UHI INVERNESS

Public Sector Equality Duty Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report

2025-2027

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Foreward

We are delighted to introduce our Public Sector Equality Duty Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report for April 2025. This report highlights some of the work we do to embed equalities within and across our tertiary setting and the progress we have made with our equality outcomes since our last report in 2023. We are passionate in creating a truly inclusive environment, valuing and respecting diversity and ensuring equality of opportunity for every individual across every aspect of our work.

This commitment is encapsulated by our values of being Ambitious, Bold and Creative and these values underpin our organisational culture, empowering our staff and students to achieve such positive outcomes. We take pride in being sector leading in various aspects of our work and have taken significant strides forward in progressing our equalities work.

Within Part 1 of our report, we have set out the progress we have made against our previous outcomes since 2023. Our data shows that we have had much success in widening access, removing barriers to opportunity, and supporting our students to achieve successful outcomes and improved life chances.

We are acutely aware however of the persistent inequalities which continue across our wider society and the continued work which is therefore required to address these. The publication of the new National Equality Outcomes by the Scottish Funding Council and the Equality and Human Rights Commission in November 2024, highlights the inequalities still experienced in colleges and universities in Scotland. We welcome these new outcomes and feel they provide a useful framework to support this next stage of our equalities work.

As the work we have completed under our previous outcomes becomes fully embedded and 'business as usual', the next four years will see us embrace the new National Equality Outcomes on this next stage of our equalities journey. We are excited to see how much more progress we can make and success we can achieve by working collaboratively with our students, our staff and our communities.

Professor Chris O'Neil
Principal and Chief Executive UHI Inverness

Introduction

The publication of the new National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) by the Scottish Funding Council and the Equality and Human Rights Commission in November 2024 identified the most persistent inequalities which affect both students and staff in Scotland's tertiary education sector. The purpose of the NEOs is to address the persistent inequalities across the key themes of:

+ Age
+ Disability
+ Gender re-assignment
+ Race
+ Religion or belief
+ Sex
+ Sexual orientation

The NEOs will support us in having a more granular focus on, for example:

+ Success and retention rates of students across certain protected characteristic groups
+ Satisfaction levels of certain protected characteristic student groups
+ Gender imbalance on courses
+ Mental health and wellbeing of our staff and students
+ Safety of our students and staff
+ Proportionate representation of our staff and Board of Management, particularly in relation to gender, race and disability

UHI Inverness welcomes the NEOs and value the crucial role they will play in bringing practical improvements to the lives of those who experience discrimination and disadvantage. Although not a protected characteristic nor included in the NEOs, we are very keen to recognise the additional barriers experienced by many learners with care experience. We have aligned our work on the NEOs with our Promise Plan (Corporate Parenting Plan) which details our proactive approach to supporting learners with care experience. Our interim update report highlights our progress. We recognise this alignment as being important to highlight at this juncture.

The NEOs will also support us to meet our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). We are aware that the adoption of the NEOs does not replace our commitment to uphold the legal duties placed upon us to have due regard to:

+ Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

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

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

These legal duties will continue to be embedded across all of our work and in the culture and ethos we continue to develop across UHI Inverness. By adopting all of the NEOs, we feel we can ensure our equality objectives are aligned with these legal requirements.

We have used the NEOs as a framework for setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals over the course of the next PSED reporting period, 2025-2027. This will help us to create clear and actionable equality outcomes that can be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis and formally reported on every two years.

We have embedded much of our equalities work into our well-established systems and processes and as such we have mainstreamed the way we gather and monitor our data around equalities. In addition to reporting on our NEO action plans every two years, we will also report on our employee data related to protected characteristics, including data related to gender pay equality.

This report is in two parts:

Part 1 – reflects on the progress made on our previous equality outcomes since our last reporting in 2023 and an overview of our Employee Data and Gender Pay Report (AY 2022-2023 and AY 2023-2024).

Part 2 - sets out our forward-looking action plan detailing our SMART goals for 2025-2027 to address the persistent inequalities which the NEOs identify.

Our Context

UHI Inverness is one of the largest academic partners of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), currently employing circa 430 employees and delivering over one-quarter of the region's further education (FE) and higher education (HE) provision. The UHI is the Regional Strategic Body for FE in the Highlands and Islands region and distributes SFC credit funding to the partnership.

