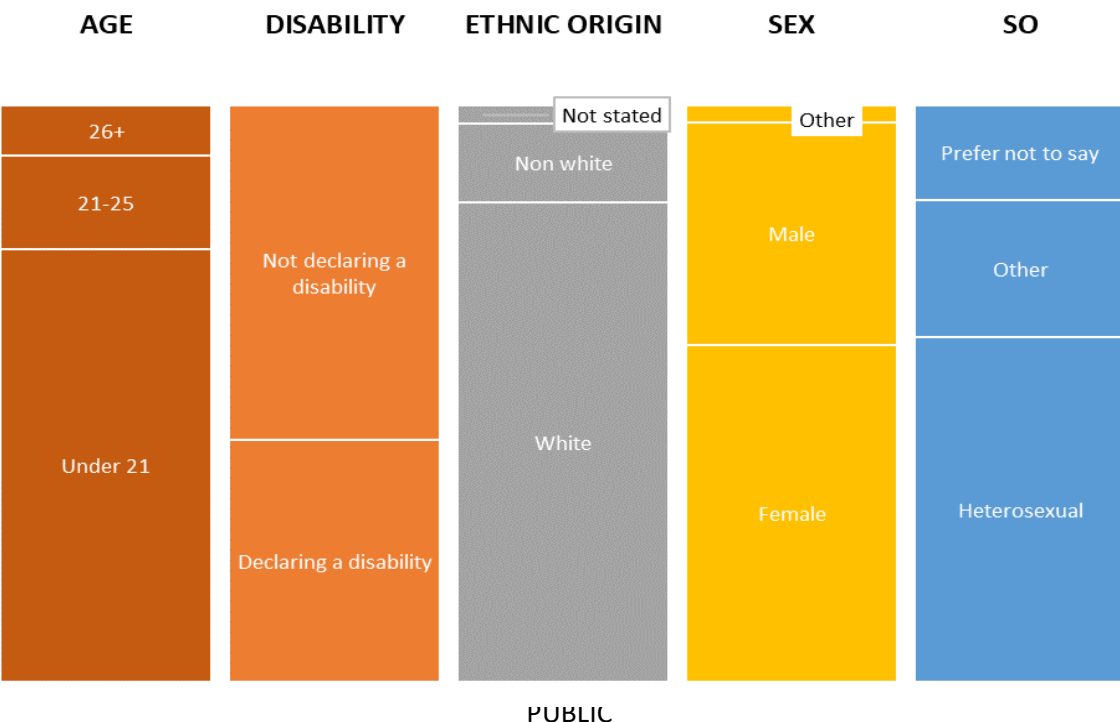
	staff group is more closely aligned with the equivalent national age profile.
DISABILITY	8.77% of staff reported a disability this year (reflecting a headcount of 75), compared to 8.62% the previous year. This remains higher than the latest national sector average (7.17%) which has increased from 6.85% the previous year. Of those staff reporting a disability, the most frequent category apart from 'other' (43%) is 'learning difficulty' (31%). A free text field within the data collection reveals that 'other' is often used where staff members have more than one condition contributing to their disability.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	Falmouth does not currently collect data on staff gender reassignment. However, we are reviewing our data collection policy for this protected characteristic in the 2024/25 year.
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Falmouth began collecting this information following an update to our HR information system in the 2023/24 academic year. Reporting on this protected characteristic will commence in 2025, allowing sufficient time for staff to populate this field.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	Falmouth does not currently report data on pregnancy and maternity. However, we are reviewing our data reporting for this protected characteristic in the 2024/25 year.
RACE	5.85% of Falmouth staff report being from non-white ethnic backgrounds (50 headcount, 25 FTE), an increase from 4.93% the previous year. This proportion is smaller than the national average for higher education (17.40%). However, this figure should be considered in the context of the local demographics: according to the 2021 census data 3.2% of Cornwall residents are from non-white ethnic backgrounds, compared to 18.3% in England and Wales.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	59.53% of staff (510 headcount, 340 FTE) described themselves as having 'No Religion', an increase from 58.73% the previous year. The data also shows that the levels of staff not disclosing their religion or belief continues to decrease (a trend that has been noted at Falmouth in the past 4 years) moving to 21.99% from 22.49% last year.
SEX	<p>The proportion of male staff at Falmouth has increased slightly to 47.02% from 46.30% 12 months previously, reflecting a headcount of 400 males (280FTE). Conversely, the proportion of female staff has decreased slightly to 52.98% from 53.70% 12 months previously, with a headcount of 455 females (295FTE). The proportion of female staff remains slightly lower than the national sector average of 54.91%.</p> <p>The male / female balance is not as even when analysed across occupational groups. For instance, within the online academic staff group, 43.75% of staff are male (30 headcount) and 56.25% of staff are female (35 headcount). However, the average hours worked by</p>

