

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Policy, practice, process, or service title:	Equality Outcomes Review 2025-2029
Policy, practice, process, or service lead/ owner:	EDI Lead
Others involved in EqlA assessment group	Assessment group included: None established. Regular updates have been shared with the EDI Committee.
Policy, practice, process, or service implementation date:	30/04/2025

1 Framing the policy, practice, process, or service

1.1 Briefly describe the outcomes, aims and purpose of the policy, practice, process, or service:

The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard, when carrying out functions as a service provider, policy maker and employer, to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation, or harassment.
- Advance equality of opportunity - remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics and taking steps to meet the needs of people where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Foster good relations – specifically about tackling prejudice and promoting understanding across difference groups of people

The regulatory framework in Scotland is designed to support public authorities to meeting the above duties. SRUC is required under the [Equality Act \(2010\) \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012 \(and subsequent updates\)](#) to meet several regulatory duties including to publish equality outcomes at an interval no longer than four years. SRUC is also required under the same regulations to report on how we mainstream equality. Equality outcomes must be evidence based and developed in consultation with those affected.

Further context can be summarised as follows.

National Equality outcomes and reporting guidance

The Scottish Funding Council and Equality and Human Rights Commission have developed national equality outcomes based on evidence of the biggest inequalities in the Scottish further and higher education sector. Scottish institutions are asked to consider their own evidence in relation to the national equality outcomes and to determine which national equality outcomes they will adopt as part of their equality outcomes work.

Ongoing Regulatory review by Scottish Government

Scottish Government is reviewing the regulatory framework in Scotland however no changes have been implemented for the April 2025 reporting deadline. There has been an indication through correspondence from Scottish Government that further requirements on inclusive communication are expected soon, and that Regulation 6A will be repealed (note that Scottish Government has never provided public authorities with Board member equality data since this regulation came into force).

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 and statutory guidance.

SRUC is also subject to the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 with reporting expectations on gender representation on SRUC's Board. Key parts for reporting are how SRUC encourages applications by women and the steps we have taken to achieve gender representation (including other protected characteristics as appropriate).

1.2 Is the policy, practice, process, or service new or being changed, reviewed, or stopped?

Review: SRUC's current equality outcomes end April 2025. Our revised equality outcomes will run from April 2025 – 2029

1.3 Who is affected by this policy, practice, process, or service?

All SRUC's current and future staff and students. SRUC's other customers/ partners may also be affected.

1.4 Are there any other SRUC policies that may be affected by this policy, practice, process, or service?

The review of equality outcomes and progress in mainstreaming equality will include work to review and develop some SRUC policies. Any policy changes will require their own equality impact assessment and should align to SRUC's equality outcomes objectives.

2 Evidence relevant to the policy, practice, process, or service including consultation

The information you gather in this section will:

- help you to understand the importance of your policy, practice, process, or service for different equality groups,
- inform the depth of equality impact assessment you need to do (this should be proportional to the potential impact on equality groups), and
- provide justification and an audit trail behind your decisions, including where it is agreed an equality impact assessment is not required.

2.1 Evidence: Set out in the table what you know about the experiences of people in terms of each equality group.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>Internal data has been used where available. The National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) were developed using sectoral data reviewed by the Scottish Funding Council and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The NEOs data sources have been published by the Scottish Funding Council and have not been replicated in this document; the NEOs are repeated in this document.</p> <p>The latest data for employees is 2022-23 at the time of drafting the EqIA. SRUC commissioned an EDI audit which was undertaken by researchers with Advance HE. For the survey, 852 people took part including 706 staff and 146 students and additional information was gathered via focus groups.</p> <p>With reference to student surveys and engagement. The Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (SSES) and SRUC Wide Survey (SWS) return significantly more responses than the National Student Satisfaction (NSS) survey (in 2024, the SSES and SWS saw 1,236 responses, 619 and 617 respectively, while the NSS saw 161). The SSES and SWS also cover a much broader range of SRUC provision. As such, where there are differences between surveys, or where the SSES/SWS return a pattern not seen in the NSS, the SSES/SWS return is given greater weight. To note, speak week reflects input from 205 learners.</p>

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Multiple equality groups and intersectional findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) SRUC's inform and support form (2) SRUC's Student Mental Health Strategy (3) Vet School Council: Towards a Fairer Future report (4) SRUC's Corporate Parenting action plan 2024+ (5) SRUC employee data March 2023 (6) EDI Audit by Advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SRUC Inform & Support form launched in October 2024 provides a space for people to confidentially disclose an experience or being witness to sexual harassment, abuse, a hate crime, or other inappropriate behaviour. The form covers all nine protected characteristics. Reporting is to be established. 2. The mental health strategy not only focuses on wider mental wellbeing for all students but acknowledges specific need to ensure that marginalised and hard to reach student groups are supported and encouraged to seek support, such as Care-Experienced, BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic), refugees, LGBTQI +, Neurodiverse, male, and disabled students to remove barriers and widen access. 3. Using UCAS data and written pre-SRUC's Vet School. Findings include low representation from all ethnic groups other than White, low representation of applicants who define as men, disabled applicant representation has dramatically increased (reason is unclear) but are less likely to receive and accept offers, Real barriers include accessing the right qualifications (rural areas most affected), expected work experience, achieving required grades, gaining support to apply, meeting financial costs, demonstrating competency standards expected by the RCVS. 4. SRUC's Corporate Parenting Group also looks at veterans, travellers, refugees, and any other identified groups, not already cared for. There is a clear intersection with protected characteristics under the Equality Act. Action plan objectives include understanding care experience students lived experience, management information, maximising successful outcomes for care experienced students, be a college of choice for care experienced students, staff knowledge skills to support students, and wider awareness raising. The objective aligns with several EDI audit recommendations.

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		<p>5. SRUC is unable to form any conclusions regarding differences in experiences due to small numbers in terms of number of employees involved in a new grievance, capability or disciplinary procedures, and job evaluation and relevant outcomes.</p> <p>Approximately 70% of applications for both 2022 and 2023 came from female employees. No applicants in 2021-22 declared a disability compared to 29% of applicants declaring a disability in 2022-23. Ninety percent (90%) of all applications came from UK White employee in 2021-22 compared to 2022-23 where 29% of employees from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and 14% from other ethnic background and 29% UK White applied for supported learning.</p> <p>6. The generic recommendations from the EDI Audit include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review internally and externally facing EDI webpages/ intranets to improve signposting to relevant policies, resources, EDI events and available support • Review communication of EDI activities, policies and progress • Build a co-creative relationship with students and staff so they can support and feed into EDI initiative, policies, resources and support • Review the use and monitoring of EDI data • Ensure that EDI work is adequately prioritised and resourced <p>The EDI audit identified the following most reported barriers and challenges at SRUC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff capacity, confidence and resource to deliver EDI responsibilities • Lack of resource for EDI work, events and opportunities for specific groups • Overly centralised activity, lack of consistency across campuses, teams, locations • Significant underrepresentation in student and staff demographic • Lack of understanding and support of the needs of disabled staff and students • Lack of data and benchmarking to support EDI work