UHI Inverness delivers provision spanning across the entirety of the SCQF levels 1-12. The college had circa 6,253 enrolments in 2023/24, 3,807 (61%) of whom were enrolled on FE programmes, over 700 of whom are our own modern apprentices, with >300 more being managing agents' apprentices and 2,446 (39%) of whom were on HE programmes as part of the University's provision.

Over 40% of our learners are between the ages of 16 and 19 and 30% of our activity is delivered to learners living in remote and rural areas, 4% being delivered to those living in the 10% most deprived postcode areas, which reflects the Highland/Inner Moray Firth area demographic. The college currently delivers 4% of our activity to care experienced learners. Our learners are split between 49.2% female, 50.3% male, and 0.5% other. Our curriculum is delivered through 4 broad curriculum Schools:

+ Care, Sports, Arts, Drama and Humanities
+ Hair, Beauty, ESOL, Business and Hospitality
+ Applied Science, Forestry, Computing and Education
+ Engineering & Construction

Within the 4 Schools, our provision covers 16 subject areas and includes specialist provision within the Scottish School of Forestry and a significant and growing number of work-based learners. Circa 750 school pupils, aged 15-17, are enrolled on Senior Phase school-link programmes. We have a growing demand for places and have witnessed a 17% increase in applications over the last 3 years.
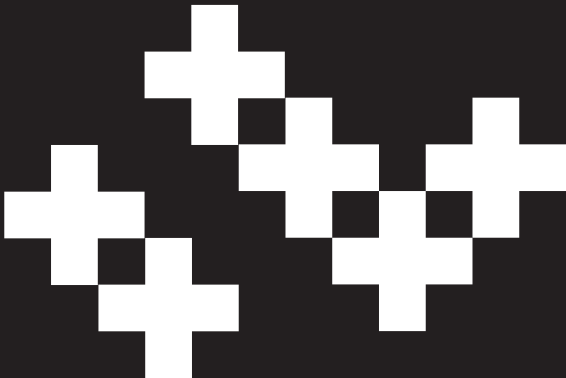
Our Organisational Culture

Our commitment to equal opportunities runs right through our organisation, across staff and student journeys from recruitment, selection, and promotion procedures to support systems, and pedagogies. We work hard to cultivate an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, where everyone can achieve their full potential regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Our mission is to have a transformational impact on the prospects of our region, its economy, its people, and communities. We believe equality of opportunity is at the forefront of that.

Our 2021-2026 Strategic Plan embodies these themes and sets out our ambition to provide access to an excellent student experience which supports the needs of individuals to achieve their full potential and successful outcomes. For our staff, we are ambitious in continuing to provide a supportive workplace which encourages individuals to develop to their full potential. Every individual can achieve this through ongoing opportunities for high quality professional development and further embedding our culture of collaborative leadership.

Our organisational values are to be Ambitious, Bold and Creative in all that we do.

Ambitious — **Through teamwork and partnership, we have a desire and determination to collectively succeed**

Bold — **We have passion and courage to say what we say we will do and exceed expectations.**

Creative — **We use our collective expertise and imagination to create new ideas and to continuously improve.**

Our values define who we are, our expectations of ourselves and of each other. They describe how we interact with one another and how we interact with our students and partners. The values that underpin our behaviour and culture are:

Respect — **We will operate in an environment of mutual respect, behaving professionally at all times.**

Integrity — **We will act with integrity, being honest and transparent in our work and putting the interests of our students first; will be open in our dealings with each other.**

Accountability — **We will be accountable for our actions, do what we say we will do and exceed expectations.**

Passion — **We will be passionate in our work and in our ambition for our students, our college, and our university.**

Our Student Journey

Our commitment to widening access is underpinned by a variety of approaches which are well embedded across the student journey. Our programmes are designed like building blocks so people can create their own unique learner journey and choose the path that best suits them. Our students get credit for prior learning and experience, can enter at a level which suits their abilities, progress from one programme to the next, and then exit with a qualification when the time is right for them.

Through an innovative approach to learning, including our use of online learning technologies and face to face teaching, we offer flexibility to study face to face, through our recognised blended learning approach, or online entirely, with full-time and part-time options.