	<p>female staff members are fewer, as the total FTE of female staff (15 FTE) is the same as that for male staff (15 FTE) in this group.</p> <p>The male / female balance is also less even when analysed across pay grades. Only 31.03% of grade 8 and above staff are female (10 headcount, 10 FTE) and 74.14% of grade 3 staff are female (45 headcount, 30 FTE). These disparities across the grades contribute to Falmouth's gender pay gap, detailed in Annex B, with separate figures provided for each employer (Falmouth University and Falmouth Staffing). Falmouth Agency figures are not provided, as the headcount for this employer did not meet the threshold of 250+ workers at the snapshot gender pay gap reporting date.</p> <p>A combined core staffing figure, including staff from Falmouth University and Falmouth Staffing, is also provided for comparison with gender pay gap figures from before the formation of Falmouth Staffing, and includes all of our staff recruited locally / nationally. Falmouth Agency is excluded from this core staffing figure, as its student workers are recruited from within our student population, which has a different profile. It is noted that both the mean and median gender pay gap have decreased slightly from the previous year.</p>
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	<p>9.36% of staff (80 headcount, 45 FTE) indicated their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or other, compared to 9.65% the previous year. This figure is significantly higher than the latest ONS 2022 data, which estimates that 3.3% of the UK population age 16 or over identify as LGB or other.</p>

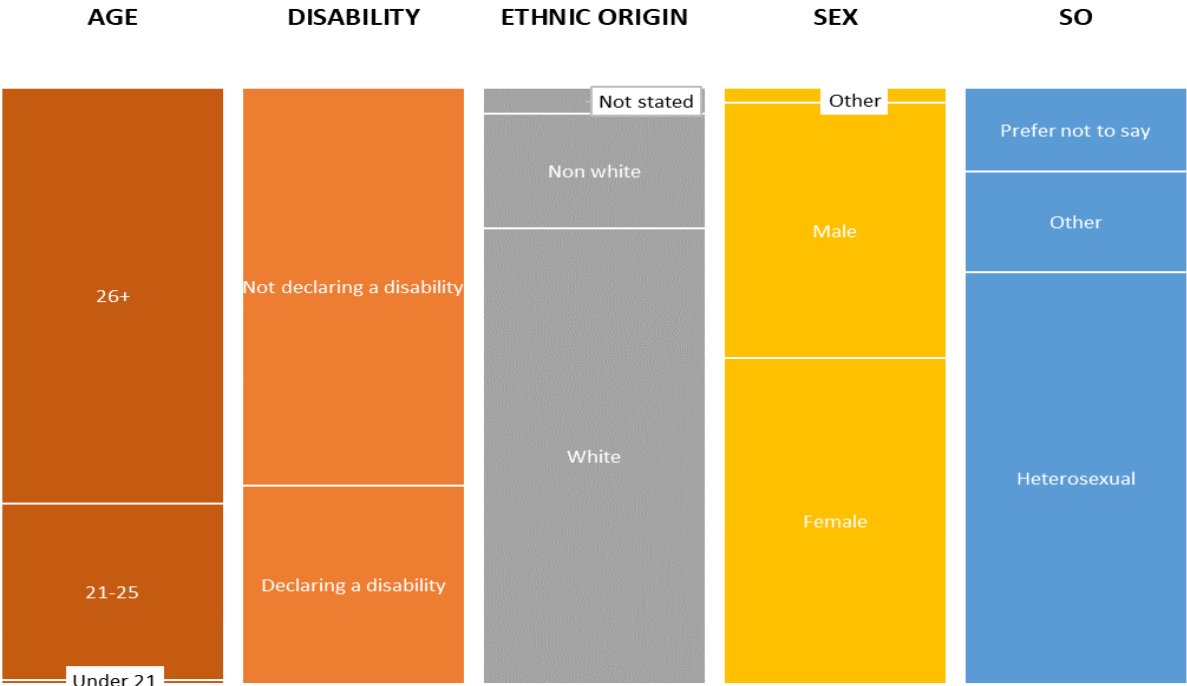
* Headcount and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) figures rounded in line with Falmouth's Disclosure Control and Rounding Policy. National average figures taken from latest published HESA data (2022/23)

STUDENT PROFILE

3.1 Undergraduate Student Profile by protected characteristics (%). This chart illustrates Falmouth's **undergraduate student profile** by some of the protected characteristics. A text description of the figures and trends illustrated by the chart is included in the narrative below.



3.2 Postgraduate Student Profile by protected characteristics² (%). This chart illustrates Falmouth’s new **postgraduate student profile** by some of the protected characteristics. A text description of the figures and trends illustrated by the chart is included in the narrative below.



<p>AGE</p>	<p>The age range of Falmouth students is lower than average but not significantly at variance with other Higher Education Institutions. Our proportion of mature students (26+) is 8.66% in undergraduate study and 69.61% at postgraduate level. This makes sense when viewed in context of our wider portfolio and the relative number of postgraduate courses we offer and the disciplinary spread. We have around 16.14% mature students at undergraduate level between 21 – 25 years old and 29.74% in that age range in postgraduate study.</p>
<p>DISABILITY</p>	<p>The percentage of total UK population that is disabled is c. 22%, meaning that Falmouth has around double the UK national average of disabled students. This is additionally significant as when taken in the context that our good degree outcomes are appropriate and steady (i.e., not over-inflated by Office for Students’ standards) the proportion of disabled Falmouth students securing positive educational outcomes remains high. The numbers from the table above are contextualised further by noting a significant proportion of our 57.90% undergraduate and 66.70% postgraduate students who have declared “no disability” may have nonetheless a non-disclosed learning need which can unnecessarily negatively impact on their academic progress. The literature is still clear that attainment in students with a disclosed disability is not significantly at variance with non-disabled student attainment, but the same cannot be said for attainment in students with an undisclosed disability, which influences the focus of our institutional efforts and informs our oversight of key metrics, such as reasons a student chose to leave study.</p>