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Age: students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council (2) SRUC's 2022-23 student attainment data (3) Student Support and Engagement Survey 2024 (SSES) (4) SRUC wide student survey 2024 (5) National Student Satisfaction Survey 2024 (6) EDI Audit by Advance 2023-2024 (7) Student demographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Equality outcome: 'The retention outcomes for university students aged 25 and over will improve', and 'the success rates for college students aged under 19 will improve'. 2. SRUC student data: Overall completion rate is 75% with minor fluctuations by age. Differences by study and mode include learners aged 30+ studying at FE level were more likely to complete successfully than those 29 and under; learners aged 21+ studying at HE level were more likely to complete successfully than those 20 and under. Learners aged 21-29 were slightly more likely to complete if studying full time rather than part time. 3. SSES 2024 found no substantial difference in responses by age. There is a minor difference in Student Voice and Community, with mature learners (21+) less likely to return positive satisfaction scores in this category. 4. SRUC wide student survey- Learners aged 21-24 were slightly less likely to return positive satisfaction scores in the Student Voice and Community category. 5. There is no substantial difference to most of the responses to the NSS, excepting the Organisation and Management scale and Students' Association question. For both, learners between 26-30 were substantially less likely to return a positive satisfaction score in 2024. However, this is not a sustained difference with previous years seeing this category of learners returning the highest or significantly higher satisfaction. 6. Learners aged 24 and under were significantly less likely to feel comfortable speaking up and expressing their opinions than those over 25. Learners aged 24 and under were also significantly less likely to say that SRUC is active in tackling bullying and/or harassment and that they are satisfied with how bullying and/or harassment are addressed.

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		<p>7. In 2023/24, 54% of SRUC learners were 20 and under, 14% aged 21-24, 10% aged 25-29, and 22% 30+. There are differences according to level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At FE level, 63% of learners were 20 and under, 10% aged 21-24, 9% aged 25-29, and 18% 30+. The proportions for 21-29 are commensurate with Scottish FE institutions (data from 2022/23). The proportions for either side of that are different, with Scottish FE institutions seeing 47% of learners aged 20 and under and 36% of learners aged 30 and over. • At HE level, 44% of learners were 20 and under, 18% aged 21-24, 12% aged 25-29, and 26% 30+. The proportion of learners aged 30 and over is higher than both the Scottish and rUK sector averages (18% and 16% respectively; data from 2021/22). • At PG level, 17% of learners were 21-24, 20% 25-29, and 62% 30+. The proportion of learners aged 30 and over is substantially higher than the Scottish and rUK sector averages (38% and 36% respectively), and those aged 21-24 substantially lower (17% vs 36% and 39%). • This varies by Board of Study, with the highest percentage of learners 21 and under sitting within the Agriculture and Business Management and Animal Science and Management Boards, and the highest percentage of learners 30 and over sitting within the Golf, Food and Drink, and Environment and Conservation Boards.
Age: employees/ other	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) SRUC employee data published 2023</p>	<p>1. There are no staff/ Board National Equality Outcomes in relation to age.</p> <p>2. In 2023, 13.5 % of our employees are aged 50-54 years (13.8% in 2021). This is closely followed by employees aged 40 to 44 years (13% in 2021, 13.2% in 2022 and 13% in 2023). There has been a slight increase in the number of employees aged between 16 to 19, now 1.6% in 2023. Most employees working full time are within the 45-54 years age range at 26.8% and 26.7% in 2022 and 2023, respectively. For part</p>

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	(3) EDI Audit by Advance HE	<p>time employees, the highest proportion of employees are those aged between 35-44 at 26.5% and 26.6%.</p> <p>3. Staff aged 44 and under were significantly less likely than staff aged 45 and over to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> say that there is a diverse representation of people across all levels of SRUC to say that they are aware of SRUC's EDI policies and activities. To know where to seek mental health and/ or wellbeing support and that they feel confident asking for mental health and/ or wellbeing support. Be less aware of how to report bullying and/ or harassment. <p>For staff, age was the second most frequently reported characteristic where they had experienced bullying and harassment.</p>
Disability - students	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) Student panels 2024-25</p> <p>(3) SRUC's 2022-23 student attainment dashboard</p> <p>(4) SRUC's mental health strategy 2023+</p> <p>(5) EDI Audit by Advance HE</p> <p>(6) Speak Week report 2024</p> <p>(7) SSES survey</p> <p>(8) SRUC-wide Survey</p>	<p>1. National Equality Outcome: 'The success and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve', and 'Disabled students report feeling satisfied with the overall support and reasonable adjustments received, including from teaching staff, while on their course', and 'Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system'.</p> <p>2. Students felt at a disadvantage when not able to type exams and questioned if tools like spellcheck and synonyms can be used in exams. Concerns about the uncertainty of mental health day events</p> <p>3. Overall, there is no substantial difference with respect to Disability. Differences at study and mode level include that learners disclosing a disability and studying at FE level were slightly more likely to succeed than those who did not, whereas those at the PG level disclosing a disability were less likely to succeed. Those disclosing a disability and studying part time were more likely to succeed.</p> <p>4. SRUC's mental health strategy was developed in co-production with students in acknowledgement of the increase in disclosure of poor mental health and the impact</p>

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	(9) National Student Satisfaction Survey (10) SRUC Student demographics	<p>mental health can have on educational outcomes. The strategy aims include prevention of poor mental health, communication, and guidance, belonging and engagement, data, and evaluation, and general or specialist support.</p> <p>5. EDI Audit (students): Disabled learners were significantly less likely than those who did not disclose as disabled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • say that SRUC is committed to promoting EDI and that SRUC is responsive to concerns about EDI. • to feel comfortable speaking up and expressing their opinions • feel their mental health and/or wellbeing are being supported and that they feel confident in asking for mental health and/or wellbeing support <p>The qualitative analysis highlighted lack of appropriate / adequate support for learners with disabilities in teaching and learning, lack of access and/or awareness of support for disability (mainly with reference to physical disabilities, mental health issues, and neurodivergence) and lack of resources and/or training for particular groups, including learners with disabilities. The EDI audit recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners with disabilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing training provision to ensure there is robust training in disability and mental health for all staff, in particular staff involved in teaching and learning. • Ensuring there is clear information and guidance for disabled learners on available support and that this is clearly communicated and signposted. • Reviewing disability and reasonable adjustment policies in collaboration with disabled staff and learners to ensure they are robust. • Ensuring that the disclosure of disability by staff and learners is adequately supported. • Considering joining the Disabled Students Commitment, developed by Advance HE's Disabled Students' Commission.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing student support mechanisms such as the accessibility of student support email addresses, whether these are adequately resourced/working at capacity, and ensuring that support mechanisms/processes are clearly communicated with learners. • Reviewing curricula to ensure that there is disability representation and that it is accessible to disabled learners. <p>6. Speak Week 2024: Students are positive about the support from staff, with responses detailing how lecturers are approachable and help them succeed academically. There is a call for more consistent support for learners disclosing as disabled, and the perception that staff are not trained to deal with certain mental health concerns.</p> <p>7. SSES found no evidence of differences by disability</p> <p>8. SRUC wide Survey found no evidence of differences by disability.</p> <p>9. Respondents disclosing as disabled generally returned higher positive measures than those who did not in the NSS. In 2024, the Organisation and Management Scale was an exception to this, with learners disclosing as disabled – particularly a cognitive or learning disability – less likely to return a positive satisfaction score than those who did not. However, this is not a sustained difference when compared to previous years.</p> <p>10. Student demographics: In 2023/24, 28% of SRUC learners disclosed a disability, 30% at FE level, 24% at HE level and 23% at PG level. This is commensurate with sector averages at the FE level, higher than sector averages for HE level (Scotland and rUK 2021/22 data: 18%) and substantially higher for PG level (Scotland = 9%, rUK = 10%). This varies by Board of Study with the highest percentage of learners disclosing a</p>