We deliver personalised experiences to our students, where smaller class sizes, high quality support and dedicated, friendly staff, ensure our students feel supported every step of their journey to achieving successful outcomes. Students are at the heart of everything we do, and we listen to our students, so we continuously improve in delivering the very best experience. This is reflected in very high student satisfaction of 94% in 2025 and student outcomes which exceed sector benchmarks.

Access and inclusion are at the core of our mission. We provide access to all levels of education and progression opportunities to learners from all backgrounds, including people living in some of Scotland's most remote regions. We are committed to widening access to the most vulnerable groups in our community, including learners with learning disabilities, from deprived backgrounds (SIMD 10/20), those with caring responsibilities and those with experiences of growing up in care. We pride ourselves on being inclusive and accessible and making studying at college or university a realistic choice.

Our approach to equalities underpins and guides all we do and provides an umbrella under which every aspect of the student and staff journey is encompassed. We believe that leadership is a shared responsibility, and we empower our staff to work together and in partnership with our students to meet their aspirations.

Progress since 2023

UHI Inverness has made significant progress across our equality outcomes since our last reporting in 2023. The below gives just a flavour of the improvements and enhancements made, and which demonstrate the impact of our commitment to equality.

We have had some key achievements since 2023 and our last reporting. In Autumn **2024, UHI Inverness received the Emily Test Charter award,** recognising our long-term commitment to Gender Based Violence prevention, intervention, and support. We are amongst a select few Scottish colleges and universities to have achieved this award to date. We are pleased to see this area of work reflected in the NEOs and are committed to further awareness raising and the provision of support across our learning community.

UHI Inverness introduced a new pilot last year to support the retention and outcomes of full-time further education learners with disabilities. A new team of **Learning Assistants** were employed for the last 7 weeks of the academic year to provide targeted intensive support to further education full-time learners with a disability. This initiative supported individuals who otherwise were at risk of leaving their course. The success of this initiative led to a 2.3% improvement in the retention of learners with a disability since the previous academic year and an increase in Partial Success. We did not, however, see an improvement in full Successful Outcomes for FT FE learners with a disability. We have identified that earlier intervention is needed. This initiative has been extended this academic year, and we have further invested in Learning Assistants who have been deployed much earlier in the year to provide earlier intervention and maximum impact. We hope this earlier intervention will lead to an overall improvement in learner retention and outcomes and are looking at ways of making this being a sustainable means of providing additional learning support for those with disabilities.

In AY 22/23 we significantly **extended our suite of support** for students. This included new mechanisms to support all learners, but particularly those from the most deprived postcodes at a time of a prolonged national cost-of-living. UHI Inverness introduced a free breakfast in March 2022 and extended this in August 2022 to include a free lunch to all learners. This was done in response to a growing awareness of student poverty and has delivered circa 140,000 free portions of food to date. We also introduced an on-campus food bank, The Larder, and free toiletries through establishing The Cubby on campus. Both of these are heavily used. These additional support mechanisms and further enhancements in how we support those in greatest need have contributed to improved student retention and outcomes.

We have now fully embedded **Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)** across all policies and procedures. This has led to several benefits including a greater analysis at policy development stage to ensure policies do not discriminate against or disadvantage any group of people. By identifying barriers, our EIAs promote equality and foster good relations among different groups. They have also helped to improve our decision making by providing a structured approach to reflect on how decisions may impact different groups leading to more inclusive and effective policies. They have also supported us in identifying any staff professional development which may be needed for specific policies and procedures.

A new staff wellbeing group has been established to advise the Principal and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing committee on the wellbeing of our staff. The group promotes formal communication and informal dialogue with staff. The group is cross-college and cross-level in its membership and is made up of volunteers from both curriculum and professional services staff. The group promotes wellbeing initiatives, signposts staff to resources and support mechanisms, as well as providing a valuable forum to discuss challenges and new initiatives to support the wellbeing of staff.

A new employee engagement group has been introduced to provide a platform through which employees can actively participate in shaping their work environment and contribute towards the success of UHI Inverness. The group's membership represents the whole organisation, with one member from each professional services team, every Depute Curriculum Leader level and both Research Centres, invited to join the group.