² SO = Sexual Orientation

GENDER REASSIGNMENT	The University holds partial data on this characteristic but it is not yet reported.
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	The University does not currently collect data about students' marriage or civil partnership status.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	The University does not currently collect data about students' pregnancy or maternity status.
RACE	83.17% of our undergraduate and 76.49% of our postgraduate student populations are white, with a significantly lower proportion either unknown or non-white. Our OfS endorsed Access & Participation Plan (APP) outlines a diverse range of ways we seek to redress this imbalance in context within the wider aims of the APP and our geographical position, especially with respect to on-campus provision.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	The University holds partial data on this characteristic, but it is not yet reported.
SEX	Our portfolio offer of courses and subject areas are very clearly attractive to female students, with 58.46% of our undergraduate and 54.74% of our postgraduate cohorts identifying as female. Our data has remained consistent in this sub-category year on year since 2020.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	In contemporary Higher Education, students who identify as LGBTQ+ have been found to experience an increased risk of developing depression and anxiety (Neves and Hillman, 2017). The literature is also clear that students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans are at risk of experiencing multiple stressors which can result in negative mental health outcomes (Hatchel et al., 2019). Research also indicates that for students who identify as LGBTQ+, perceptions of safety, acceptance and tolerance (Formby, 2014) are important factors which influence university choice-making. We continue to offer an inclusive and safe community for students of all orientations.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

a) “We will deliver our Access and Participation Plan, which sets out ambitious targets to improve equity of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access Higher Education and support to succeed.”

- 4.1** In 2023, the Office for Students (OfS) approved Falmouth University’s new [Access and Participation Plan \(APP\) 2024-2028](#) (see summary document [here](#)). Falmouth’s APP was one of the first plans to be submitted to the OfS because we volunteered to be in the first phase of new plan development.
- 4.2** Falmouth’s new APP includes both qualitative and quantitative targets. In our new APP, we have analysed data to identify 6 risks to students achieving equal opportunity, set ourselves 6 objectives to mitigate these risks, and added numerical targets to each. We have then developed interventions which are the initiatives/projects/events/processes that will help us to meet our objectives and targets.

4.3 The 11 quantitative (numerical) targets to be met through the Access & Participation Plan as follows. At the most recent point of assessment we had achieved 10 out of the 11 milestones set out in the plan for 2024/25:

TARGET	BASELINE %age	2024/25 Target	July 2024 data
Increase the proportion of Asian, Black, Minority & Other ethnicities.	7.9%	8.5%	9.6%
Reduce the gap between the proportion of IMD Q1 and Q5 entrants.	17.8%	16.0%	12.9%
Increase the proportion of mature students (21 and over at the start of their course).	16.1%	17.0%	17.2%
Reduce the continuation gap between students who were 21 and over at the start of their course and those who were under 21.	7.6%	7.0%	3.8%
Reduce the continuation gap between IMD 2019 Q1 and Q5 students.	15.3%	13.5%	0.3%
Reduce the continuation gap between white ethnicity students and all other ethnicity groups.	7.1%	6.1%	5.0%
Reduce the attainment gap between white ethnicity students and all other ethnicities.	11.9%	11.5%	15.8%
Reduce the attainment gap between disabled students and students with no disability reported.	7.4%	6.5%	1.1%
Reduce the attainment gap between IMD 2019 Q1 and Q5 students.	16.9%	16.0%	11.2%
Reduce the progression gap between IMD 2019 Q1 and Q5 students.	15.6%	15.0%	-9.4%
Reduce the progression gap between TUNDRA Q1 and Q5 students.	9.3%	8.5%	3.3%

* IMD – Index of Multiple Deprivation

4.4 Some examples of interventions delivered in furtherance of the APP and mapped against the above targets include (but are not limited to):-

- A racial equality research project called ‘Antiracism, Access & Inclusion’, interviewing students from different ethnicities, to inform future practice.
- **Supporting Disabled Students:** the Accessibility and QAE teams have produced a guide for staff to provide information and guidance on meeting the statutory requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and sector best practice on supporting disabled students.
- A ‘**Micro-internships**’ programme targeted at underrepresented groups to obtain crucial work experience.
- A **Turing Programme report** shows that in 2023, through the **Go Abroad programme**, 73 students were sent abroad and 64% of participants were either eligible for the disadvantaged uplift or declared special education needs and disabilities (SEND), highlighting the great work done to diversify the students who are applying for these opportunities.