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		disability sitting in the Horticulture and Landscape Board, and the lowest percentage sitting in Golf, Food and Drink.
Disability: staff and others	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council (2) SRUC employee data published 2023 (3) Scotland Census 2022 (4) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Audit of SRUC by Advance HE (5) get-it-off-your-chest_a4_final.pdf	<p>1. National Equality Outcome: ‘Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college Boards and university Courts’.</p> <p>2. SRUC does not hold data about disability at Board level. Staff data as of 31 March 2023 shows 7.8% of staff declared a disability, 83.9% declared as non-disabled, 8.3% prefer not to say/ did not disclose. From our data, disabled people are underrepresented at SRUC (even if we combined the declared disability and unknown percentages). SRUC is a Disability Confident employer with those on recruitment panels required to complete unconscious bias training.</p> <p>SRUC information shows that leavers with a declared disability have more than doubled; 12% of leavers in 2022 and 24.8% leavers in 2023 declared a disability.</p> <p>3. The most common type of condition reported in the Scotland census 2022 was a ‘long-term illness, disease or condition’. This was described on the census form as a condition that you may have for life, which may be managed with treatment or medication and is not in one of the other categories – can include conditions such as arthritis, cancer, diabetes, and epilepsy. The census found that the percentage of people reporting a long-term illness, disease or condition increased from 18.7% in 2011 to 21.4% in 2022. The second most common condition reported in the census was a mental health condition and people reporting a mental health condition increased from 4.4% in 2011 to 11.3% in 2022. This increase from 232,900 to 617,100 people was the largest increase across condition types. The increase in the number of people reporting a mental health condition was driven by a large increase among younger people. In 2022 younger people were more likely to report a mental health condition than older people. In 2011 the reverse was true. In 2022 15.4% of 16- to 24-year-olds reported a</p>

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		<p>mental health condition, up from 2.5% in 2011. The census found that a higher percentage of females reported a mental health condition across all age groups in 2022. We saw a similar pattern in 2011. The biggest difference in 2022 was among 16- to 24-year-olds where the percentage of females (20.4%) reporting a mental health condition was twice as high as males (10.5%).</p> <p>The data shows that the number of people with disabilities working full time has decreased over the period (7.6% in 2022 down to 6.8% in 2023), whilst those working part time has increased (6.4% in 2022 up to 9.9% in 2023).</p> <p>4. Among those who disclosed a disability, mental health was the most frequently reported impairment type, followed by a learning difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD. EDI Audit findings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ratings of disability provisions and reasonable adjustments available to staff and students indicate this is an area of improvement for SRUC, • Disabled students and staff both, at times, felt disadvantaged and othered at SRUC and expressed a desire for more support in relation to disabilities. • Disabled staff were consistently more negative in their ratings of the belonging questions than non-disabled staff • Disabled staff were significantly less likely to feel workloads are allocated fairly, to be satisfied with their work/ life balance, and to recommend SRUC as a great place to work. • Disabled staff were significantly more negative in their ratings of each wellbeing item than non-disabled staff • Recommendation to provide specific training, resources, and support to • improve the experiences of staff and students with disabilities. • A reported barrier for SRUC is lack of understanding and support of the needs of disabled staff and students

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In focus groups and the interviews, it was suggested that mental health and wellbeing could be better supported at SRUC • It was also suggested that signposting and communication to support and resources on wellbeing could be improved. <p>Open comments describe first-hand experience as well as witnessing incidents and general feelings of hostility towards women, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minoritised groups. In focus groups, some participants felt their personal characteristics, including disability, made them feel othered at SRUC. The audit recommends that SRUC provide specific training, resources and support to improve the experiences of staff and students with disabilities.</p> <p>5. There is also evidence that men have been less likely than women to seek support when worried or feeling low.</p>
Race – students	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council (2) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (3) SRUC-wide Survey (4) National Student Satisfaction Survey (5) EDI Audit by Advance HE 2023-2024	<p>1. National Equality Outcome that ‘Staff and students are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress’.</p> <p>2. SSES 2024: There is slight difference in overarching responses to the SSES according to Race, with learners from White ethnic backgrounds returning higher positive satisfaction scores than those from BAME backgrounds. Regarding question scales, learners from White ethnic backgrounds were slightly more likely to return positive satisfaction scores in the Learning and Teaching and Student Voice and Community scales than those from BAME backgrounds. There is no substantial difference in the Assessment, Feedback and Communication scale. Learners from White ethnic backgrounds were substantially more likely to be satisfied with their college experience in 2024 than those from BAME backgrounds, though this is not the case in previous years.</p>

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	(6) Student demographics 2023-2024 (7) Attainment data (8) Education Scotland Review 2021-2022	<p>3. SWS 2024: There is substantial difference in overarching responses to the SWS according to Race with learners from BAME backgrounds returning higher positive satisfaction scores than those from White backgrounds. Regarding question scales, learners from BAME backgrounds were slightly more likely to return positive satisfaction scores in the Learning and Teaching and Assessment, Feedback and Communication scales than those from White backgrounds, and substantially more likely to return positive satisfaction scores in the Student Voice and Community scale.</p> <p>4. NSS 2024: Responses from learners from BAME backgrounds have not been published by Ipsos Mori owing to low numbers.</p> <p>5. EDI Audit: Learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds felt significantly more strongly that people really care about them at SRUC and that they are comfortable speaking up and expressing opinions than learners from White ethnic backgrounds. Learners from BAME backgrounds were also significantly more likely to feel that their mental health and/or wellbeing are supported than learners from White ethnic backgrounds. However, the qualitative analysis highlighted the impact of a visible lack of ethnic diversity at SRUC, and the need to fit around the culture of the dominant majority. The EDI audit recommended that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and support the increase in staff and learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring training goes beyond statutory requirements and includes awareness raising of cultural/structural issues. • Considering unconscious bias training for all staff members. • Working on building trust and sustained relationships with staff and learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds, with the aim of engaging them as co-creators.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing recruitment processes to ensure they are inclusive of and attractive to those from minority ethnic backgrounds. • Reviewing curricula to ensure that there is representation of those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. <p>6. In 2023/24, 97% of SRUC learners were from White ethnic backgrounds. This is substantially higher than sector averages for UK domiciled learners at the HE/PG level (Scotland and rUK 2021/22 data: 89.1% and 71.2% respectively), higher than Scotland FE levels (91.5% FT and 84.1% PT in 2021/22) and higher than the Scottish population according to the 2022 census (92.9%). It is also higher than UK domiciled learners at the HE/PG level studying agriculture, food and related studies (93%), engineering and technology (88.4%), geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences) (88.9%), veterinary sciences (92.2%), and business and management (68.4%), though it is commensurate with FE learners in Scotland's colleges studying agriculture, horticulture and animal care (98.2% in 2021/22) (though this average will be significantly influenced by SRUC's own figures).</p> <p>7. In 2022/23, attainment data saw differences with respect to Race overall, with learners from BAME backgrounds less likely to succeed than those from White ethnic backgrounds (69% and 75% respectively). Differences appear at the study and mode level for learners from BAME backgrounds only. Learners from BAME backgrounds studying at HE level were less likely to succeed than those studying at FE or PG level; and learners studying part-time were more likely to succeed than those studying full time.</p> <p>8. The Academic Division is required by Education Scotland to address the extreme underrepresentation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students in our student population. This first appeared as a requirement following the 2021/22 Education</p>

