



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING REPORT

| 2025

# ACCESSIBILITY UPDATES



Our Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report shares our work to remove barriers for protected groups in the last four years, 2021 - 2025. It also outlines the next steps in our plan to keep making things better for students, staff, and our wider community over the next four years, 2025 - 2029.

We decided to make accessibility-focused changes to this document so that it is easier to understand. The groups most likely to be affected by the data and decisions in this report should be able to read it. We are doing everything we can to make this possible.

We hope this approach will help all readers find out about our equality work more easily. You can find out about the general improvements we have made on the next page. If you encounter any accessibility issues while reading this report, please get in touch with us to see if we can make adjustments.

## GET IN TOUCH WITH US



You can phone us on 01738 877 000



If you use British Sign Language, you can use [Contact Scotland BSL](#) to connect with a video interpreter to help you speak with us over the phone



You can email us at [pc.equality.perth@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:pc.equality.perth@uhi.ac.uk)



## DESIGNING THE REPORT

This document uses high contrast colours and clear fonts similar to those on our website and printed marketing materials. Charts and graphs have been checked with protonopia and deuteranopia filters to improve accessibility for colourblind readers.

Most of the text is font size 14 with increased line spacing. This allows us to make sure that sections using smaller text (such as graphs or charts) are still easy to read.

We use visual elements, including images, to support text within this report. Hyperlinks are highlighted with a dotted underline.

We have made sure that all non-text elements are supported by explanations in the body text, so that any readers who find graphics inaccessible can access the same information. If you encounter any issues with screen reading software, please contact us for a plain text version.



## WRITING THE REPORT

We wrote this report in Plain English, using short sentences and the simplest language possible.

Each word fits completely in one line to make sure there are no unnatural breaks in how a sentence should flow.

Some of the words and phrases in this report are familiar to people working in education but might not be clear to other readers. When we use these, we will explain what they mean.

# HELPFUL CONTEXT

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL



I am incredibly proud to present our Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming Report 2025, which demonstrates our continuing commitment to ensuring that all of our students and staff are valued and respected.

Here we set out our strategy for embedding equality through everything we will do over the next four years, grounded in our longstanding belief that a culture which celebrates and promotes inclusion is one that enables great learning and teaching to take place.

We highlight the progress we are proud of, the areas where we can improve, and set ambitious but achievable goals to keep equality at the heart of our organisation. We will listen to the unique perspectives of our staff and students and implement measures to promote fairness, challenge discrimination, and empower the UHI Perth community.

**Dr Margaret Cook, Principal and Chief Executive**

## UNDERSTANDING UHI

We are part of the the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), which you can find out more about by visiting the [UHI website](#).

All partners are independent legal bodies, so we write separate Equality Mainstreaming reports. However, our shared approach to delivering education across Scotland means you will see a mix of local and partnership-wide examples throughout our report.



<b>Accessibility updates</b>	<b>2</b>
.....	
Get in touch with us	2
.....	
Designing the report	3
.....	
Writing the report	3
.....	
<b>Helpful context</b>	<b>4</b>
.....	
A message from our principal	4
.....	
Understanding UHI	4
.....	
<b>Why we mainstream equality</b>	<b>7</b>
.....	
We do the right thing	7
.....	
We follow the law	7
.....	
Protected characteristics	8
.....	
Equality factors	9
.....	
<b>Our approach</b>	<b>10</b>
.....	
National Equality Outcomes	10
.....	
Previous outcomes (2021 - 2025)	10
.....	
Potential 2025 outcomes	12
.....	
Economic challenges in education	14
.....	
<b>Benchmarking our progress</b>	<b>14</b>
.....	
Board representation	16
.....	
Protected Characteristics	17
.....	
Age	17
.....	
Disability	21
.....	
Race	34
.....	
Religion or Belief	38
.....	
Sex	42
.....	
Sexual orientation	47
.....	
Equality factors	51
.....	
Care experience	51
.....	



Caring responsibilities	55
Other data	58
Equality complaints and grievances	58
Pay gap information	60
<b>Looking to the future</b>	<b>60</b>
Focusing on areas for improvement	60
First steps	60
National Equality Outcomes	61
Essential action: improving our EDI data	64
Key areas to progress	65
Final thoughts	71

# WHY WE MAINSTREAM EQUALITY

## WE DO THE RIGHT THING

Most importantly, we truly believe that all students and staff should have access to a high quality, supportive, and inclusive educational environment. We put effort into building a positive college community where everyone is free to be themselves because it makes us all stronger.



## WE FOLLOW THE LAW



All service providers in the UK have a duty to prevent discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. Public sector bodies also have to follow extra rules. These are known as Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), or General Duty.

These rules apply to us because the government gives us money to teach Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) courses.

This means we have to do more than react to discrimination when it happens - we need to do everything in our power to make sure our college is a safe place to learn and work for everyone. There are three ways the law says we must do this:

1



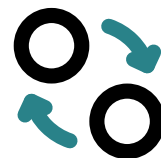
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act.

2



Advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic.

3



Foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic.



## PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The nine areas protected by the Equality Act 2010 are called protected characteristics. These are:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>1. Age</b>                            | <b>5. Pregnancy and maternity</b> |
| <b>2. Disability</b>                     | <b>6. Race</b>                    |
| <b>3. Gender reassignment</b>            | <b>7. Religion or belief</b>      |
| <b>4. Marriage and civil partnership</b> | <b>8. Sex</b>                     |
|  | <b>9. Sexual orientation</b>      |

We all have some protected characteristics, so we all benefit from the law.

1



This means we need to make sure that people with specific protected characteristics have the same UHI Perth experience as people without them.

There are four main types of discrimination that the Equality Act asks us to prevent. You can read about these on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website:

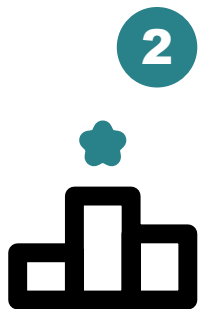
.....  
Direct and indirect discrimination

.....  
Harassment and victimisation

We aim to prevent as many incidents as possible through the positive work shared in this report, as well as making sure we have strong processes for handling any complaints of discrimination, bullying, and harassment.

We hope this approach helps students and staff feel safe raising concerns, with confidence that they will be taken seriously.





Everyone in the UHI Perth community should have the same opportunities to succeed.

We put support in place to help students and staff who have been historically disadvantaged in their work and/or studies.



Everyone in the UHI Perth community should be encouraged to learn from and support each other, creating an environment where people from different backgrounds can work and study together positively.

## EQUALITY FACTORS

In this report, we sometimes refer to equality factors instead of protected characteristics.

We use this term to recognise that although some of the inequality we aim to reduce is not directly covered by the Equality Act 2010, it can have a similar impact on our ability to create a positive, inclusive community.

While Public Sector Equality Duty only asks us to report on protected characteristics (not including Marriage and Civil Partnership or Pregnancy and Maternity), we choose to share our work to make a difference for students and staff from these additional groups. In this report, we have included sections on Care Experience and Caring Responsibilities, recognising that people affected by these share many challenges with protected groups.

# OUR APPROACH

## NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOMES



The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have set National Equality Outcomes (NEOs). These focus on inequalities which exist across the Scottish tertiary education system, so that universities and colleges can work together to tackle them.

We have chosen to use the NEOs to direct our future Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity by using our currently available data to benchmark our work mainstreaming each area to date. This allows us to identify the outcomes that are most relevant to our staff, students, and wider community as well as defining specific actions we can take to address them locally.

Progress benchmarks also allow us to recognise where we have data gaps in relation to the new requirements, so we can improve our approach to reporting in 2027 and beyond.

## PREVIOUS OUTCOMES (2021 - 2025)

This report also needs to consider how well we achieved the local equality outcomes set in 2021. We chose to make things simpler by creating one section for all data, organised by protected characteristic and other relevant equality groups.



**Outcome 1**  
Care experience



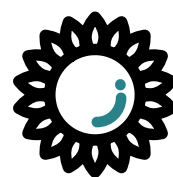
• **Outcome 2**  
• Mental health



• **Outcome 3**  
• Gender balance



• **Outcome 4**  
• Anti-racism



• **Outcome 5**  
• Hidden disability





## OUTCOME 1

More learners than before are disclosing they are Care Experienced. These learners tend to have additional barriers which negatively impact attainment scores compared to their peers. We will work with the learners and other agencies to deliver interventions and support to narrow the attainment gap.

.....



## OUTCOME 2

There is an increase in the number of learners disclosing mental ill health. These learners tend to have additional barriers impacting their attainment scores compared to their peers. We will work with the learners and other agencies to deliver interventions and support to narrow the attainment gap.

.....



## OUTCOME 3

We recognise that there are gender imbalances across some areas of our curriculum, we will take active steps to promote accessibility of these programmes and challenge gender stereotyping.

.....



## OUTCOME 4

We are committed to being an anti-racist organisation and will seek to eliminate racism in all its forms throughout all parts of the college.

.....



## OUTCOME 5

The college has a declining proportion of staff disclosing a disability in comparison to the local population. We will look to ensure that our policies, processes and practices are supportive of recruiting and retaining disabled staff. We will focus on hidden disabilities and wellbeing at work.

# POTENTIAL 2025 OUTCOMES

We have created a local list of the suggested National Equality Outcomes with small wording changes to reflect what these mean for UHI Perth. We used this to consult with our staff and students, making sure community voices are represented in our final outcomes. You can find the original wording on the [SFC website](#).

We recognise that all of these potential outcomes would benefit UHI Perth and we hope to make progress against many over the next four years. However, we are focusing our mainstreaming work on the NEOs most relevant to us so that we can make the biggest possible impact.

OUTCOME 1	A higher number of mature university students (aged 25 and over) will complete their degree programmes.
OUTCOME 2	A higher number of younger college students (aged 18 and under) will achieve successful results.
OUTCOME 3	More students who share that they have a mental health condition will complete their programmes successfully.
OUTCOME 4	Disabled students will feel positive about the support and reasonable adjustments offered, including from teaching staff, while on their course.
OUTCOME 5	Disabled staff and students will feel safe at UHI Perth.



<b>OUTCOME 6</b>
<b>OUTCOME 7</b>
<b>OUTCOME 8</b>
<b>OUTCOME 9</b>
<b>OUTCOME 10</b>
<b>OUTCOME 11</b>
<b>OUTCOME 12</b>
<b>OUTCOME 13</b>
<b>OUTCOME 14</b>
<b>OUTCOME 15</b>

- Representation of disabled staff and Board Members will be similar to the local area.
- Trans staff and students will feel safe to be themselves at UHI Perth.
- Staff and students will feel confident that complaints of racism are handled fairly, leading to positive and effective outcomes.
- Students from all racial backgrounds will have equal chances of success and learn from course content which is diverse and anti-racist.
- Representation of ethnic minority Board Members will be similar to the local area.
- Representation of ethnic minority staff will be similar to the local area.
- Students and staff will feel confident and supported when reporting any concerns related to their religion or beliefs.
- Staff and students will feel able to access support about violence, harassment, and abuse and know that they can safely report their experience.
- UHI Perth will actively work to prevent and respond to violence, harassment, and abuse.
- Male staff and students will know how to access mental health support.

## OUTCOME 16

UHI Perth will actively work to reduce significant gender imbalances on courses.

## OUTCOME 17

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students will feel safe being 'out' at UHI Perth.

## ECONOMIC CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION



The timeframe covered by this report has seen significant financial uncertainty in Further and Higher Education. You can find more detail in the Audit Scotland briefing '[Scotland's colleges 2024](#)'.

Unfortunately, reduced staffing affects our ability to maintain some areas of good practice highlighted in 2023's Interim Mainstreaming Report. We are hugely grateful to students and staff, past and present, who made this work possible.

We hope our community will continue supporting our equality efforts while we take this opportunity to refocus, using the NEOs to hone in on areas where limited resources can make the most measurable and long-lasting impact.