- A **review of accessibility policies and processes** including the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and reasonable adjustments process.
- The implementation of **3 National Saturday Clubs** on campus aimed at local young people from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.
- All Academic teams are working towards **decolonising their curriculum** and considering the inclusivity of all literature/ photos/reading lists used by our students.
- The Cornwall Business School event management courses are accredited by '**Attitude is Everything**' and students have the opportunity to complete the '**Attitude is Everything Disability Equality Training for Live Events**' short course and receive certified recognition. This helps individual students with either physical disabilities, mental health difficulties or learning differences. All students also had the opportunity to complete a short '**eco-anxiety**' course, in response to mental health issues related to climate change.
- The '**Step Into Falmouth**' transition programme is offered to all students before enrolment, to help any students who suffer from acute anxiety, or live with a learning difference, to feel supported as they move from FE to HE study.
- An annual **Transition Event for neurodivergent students** and their parents to attend workshops over 2 days before enrolment, to build confidence and alleviate concerns.
- The University are committed to expanding its **online programmes**, which can be a more appropriate mode of study for mature students, disabled students, or those students living in a disadvantaged area.
- There is now a **Handshake** collection called '**Invests in diversity**' where students can see employers who have committed to making their organisations more inclusive, accessible, diverse, or all of the above.
- The Students' Union offer a '**Creative Hardship Fund**', which is designed to provide financial support for students' final projects, ensuring they have the necessary resources to bring their creative visions to life. It aims to alleviate financial barriers that students may face in realising their projects for third-year showcases, ensuring equal opportunities for all students to excel in their final presentations and enhance their portfolios.

4.5 The overall aim of our APP is to support students to access higher education, to feel supported whilst studying, to help them to achieve their degree and their ultimate career goals. We also seek to continuously develop an environment where all target students at Falmouth University can achieve their full potential. Falmouth University attracts a diverse range of students and has over double the national average of disabled students currently enrolled in 2024. The University still performs exceptionally well within this demographic, for example, the current disabled student versus non-disabled student attainment gap is at 1.1% against a current target gap of 6.5%.

4.6 In addition to our APP target student characteristics, we also aim to support all other underrepresented student groups and recognise intersectionality, for example: young carers; care-leavers/care-experienced/estranged students; students from Gypsy/ Roma/ Traveller heritage; students from military families; asylum seekers/refugees; and students who identify as LGBTQ+. We support these students through initiatives in collaboration with the Students' Union, other Universities, external organisations and partners. A more detailed Annual Report on AAP activity is provided in Annex D.

b) “We will achieve University Mental Health Charter accreditation, taking a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing that seeks to shape a future in which everyone can thrive”

4.7 Progress towards achieving the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) is advancing through the dedicated four workstreams: LEARN, SUPPORT, WORK and LIVE. These workstreams are guided by the UMHC Steering Group, chaired by the Vice Chancellor & Chief Executive. The Steering Group has worked to collate, coordinate and integrate the various workstreams, to meet the Student Minds Principles of Good Practice and prepare for Falmouth’s accreditation submission, aiming for Charter status assessment in early 2025.

4.8 Summary of key achievements for each workstream within the reporting period:

LEARN Workstream:

- ‘Institutional Placement Provision: developing culture and practice’. This has been achieved whilst implementing UUK Guidance on Supporting Placement Students.
- We have undertaken and completed a Healthy Curriculum diagnostic review of our entire on-campus provision using a Falmouth peer-review published methodology, where each UG on-campus course now has an output of where they are demonstrating strengths and where there may be areas for improvement.
- We have developed and applied a novel attribute mapping methodological approach to allow us to evaluate the entire range of activities mapped against a discrete set of attributes that benefit transition into and through learning. This mapping forms the basis of Themes 1 and 3 within the LEARN workstream and offers insight and assurance we are having a positive impact.

SUPPORT Workstream:

- Reviewed the University’s emergency contact process, updating it in accordance with UUK Guidance.
- Implemented new Compassionate Communications Guidance.
- Formalised Risk Management and Clinical Governance Policies for Student Support.
- Developed a, 'Something not right/working' process to help students easily raise a concern about support (e.g., Therapy, Accessibility, Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA), Student Support).
- Review of Student Support capacity with relevant internal and external benchmarks.
- Closer working with external DSA providers, including procedures for regular updates from and referral guidance.
- Continued operation of the Wellbeing Opinion Panel co-created with students.
- National Student Survey (NSS) Q26 2023 action plan, and 2024 analysis and action plan development.
- The workstream has also progressed work to develop evaluation mechanisms for welfare services.

Significant activity was also undertaken during the period to implement Falmouth’s Suicide Safer University Plan. This has covered online staff training, improving access to

support services, developing trauma informed practices in Support Services and improving information sharing.