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		Scotland review. The 2022/23 Education Scotland review noted the lack of activity in this area and the requirement to see progress.
Race - staff	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) SRUC employee data published 2023</p> <p>(3) Scotland Census 2022</p> <p>(4) Hate Crime in Scotland data 2021</p> <p>(5) EDI Audit by Advance HE</p>	<p>National Equality Outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the racial diversity of Court members and address any racial diversity issues in college Boards. • Increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching college staff to align with student representation in the sector. • Staff and students are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress • Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist. <p>2. Board/ Court – data is not gathered by SRUC. Staff demographic 31 March 2023: White British (79.6%), White other (5.3%), minority ethnicities (8.2%), unknown (6.8%). Leaver data shows a higher percentage by proportion of leavers from an ‘Other White’ ethnicity, and the percentage of leavers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups was 5.6% in 2022 and 9.8% in 2023.</p> <p>In 2023 we saw a reduction of applicants from a White background and an increase in applicants identifying across all other ethnicities, possibly influenced by the covid pandemic, and changing immigration rules post-Brexit. Both had the effect of significantly reducing migration from Europe and increasing recruitment from around the world, with a corresponding increase in sponsoring foreign nationals.</p> <p>3. Scotland’s Census asked people to choose the option that best described their ethnic group or background. The majority of people in Scotland chose ‘Scottish’ (77.7%) or ‘Other British’ (9.4%) within the White category. In 2022 these groups together made up</p>

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		<p>87.1% of the population. The increase in people from minority ethnic backgrounds was driven by increases across several different groups. Note that in the Census reporting 'minority ethnic group' is used to refer to some ethnic groups that were in the White category on the census form such as Polish, Irish and Gypsy/ Traveller.</p> <p>4. Racial crime remains the most reported hate crime, followed by crimes with a sexual orientation aggravator (Justice Analytical Services, Scottish Government). Hate Crime in Scotland – the current context – Safer Communities Scotland</p> <p>5. Due to limited numbers of staff from Asian, Black, Chinese, mixed and other ethnic backgrounds, analysis had to be undertaken at an aggregated level. Representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds is low compared to higher education in Scotland based on participant data. Staff from BAME ethnic groups feel a significantly stronger sense of belonging to SRUC and were more likely to feel that their line manager supports their career development than staff from White ethnic groups. Open comments describe first-hand experience as well as witnessing incidents and general feelings of hostility towards women, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minoritised groups. In focus groups, some participants felt their personal characteristics, including race, made them feel othered at SRUC.</p> <p>An audit recommendation is to provide specific training, resources and support to improve the experiences of staff and students from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds and support the increase of staff and students from diverse ethnic backgrounds.</p>
Sex - students	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council	1. National Equality Outcomes include:

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	(2) EmilyTest Charter (3) Sexual Harassment and violence in further and higher education, House of Commons Research Briefing 2022 (4) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (5) SRUC-Wide Survey (6) National Student Satisfaction Survey (7) EDI Audit by Advance HE (8) SRUC's Boards of Study Gender Action Plan (9) SRUC student demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and students know how to access support about sex-based violence, harassment, and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so because the services are fit for purpose. • Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse. • Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support because of the work undertaken to support and signpost services (recognising intersectionality within that group). • Students, regardless of declared sex, will feel safe to be themselves in the tertiary system because of work undertaken to foster good relations and tackle prejudice and discrimination. • Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take steps to address it. <p>2. SRUC has committed to the EmilyTest Charter and aims to take the pledge by December 2025. This work will fall under our wider safeguarding framework.</p> <p>3. Between March 2018 and March 2020, students in England and Wales were over three times more likely than average to have experienced sexual assault. Female students are the most likely to experience such behaviour, and male students the most likely to perpetrate it. Disabled students and LGBTQI+ students are also disproportionately affected by unwanted sexual behaviour. There is also evidence of students experience sexual harassment perpetrated by staff, and staff members experiencing similar behaviour from colleagues.</p> <p>4. There is no substantial difference in responses to the SSES in relation to Sex. SSES "I feel I am part of the College community." Female (86% agree), Male (81% agree)</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>5. Where known, there is no substantial difference in overarching responses to the SWS between female and male learners; however, “other” learners returned substantially lower positive satisfaction scores. Regarding question scales, female learners returned slightly lower positive satisfaction scores than male learners in the Assessment, Feedback and Communication, and Student Voice and Community scales. Other learners returned substantially lower positive satisfaction scores in all scales.</p> <p>6. Male respondents returned substantially lower positive measures in the Teaching on My Course, Organisation and Management, and Student Voice scales in 2024. Female respondents returned slightly lower positive measures in the Learning Resources scale. The difference in the Teaching on My Course scale is common to previous NSS returns. The differences in Organisation and Management and Learning Resources are not consistent, varying each year. The differences in Student Voice appears to be an anomaly with previous NSS years seeing female respondents returning lower positive measures in this scale.</p> <p>7. Female learners were significantly more positive in their rating of people being treated equally at SRUC than male learners. Male learners felt more involved in the social life at SRUC than female learners. Elsewise, no significant differences were found in the EDI audit regarding Sex. An audit recommendation is to provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and students in relation to gender and sexual orientation.</p> <p>8. SRUC’s Boards of Study monitor gender balances on their respective academic programmes and actions plans are in place to local oversight and delivery. From a review of the plans, over half the Boards of Study want to focus on actions on targeted recruitment/ marketing, working with industry partners, engage directly with schools/ councils, and use alumni to improve gender balance and highlight career opportunities to a wider audience.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>9. In 2023/24, 53% of SRUC learners were female and 46% male. There are differences according to level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At FE level, 46% of learners were female, 53% male. This is different to the Scottish FE sector overall (data from 2022/23) which saw 51% female learners and 49% male learners. • At HE level, 62% of learners were female, 37% male. This is slightly different to Scottish and rUK sector averages (within 2 percentage points of Scotland average and 5 percentage points of rUK; data from 2021/22). • At PG level, 59% of learners were female, 40% male. This is commensurate with Scottish and rUK sector averages (data from 2021/22). • This varies extensively by Board of Study, with the highest percentage of female learners sitting within Veterinary Sciences (95%), and the highest percentage of male learners sitting within Golf, Food and Drink (97%), followed by Forestry, Forgework and Engineering (88%). In comparison, at the HE/PG level (data as of 2021/22), 63.8% of learners studying agriculture, food and related studies were female, 20.5% of learners studying engineering and technology, 53.3% of learners studying geographical and environmental studies (natural sciences), 82.9% of learners studying veterinary sciences and 47.1% of learners studying business and management.
Sex – staff/ other	<p>1. Tackling persistent inequalities report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>2. SRUC's employee demographic data reported in March 2023</p>	<p>1. National Equality Outcomes – see those stated for students above.</p> <p>2. The proportion of male and female employees remains consistent throughout each period, 57.3%, 57.7% and 58.7% of the workforce are female, and 41.1%, 40.2% and 39.1% of employees are male in 2021, 2022 and 2023, respectively. There is a significant difference by sex across part-time employees where we find that 71.2% (2022) and 75.3% (2023) are female. This is line with Office of National Statistics figures</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	3. EDI Audit by Advance HE	<p>which states the majority of part time employment was by woman (38%) compared to 14% of men.</p> <p>In the year ending March 2021 paternity/partner leave accounted for almost half (43.75%) of the total leave that year but has decreased in both 2022 and again in 2023.</p> <p>SRUC's leaver data 2020-2023 shows an overall higher number of female leavers however proportionally female leavers has reduced from 55% in 2019-21 to 39% in 2022-23. Accordingly, SRUC's number of female employees has continued to rise; 58.7% in 2023 and 57.7% in 2022 from 57.3% in 2021.</p> <p>3. The EDI audit showed that overall staff were very positive about gender equality, with many participants suggesting SRUC has come a long way in supporting gender equality. However, male staff rated the statement about EDI work being recognised when workload is allocated statistically higher than female staff. In the focus groups, female staff felt they take on more EDI work, and experience issues relating to both caring responsibilities and timings of meetings/ away days. For staff, gender and sex were the first and third most frequently reported characteristic where they had experienced bullying and harassment. Open comments describe first-hand experience as well as witnessing incidents and general feelings of hostility towards women, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minoritised groups.</p> <p>The audit recommends that SRUC provide specific training, resources and support to improve the experiences of staff and students in relation to gender and sexual orientation.</p>
Gender Reassignment - students	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council	1. National Equality Outcome that 'Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system'.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	(2) SRUC identified policy gap (3) Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey (4) SRUC-wide survey (5) National Student Satisfaction Survey (6) EDI Audit by Advance HE (7) SRUC student demographics	<p>2. SRUC has set up a working group to develop a Trans and Non-Binary Support policy and related guidance to address the current policy gap (for both staff and students).</p> <p>3. SSES showed no substantial difference in overarching responses in relation to Gender Reassignment.</p> <p>4. In 2024, respondents whose gender identity is different from the gender originally assigned at birth were substantially less likely to return a positive measure in their overarching responses to the SWS than those whose gender identity was the same. This is the same for overall satisfaction and the Assessment, Feedback and Communication scale, but not for the Learning and Teaching or Student Voice and Community Scales. For example, in response to the question “I feel I am part of the College community”, 74% of those with the same gender identity as at birth agreed but only 33% of people with a different gender identity that at both agreed (but 100% agree that all students are treated fairly by staff).</p> <p>5. Data on Gender Reassignment is not reported in the NSS.</p> <p>6. 18 learners who responded to the survey identified as trans or having a trans status. This equates to 12.3%. Of those learners, 28.6% felt unable to discuss their trans identify with others at SRUC. Learners who identified as trans or having a trans history were significantly less likely to say that they are involved in the social life of SRUC than learners who did not identify as trans. Learners who identified as trans or having a trans history were significantly less likely to say that they know how to report bullying and/or harassment at SRUC than learners who did not identify as trans. The qualitative research indicated that for some participants, their personal characteristics including gender identity made them feel othered at SRUC, causing a barrier to their sense of belonging. These participants felt they were outside of the norm of the dominant majority at SRUC, contributing to a feeling of being an outsider. The EDI report recommended</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>that SRUC provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners in relation to gender (including transgender) and sexual orientation.</p> <p>7. In 2023/24, just over 1% of learners reported being transgender, equivalent to the sector average. However, the question at registration on gender identity has been removed for HE learners, so this figure may not be an accurate representation of the cohort as 33% of learners have not disclosed this information. This figure must also be understood in the context of under-disclosure emphasised in the EDI audit report. The numbers were too low to report at SCQF level or by Board of Study.</p>
Gender Reassignment - staff	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) SRUC's employee demographic data published March 2023</p> <p>(3) EDI Audit by Advance HE</p>	<p>1. Same National Equality Outcomes as noted under students above.</p> <p>2. Numbers are too low to report however non-disclosure has decreased.</p> <p>3. Open comments describe first-hand experience as well as witnessing incidents and general feelings of hostility towards women, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minoritised groups. In focus groups, some participants felt their personal characteristics, including gender identity, made them feel othered at SRUC.</p>
Sexual orientation - students	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) Student satisfaction and engagement survey</p> <p>(3) SRUC-Wide survey</p> <p>(4) National Student Satisfaction Survey</p>	<p>1. National Equality Outcomes: 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college'.</p> <p>2. In 2023 and 2024, respondents who identified as 'other' were less likely to return positive satisfaction scores in their overarching responses to the SSES than those who are heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian. Overall satisfaction sees consistent lower positive scores for other learners; 2024 also saw gay or lesbian learners returning lower positive scores, though this is not the case for previous years. The same pattern can be found in the Learning and Teaching scale. The Assessment, Feedback and Communication scale sees the same difference for other learners, but those who are</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	<p>(5) EDI Audit by Advance HE</p> <p>(6) SRUC student demographics</p>	<p>gay or lesbian returned the highest positive scores. The Student Voice and Community Scale sees bisexual and other learners returning lower positive scores.</p> <p>3. In 2024, respondents who are gay or lesbian or other were less likely to return a positive measure in their overarching responses to the SWS than those who are heterosexual or bisexual. Gay or lesbian learners were substantially less likely to return a positive score in the Assessment, Feedback and Communication scale. Gay or lesbian or other learners were substantially less likely to return a positive score in the Student Voice and Community scale. No substantial difference was seen in the Learning and Teaching scale.</p> <p>4. In 2024, respondents who are lesbian, gay or bisexual were substantially more likely to return a positive score in the overall satisfaction question than those who are heterosexual. This is the reverse of 2023, where heterosexual learners were more likely to return a positive satisfaction score. The only scales to see substantial difference in 2024 were the Learning Resources scale, where heterosexual learners were more likely to return a positive satisfaction score, and the Student Voice scale where lesbian, gay or bisexual learners were more likely to return a positive satisfaction score. The latter is the reverse of 2023, while the former saw no difference in 2023. Sexual orientation data was not reported on prior to 2023.</p> <p>5. No statistically significant differences were found in the responses to the survey with respect to Sexual Orientation. However, the qualitative research indicated that for some participants, their personal characteristics including sexual orientation made them feel othered at SRUC, causing a barrier to their sense of belonging. These participants felt they were outside of the norm of the dominant majority at SRUC, contributing to a feeling of being an outsider. The report highlighted the lack of resources and/or training on support for particular groups (including LGBTQ+). The report recommended that SRUC</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>provide specific training, resources, and support to improve the experiences of staff and learners in relation to gender and sexual orientation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating safe spaces both in person and online for LGBTQ+ communities to develop, encouraging visibility and peer support. • reviewing toilet provisions to ensure there are gender neutral toilets available to trans gender and non-binary staff and learners. • ensuring mental health and disability support acknowledges the intersection of these with gender and sexual orientation and that student wellbeing services are competent with specialist knowledge of sexuality, gender orientation and identity alongside representation from LGBTQ+ staff (Marshall, 2023). • reviewing curricula to ensure that there is LGBTQ+ (Ward and Gale, 2017) and female representation. • celebrating and championing LGBTQ+ staff and learners through communications, research, fostering of inclusive spaces, representation on campus, in media and in curriculum, and consider the use of pronouns in email signatures (Marshall, 2023). <p>6. In 2023/24, 82% of learners reported being heterosexual. 8% reported being gay, lesbian, or bisexual. 7% chose not to disclose. There are differences according to level with 6% of FE learners being gay, lesbian, or bisexual, 10% of HE learners, and 14% of PG learners. Sector average (as of 2021/22) is 7.7% gay, lesbian, or bisexual, 2.3% other, and 16.2% either refusing the information or leaving the field blank. Sexual orientation was not broken down by Board of Study owing to figures available being too low.</p>
Sexual orientation – staff/ other	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council	1. See National Equality Outcomes noted under students above.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	(2) SRUC's employee demographic data published March 2023 (3) EDI Audit by Advance HE	2. Most employees identify as heterosexual (74% in 2021, 75.7% in 2022 and 78.4% in 2023). Employees identifying as Bisexual has increased over this reporting period. Disclosure has also improved by ~5 percent down to 12.7% no response in 2023. 3. Only 10.8% of staff who identified as any sexual orientation than heterosexual or straight felt unable to discuss their sexual orientation with colleagues at SRUC. Open comments describe first-hand experience as well as witnessing incidents and general feelings of hostility towards women, those with disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minoritised groups. In focus groups, some participants felt their personal characteristics, including sexual orientation, made them feel othered at SRUC. The audit recommends that SRUC provide specific training, resources and support to improve the experiences of staff and students in relation to gender and sexual orientation.
Religion or Belief - students	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council (2) Student engagement data (3) EDI Audit by Advance HE (4) SRUC student demographic data (5) University UK's 2016 <i>Report of the UUK Taskforce examining violence against women,</i>	1. National Equality Outcome: 'Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose'. 2. Religion and belief data is not returned by the SSES, SWS, NSS, CLD or GOS, or in complaints and appeals data. Speak week also did not return information regarding Religion. In lieu of the paucity of internal data, external research on religion or belief in tertiary education has been included. 3. More than half of the learners who participated in the EDI Audit reported having no religious belief system (63.8%). The remaining half of the sample consisted of participants from Christian, Hindu, or Spiritual backgrounds, with ten learners preferring not to disclose. Some participants who reported a religion felt able to discuss religion with other SRUC members with 44.2% of learners selecting yes and an additional 30.2% selecting with some but not all. No statistically significant differences were found in the responses to the survey with respect to Religion or Belief, and the characteristic did not come up in the qualitative research.