## BENCHMARKING OUR PROGRESS

We have tried to keep the structure of each section as consistent as possible to make it easier to compare our progress in different areas. We are sharing all of the relevant data we have for all protected characteristics and additional equality factors. However, as we hold different data for each group, you are likely to see some differences between sections.

Where our data reveals we have small numbers of people in specific groups (usually less than 10), we replace these figures with stars to make sure no one can be identified individually. When this happens, we remove the figures for the



smallest (\*) and second smallest (\*\*) groups to make sure it is impossible to calculate the exact number.

Our benchmarking does not include data on our pay gaps because these have a dedicated section matching our yearly Pay Gap Report, which has also been published separately.

Here is a broad overview of the data used for benchmarking:

EDI data for our students and staff
Student success and satisfaction
21-25 Equality Outcomes
Current EDI activity
National Equality Outcomes

We share representation statistics for each group and compare these with local and / or national Census data.



We share the success rates for each group to highlight any attainment gaps (where people from some groups are less successful than others), along with how satisfied they are with their experience.



We highlight evidence for past Equality Outcomes using the icons and labels defined on Page 11.



We share examples of our work to positively impact each community.



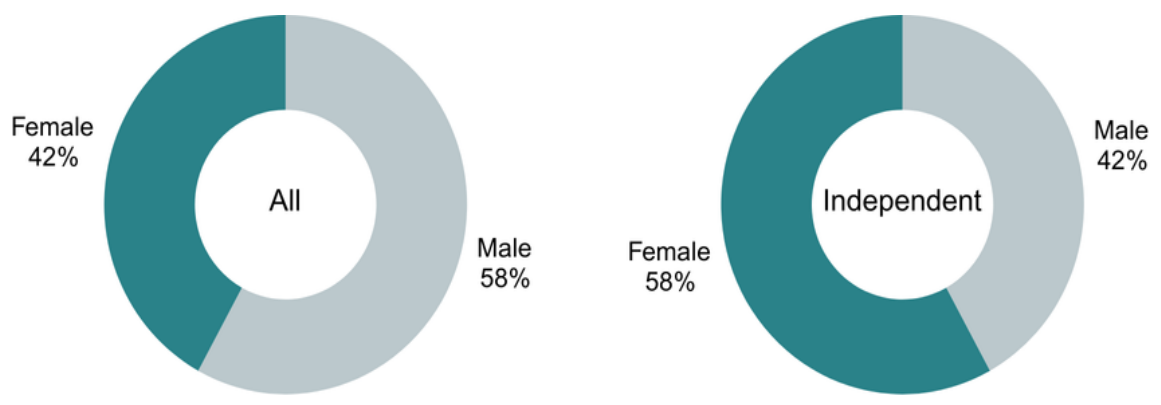
We highlight any National Equality Outcomes that our existing data provides evidence for and whether we will formally adopt these for 2025 - 2029.

# BOARD REPRESENTATION

We currently only report on gender representation within our Board of Management. Moving forward, we will capture more equality monitoring data from board members, including race and disability, so that we can report on National Equality Outcome 10 and 11.

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
INDEPENDENT	5	7	12
STAFF	2	1	3
TRADE UNION	2	0	2
STUDENT	2	0	2
TOTALS	11	8	19

The figures above show that our board is currently 58% male and 42% female. However, it is important to recognise that there are three roles (Trade Union, Staff and Student board members) which are elected. This means that we have no control over who takes up these positions. It also means the figures change every year as new student board members are elected, with all other board members being elected for a 4-year term.



Looking only at the independent board member roles, where we directly control the recruitment process, this reverses to a more favourable 42% male and 58% female split. This helps with our overall gender balance since our unelected roles have mostly been held by men in recent years.

NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS

Once we begin capturing more detailed equality monitoring data from our Board of Management, we will be able to review the specific National Equality Outcomes which relate to board representation. We are therefore not formally adopting these at this time, but will do so in the future if we find evidence that our board is not representative of the wider community.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

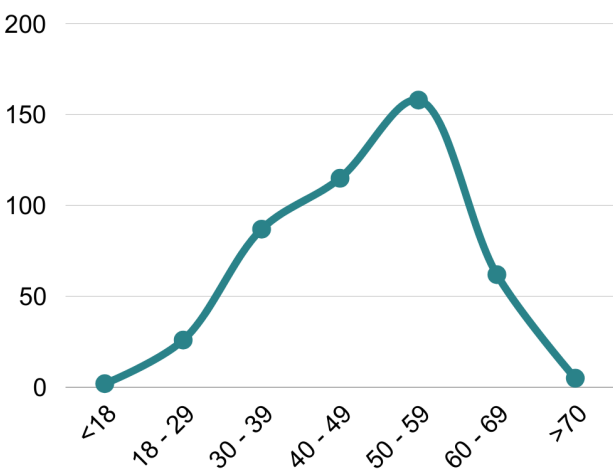
AGE

STAFF PROFILE

	<18	18 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	>70
TOTAL	*	26	87	115	158	62	**
%	*	5.7%	19.1%	25.3%	34.7%	13.6%	**

Our data suggests that younger workers are currently underrepresented within UHI Perth, with just 6% of colleagues being under the age of 30, even though 16 - 29 year olds make up 13% of people living in the local area.

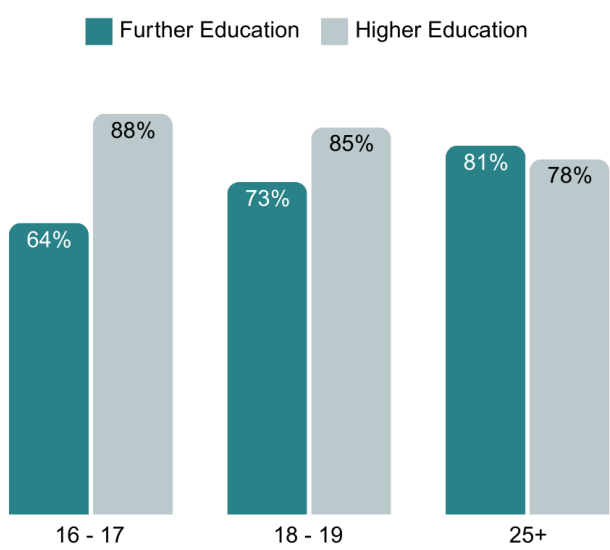
The majority of our staff (60%) are between the ages of 40 - 59, while people in this age range make up 27.5% of the local population.



STUDENT PROFILE

	FURTHER EDUCATION				HIGHER EDUCATION			
	<18	18-19	20-24	25+	<18	18-19	20-24	25+
TOTAL	1020	410	316	547	52	249	404	813
%	44%	18%	14%	24%	3%	16%	27%	53%

STUDENT SUCCESS BY AGE GROUP



On average, 73% of Further Education students and 81% of Higher Education students successfully complete their courses. This suggests our focus should be improving our Further Education outcomes.

Our data shows that student success varies greatly based on their age and level of study.

Our youngest students (16 - 17) have the largest difference in outcomes with 88% of students succeeding in Higher Education courses while only 64% succeed in Further Education courses.

This 24% attainment gap is a result of several factors. Part of the reason is likely explained by the smaller number in this age group studying at Higher Education level (52 students) compared to Further Education (803 students). Also, young people who have experienced barriers to success in their school education are more likely to start their studies with Further Education courses. Many of those barriers will continue to have an effect on their college education, which may explain why students in this group have withdrawn from or failed their courses at higher rates.



There is a smaller, but still significant, difference for 18 - 19 year old students studying in Further and Higher Education. In this age group, there is a 12% attainment gap with 85% successfully completing Higher Education qualifications compared to 73% of Further Education students.

The opposite is true for our mature students (25+), where success in Further Education is above average (81%) but success in Higher Education drops slightly below average (78%).

Overall, the data shows opposing trends. Positive outcomes in Further Education improve by 8-9% in each age group. Meanwhile, in Higher Education they decrease by 3%.

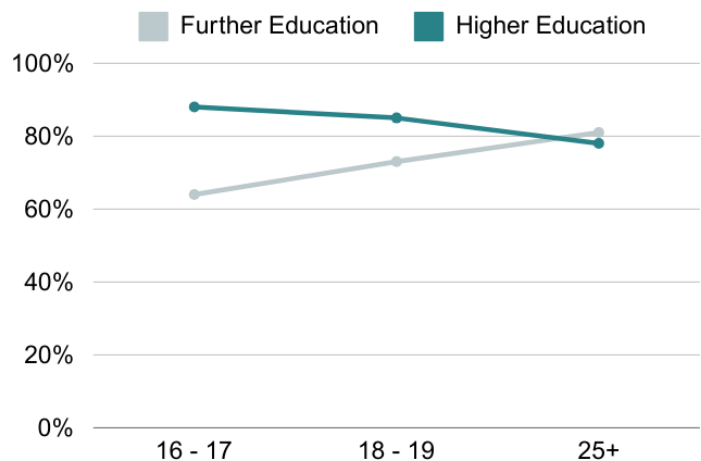
However, the Higher Education results are generally above or only very slightly below the UHI Perth average of 81%. In contrast, there is an attainment gap between Further and Higher Education students which, for our younger students, grows even wider.

### STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY AGE GROUP

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

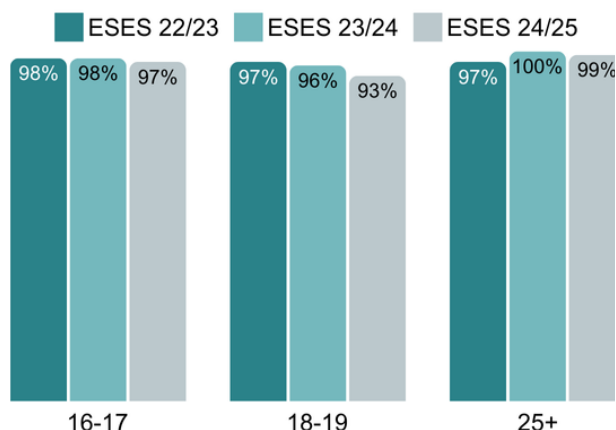
When looking at withdrawal rates by age group, we can see that there is some variation between students from different groups:

	<18	18-19	20-24	25+
FE	18%	15%	15%	13%
HE	0%	3%	2%	9%



This shows that there are small differences of 2-3% in our withdrawal rates for younger students in Further Education and Mature Students in Higher Education.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION BY AGE



Every year, we carry out an Early Student Experience Survey to find out how our students feel about their experience at UHI Perth.

When we break down the results by age, we can find no evidence of significant gaps for any particular group.

Over the past three years, the average satisfaction rate across all age groups is 97%. While there has been a small drop for all age groups in the 24/25 academic year, the results continue to be very positive.

## INCREASING ACCESS TO COLLEGE FOR ALL AGES

We offer courses with low entry requirements for people who need to build up their skills, qualifications and experience to help them succeed on our subject-specific courses in the future. These courses are tailored to different age groups, including school pupils, younger students, and adults returning to education.

Our colleagues in the New Opportunities department are always looking for fresh ways to engage young people and, during the 2021 - 2025 mainstreaming period, they introduced exciting new courses. These include our NQ Gateway 2 Creative Industries course for students interested in creative careers and a Gateway to College course for school pupils who want to build confidence before studying full-time in Further Education.

They have also updated existing courses, adding Duke of Edinburgh awards to NQ Next Steps Level 5. The picture on the next page shows two of our students



enjoying kayaking, a new addition to their course.

We also offer our Return 2 Learn and Scottish Widening Access Programmes (SWAP). Return 2 Learn helps people transition into our subject-specific Further Education courses while SWAP

courses allow quick access to Higher Education. These are open to applicants who have faced barriers affecting their ability to meet the entry requirements for HNC, HND, or degree level courses.

## **NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

Our data shows that our mature students report the highest satisfaction of all age groups. They also achieve successful outcomes at a similar to the average of all students. Based on this information, we will not adopt a specific National Equality Outcome in relation to our mature students.

In our consultation with the UHI Perth community, we have received feedback that this is an area of particular importance so we will continue to monitor this so that we can take action if required in future.