WORK Workstream:

Efforts have focused on further developing, embedding and advancing Falmouth's approach towards meeting the UMHC Principles of Good Practice:

- Introducing the People Success Directorate with a focus on encouraging staff and student participation in the development, promotion and implementation of wellness and wellbeing support strategies, emphasising Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives.
- This year, the annual 3-day all staff Nexus (staff development) event included our first People Nexus activities. These included opportunities to engage in learning and explore available support for: Coaching, Handling Difficult Conversations, Librarian Allies, Looking Back & to the Future, Reasonable Adjustments, Thinking about Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship, Working with Neurodiversity, and the Workload Allocation Model (WAM).
- Introduced through Falmouth's internal communications team, the annual EDI calendar raises awareness, recognition and celebration of multicultural events.
- Enhancements have been made to further develop Falmouth's Performance Development Review (PDR) framework, now including and emphasising wellbeing.
- To complement the current Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) support provided through our external partner, we now offer dedicated wrap-around support at both an individual and team level. Additionally, we have onboarded a new Occupational Health provider.
- Academic networks for the Heads of Subject and Course Leaders have been reestablished, featuring a Teams chat channel for informal support and regular meetings for formal support and information sharing.
- In consultation with our recognised Trade Unions, Falmouth has refreshed and expanded our suite of supportive people policies and robust processes to support staff, promoting fairness and equity.
- The new On Campus Academic Workload Allocation Model (WAM) has been collaboratively developed and pilot launched for the 2024-25 Academic Year.
- Intranet pages have been updated, making it easier to find and access the updated HR toolkits for staff supporting poor mental health and wellbeing, as well as Teams channel information.
- Self-care is now proactively promoted through Falmouth's intranet pages, internal communication campaigns, on campus wellbeing fairs and initiatives, alongside Falmouth's Mental Health and Wellbeing Approach and Commitment which is published and promoted digitally through our Intranet.

LIVE Workstream:

- Coordinated and facilitated staff networks, including neurodiverse and the Menopause Cafés.
- Coordinated events for groups more at risk of isolation for example, mature/international/disabled students at induction and throughout year, including the introduction of The Students' Union collectives for 24/25 and a much-enhanced ResLife offer.
- Managed cross partnership communication campaigns, covering subjects such as loneliness, stress and sleep.
- Worked with Action for Children to provide an eight-week course supporting students to develop life skills for university.
- Developed enhanced induction activities for neurodivergent students.
- Held two Wellbeing and Inclusion Fairs.

- Ran the Don't Ignore the Signs campaign twice. This campaign highlights signs of unhealthy relationships.
- Updated the handbook sent to students prior to starting university as well as provided a Wellbeing booklet given to first years with keys and emailed to second and third years.
- Reviewed and improved connectivity between Student Support, Safety and Support and Halls teams.
- Ensured that posters for connecting with Student Support and how to 'Look After Your Mate' are widely visible in flats.
- Worked closely with the Bridge project and Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) to bring representatives onto campus to provide Sexual Violence/Domestic Abuse support.
- Worked with Healthy Cornwall for stopping smoking and healthy lifestyle advice and Addiction Recovery Agency (ARA) Recovery for All for Gambling support and advice onto campus.
- Introduced another Peer Support group for students experiencing bereavement.
- Continued to deliver training for supporting Autistic students and those with ADHD to front line student support teams.

4.9 This significant and meaningful programme of work underscores the University's commitment to both our Student and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing agendas. We recognise the importance of this initiative and remain dedicated to its success.

c) "We will enable our workforce to continually develop socially responsible curricula, research, knowledge exchange and ways of working, and to enact positive, values-aligned change at all levels of the University"

i) Socially responsible curricula

4.10 A socially responsible curriculum is defined as a curriculum that helps its students develop the skills and knowledge to be effective and compassionate in an uncertain world. With increasingly complex student needs entering higher study, and mental health as a key driver of student choice and behaviour, we are broadly defining social responsibility through a lens of wellbeing and sustainability; in an evidence-informed way that allows us to measure and develop our curricula at scale and systematically to assure and enhance student success and student outcomes. This year we have published and applied two separate novel methodologies used to evaluate wellbeing and transition attributes (outlined below) as well as more granular interventions such as the suite of study trips / external visits, sustainability themes workshops and events and a wide range of student creative projects that explore artistic expression through a current world lens.

4.11 Transition Attributes

The Transition Attributes (TA) framework is an evaluative pedagogic tool which allows us to map all transition activities across 12 domains in 4 themes which are directly congruent with established higher education sector "Graduate Attributes" literature. Each discrete transition activity we offer is **mapped** against the TA's, using sentiment analysis to visually articulate linkages between discrete domains and further quantify those linkages to measure the degree of presence of each domain in the activity. What this means in terms of the visuals presented below, is that distance from the centre is a relative measure of presence for each transition attribute domain.

4.12 Sustainability and Curriculum

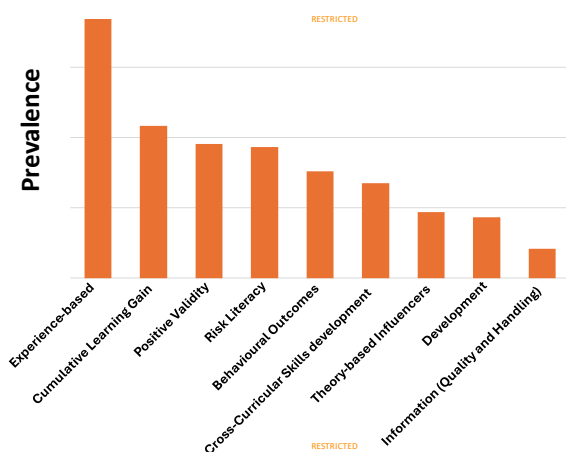
Building on our momentum from the 2021-22 academic year, we continue to review our new and existing course portfolio using the Falmouth Curriculum Ladder for Sustainability (FCL-S) framework approach. From last year, we have analysed an additional 28 courses (*a total of 58 courses complete to date*) which helps us generate a comprehensive, consistent and data-informed baseline understanding of how sustainability-lined content is embedded across our curricula. This empowers us to target and design sustainability learning into new and re-approving courses to keep our curriculum current and reflective of the importance of sustainability for education.