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	<p><i>harassment and hate crime affecting university students.</i></p> <p>(6) NUS's 2012 <i>No Place for Hate: Hate Crimes and Incidents in Further and Higher Education.</i></p> <p>(7) Equality Challenge Unit's 2011 <i>Religion or belief in higher education: the experiences of staff and students</i></p>	<p>4. In 2023/24, 78% of learners did not belong to any religious denomination. 17% of learners reported being of Christian faith. This is higher than the sector average (as of 2021/22) which saw 43.8% learners claim no religion, increasing to 54.7% in Scotland. This is also higher than subject averages (at HE/PG level), which saw 52.3% agriculture, food and related studies learners claiming no religion, 42.2% engineering and technology learners, 58.3% geography, earth, and environment studies (natural sciences), 54.9% veterinary sciences and 30.5% business and management learners.</p> <p>5. Of the 924 antisemitic incidents recorded in the UK in 2015, 2.3% of cases involved Jewish learners, academics, or other student bodies, with 1.4% taking place on campus. Of the 1,128 reports of anti-Muslim incidents from victims, witnesses, and third-party organisations, around 6% of female victims and 14% of male victims were at an educational institution (level not specified) when the incident occurred.</p> <p>6. 52% of Muslim, 35% of Hindu, 33% of Sikh and 32% of Jewish respondents were very or fairly worried about being subject to abuse because of prejudice against their religion or belief, compared to 4% of respondents who were atheist and 4% of respondents who identified as having no religion. Almost one fifth of hate incidents reported by respondents were thought to have had an element of religious prejudice. 43% Jewish, 37% Hindu, 36% Buddhist and 36% Muslim learners surveyed also stated that they altered their behaviour, personal appearance, or daily patterns due to worries about prejudiced abuse.</p> <p>7. The overwhelming majority of learners reported themselves satisfied with both the content and the teaching of their courses. There was a level of variety among learners by religion or belief group as to how far course content and teaching were seen to be sensitive to their religion or belief. Muslim, Christian, and Jewish learners were more likely to disagree that their course content was sensitive to their religion or belief than</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
		<p>Hindu, Sikh, or No religion learners. Muslim, Christian and Buddhist learners were more likely to disagree that their teaching was sensitive to their religion and belief than Spiritual, Pagan and No religion learners. The research highlighted how most institutions organise their academic year based on public holidays, which broadly align with the western Christian calendar, which could be challenging for learners and staff of other faiths (and sometimes Orthodox Christians), who wished to celebrate holy days and religious festivals. Relatively few participants in the study wished to wear religious dress or symbols (10%). Those that did wish to observe certain dress codes (mostly Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish respondents) mostly felt comfortable doing so (79.3%). However, participants reported experiencing challenges, particularly in programmes of study in medical or health-related disciplines, where clothing must meet health-and-safety requirements. The research indicated that in some cases there were tensions between religion or belief and other protected groups. Of note was the tension between religion or belief and sexual orientation</p>
Religion or Belief - staff	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p> <p>(2) SRUC staff data as of 31 March 2023</p> <p>(3) EDI Audit by Advance HE</p>	<p>1. See National Equality Outcomes under students above.</p> <p>2. 2023 SRUC Staff data: 45.7% have no religion or belief, 29.2% are Christian, 5.1% comprise all other religions or beliefs, 20% prefer not to say/ unknown.</p> <p>3. More than half of audit participants reported having no religious belief system (63.8%). Half of staff reported comfort discussing religion (or lack thereof) with others and 27.1 % were happy to discuss religion with 'some but not all.' Those who reported no religion felt more able to discuss religion with other SRUC members.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity - students	<p>(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council</p>	<p>1. there are no national equality outcomes in relation to pregnancy or maternity</p> <p>2. Pregnancy or maternity data is not returned by the SSES, SWS, NSS, CLD or GOS, or in student demographics, complaints and appeals, or attainment data. Speak week also did not return information regarding pregnancy or maternity. In lieu of the paucity of</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).
	(2) SRUC student engagement data (3) EDI Audit by Advance HE (4) Equality Challenge Unit 2010, Student pregnancy and maternity	<p>internal data, external research on pregnancy and or maternity in tertiary education was sought; however, little research exists.</p> <p>3. There was an insufficient number of learner participants reporting any type of leave of absence from their course related to a pregnancy or partner's pregnancy to consider any differences for learners according to this protected characteristic.</p> <p>4. Reports NUS 2009 research based on interviews with 2,167 learners in higher and further education with children. 29% of these respondents became pregnant during their course (sector data on this is not available). Of these, 59% did not feel supported by their college or university. Issues facing pregnant learners included being forced to withdraw from their course, taking longer out of their course after giving birth than they would like, and being prevented from sitting exams. The number of learners who become pregnant during their studies is likely to increase as data from Scotland and other European countries show a positive correlation between the increasing age profile of learners and the likelihood of their having a child.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity - staff	(1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council (2) SRUC employee data (3) EDI Audit by Advance HE	<p>1. there are no national equality outcomes in relation to pregnancy or maternity</p> <p>2. 2021-2023 RUC data shows that only a few employees choose not to return to work after maternity leave.</p> <p>3. Of those who had taken maternity leave and another type of parental leave, around a quarter of them rated the leave provisions at SRUC as very good and good, with 39.3% opting not to say. In open comments, staff mentioned the importance of flexibility to support their caring responsibilities, suggesting that SRUC does support flexible working.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership – employment only	1) Tackling persistent Inequalities Report, Scottish Funding Council	<p>1. there are no national equality outcomes in relation to marriage and civil partnership in employment.</p>

Equality characteristics	Evidence source (e.g. web link, report, survey, complaint)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the policy, practice, process, or service? Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (step 3).