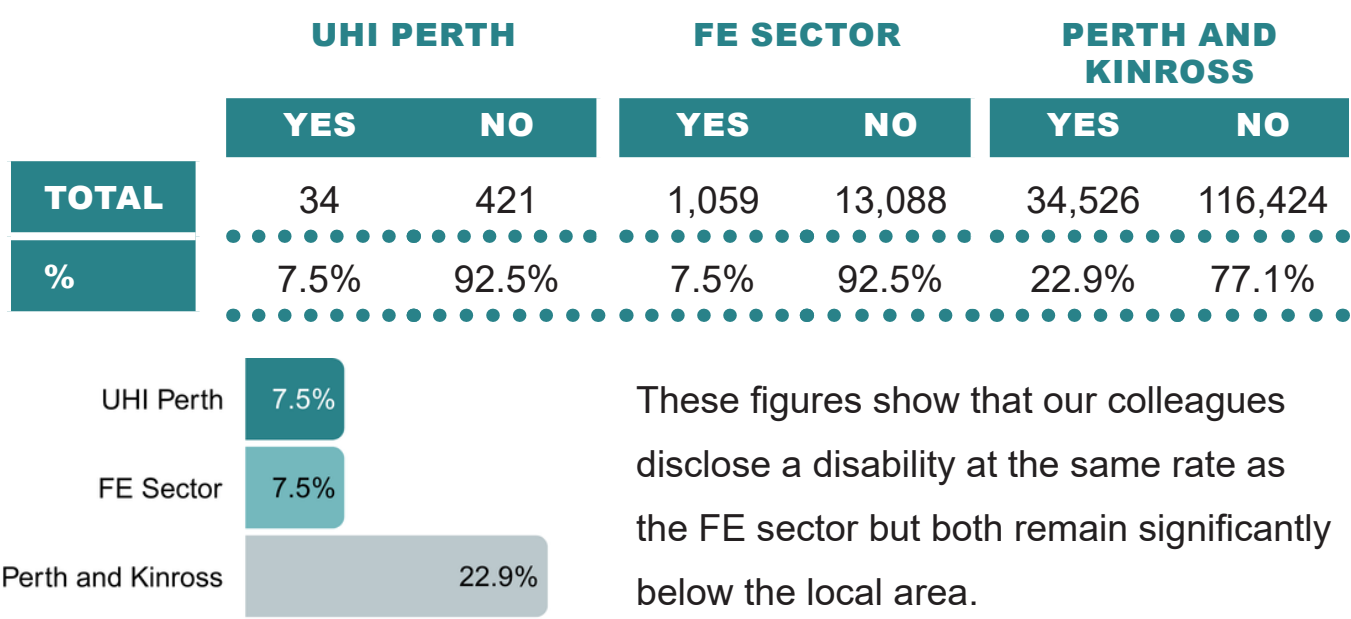
In contrast, our data shows that while our younger students are similarly satisfied with their experience of studying at UHI Perth, there is a significant attainment gap for our youngest students. Based on this information, we plan to adopt **National Equality Outcome 2: A higher number of younger college students (aged 18 and under) will achieve successful results.**

## **DISABILITY**

### **STAFF PROFILE**

The table below shows the percentage of people with a declared disability

employed by UHI Perth, employed within the Scottish Further Education sector<sup>1</sup>, and living in the Perth and Kinross area.



Some of the difference between our disclosure rates and the local population may be explained by the fact that older people are both more likely to have a disability or health condition and to have retired from the labour market.

There is also likely to be under-reporting, both from colleagues who are not comfortable sharing that they are disabled and those who meet the legal definition but do not self-identify with the term.

In the group of UHI Perth staff who have disclosed a disability, there are more than twice as many women (69%) than men (31%). While women are slightly more likely to experience disability than men, the most recent Scotland’s Census data shows a much smaller difference of 4%. This suggests that male colleagues are currently less likely to disclose that they have a disability.

We intend to get a clearer picture of our workforce by improving how we capture equality monitoring data and ensuring our work on this supports colleagues to feel safe and empowered to disclose any disabilities to us. Once we have closed this data gap, we will understand whether there is an actual gap in the representation of disabled people in our workforce. This will allow us to take

<sup>1</sup> College Staffing Data 2022-23, Scottish Funding Council



informed, targeted action if necessary.

STUDENT PROFILE

The table below shows the percentage of students who have declared a disability, split into Further and Higher Education:

	FURTHER EDUCATION		HIGHER EDUCATION	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
TOTAL	1,023	1,252	662	889
%	45%	55%	41%	59%

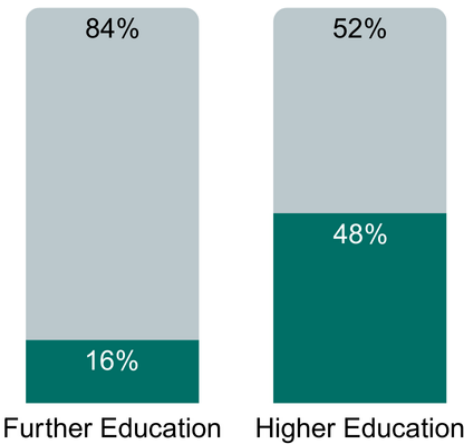
The number of students disclosing a disability is significantly higher than national average in the sector (24%) from 2021-22<sup>2</sup>. However, without more recent statistics, it is hard to say whether this is a local trend or reflective of an increase across the sector over the past two years.

PERSONAL LEARNING SUPPORT PLANS

Students with disabilities can work with our Support and Wellbeing Team to create Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs) to help give them the best possible chance of success in their studies.

In our 23/24 Student Services Survey, 92% of respondents rated the effectiveness of their PLSP ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’. This is an increase of 8% from 22/23.

Outcome data for disabled students, shared in more detail below, reinforces that our PLSPs work well for those who use them. However, it also reveals that not all eligible students are accessing the support available and that there is a large gap in uptake between



2 Key College Facts 2024: ‘Supporting Communities’, Scottish Funding Council

eligible Further Education (16%) and Higher Education (48%) students.

We understand that not all students who disclose a disability will need reasonable adjustments to be successful in their studies but, even taking this into account, the uptake in Further Education seems particularly low.

There is a significant difference in the funding available between Further Education students (SFC Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance) and Higher Education (SAAS Disabled Students' Allowance) which may explain some of this gap.

We need to explore this issue further to find out the reasons for this difference and identify steps we can take to improve engagement with PLSPs.

**STUDENT SUCCESS BY DISABILITY**

On average, 73% of Further Education students and 81% of Higher Education students successfully complete their courses.

Our data shows that this figure changes depending on whether a student has declared a disability and if they have worked with us to create a PLSP.

The table below shows the rate of success for students who have disclosed a disability, disabled students who have a PLSP, and students who have not disclosed a disability:

	FURTHER EDUCATION			HIGHER EDUCATION		
	YES	WITH PLSP	NO	YES	WITH PLSP	NO
SUCCESS (%)	68%	66%	76%	79%	83%	82%

While this data suggests PLSPs have a limited impact in Further Education, we believe this is more likely to reflect the low uptake in this group rather than low effectiveness.

In contrast, Higher Education sees a small increase in successful outcomes

which results in students with PLSPs achieving at higher rates than the UHI Perth average and their non-disabled peers.

Similar to other equality mainstreaming areas, we see a greater gap present in Further Education than Higher Education.

Our student outcome data currently only captures whether someone has disclosed a disability or not, so it is not possible to tell whether there is any difference in outcomes for students with mental health challenges.

**STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY DISABILITY**

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

When looking at withdrawal rates by disability, we can see that there is some variation:

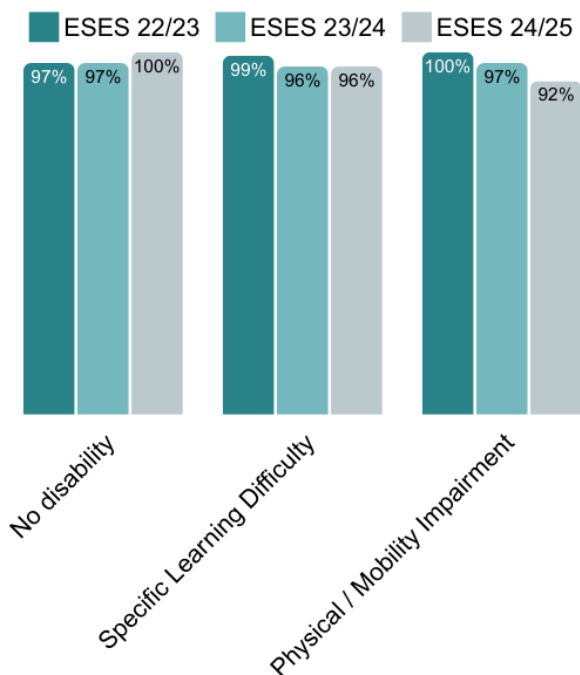
	YES	WITH PLSP	NO
FE	19%	20%	13%
HE	7%	5%	5%

This shows that in Further Education, students who disclose a disability are 6% more likely to withdraw from their course than students who do not disclose a disability.

In Higher Education, there is a smaller difference of 2% which seems to be successfully corrected by the greater use of PLSPs in this student group.

**STUDENT SATISFACTION BY DISABILITY**

When we break down the results of our Early Student Experience Survey by disability, there is evidence of a slight decrease in satisfaction for disabled students year-on-year, while for non-disabled students this has climbed to 100%.

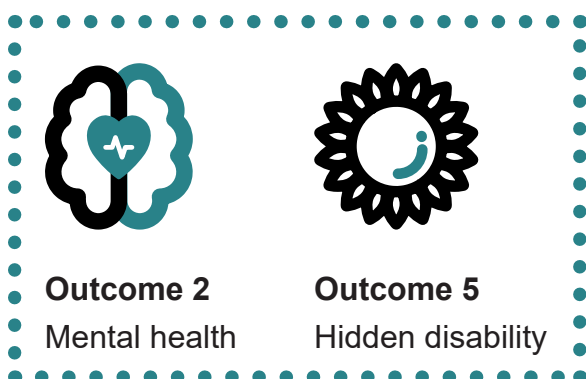


Satisfaction among disabled students with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, has remained the same while there has been a decline of 8% for students who have disclosed a physical impairment or mobility issue.

While satisfaction still remains high at 92%, we intend to investigate to ensure that any underlying issues causing this trend are addressed before the gap widens further.

## PREVIOUS EQUALITY OUTCOMES

Two of our equality outcomes for 2021 - 2025 are related to disability:



The data in this section shows some of our progress in these areas.

## REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT PASSPORTS

We launched our Reasonable Adjustment Passport in August 2023, as part of advancing our 2021-25 Equality Outcomes and meeting our responsibilities as a Disability Confident Committed employer.



This is a document that our employees can use to share information with us

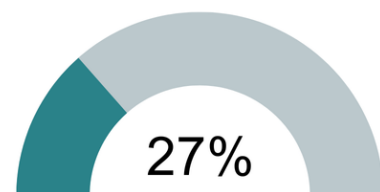


about their needs at work and any adjustments we can make to support them. There are multiple benefits to having a central process for recording reasonable adjustments which include:

- opening up conversations about disability with a supported structure
- giving the option to request an Occupational Health referral
- making a clear record of what has been agreed, by who, and when
- reducing the need to reassess reasonable adjustments when changing roles or line managers
- supporting future conversations about changes to reasonable adjustments
- making sure employees feel valued, with better wellbeing and engagement

So far, 19 managers have received training on our Reasonable Adjustment Passport and 27% of colleagues with disclosed disabilities have submitted one to HR. While we are confident that the scheme is working well for people currently taking part, we recognise that there is a need to encourage more people to use it.