4.13 Peer Support Mentoring

Our Student Mentor program pairs senior students with new students to provide support, guidance, and a sense of community. Mentors assist with orientation, academic advice, and social integration. The Student Mentors collaborate with university staff and student services to further enhance student well-being and success in a pastoral capacity. The program emphasises a reciprocal and supportive peer-mentoring model, benefiting the wellbeing and confidence of both mentor and mentee.

4.14 Healthy Curriculum Review

The graph (below) offers a summary of our whole university curriculum mapping completed this year; each course having been mapped against the nine ladder themes.



The collective results show each discrete theme in order of prevalence for assurance there are no gaps and to allow focus for future course improvement and portfolio development to strengthen specific thematic areas. This work forms the basis of our learning and teaching workstream as part of the University Mental Health Charter.

ii) Socially responsible research and knowledge exchange

4.15 Postgraduate research (PGR): equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of the work being undertaken at postgraduate research level. Active and positive steps are being taken to instil an awareness and understanding of the importance of foregrounding equality, diversity and inclusion in our research practices. We have successfully expanded the Research Student Development Programme to include sessions which continue from last year on wellbeing; 'Writing for Stress Management; Self-Care as a Researcher', a session on diversity of learning needs; 'Neurodiverse Learning', and a session providing rich discussion entitled, 'Decolonising Your Research'. We continue to run sessions on Research Ethics.

Our keynote speakers this year have helped us focus on issues around equality, diversion, and inclusion. Dr Parthana Purkayastha (Royal Holloway University), presented her research titled 'Decolonising Human Exhibits: (Im)possible Reenactments' at the summer symposium. This year we celebrated Black History month with a one-day symposium. Led by Professor Lee Miller, speakers included

Falmouth PGR students, staff and two keynote speeches from experts in Black history, Professor Prof. LaGarrett J King, (University of Buffalo) and Dr Carmaletta M Williams, (Black Archives of Mid-America). The event was extremely successful, and Black History month will continue to be a part of the PGR events calendar each year.

We have a new round of Doctoral Briefs currently with open calls. These have been selected with a view to enhancing equality, diversion, and inclusion and include a new brief on neurodiversity and magical thinking. We have an Expression of Interest optional submission which allows potential students to get feedback and ask any questions. This is designed to enhance accessibility to the PhD programme and help to demystify the process and affords those from diverse backgrounds access to academic support in advance of formal application. We are also planning on changing how we run the interviews for PhD places and, to improve accessibility, prospective students will be given access to the questions that will be asked at interview in advance.

We have refreshed the PGR Hub and Learning Space resources to provide easy access links to access all wider institutional support services available to students such as Academic Skills Advisors, Accessibility & Inclusion, Support & Wellbeing, ensuring awareness of the breadth of services available to all students. Our PGR students have ILPs (Individual Learning Plans) if needed in line with taught courses and with this information we are able to make reasonable adjustments for them.

We are creating the conditions in as many ways as we can to ensure that a diverse and inclusive PGR community can build and thrive.

4.16 The postgraduate research community has been an active voice in equality, diversity and inclusion contexts. PGR students gave presentations at the Black History month symposium and several are working on projects that have equality, diversion, and inclusion at their centre. This includes scholarly and practice PhD projects exploring issues of race, neurodiversity, and gender. Students have contributed to the Attune project led by Oxford University. Students are also continuing work with The Brilliant Club and a new call has been posted for PGR students to participate in the university access charity focused on increasing the number of less advantaged students accessing universities.

4.17 Research and knowledge exchange projects:

Attune

This project uses creative arts practice to enhance multidisciplinary research projects and support the mental health and wellbeing of staff and students. The Attune Project is therefore a large-scale research initiative focused on understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on adolescent mental health. It is jointly led by Falmouth and Oxford Universities, with several other academic partners including universities of Leeds, Kent, UCL, QMUL, KCL, and Greenwich, and other non-academic partners including Young People Cornwall, NSPCC, Aardman Animations, Cornwall Council, Theatre Troupe. By employing arts-based methodologies, Attune aims to uncover hidden experiences and insights from young people, used to develop impactful public health resources and a digital game to support young people's mental health.

Springboard Studios

Springboard Studios came to an end in December 2023. We are exploring a further programme focused on retention of students in the first year and have approved the development of an online short course 'Wellbeing Through Creativity' based on the

research and work undertaken through this project. The Springboard programme provided place based, blue mind, creative opportunities, based on the 5 ways of wellbeing to support students to emotionally regulate, reduce self-sabotage, increase confidence and self-belief and support their transition into employment through the development of live briefs with local Charities and Social Enterprises. The optimisation of place, alongside the implementation of blue mind, demonstrated the power of creative thinking when supporting students in this crucial transition.