2.2 Consultation and stakeholder involvement: Speaking to people who will be affected by your policy, practice, process, or service can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Describe below what you learned from the consultation/ involvement. Consultation can take time so make sure that you build this into your policy, practice, process, or service review/ development timeline.

Workshop with students at Barony, September 2024: Students reported that the following make them feel safe on campus:

- Approachable and knowledgeable staff who pay attention to interactions
- Access to therapy/ services (including gender neutral toilets) and ways to report incidents
- Feeling validated and listened to, and have secure social networks
- Group chats to check in with each other
- Educate students and lecturers on equality and being welcoming of difference
- Be openminded, kind, respectful, empathetic without being invasive
- SRUC should be mindful of power dynamics and inequalities; create a safe and trustful environment, create non-hierarchical spaces, give all students support where possible, take action against hate

Workshop with students in Glasgow, October 2024. Students listed the following when asked to consider what does/ or would make them feel safe on campus and online. Words/ phrases included understanding, space, respect, support, kindness, access to information on security, lights, accessibility, welcoming atmosphere, communal spaces, individual spaces. Open discussions, respect each other, acceptance, taking an interest, helpful, tolerance of difference. ‘We enjoy the calm environment of the glasshouse and gardens. We feel we need a quiet space to take a moment, which is easily accessible here. It is important to be able to ask questions.’

EDI Audit recommendations identified by staff as important at CELT Conference 2024.

EDI Audit Recommendation (abbreviated) prioritise by staff	No of staff
Provide specific training etc to improve experiences for disabled people	14 staff

Build a co-creative relationship with staff on students on EDI	10 staff
Provide specific training etc to improve experiences for people in relation to gender and sexual orientation	9 staff
Provide specific training etc to improve experiences of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds	8 staff
Review internally and externally facing EDI webpages	8 staff
Ensure that EDI work is prioritised and resourced	7 staff

National equality outcomes identified by staff as important at CELT Conference 2024

National Equality Outcome	No of staff
Staff and students know who to access support about sex-based violence, harassment, and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so	7 staff
The success and retention rates of college students who declare a mental health condition will improve	4 staff
Staff and student are confident that complaints of harassment of bias on the ground of race will be dealt with appropriately	4 staff

Consultation Conversations on SRUC's EDI Priorities held during October to December 2024.

Fifteen conversation events (66 people) were held both in person at each SRUC campus and online. Specific online events were held for people with lived experience (direct or indirect) of disability, being a woman, being of ethnic minority origin, and identifying as LGBTQI+. Participants were presented with the current context at SRUC and suggestions of evidence-based priorities presented by the EDI Lead. Participants were then asked if they agreed with those priorities, what actions SRUC could take and which SRUC teams could lead on those action.

The summary includes specific conversations with the Student Support and Engagement Committee on 19 November 2024 and a conversation with SRUC's Academic Liaison Managers.

There was almost universal agreement that **Race, Disability (specifically neurodiversity, mental health, physical access, and menopause), and feeling safe are priorities for SRUC.** The majority of sessions agreed that **gender equality is also one of SRUC's challenges.** One group felt that self-efficacy, confidence, safety and belonging contributes to many inequalities and although less easily defined, is an important aspect to consider in the EDI strategy.

NOTE: SRUC achieved a bronze Athena Swan Award in November 2024 with an associated 5-year action plan which includes review or changes to recruitment, promotion, workload allocation, training, policy/ governance, and prevention of gender-based violence. Participants were therefore directed to focus on other areas during discussions and means these areas are not included below.

Themes and Actions from the consultation include:

- **Community Building and Support**

Develop community relationships and outreach efforts.

Foster community spirit through expanded open days and events.

Use psychological safe spaces and sensory rooms.

Enhance student and staff communities, including those for international students and distance learning cohorts.

- **Education and Training**

Offer cultural awareness and inclusive language training.

Embed inclusive practices into staff training weeks.

Provide lecturer development to manage classroom behaviours.

Create tailored training weeks with protected time to complete mandatory sessions.

- **Resources and Facilities**

Ensure physical access improvements, like sensory rooms and better building navigation.

Offer office facilities for breastfeeding and menopause considerations.

Improve signposting to staff and student support resources and remove the requirement of a diagnosis for access.

Provide gender-neutral facilities.

- **Policies and Leadership**

Develop and enforce anti-racist strategies with clear vision and partnerships.

Ensure inclusive leadership at all levels, with senior leaders sponsoring specific equality groups.

Conduct timely equality impact assessments.

Improve communication of EDI work to ensure messages reach all levels effectively.

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Enhance mental health support and delivery of strategies.

Provide psychological safe spaces and quiet areas to support mental health.
Promote mental health resources beyond student support to tackle staff resistance to adjustments.
Structure improved mental health partnerships and training.

- **Equity in Education**

Develop inclusive teaching materials and practices as standard.
Ensure students from diverse backgrounds receive appropriate support, including integration for non-native English speakers.
Offer scholarships and marketing to attract diverse student bodies.
Provide reasonable adjustments for course progression and feedback.

- **Behaviour and Respect**

Tackle unwanted behaviours through training and creating an accountable environment.
Promote respect through improved behaviour and language training.
Implement policies to ensure respectful environments.
Encourage exposure to diverse ways of thinking and being.

- **Communication and Inclusive Practices**

Integrate inclusive communication internally and externally.
Promote better communication channels for SRUC's EDI work.
Develop film short videos that challenge stereotypes across all programmes.
Use living libraries to foster diverse experiences.

- **Engagement and Outreach**

Capture student energy through internships and personal development modules.
Support local engagement e.g. with LGBTQI+ charities for training.
Engage with external partners to develop gender action plans and industry partnerships.
Use campus grounds for commercial activity and increased student involvement.

2.3 Record here if you need to undertake a full equality impact assessment based on your evidence above.

Outcome of Step 2 following initial evidence gathering and relevance to equality characteristics	Yes/ No (Y or N)	Next steps
There is no relevance to equality		Proceed to sign off (step 5) to agree with decision makers that no EqIA is required based on current evidence
There is relevance to some or all the equality groups	Y	Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all the equality groups		Proceed to Step 3: complete full EqIA

3 Impact on equality groups and changes to policy, practice, process, or service

You must consider the three aims of the general duty for each protected characteristic. The following questions will help:

- **Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment, or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010?** How will this be mitigated?
- **Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?
- **Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not?** How can this be achieved?

3.1 Does the policy, practice, process, or service have any impacts (whether intended or unintended, positive, or negative) on any of the equality characteristics? In the tables below, record the impact of the policy, practice, process or service, as it is planned or as it operates, might have on each equality characteristic and describe what changes in policy, practice, process or service or actions will be required to mitigate that impact or to take advantage of a positive impact.