Disabled colleagues using a Reasonable Adjustment Passport

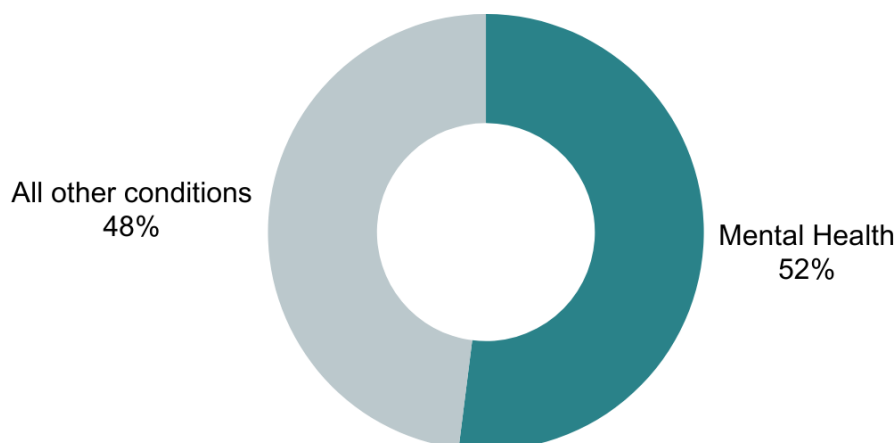


This is also affected by our low disability disclosure rates, meaning there are likely many more people who may benefit from this scheme than is suggested by our current data.

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DATA**

In the 23/24 Academic Year, 6% of colleagues were referred for Occupational

## Health assessments.



52% of these referrals were related to Mental Health - this was by far the largest group, with each other condition making up no more than 10%.

Over a third of Mental Health referrals were due to work-related stress, with no stressors in other areas of life, while the rest were made up of stress (including non-work stressors), depression and anxiety.

### **WORK-RELATED STRESS**

We have recently completed our yearly Stress Management Survey. This year, more than half of respondents shared experiences of work-related stress, anxiety, or depression.

UHI Perth has undergone a period of significant change due to the financial challenges affecting the entire Further and Higher Education sector and it is understandable that there is an increased level of stress for our colleagues.

We recognise our responsibility to support colleagues to manage workplace stress and our Stress Management Group has recently published an action plan to help with these issues.

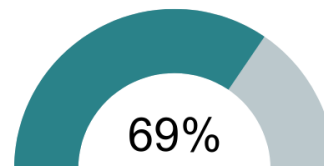
### **INTERNAL REVIEW OF THE EXPERIENCES OF STAFF WITH DISABILITIES**

As part of our work on our previous equality outcomes, we conducted a review

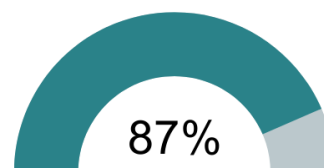
into the experiences of staff with disabilities to see where we can improve efforts to meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

This showed that there is a difference in how disabled and non-disabled colleagues feel about working at UHI Perth. Particularly relevant to the National Equality Outcomes is that when asked about feeling safe at work, only 69% of disabled colleagues answered yes. This is an 18% gap when compared to non-disabled colleagues (87%). This is a clear area for improvement, in line with National Equality Outcome 5.

Feelings of safety for disabled colleagues



Feelings of safety for non-disabled colleagues



This report identified 18 actions which we will continue progressing as part of our equality mainstreaming work in this area.

These are grouped into the themes below:

- Increase disclosure rates within Equal Opportunities Monitoring
- Increase staff awareness and knowledge relating to disability
- Improve accessibility across campus
- Improve digital accessibility
- Improve visible leadership in relation to disability
- Increase feeling of safety and reduce experiences / witnessing of hate crimes among staff with a disability or long-term health condition
- Ensure staff are aware of improvements being made as a result of this review

## STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

We have an on-site counselling service which all of our students can request access to, offering them up to six sessions with one of our BACP registered counsellors each academic year.

Feedback from students who have accessed this service shows that it has huge personal and educational benefits. These include helping them to stay on their course, improving their UHI Perth experience, and building their hope for the future.

There is a clear gender split in usage of the counselling service. In 2023/24, the breakdown was 64% female students, 32% male students and 4% non-binary students. While we have a slightly higher number of female students (53%) than male students (47%), this is not enough to explain the difference in service usage. This data suggests that women are twice as likely to access the student counselling service compared to men.

We recognise that men do not always feel comfortable asking for help with their mental health, which is why we offer 'Man Cave' sessions during term-time as a supportive space for male students to promote positive mental health. We also work with charities like Andy's Man Club, who facilitate weekly peer support sessions for men in the local area.



#ITSOKAYTOTALK

We also deliver Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) training on campus, run by three colleagues qualified to deliver this to staff and students. Since 2021, seven courses have been delivered to train almost 100 UHI Perth colleagues as Scottish Mental Health First Aiders. We expect this number to keep growing, starting with three more courses running in 2025.

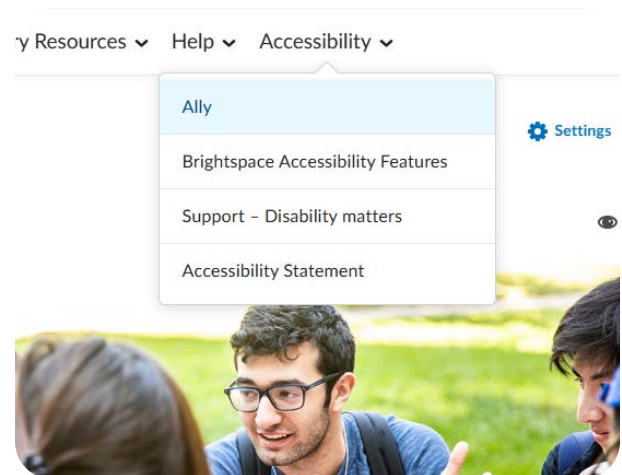
## DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

As learning moves more and more towards digital platforms, it is essential that

our staff and students have the skills they need to make sure that learning is accessible for themselves and others.

Our Director of Teaching, Learning and Quality Enhancement, supported by our Digital Skills Training Officer, recently hosted training sessions on Brightspace Ally as part of one of our staff conference days.

This gave colleagues the opportunity to find out about the features built into our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to increase the accessibility of their teaching materials for everyone.



## NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS

We are proud of the progress that we have made in this area over the past four years. However, we also recognise that we still have more to do to make sure we are providing the best possible place to work and study for our disabled staff and students.

Our consultation with the UHI Perth community has shown that this is a priority for our staff and students, which strengthens our commitment to making further improvements.

In the interests of streamlining our equality work within the National Equality Outcomes framework, we will be retiring our previous outcomes related to disability and adopting **National Equality Outcome 4: Disabled students will feel positive about the support and reasonable adjustments offered, including from teaching staff, while on their course** and **National Equality Outcome 5: Disabled staff and students will feel safe at UHI Perth**.

We will also adopt sex-based **National Equality Outcome 15: Male staff and**



**students will know how to access mental health support** as part of our work to support staff and students with disability.

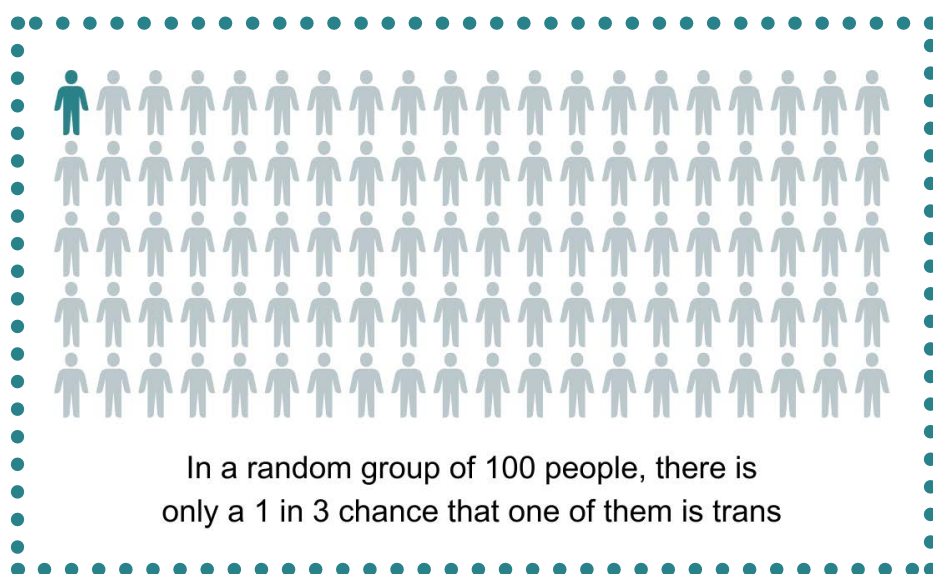
## **GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

At UHI Perth, we recognise and respect binary (male and female) and non-binary (not male or female) gender identities.

While the wording of the Equality Act 2010 focuses on people undergoing binary transition, we take the issues faced by non-binary members of our community just as seriously.

## **STAFF AND STUDENT PROFILES**

The transgender community is relatively small, with just 0.3% of Perth and Kinross residents identifying as trans (including non-binary identities) in the most recent census, slightly lower than the Scottish figure of 0.44%.



This is reflected in our equality monitoring data, which means we can only share broad observations to make sure no one can be personally identified from the information in this report.

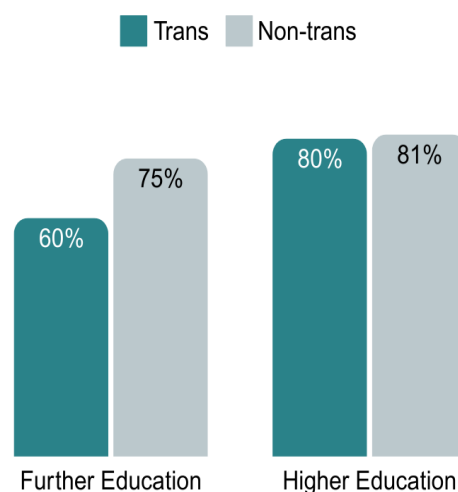
However, we want to highlight that our efforts to value, respect, and support

our trans staff and students are just as important to us as our work with larger communities.

## STUDENT SUCCESS BY TRANS IDENTITY

On average, 73% of Further Education students and 81% of Higher Education students successfully complete their courses.

Similar to other equality groups, we see a significant difference in success between trans Further and Higher Education students. HE students who identify as trans are similarly successful to their cisgender (non-trans) peers, with 80% achieving a successful outcome. In contrast, there is evidence of a 15% attainment gap between trans and cisgender FE students (60% success vs 75% success).



## STUDENT SATISFACTION BY TRANS IDENTITY

Our ESES results include binary trans people in our wider gender categories ('Female including trans woman' and 'Male including trans man') according to their gender identity. This means that while we recognise and include trans students, we do not have a way to see any difference in satisfaction for binary trans people. The questions asked in this survey are shared with other UHI partners so, while we would like to capture this data in future, we need to explore whether this is possible.

We can report on students who selected 'I describe myself in another way'. This option usually suggests that the person has a non-binary gender identity. In our 24/25 survey, satisfaction for this group is 97% which is an increase of 5% from 23/24. It is also 1-2% higher than all other gender categories this year.

This suggests that UHI Perth students who are comfortable sharing their non-

binary gender identity with us have a similarly positive experience to their cisgender peers.

## **NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

At the moment, we have limited data to share about UHI Perth's trans community - however, the data we have shows that we need to address the attainment gap for trans students in Further Education.

It is also important to us to consider our support for trans staff and students within the bigger picture of what we need to do for other members of the LGBT community working or studying at UHI Perth (detailed further in the Sexual Orientation section). This will make sure that we are recognising and valuing the shared history of these groups to effectively address their challenges.

To support these aims, we will be adopting **National Equality Outcome 7: Trans staff and students will feel safe to be themselves at UHI Perth.**

## **RACE**

In this section, we share our staff data in terms of staff who self-identify as ethnic minorities and those who do not. This excludes colleagues who have not shared their ethnic background with us.

We know that this is not the best way to share data about race, as it groups hugely diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds together despite people from these communities having very different experiences.