CREATE

Through the CREATE project we are exploring bringing youth, science and art researchers together to develop methods and resources that unlock the learning potential from arts-based processes and outputs in mental health research. Early insight is emerging about the power of arts as an inclusive methodology within research related to adolescent loneliness. The insight from the project will be brought back into the university to influence mental health arts-based research within the Centre for Arts and Health.

Charismatic

Charismatic is a research and development project supported by Innovate UK led by Oxford based AI company Charisma, working with Falmouth University's Sound/Image Cinema Lab, University of the Arts London's Creative Computing Institute, Channel Four, Aardman Animations, Sound Reactions, and digital sociologist Lisa Talia Moretti.

Charismatic is a powerful technology ecosystem that helps new and existing writers and producers generate and improve scripts, storylines and characters with ease. A keystone of our research is working with screen partners to discover the potential of emergent technologies to aid and advance creative practice. A central theme of this project is the use of these technologies in assisting creatives in developing their work for the screen and providing tools with which we can enable underrepresented groups through lowering the barriers to film and television production.

4.18 Academy of Continuing Education

On-Demand learning at Falmouth University supports Knowledge Exchange by bridging academic expertise with societal needs, delivering economic, social, and wellbeing benefits locally and further afield. The short course department offers a diverse portfolio of innovative, professionally focused, and leisure-oriented courses that align with regional and national priorities while promoting lifelong learning and personal development. These offerings, including CPD courses and summer school provision, are tailored to address skills gaps in areas such as digital technology, immersive media, and green innovation, while also fostering creativity, resilience, and adaptability.

As an example, Falmouth University deliver a 2-week short course in partnership with Attitude is Everything, focused on upskilling students and those involved in the visitor economy on how to improve accessibility and access in the live events sector.

By leveraging its Virtual Learning Environment(VLE) platform for online delivery, the University ensures accessible, high-quality learning experiences for diverse participants, including those in rural and underserved areas undertaking on-demand learning. This provision not only empowers individuals to enhance their personal and professional lives but also strengthens community cohesion and resilience, contributing to the broader wellbeing and cultural vitality of Cornwall and beyond.

4.19 Launchpad Futures

St Austell Brewery

Working with staff and students from the Cornwall Business School, two initial sessions focused on accessibility for people that are d/Deaf, disabled or neurodivergent were delivered to St Austell Brewery staff and their board of directors. The Brewery is investigating their response to accessibility as part of one of their key development areas for 2025. The presentations highlighted the issues faced by people who have accessibility requirements partially in relation to events, and hospitality venues, and provided context for discussion and recommendations.

Stitches & Cream

Launchpad Futures is working with the School of Film and TV to develop a campaign for local business Stitches and Cream. The Campaign aims to bring into the spotlight the life-changing impact of *The Flock*, a membership-based organisation built around knitting, community, and empowerment for women aged 50-70. *The Flock* isn't just a group—it's a growing global family, with members from America, Canada, Denmark and New Zealand. A place where women can share their passions and support one another through life's highs and lows. With powerful member stories, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and heartfelt testimonials, the campaign will seek to convey how this network goes beyond knitting – showcasing a community where lives are woven together, creating strength, confidence, and new beginnings.

SpySquad

Through the Launchpad Futures internship programme we facilitated the opportunity and employment of four students from the Games Academy. They will support local start-up Spysquad HQ, in the production and development of a new to market 2D Digital Game, that is specifically designed to support the personal development and mental health of young people, particularly those who have been diagnosed with autism and Aspergers. The digital game platform is designed to engage critical thinking and problem-solving skills, promote emotional intelligence, awareness of self and others. The project is being supported by a local consultant from Pendigital, with the launch scheduled in time for the Tech Cornwall Festival on 15.02.25.

4.20 Centre for Heritage, Culture & Society

The research Centre for Heritage, Culture & Society has 'Equality and Inclusion' as one of its three core themes, with social justice more broadly underpinning its critical heritage approach. Projects addressing EDI issues include Re:voice and INTANGIBLE, considering the social dynamics and ethics of how different groups engage with and value culture and heritage.

4.21 Entrepreneurial Futures

Through SPF (Shared Prosperity Fund) funding, the team supported Co Motion, a recently launched community interest company based in Cornwall which connects neurodiverse artists with creative technology through the process of collaboration and play. Co Motion identified a need to facilitate a south-west platform through which neurodiverse artists could harness technology to tell stories in new ways, and their project activity is co-designed alongside the artists with whom they work. In 2024, Co Motion artists have been collaborating with South-West based artists and Falmouth University students to create work for Cornwall Film Festival and the Real Immersive 360° Dome in Plymouth.

Co Motion attended an Entrepreneurial Futures micro-residency to upskill their team and explore ways in which immersive technologies could help them to deliver

workshops to artists with different sensory and processing requirements, with the aim of creating as equitable a process of skills development for artists as possible. For the creation of 3D assets, the Co Motion team were introduced to LiDAR and photogrammetry, Polycam and Blender, and through discussions with the Falmouth team they were able to identify which hardware to invest in that would support the project's needs.