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Age	Potential for discrimination			x	<p>Our evidence shows that the National Equality Outcomes in relation to age are not currently relevant to SRUC despite some fluctuations by age on completion. We will continue to monitor student outcomes trends by age.</p> <p>There is some evidence of a need to equip staff and students with the skills to address instances of bullying and harassment on account of age, and to build confidence in younger learners to express their views. These areas link to wider considerations of tackling unwanted behaviours and creating safe/ supportive environments to be addressed under SRUC's equality outcomes.</p>
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	x			
	Potential to foster good relations	x			
Disability	Potential for discrimination	x			<p>SRUC's EDI Audit results for both staff and students, current commitment to delivery of the Student Mental Health Strategy, and staff demographics indicate this is an important area of improvement for our new equality outcomes both in terms of belonging and improved consistency, signposting, and delivery of support. SRUC will therefore adopt the National Equality Outcomes in relation to satisfaction with reasonable adjustments, feeling safe in the tertiary system, and</p>
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	x			
	Potential to foster good relations	x			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					<p>workforce/ Board representation. It should be noted that some evidence sources indicated positive student experiences of adjustments and support.</p> <p>Through internal consultation, there was consensus that within the broad range of disabilities, SRUC should focus on mental health, physical disabilities, and neurodivergence.</p> <p>There is no evidence on significant differences in attainment, and we will continue to monitor trends.</p> <p>Making improvements for staff and students with disabilities will be a focus on SRUC's new equality outcomes. In terms of Board representation, the focus will be how/ if SRUC can gather and use this data.</p>
Race	Potential for discrimination	x			<p>There is a mixed picture in relation to feedback from minority ethnic students. The EDI audit notes the lack of representation (supported by sector wide and census data and is a specific action from Education Scotland) and experience of SRUC's minority</p>
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	x			
	Potential to foster good relations	x			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					<p>ethnic community feeling the need to fit around the culture of the majority.</p> <p>The EDI audit noted low staff representation compared to the sector (HE institutions). Internal consultation conversations highlighted cultural differences and experiences of microaggressions.</p> <p>Making improvements for minority ethnic staff and building an anti-racist culture will be a focus on SRUC's new equality outcomes. In terms of Board representation, the focus will be how/ if SRUC can gather and use this data.</p>
Sex	Potential for discrimination	X			<p>SRUC is committed to work with EmilyTest and intervention/ prevention of gender-based violence in further and higher education. Our evidence and national equality outcomes support this work. SRUC's Boards of Study have agreed action plans aiming to address significant gender imbalances on programmes of study. SRUC's published Athena Swan action plan was based on a robust analysis of SRUC's data and aims to address evidence of workload allocation,</p>
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
					gender pay gap and instances of bullying/harassment. Gender equity will be a focus on SRUC's equality outcomes.
Gender Reassignment	Potential for discrimination	X			SRUC has evidence that feelings of belonging, and safety can be improved at SRUC for staff and students, and this will be a focus of SRUC's revised equality outcomes. SRUC's Athena Swan action plan includes actions aimed at all genders.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Sexual orientation	Potential for discrimination	X			The EDI audit found experiences of being 'othered' at SRUC and lower sense of belonging. These areas link to wider considerations of tackling unwanted behaviours and creating safe/ supportive environments to be addressed under SRUC's equality outcomes.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			
Religion or Belief	Potential for discrimination	X			No significant inequalities are identified through the review of SRUC's evidence. However, due to plans to increase minority ethnic representation across SRUC, consideration of religion or belief will be included in anti-racist work as appropriate.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			
	Potential to foster good relations	X			

Equality group	Public sector equality duty	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe the changes or actions (if any) you plan to take. E.g. to mitigate any impact, maximise the positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes despite the potential for adverse impact.
		Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	
Pregnancy or maternity	Potential for discrimination			X	There is no evidence to suggest this is a significant area of focus for SRUC. Take up and experiences of family leave will be promoted under gender equality work.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	
Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)	Potential for discrimination			X	There is no evidence that this is a focus of inequality at SRUC.
	Potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	
	Potential to foster good relations			X	

3.2 Think about and describe below how your assessment impacts on your policy, practice, process or service review or development timeline including but not limited to:

- Procurement criteria: do you need to include specific equality criteria as part of the technical specification?
- Communication plan/ products: do you need to communicate with people affected by this policy, practice, process or service in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages)?
- Cost: do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- Resources: do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?

3.3 Record the outcome of this assessment below having considered the potential or actual impacts of your policy, practice, process, or service on equality groups. Choose from one of the following (mark with an X or delete as appropriate):

Note: You must take action to remove barriers or take advantage of positive opportunities BEFORE the policy, practice, process, or service goes live.

Please select (X)	Implications for the policy, practice, process, or service
	No major change: Your assessment demonstrates that the policy, practice, process, or service is robust. The evidence shows no potential for unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.
X	Adjust the policy, practice, process, or service: You need to take steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality of to foster good relations. You have set actions to address this and have clear ways of monitoring the impact of the policy, practice, process, or service when implemented.
	Continue the policy, practice, process, or service: The policy, practice, process, or service will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. You have justified this with this assessment and shown how this decision is compatible with our obligations under the public sector equality duty. When you believe any discrimination can be objectively justified you must record in this assessment what this is and how the decision was reached.
	Stop and remove the policy, practice, process, or service: The policy, practice, process, or service will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.

4 Monitoring the policy, practice, process or service impact and further actions

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your policy, practice, process, or service on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. Your monitoring information will also inform a future review of the policy, practice, process, or service.

4.1 Record in the table below how you intend to monitor the impact of this policy, practice, process, or service on equality groups. In the table below you should:

- list the relevant measures,
- Identify who or which team is responsible for implementing or monitoring any changes.

- Where the measure will be reported to (e.g. committee, ELT, Board) and how often.

Measure	Lead department/ individual	Reporting (where/ frequency)
Each equality outcome has a list of measures that will be drawn from data sets and engagement across the institution.	Various – see equality outcomes report.	EDI Committee, quarterly. External publication, no later than every 2 years.
Some baseline measures/ reporting are to be created (e.g. Board demographics, Inform and Support data).	Various – see equality outcomes report.	EDI Committee, quarterly. External publication, no later than every 2 years.

4.2 Record further actions or changes required after the policy, practice, process, or service is implemented in the table below. Make it clear if there are no outstanding actions.

Action	Lead department/ individual	Action target date
Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 are to be translated into BSL	EDI Lead	October 2025.

5 Sign off and future review

Equality impact assessments must be signed off by the relevant Head of Service/ Department, even where an EqIA is not required. Also note here when you plan to review the policy, practice, process, or service and accompanying EqIA which should be no later than 5 years from policy, practice, process, or service implementation.

5.1 Senior Responsible Owner/ Committee sign off.

Job/ Committee title: Executive Leadership Team
Date: 04/04/2025

5.2 Equality impact assessment review date.

Date: 30/04/2029

Important: You must send the final version of this equality impact assessment to:

- the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Lead.
- the Communications team for publication on SRUC's equality page on the external website.

Document control		
Document control:		V1.0
Date policy, practice, process, or service live from:		1 May 2025
Review/ Approval Group:		Executive Leadership Team
Last reviewed:		N/A
Review cycle:		Every 4 years
Document change log		
Version/ Author	Date	Comment
V0.1	Feb 2025	For info – EDI Committee
V0.2	4 April 2025	ELT approval