Unfortunately, while we hold some more detailed information on specific ethnic backgrounds shared by our colleagues, the number in each group is too low to report due to the risk of identifying individuals.

Due to there being more students than staff in the UHI Perth community, we can share more detailed information with reference to whether students have

identified their ethnic background in our records system as Asian, Black, Mixed or White.

STAFF PROFILE

The table below shows how many colleagues self-identify as ethnic minorities within UHI Perth, the Scottish Further Education sector, and the Perth and Kinross area. This excludes UHI Perth colleagues who have not shared any information about their ethnic background with us.

	UHI PERTH		FE SECTOR <sup>3</sup>		PERTH AND KINROSS	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
%	5.4%	94.6%	3%	97%	2.3%	97.7%

If we include colleagues who have not shared information about their ethnic background with us when calculating representation, 3.5% of our staff have self-identified with ethnic minority backgrounds.

In either case, we have greater representation of ethnic minority colleagues compared to the wider sector and geographic area.

STUDENT PROFILE

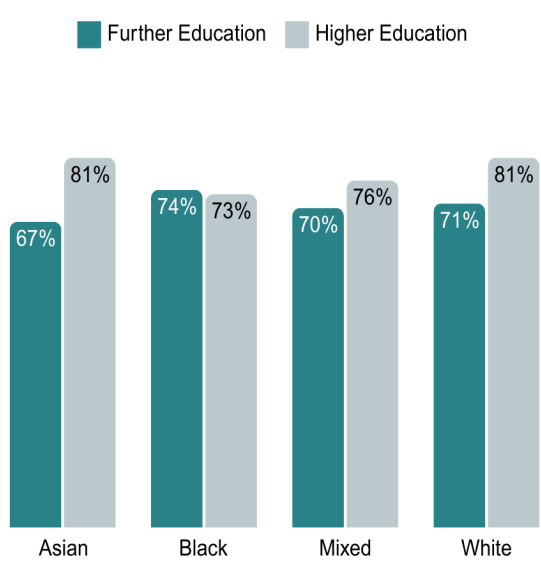
The table below shows how many UHI Perth students self-identify as ethnic minorities. This excludes students who have not shared any information about their ethnic background with us.

	FURTHER EDUCATION		HIGHER EDUCATION	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
TOTAL	127	2,015	83	1,307
%	5.9%	94.1%	5.9%	94.1%

3 Key College Facts 2024: ‘Our Colleges’, Scottish Funding Council

Similar to our staff data, this shows that we have greater representation of ethnic minority students compared to census data for Perth and Kinross (2.3%). It is slightly lower than the sector average from 2021-22<sup>4</sup> (8%), which is likely explained by ethnic minority representation in the local community being lower than many other regions.

**STUDENT OUTCOMES BY RACE**



The chart to the left shows how many of our students succeed in Further and Higher Education courses, broken down by racial backgrounds.

As a reminder, the average success rate across all UHI Perth students is 73% in Further Education and 81% in Higher Education.

Our data suggests that our Asian students are less likely to be successful in their FE studies (67%), while performing at the same rate as others in their HE studies (81%).

This is the opposite for our Black students, who are slightly more likely to succeed in FE than average (74%) but have below average chances of success in HE (73%).

Students of Mixed ethnic backgrounds are slightly less likely to succeed in both FE (70%) and HE (76%).

This data reveals that we have three notable attainment gaps related to race:

- a 6% gap in Further Education for Asian students
- an 8% gap in Higher Education for Black students

4 Key College Facts 2024: ‘Supporting Communities’, Scottish Funding Council



- a 5% gap in Higher Education for students with a Mixed ethnic background

## STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY RACE

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

When looking at withdrawal rates by ethnicity, we can see that there is some variation between students from different groups:

	WHITE	ASIAN	BLACK	MIXED	OTHER
FE	17%	21%	16%	22%	13%
HE	6%	5%	9%	0%	13%

This shows that in Further Education, students who identify with an Asian or Mixed ethnic background are at least 5% more likely to withdraw. However, this is not true for students from these backgrounds studying at Higher Education level.

In contrast, students who identify with a Black or Other ethnic background are more likely to withdraw from Higher Education courses.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION BY RACE

The ethnicity data captured in our Early Student Experience Survey does not allow us to make a direct comparison with the data shared above. This is because the ESES currently captures data on nationality, meaning there is an overall category for British instead of individual options by ethnicity (e.g. Black British, White British).

However, we can share that the levels of satisfaction for each group range from 92% to 100%. These high scores suggest that there are no major concerns with student satisfaction linked to ethnicity.

## NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS

We have over twice as many colleagues self-identifying as ethnic minorities compared to census data for the local area and we will continue our efforts to support people of all racial backgrounds to work and study with us. However, our current data suggests that we do not need to adopt a specific National Equality Outcome in relation to representation.

Our data shows that have some attainment gaps in Further and Higher Education for students from different ethnic backgrounds, meaning that we have work to do in this area. Consultation showed that this outcome is also important to our community, with 75% of people who self-identified as ethnic minorities highlighting it as one of their top priorities. Based on this information, we will be adopting **National Equality Outcome 9: Students from all racial backgrounds will have equal chances of success and learn from course content which is diverse and anti-racist.**

This builds on our work to become an anti-racist organisation since 2021.



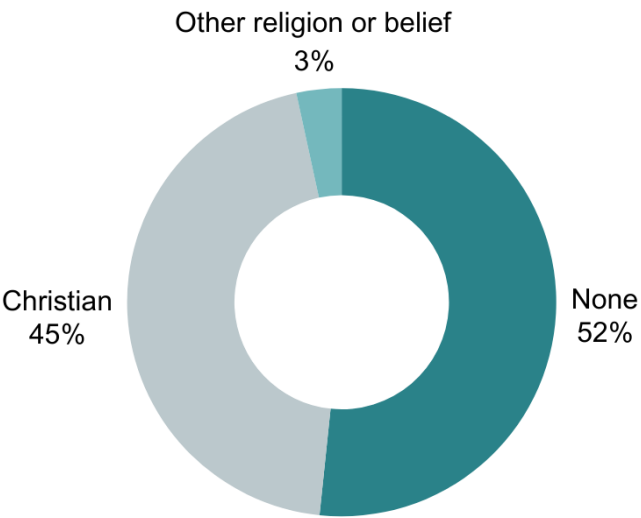
## RELIGION OR BELIEF

### STAFF PROFILE

The chart on the next page shows the information about staff religion or beliefs that we currently hold. To avoid identifying anyone belonging to smaller religious groups, we have combined some religions and beliefs together (e.g. providing an overall percentage for Christian beliefs instead of detailing a specific denomination).

This data excludes colleagues who have not shared any information about their religion or belief with us. Unfortunately, our understanding of religious and other

belief-based communities within UHI Perth is limited as 66% of our staff have not shared this data.



The majority of colleagues who have shared this information with us identified as having no specific religion or belief, including the responses ‘None’, ‘Atheist’, and ‘Agnostic’ (52%). This almost exactly reflects representation in the local community, which is 52.5%.

The second largest category is Christian, including the responses ‘Christian’, ‘Church of Scotland’, ‘(Roman) Catholic’, ‘Church of England’, ‘Baptist’, ‘Episcopalian’ and ‘Presbyterian’ (45%). This is slightly higher than the local community’s representation at 39.1%.

All other religions and beliefs, including ‘Humanist’, ‘Islam’, ‘Pagan’, and ‘Veganism’, make up 3% of responses shared. This is slightly more representation than seen in the local community, which is 1.9%.

However, as these figures represent only one third of UHI Perth staff, we could see significant changes as we work to improve our equality monitoring data.

**STUDENT PROFILE**

As we have more students than staff, we can share more detailed information about their religions and beliefs. This data includes people who have chosen ‘Prefer not to say’, as we capture student EDI information in a way which shows a clear difference between not sharing any information and selecting this option.

The table below shows the representation of different religions in our student body:

## FURTHER EDUCATION

	NONE	CHRISTIAN	MUSLIM	OTHER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
TOTAL	752	182	20	40	145
%	66%	16%	2%	4%	13%

## HIGHER EDUCATION

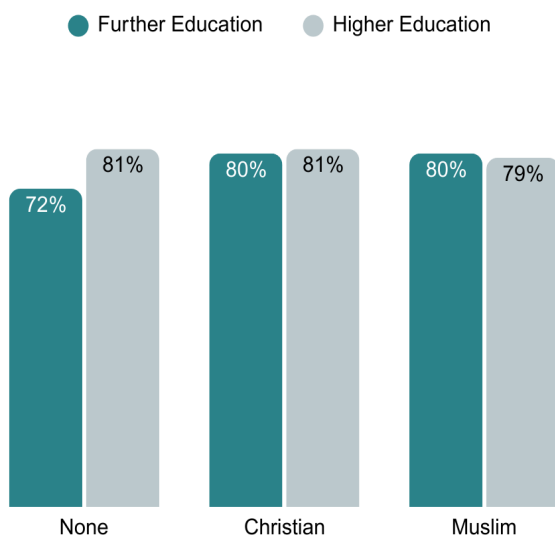
	NONE	CHRISTIAN	MUSLIM	OTHER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
TOTAL	880	107	19	64	97
%	75%	9%	2%	5%	8%

In both Further and Higher Education, a greater percentage of people identify as having no specific religion or belief compared to the local area (52.5%).

There are also more students identifying as Muslim compared to the local area (0.6%) and who identify with 'Other' religion or beliefs (1.9%, when including all smaller religious communities (<1%) as part of 'Other').

However, the percentage of students identifying as Christian is significantly lower than Perth and Kinross more widely (39.1%).

## STUDENT OUTCOMES BY RELIGION OR BELIEF



The chart to the left shows the percentage of students who successfully complete their course broken down by religion. This only includes data for students who identify as having no religious beliefs, Christian beliefs, or Muslim beliefs as the numbers for other groups are too small to

report accurately.

As a reminder, the average success rate across all UHI Perth students is 73% in Further Education and 81% in Higher Education.

This data shows that there are no significant attainment gaps related to student religion, as all groups are within 2% of the average success rates. In most cases, each group meets or exceeds them.

**STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY RELIGION OR BELIEF**

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

When looking at withdrawal rates by religion, we can see that there is some variation between students from different groups:

	NONE	CHRISTIAN	MUSLIM
FE	16%	13%	10%
HE	6%	9%	11%

The data shows that students with no religion match the average UHI Perth withdrawal rate exactly - this makes sense as this group makes up 66% of FE students and 75% of HE students, contributing greatly to the average.

Christian and Muslim students have lower withdrawal rates when studying at Further Education level but are more likely to withdraw when studying a Higher Education course.

**NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on our data, we will not adopt the National Equality Outcome specific to religion or belief at this time. However, this may change as we improve the accuracy of our staff EDI data and review our processes for reporting equality concerns.



Although we are not undertaking focused work in this area at this time, we believe that our efforts to progress other National Equality Outcomes will also have benefits for staff and students who share this protected characteristic.

**SEX**

This section reports on sex, as held in our staff and student record systems, and is separate to our data on gender identity.

This is why there is no reference to non-binary identities in this section. Trans staff and students are included in the male or female groups according to the data that they have provided to us, which may or may not align with their gender identity.