4.22 Research & Knowledge Exchange Staff Support Schemes

The staff support schemes created using core QR (Quality-Related) funding and HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Funding) have been utilised to support a breadth of relevant knowledge exchange and research projects, including:

The Live Audience Accessibility & Augmentation 2 Beat Blocks (LAAA2BB) project

LAAA2BB supported an innovative new business to introduce the potential of haptic technology to music festivals, disability organisations and policy makers. Meanwhile, LAAA2BB field research measured audience and policy maker perceptions of the BEAT BLOCKS haptic dancefloor. LAAA2BB worked with partners to introduce audience members who are d/Deaf, disabled or neurodiverse to BEAT BLOCKS.

EDI Pilot Podcast

Funding was granted from the Supporting Impactful Knowledge Exchange scheme to support the creation of a pilot Equity, Diversity and Inclusion podcast around research carried out in 2022. The podcast would share and disseminate the research to a wider audience including members of the public locally, nationally and internationally through the exchange of ideas, evidence and expertise, with the aim of influencing policy, individuals and organisations within Cornwall, nationally and beyond as part of an effort to make societal change.

Voices from the Edge: Women and the Cornish Music Ecology

This activity was based on Participatory Action Research (PAR) with women and gender non-conforming students and graduates from music courses involved in quantitative and qualitative research which would culminate in an evidence-based report on gender and music in Cornwall and recommendations for how to grow Cornwall's music and sound culture and opportunities. The activity is, in part, geared towards creating a network of key stakeholders with the aim of addressing gender discrimination in the economy and culture. This is through building a connected, minority gender-inclusive, and sustainable culture in music and sound at a regional level, and primarily directly in relation to the Cornish creative culture and economy, whilst in dialogue with the Southwest more broadly.

Routes to Renewal in Outpatient Departments: A catalyst for change through autobiographical and transdisciplinary ethnography

The 'Routes to Renewal' project developed following the call by the Southwest Outpatient Transformation Group (SWOTRG) to support the exploration of lived experiences of people who have been in receipt of outpatient services. Falmouth University, in conjunction with members of the SWOTRG developed a research approach that optimised creative practice (creative writing and autobiographical reflection) as the lens through which to surface the unseen and unheard lived experiences of people that have journeyed through outpatient services in the southwest. Funded by a small HEIF grant, the investigators devised a three-pronged approach to allowing people to voice and explore their own outpatient experiences. Emphasising the personal, the primary research question 'What are the lived experiences of adults who have used outpatients'

services in the past 2 years?’ was answered via three parts of the study: a mobile phone based survey, an informal interview, and arts-based creative practice. This project has access and equality at its core. The project which ended in July 2024 was intended as a pilot for a larger study that will have a positive and real-life impact on outpatient experience.

iii) People and Culture

4.23 There are several initiatives being progressed and led by the People and Culture Team, which support workforce enablement, as well as progressing our achievement towards the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC).

4.24 Talent Development

In response to our changing business needs, and to enhance a culture of growth and opportunity at Falmouth, we have been intentionally shifting our focus towards developing our internal talent. Amongst staff in post at the end of the 2023/24 academic year, 66% of those who were appointed to their role within that academic year were internal appointments. To support this, we have developed and introduced an in-house app to further enhance our Performance and Development Review (PDR) process. This tool alongside embedded academic career frameworks, progression procedures, and mentoring and coaching opportunities, enables our staff to take charge of their career development, and strengthens our internal talent pool.

In 2023/24, to build community and connection at Falmouth, an additional day of networking and personal development opportunities, known as People Nexus, was added to our annual academic staff development event. This day was opened to all staff to share knowledge, discuss key topics and build crucial networks among the University community, and included a programme of sessions on topics such as reasonable adjustments, working with neurodiversity, handling difficult conversations, and coaching for growth.

We have also continued to enhance the internal development resources and opportunities available to all staff, including the provision of online Suicide Prevention Training to support our Suicide Prevention Plan and our work towards the UMHCh, and Sexual Consent Training to improve knowledge and understanding within our campus community around the issue of sexual violence.

4.25 People Experience

We have actively progressed new initiatives and feedback mechanisms, including:

- Piloting a new Workforce Allocation Model developed in response to feedback in our 2023 Wellbeing & Belonging Survey and facilitating discussion sessions with academic colleagues to collect initial feedback on the model and approach.
- Reviewing our Family Leave, Discretionary Leave and Flexible Working Policies and Procedures to ensure staff have access to a comprehensive range of options to support their work life balance.
- Undertaking a sexual harassment risk assessment and developing an accompanying action plan setting out how we intend to improve policy, guidance, and training in the 2024/25 academic year to strengthen our approach to harassment prevention.

4.26 People Success

Finally, in 2023/24 an appointment was made to the new role of Head of People Success. This role, embedded within our academic leadership team, is focussed on bringing together our wellness and wellbeing support strategies, with an emphasis on

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives. The role works closely across all stakeholders, at a whole university level, to foster a thriving and inclusive community and enact positive change in line with our mission, vision and values, and fulfilling our people commitment to staff and student success.

5 ANNEXES

- a) [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement of Commitment](#)
- b) [Staff Equality & Diversity Dashboard 2024](#)
- c) Access & Participation Plan 2024-2028 ([full plan](#), [3-page summary](#))