**STAFF PROFILE**

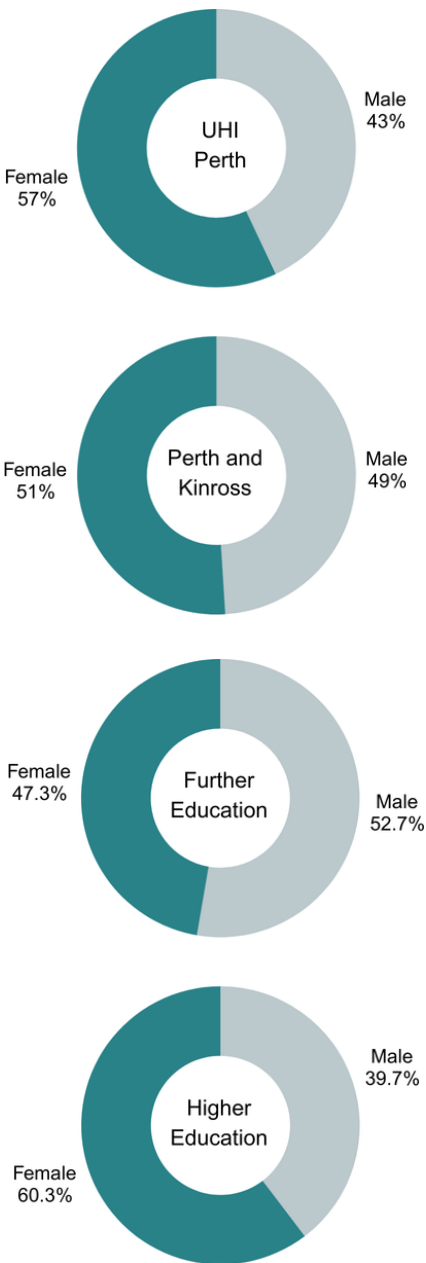
Female employees make up 56.9% of UHI Perth staff while male employees make up the remaining 43.1%.

There is a slightly higher representation of women in our workforce than in the local area, with 51.3% of Perth and Kinross residents identifying as female and 48.7% as male.

**STUDENT PROFILE**

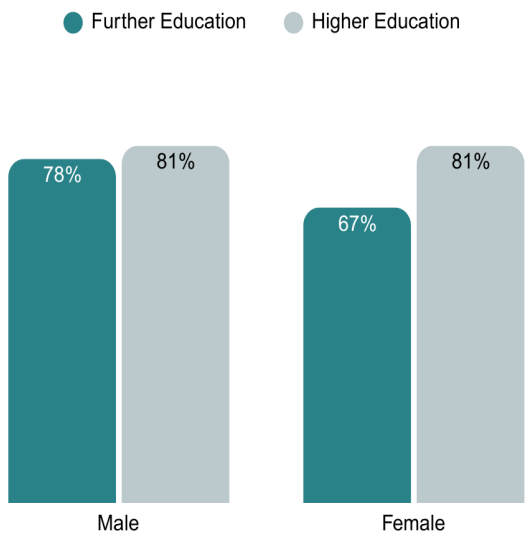
There is a difference in gender ratios depending on level of study. Our Further Education students are 52.7% male and 47.3% female, while our Higher Education students are 60.3% female and 39.7% male.

This likely reflects the fact that many of our HE



courses have flexible learning options, such as part-time or distance learning. These tend to be particularly beneficial for women, since they are more likely to be balancing their studies with unpaid responsibilities.

STUDENT OUTCOMES BY SEX



The chart to the left shows that both male and female students meet the UHI Perth overall average success rate in Higher Education.

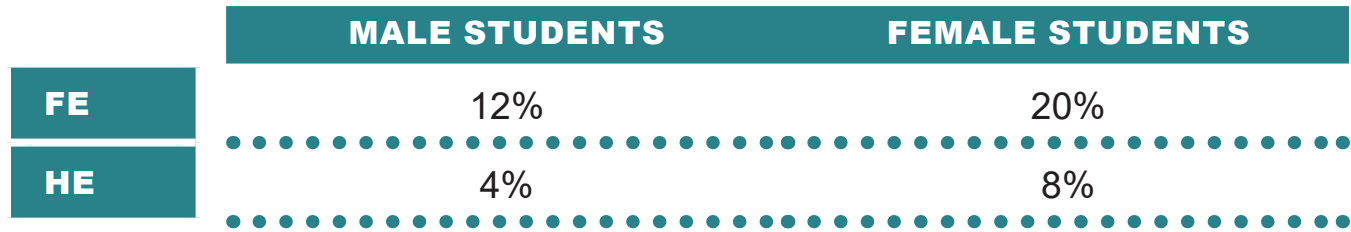
However, there is a clear difference between the success rates of male and female students in Further Education.

Male students are 5% more successful than the UHI Perth average, while female students are 6% less successful. This means we have a sex-based attainment gap of 11% to address.

STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY SEX

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

When looking at withdrawal rates by sex, we can see that women withdraw from their courses at higher rates than men:



In Further Education, female students withdraw from their courses 8% more often than male students. In Higher Education, the withdrawal rate for women (8%) is double the withdrawal rate for men (4%).

STUDENT SATISFACTION BY SEX

Our Early Student Experience Survey for 24/25 shows that male and female students are similarly satisfied with their experience of studying at UHI Perth, with both having a 96% positive response rate.

While there has been a small amount of change year-on-year, student satisfaction has been over 90% since 19/20 with no more than 1% difference between the two groups in any year.


Based on this evidence, we do not believe there is any difference in student satisfaction linked to this protected characteristic.

GENDER BALANCE BY SUBJECT AREA

The table below shows the gender ratio of each of our subject areas for both Further and Higher Education courses. This takes the number of female students compared to male students and simplifies each to the nearest whole number.

	FURTHER EDUCATION RATIO (F:M)	HIGHER EDUCATION RATIO (F:M)
HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SPORT	5 : 1	2 : 1
EARLY YEARS AND EDUCATION	2 : 1	20 : 1
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL STUDIES	3 : 1	2 : 1
BUSINESS, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE	1 : 1	2 : 1
MUSIC INDUSTRIES AND THEATRE ARTS	1 : 1	1 : 1
AUDIO, ART AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES	1 : 3	1 : 3

	FURTHER EDUCATION RATIO (F:M)	HIGHER EDUCATION RATIO (F:M)
BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING	1 : 13	1 : 6
SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND AVIATION	1 : 3	1 : 5
MOUNTAIN STUDIES	-	1 : 1



**Outcome 3**

Gender balance

While we have achieved a broadly equal gender split in some areas, we continue to have significant gender imbalances in specific subjects. These are particularly in areas which we know have historic imbalances, such as childcare and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Colleagues across the college are working to help address these imbalances - for example, our marketing team share updates on student achievements throughout the year and often highlight students and alumni (former students) succeeding in courses and industries that are ‘non-traditional’ for their background.

The photos below are from blog posts celebrating the success of female students in Automotive Engineering, Aviation and Engineering:



## PREVENTING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

This information is included in the Sex section of our mainstreaming report to match the relevant National Equality Outcome, however we recognise that Gender Based Violence (GBV) can affect anyone - including men and members of LGBT+ community.

In November 2024, UHI launched an Online Disclosure Tool to support students to share their experiences of Gender Based Violence. This includes the option to disclose anonymously, so that we can still track GBV incidents where the affected student(s) do not want to share their identity to make a complaint or access support.



This is why it is called a disclosure tool and not a reporting tool. Making a disclosure through the tool can be an informal first step in reporting GBV incidents to UHI Perth, but is not treated as a formal report in its own right.

So far, we have not received any local reports through this platform. However, since this is a new process, it is difficult to say whether this reflects a lack of GBV incidents at UHI Perth or just that affected students are not aware of the option to share their experiences in this way. We will be continuing to promote this to ensure that students are aware of how and when to use it to disclose GBV, and that staff are aware of when to signpost students to the Online Disclosure Tool.

We have also started an awareness raising campaign to support members of the UHI Perth community who may be affected by 'Sextortion'. This refers to offences committed online where a criminal threatens to share





indecent images of victims, unless they pay money or follow other orders. The poster above is displayed in toilet cubicles so that anyone who wants or needs access to information on sextortion can find it discreetly.



UHI also partnered with White Ribbon Scotland to deliver ambassador training focused on preventing GBV against women and girls by empowering people to speak out against male violence towards women. This was attended by many members of our student services team, allowing them to effectively support our students and help UHI Perth be part of the solution to GBV.

## **NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

While we have been working hard to improve the gender balance on our courses over the past four years, it is clear there is still work to be done in this area. As a result, we will be adopting **National Equality Outcome 16: UHI Perth will actively work to reduce significant gender imbalances on courses.**

We will continue promoting the disclosure, reporting, and prevention of Gender Based Violence at UHI Perth. However, it is not clear from our data at this stage whether we need to formally adopt a National Equality Outcome in this area. This will be under review until we gather more evidence to show whether our progress so far shows a need to improve or simply continue current practice.

For the reasons explained in the Disability section of this report, we are also adopting the National Equality Outcome focused on male mental health.

## **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

### **STAFF PROFILE**

Similar to other protected characteristics, the majority (58%) of our staff have not shared data about their sexual orientation with us.

Over 90% of people who have shared their sexuality with us identified as heterosexual / straight and the second largest group is made up of colleagues who chose ‘Prefer not to say’.

Due to the small number of people disclosing other sexual orientations, we cannot provide a more detailed breakdown of Homosexual (including lesbian and gay identities), Bisexual or other sexual minority representation in the UHI Perth workforce at this time.

STUDENT PROFILE

The tables below show the sexual orientation data that our students have shared with us:

FURTHER EDUCATION					
	BISEXUAL	GAY	HETERO-SEXUAL	OTHER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
TOTAL	53	18	908	23	149
%	5%	2%	79%	2%	13%

HIGHER EDUCATION					
	BISEXUAL	GAY	HETERO-SEXUAL	OTHER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
TOTAL	93	44	1095	26	111
%	7%	3%	80%	2%	8%

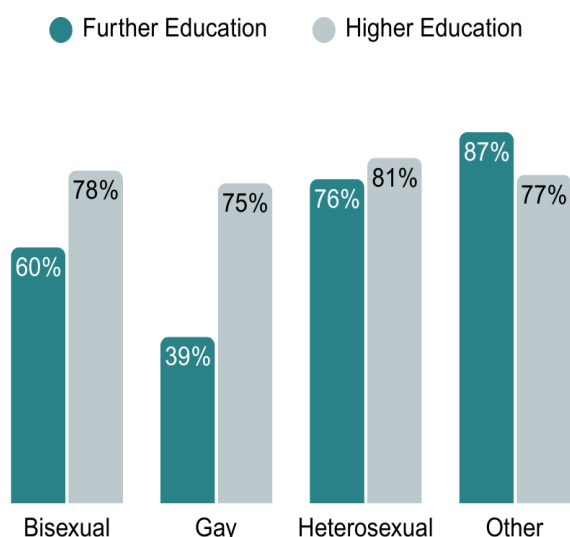
Our data shows that we have higher representation of all sexual minorities within the UHI Perth student community compared to the Perth and Kinross area. According to the most recent census: 88.3% of local residents identify as heterosexual, 1.2% as Gay or Lesbian, 1.2% as Bisexual and 0.4% as Other.

This means we have approximately twice as many people identifying as gay or lesbian, four times as many people identifying as bisexual, and five times as

many people identifying with other sexual orientations.

Our Further Education students are less likely to share their sexual orientation with us, while our Higher Education students are slightly more likely compared to the local community (9%).

## STUDENT OUTCOMES BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION



The chart to the left shows the success rates of our students who have identified as sexual minorities. As a reminder, the average success rate of UHI Perth students is 73% in Further Education and 81% in Higher Education.

Our data shows that we have relatively small attainment gaps of 6% or less for all groups when compared with heterosexual

students in Higher Education.

However, a much greater concern is the large attainment gaps for gay and bisexual students in Further Education. Bisexual students are 16% less likely to succeed compared to heterosexual students studying at the same level, while gay students are 37% less likely to succeed.

## STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

When looking at withdrawal rates by sexual orientation, we can see differences between each group:

	BISEXUAL	GAY	HETERO-SEXUAL	OTHER
FE	32%	39%	14%	0%
HE	4%	9%	7%	12%

In Higher Education, these differences are relatively small with bisexual students slightly less likely and gay students slightly more likely to leave their course compared to heterosexual students.

However, in Further Education there are significant differences in retention linked to sexual orientation. Bisexual students withdraw from their courses roughly twice as often as heterosexual students and this increases to almost three times as often for gay students.

### SCOTTISH LGBTI+ RAINBOW MARK

In 2024, UHI signed up to the Equality Network’s Rainbow Mark. This is a commitment to:

- Increase positive LGBTI+ visibility
- Provide information and tools to enable better LGBTI+ inclusion
- Reduce isolation and minority stress for LGBTI+ people
- Create more welcoming places in Scotland



Our work to progress with these goals will help us to achieve our National Equality Outcomes for LGBTI+ staff and students.

### LIBRARY DISPLAYS

Our library colleagues bring together themed books in creative displays throughout the year to highlight important issues to students and staff.



The team often use this to celebrate varied cultural events and promote allyship with different communities.

Their most recent display was for LGBTQIA+ awareness month, giving library users the chance to engage with academic texts and novels sharing the history and experiences of queer communities from different perspectives.

## NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS

Our data shows that we have strong representation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and other sexual orientations compared with the local area. Unfortunately, it also shows that these students are currently the least likely to be successful in their studies at Further Education level and are also more to leave college before completing their course.

For this reason, we will adopt **National Equality Outcome 17: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students will feel safe being 'out' at UHI Perth.**

To make sure we make a positive difference for the whole LGBT+ community, this will be linked with our work to make sure trans staff and students feel safe as detailed in the Gender Re-assignment section of this report.


## EQUALITY FACTORS

This section focuses on groups who can experience disadvantage but are not currently protected under the Equality Act 2010.

## CARE EXPERIENCE

The information in this section relates to our previous equality outcome focused

on improving the UHI Perth experience for people who previously been looked after.



**Outcome 1**  
Care experience

Someone is considered ‘care experienced’ if they have been looked after by anyone other than their birth parent(s) before the age of 18. This includes being in the care of their local authority (for example, in a group home or with foster parents) or being looked after by a family member (kinship care).

There is no specific length of time in care needed to access the support available for people with care experience, as even temporary care arrangements can cause significant disruption and introduce long lasting barriers to accessing education.

STAFF PROFILE

We can only provide data on care experience for our students as this is not something we currently ask staff to share with us. We plan to add a question about care experience as part of our upcoming review of our equality monitoring processes.

STUDENT PROFILE

The table below shows how many of our students are care experienced in Further and Higher Education:

	FURTHER EDUCATION		HIGHER EDUCATION	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
TOTAL	188	2,105	28	1,490
%	9%	91%	2%	98%

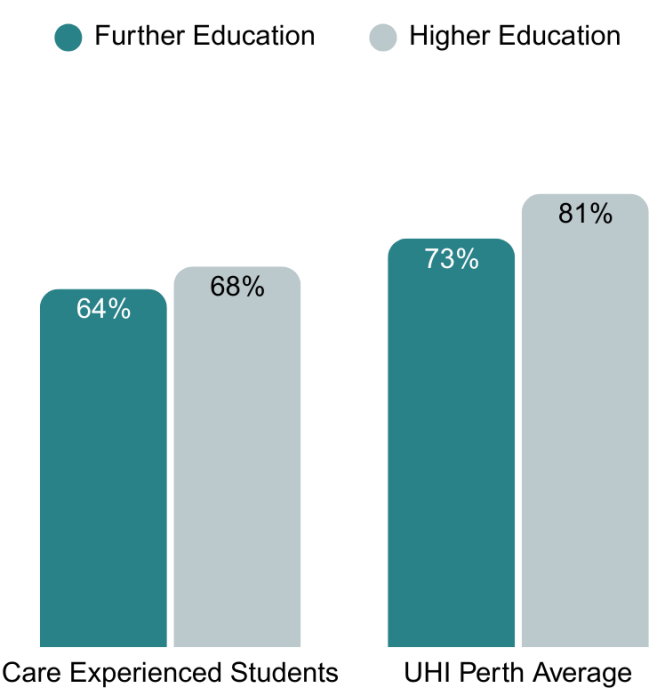
This shows that we have roughly four times as many people with care experience



studying on our Further Education courses compared to our Higher Education courses.

We know that care experience can make it more difficult for people to engage with school, so it is not surprising that most of our care experienced students are studying on our FE courses which have lower entry requirements than HE.

STUDENT OUTCOMES BY CARE EXPERIENCE



The chart to the left shows the percentage of our care experienced students who achieve successful outcomes in their studies, compared with the UHI Perth Average.

Our data shows that we currently have a 9% attainment gap for care experienced students in Further Education, increasing to a 13% gap in Higher Education.

This 9% gap in FE is the same as the data shared in our Integrated Progress Report 2023, however, it is important to note that this has remained consistent alongside improvements in successful outcomes of around 8% for all learners. It is encouraging to see that, while this recent progress has not narrowed the gap, it has equally not widened during this time.

STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY CARE EXPERIENCE

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

We can only share the data for Further Education in this section, as the number

of care experienced students withdrawing from Higher Education is too small to comment on.

In Further Education, 39 out of 188 students who told us they were care experienced left their course before the end of the programme. This is a withdrawal rate of 21%, 5% greater than the average UHI Perth student in Further Education.

This is a reduction of 2% from the withdrawal rate for care experienced students which was reported in our Integrated Progress Report 2023, however the overall UHI Perth withdrawal rate reduced by 6% during this time. This suggests that, while care experienced students have benefited from the overall increase in retention, this has been more effective for non-care experienced students.

## **STUDENT SATISFACTION BY CARE EXPERIENCE**

Our Early Student Experience Survey results over the past three years have shown positive responses from our care experienced students remaining 1% behind other students.

Both groups have also experienced a 1% year-on-year decline in satisfied responses, from a high of 97% for care experienced students and 98% for all other students.

While this is a small decrease, it is important to acknowledge that results remain very positive and there are no signs of significant differences in satisfaction between the two groups.

## **EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are no specific National Equality Outcomes related to care experience, as it is not a protected characteristic.

However, we recognise that students who have been looked after often benefit from additional support to help them succeed in their studies. We have been

working towards this as part of our 2021 - 2024 outcomes and intend to continue with the good practice we have introduced during this time.

We will also continue to monitor the experiences of students in this group as part of our ongoing mainstreaming efforts and may adopt an additional equality outcome in the future if the data suggests this will be beneficial.

## **CARING RESPONSIBILITIES**

Someone has caring responsibilities when they have to look after another person because they have a disability, physical or mental illness, or addiction.

Caring responsibilities are not the same as parenting responsibilities, so someone is not automatically considered a carer when looking after their own child.

However, someone can have both types of responsibility at the same time - for example, if they care for a child with a disability or support an elderly relative on top of their day-to-day parenting.

## **STAFF PROFILE**

We can only provide data on caring responsibilities for our students as this is not something we currently ask staff to share with us. We plan to add a question about caring responsibilities as part of our upcoming review of our equality monitoring processes.

## **STUDENT PROFILE**

The table on the next page shows how many of our students are balancing their studies with caring responsibilities in Further and Higher Education:

	FURTHER EDUCATION		HIGHER EDUCATION	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
TOTAL	197	2,096	143	1,375
%	9%	91%	9%	91%

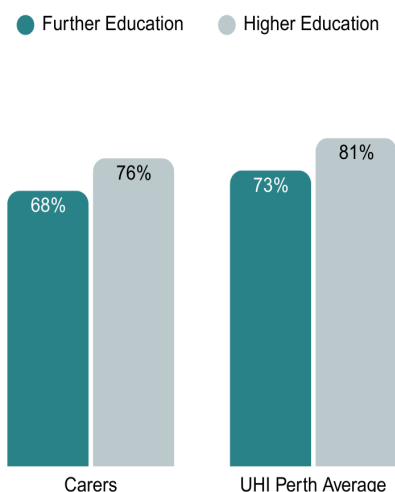
This shows that we have the same percentage of people with caring responsibilities studying at both Further and Higher Education levels.

This may reflect that most people are likely to take on caring responsibilities later in their lives. This means they are less likely to have experienced barriers in their school education, enabling them to meet the entry requirements to access courses at various levels.

However, it is important to highlight that this is not true for young carers who are defined as having caring responsibilities while they are under the age of 18). Young carers have often had to balance their school and care commitments which can have an impact on attainment.

This is supported by our data, which shows that young carers make up 47% of carers in our Further Education courses, while they are just 3% of Higher Education carers. In contrast, a large majority of carers in HE (66%) are over the age of 25.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES BY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES



The chart to the left shows the success rates of students with caring responsibilities compared with the UHI Perth average.

This shows that there is a consistent 5% attainment gap for carers in both Further and Higher Education.

While this clearly shows that we have work to do to

close this gap, it is encouraging to see that, unlike other areas, it is not wider in Further Education despite the extra challenges faced by young carers.

## **STUDENT COURSE COMPLETION BY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES**

On average, 16% of our Further Education students leave their course before gaining a qualification. This decreases to 6% for our Higher Education students.

For carers on our Further Education courses, the withdrawal rate increases to 20%. In Higher Education, it increases to 8%.

This shows that students with caring responsibilities are more likely to withdraw from courses at all levels, with a slightly higher risk for those studying in Further Education.

## **STUDENT SATISFACTION BY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES**

Our Early Student Satisfaction Survey shows that positive responses from students with caring responsibilities are consistently within 1% of students without caring responsibilities.

There has been a small drop in satisfied responses over the past year of 2% for students with caring responsibilities and 1% for students without caring responsibilities. However, as satisfaction remains high at 95% in the most recent survey for 2024/25, this is not a cause for concern.

## **EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are no National Equality Outcomes specific to caring responsibilities, as this is not a protected characteristic in its own right. However, it can often be protected by the Equality Act 2010 through association. This is because caring responsibilities are strongly linked with some protected characteristics more than others.

For example, women are more likely to have caring responsibilities so it can

often be protected on the basis of avoiding sex discrimination; or if someone is looking after a disabled or elderly person, caring can be protected on the basis of avoiding disability or age discrimination.

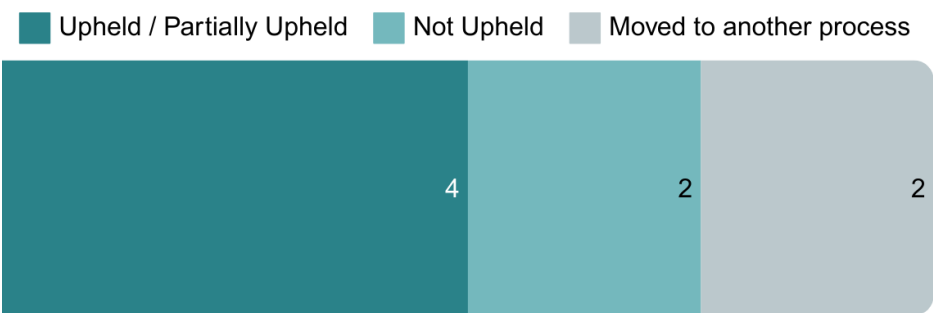
We will not be creating a specific outcome related to caring responsibilities but will aim to make progress in this area through other, related, outcomes. For example, we will consider the needs of young carers while working towards **National Equality Outcome 2: A higher number of younger college students (aged 18 and under) will achieve successful results.**

## OTHER DATA

### EQUALITY COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

#### STUDENT COMPLAINTS

In the 2023/24 Academic Year, we received 8 student complaints which related to equality issues. 50% of these were held or partially upheld, 25% were not upheld, and 25% were moved to different college processes.



As we have no way to break this down further, it is hard to say at this stage whether this supports the National Equality Outcomes about people from different communities feeling safe to report issues. The small number of complaints could mean that most UHI Perth students are having a positive experience and do not have complaints, or it could suggest that we have an issue with under-reporting.



We will be looking at how we can capture more detailed information to help us evaluate this in future. If further evidence reveals that we need to offer more support to make sure students from all communities are comfortable using our complaints and grievance procedures, we will do so as part of our ongoing equality mainstreaming efforts.

## **STAFF GRIEVANCES**

In the 2023/24 Academic Year, our Human Resources team supported 12 Employee Relations cases which included 6 grievances.

At this time, we did not track whether any of these were related to equality issues. This is something that we are now tracking, so that we can provide more detailed information in future years and identify whether any communities are experiencing barriers to reporting.

## **NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOME RECOMMENDATION**

Once we have a better understanding of whether we have any barriers preventing staff and students sharing equality concerns with us, we will consider whether to adopt the three NEOs that directly relate to complaints and reporting:

- **National Equality Outcome 8: Staff and students will feel confident that complaints of racism are handled fairly, leading to positive and effective outcomes**
- **National Equality Outcome 12: Students and staff will feel confident and supported when reporting any concerns related to their religion or beliefs**
- **National Equality Outcome 13: Staff and students will feel able to access support about violence, harassment, and abuse and know that they can safely report their experience**

As we review and update our reporting processes to remove potential barriers, we expect to make positive progress towards these outcomes before making a final decision on whether to formally adopt them as part of our four-year mainstreaming plan.



PAY GAP INFORMATION

We have included some of the high-level information shared in our [Pay Gap Report 2025](#) as part of this Equality Mainstreaming 2025 report. If you would like to find out in more detail about our current pay gaps, please access the full report on our website.

OUR PAY GAPS

The table below shows our pay gap data in six areas - we have calculated mean and median pay gaps for disability, ethnicity and gender, along with median pay gaps only for intersectional groups.

To make our areas for improvement clearer visually, we have shown our actual pay gaps (positive percentages) in bold.

		
	MEAN	MEDIAN
DISABILITY	1.56%	-4.5%
ETHNICITY	-7.2%	-1.0%
GENDER	8.6%	12.2%
DISABILITY-GENDER	-	34.15%
ETHNICITY-GENDER	-	3%

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

## FOCUSING ON AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

### FIRST STEPS

While creating this report, it became clear that there are a number of areas where we can improve our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practice in ways that will benefit the whole UHI Perth community.

While this work will not be an Equality Outcome in its own right, due to being for the benefit of all UHI Perth staff, students, and stakeholders, we believe our ongoing work on the NEOs will be more impactful if we take the time to build this stronger foundation first.

This work will include:

- Reviewing our current data capturing processes
- Updating our approach to Equality Impact Assessments

### NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOMES

We have identified three potential statuses for the NEOs, **Adopting**, **Reviewing**, and **Monitoring**, and have shared descriptions of these below. The number in brackets after each definition is the number of NEOs we currently have at this stage.



**Adopting:** this means that we have taken on the outcome in full and will be actively working to improve in this area this during the 2025 - 2029 mainstreaming period (8)
















**Reviewing:** this means that we need to gather more data to make an informed decision about whether to work towards the outcome during the 2025 - 2029 mainstreaming period (7)







**Monitoring:** this means that our current data suggests we are already successful in this area, so we will not actively work to improve further during the 2025 - 2029 mainstreaming period (2)

The table on the next page shows each National Equality Outcome with its status in our current mainstreaming plans.

1	A higher number of mature university students (aged 25 and over) will complete their degree programmes.	 <b>MONITORING</b>
2	A higher number of younger college students (aged 18 and under) will achieve successful results.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
3	More students who share that they have a mental health condition will complete their programmes successfully.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
4	Disabled students will feel positive about the support and reasonable adjustments offered, including from teaching staff, while on their course.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
5	Disabled staff and students will feel safe at UHI Perth.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>

6	Representation of disabled staff and Board Members will be similar to the local area.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
7	Trans staff and students will feel safe to be themselves at UHI Perth.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
8	Staff and students will feel confident that complaints of racism are handled fairly, leading to positive and effective outcomes.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
9	Students from all racial backgrounds will have equal chances of success and learn from course content which is diverse and anti-racist.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
10	Representation of ethnic minority Board Members will be similar to the local area.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
11	Representation of ethnic minority staff will be similar to the local area.	 <b>MONITORING</b>
12	Students and staff will feel confident and supported when reporting any concerns related to their religion or beliefs.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
13	Staff and students will feel able to access support about violence, harassment, and abuse and know that they can safely report their experience.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>

14	UHI Perth will actively work to prevent and respond to violence, harassment, and abuse.	 <b>REVIEWING</b>
15	Male staff and students will know how to access mental health support.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
16	UHI Perth will actively work to reduce significant gender imbalances on courses.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>
17	Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students will feel safe being 'out' at UHI Perth.	 <b>ADOPTING</b>

## ESSENTIAL ACTION: IMPROVING OUR EDI DATA

As the table above shows, we need to review how we capture Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data as there are a number of areas where our current progress and possible development needs are unclear.

We are committed to working to close these data gaps in the near future, so that any relevant NEOs can be adopted and worked on during the 2025 - 2029 mainstreaming period.

In order to fully review our adoption of National Equality Outcomes over the next four years, we need to:

- Refresh our Equality Monitoring questions and encourage all staff to share and/or update their information
- Introduce more in-depth Equality Monitoring processes for our Board



## Members

- Improve survey responses available to students to allow for a more detailed breakdown in certain areas (e.g. capturing outcomes specific to mental health, instead of overall disability)
- Review our complaints and grievance processes to make sure we are capturing data on equality concerns effectively
- Identify and address any barriers to reporting equality issues

## KEY AREAS TO PROGRESS

We recognise that all of the National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) can make a valuable difference to the Further and Higher Education sector across Scotland. However, to focus our efforts, we have identified five key areas where we feel our continued equality work will have the biggest impact locally.

The eight NEOs we have chosen to actively adopt at this time will be shared amongst these key areas of work. These priorities were chosen by combining what our data tells us about where we have the most opportunity to improve with effective consultation. We surveyed the UHI Perth community to find out what is important to our staff and students and used this feedback to help balance our choices.

The key areas for targeted action that we have identified are designed to:

- Support younger students to succeed on Further Education courses  
(1 linked NEO)
- Make disabled staff and students feel safe at UHI Perth, with access to the right support  
(3 linked NEOs)
- Reduce attainment gaps for ethnic minority students and make sure

course content represents people from all backgrounds

**(1 linked NEO)**

- Improve gender balance for courses, particularly Early Years and Built Environment

**(1 linked NEO)**

- Increase feelings of safety for LGBT+ people working and studying at UHI Perth

**(2 linked NEOs)**

You will find an initial outline of our ideas for achieving these outcomes below - these are also known as ‘outputs’. However, it is important to note that the outputs listed here are not final. We have started by identifying 2-3 outputs for each NEO adopted and expect to develop our strategy further as we make progress on improving our broader EDI processes.

We also know that our approach may change because of the **UHI Transformation** project. This work will define the future of the UHI partnership and, while we do not know the final outcome yet, we know the options being discussed are likely to change how we deliver our services.

We look forward to working more closely with our academic partners. However, we also have to recognise the potential impact that changing our approach may have on our current equality mainstreaming plans.

This means that, depending on the decisions made through the UHI Transformation project, our independent outcomes and plans to achieve them may change during the 2025 - 2029 reporting period.

We will produce a more detailed action plan after the release of this



mainstreaming report, noting that this may need to change when the future of UHI is clearer.

## **KEY AREA 1: SUPPORT YOUNGER STUDENTS TO SUCCEED ON FURTHER EDUCATION COURSES**

### **Ideas we are exploring to achieve this equality outcome:**

- Identify any specific barriers contributing to our age-related attainment gap so that these can be addressed
- Creating peer mentorship opportunities so younger students can learn from more experienced students further into their educational journeys
- Increasing promotion of our support services across all FE courses

### **How we will measure success:**

- Do we have a clear explanation for our age-related attainment gap?
- Has the attainment gap for younger students (<18) in Further Education reduced?
- Are younger students accessing our support services more often?

Doing this work will help us to **advance equality of opportunity** and **foster good relations**.

## **KEY AREA 2: MAKE DISABLED STAFF AND STUDENTS FEEL SAFE AT UHI PERTH, WITH ACCESS TO THE RIGHT SUPPORT**

### **Ideas we are exploring to achieve this equality outcome:**

- Supporting more FE students to make a Personalised Learning Support Plan (PLSP)
- Increasing the number of male students accessing support with their mental health, through our counsellors or other appropriate services

- Encouraging colleagues to share information about any disabilities or long-term health conditions with us, supported by 'myth-busting' what this data is used for
- Raising awareness of our Reasonable Adjustment Passport scheme, highlighting this to all colleagues and training more line managers
- Revisiting the staff disability review conducted in 23/24 and introducing a 'Feeling safe at UHI Perth' survey to allow us to monitor improvements in feelings of safety for disabled staff and students
- Introducing new EDI training, including 'bystander intervention' training to help staff effectively challenge any disability discrimination (also called ableism) that they see or hear

#### **How we will measure success:**

- Is there an increase in Further Education students using PLSPs?
- Is the counselling service being used by more of our male students?
- Are more colleagues sharing their disabilities or long-term health conditions with us?
- Are more Reasonable Adjustment Passports being used to improve individual experiences of work at UHI Perth?
- Do disabled staff and students report feeling safer at UHI Perth?
- Do staff report feeling more confident challenging any ableism they encounter at UHI Perth?

Doing this work will help us to **eliminate discrimination** and **advance equality of opportunity**.

### **KEY AREA 3: REDUCE ATTAINMENT GAPS FOR ETHNIC MINORITY STUDENTS AND MAKE SURE COURSE CONTENT REPRESENTS PEOPLE FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS**

#### **Ideas we are exploring to achieve this equality outcome:**

- Identify any specific barriers contributing to our race-related attainment gaps so that these can be addressed
- Continue decolonising the curriculum, supporting all subject areas to use and/or develop teaching materials that represent diverse perspectives
- Introducing new EDI training, including 'bystander intervention' training to help staff effectively challenge any racism that they see or hear

#### **How we will measure success:**

- Do we have a clear explanation for our race-related attainment gaps?
- How many of our subject areas are supported by a diverse range of teaching materials which include anti-racist perspectives?
- Do colleagues report feeling more confident challenging any racism that they come across at UHI Perth?

Doing this work will help us to **eliminate discrimination** and **advance equality of opportunity**.

### **KEY AREA 4: IMPROVE GENDER BALANCE FOR COURSES, PARTICULARLY EARLY YEARS AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Ideas we are exploring to achieve this equality outcome:**

- Support departments with specific gender imbalances to introduce or update their EDI action plans
- Continue highlighting the achievements of students breaking gender stereotypes

- Introducing new EDI training, including ‘bystander intervention’ training to help staff effectively challenge any sexism that they see or hear

#### **How we will measure success:**

- Is gender balance more equal on our Early Years and Built Environment courses?
- Has there been an increase in underrepresented students applying to courses and are they successful?
- Do colleagues report feeling more confident challenging any sexism they come across at UHI Perth?

Doing this work will help us to **eliminate discrimination** and **advance equality of opportunity**.

### **KEY AREA 5: INCREASE FEELINGS OF SAFETY FOR LGBT+ PEOPLE WORKING AND STUDYING AT UHI PERTH**

#### **Ideas we are exploring to achieve this equality outcome:**

- Creating more opportunities for LGBT+ staff and students to celebrate their identities, by promoting existing networks and attending local pride events
- Introducing a ‘Feeling safe at UHI Perth’ survey to allow us to monitor improvements in feelings of safety for LGBT+ staff and students
- Introducing new EDI training, including ‘bystander intervention’ training to help staff effectively challenge any homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia they see or hear

#### **How we will measure success:**

- Do LGBT+ staff and students report feeling safer at UHI Perth?



- Have attainment gaps for groups of students under the LGBT+ umbrella reduced?
- Do colleagues feel more confident challenging anti-LGBT+ discrimination they come across at UHI Perth?

Doing this work will help us to **eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity** and **foster good relations**.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

We are proud of the progress we have made over the past four years, while also recognising that we have more work to do to advance equality for everyone - including continuing with some of the goals we set in 2021.

This report shares what our UHI Perth community has come together to achieve during extremely challenging times for the Further and Higher Education sector and we want to finish by sharing our gratitude to the people who made this possible.

Thank you to our students, staff, and stakeholders. We look forward to continuing our work to make a positive difference with you over the next four years.