The purpose of the UHI Inverness employee engagement group (EEG) is to foster a culture of communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement within UHI Inverness. The group will share information, encourage feedback, seek the views of staff on relevant matters and make recommendations to the UHI Inverness Leadership Forum for consideration.

Whilst we remain committed to the formal working relationships with the officially recognised trade unions, we also recognise that effective partnership working with informal staff groups is crucial to the delivery of our strategy and to informing those formal consultative processes. The principal duties of the group include communication and feedback, recognition and achievement, problem solving and improvement, a sounding board for new policies, procedures and developments and employee development.

Part 1 ➡️

This section reflects on the progress UHI Inverness has made implementing the equality outcomes since our last reporting in 2023 and provides a snapshot of some of the work done to advance our work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

The section also provides an overview of our Employee Data and Gender Pay Report (AY 2022-2023 and AY 2023-2024).

Equality Outcome 1 2023-25
Institutional Leadership & Governance

Responsibility and accountability for equality duties are embedded clearly within governance, leadership and management structures and across institutional practices.

Link to external drivers:
Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:
UHI Inverness is a high performing and vibrant tertiary organisation. We have student outcomes that are consistently amongst the best in Scotland. Our work and ethos are underpinned by a firm commitment to advancing equality and welcoming diversity. We continue to work with staff and students to ensure that we understand the college's duties and how everyone has a role in contributing to these. Our Board of Management and our Executive Management Team recognise their collective role in fostering good relations and leading an organisation which is underpinned by a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advance equality of opportunity Foster good relations	Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)	Equality Impact Assessments are in place for all college policies and procedures. All policy owners and reviewers have received training on how to complete an EIA and assess impacts.	Completion of an EIA has been embedded as part of our policy and procedure review process. Every new policy or updated policy now incorporates the completion of an EIA. A new training module on EIAs has been developed on Brightspace (the virtual learning environment). All policy owners and reviewers have completed this training to ensure comprehensive awareness, understanding and completion of EIAs for all policies and procedures they are responsible for.
	The Executive Management Team will lead on the mainstreaming of equalities and driving progress across all aspects of our business	The commitment to equality and diversity underpin our culture and our staff are aware of our efforts to reduce inequalities. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is current and meaningful.	Mainstreaming equalities is part of our culture, and we take every opportunity to raise awareness of our legal duties; to scrutinise our data around equalities and protected characteristics; and take positive action to advance opportunity. Equality, diversity and inclusion related discussions are tabled in various committees to identify areas of strength and further development. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee brings a focus to key areas for action and supports our continued identification of areas for development. As a UHI partnership, we refreshed our Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity policy in 2024 ensuring it remains current and underpins all aspects of our business. We have introduced a new section into our policy on Neurodiversity in recognition of the growing importance of understanding and supporting neurodiverse staff and students.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
		There is robust oversight and monitoring of equalities data to inform improvement.	Our key business processes ensure that we gather data around protected characteristics so that we can scrutinise and identify trends and areas which require further development. Our SJEC has a focus on student protected characteristics, how we compare to sector benchmarks, and how we can further support improvement.
		Staff have a variety of opportunities to engage in professional development	Staff regularly complete relevant training related to aspects of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. The college participated in the CDN Trauma Informed College programme in 2023/24; staff are actively engaged in local, regional and national networks including CDN Care Experienced Students network, Emily Test network, Aurora Women into Leadership network.
		Our marketing materials demonstrate that we welcome diversity and highlight our inclusive culture.	Our marketing materials, both online and print, have become more inclusive and diverse helping to reach a broader audience and fostering a sense of belonging across our community. Marketing materials feature people from various backgrounds, including different races, genders, ages, abilities, and body types and help everyone to identify with UHI Inverness as an inclusive organisation.
		Our outreach work supports our efforts in widening access to those furthest from education and show our commitment to supporting under-represented groups.	Our outreach work in secondary schools supports our efforts to widen access to both further and higher education pathways. We have further built on the strong partnerships with local schools, especially those with pupils in our most deprived postcodes.

Our Raising Aspirations programme has introduced pupils in S3 to college life raising their aspirations to engage with the academic opportunities which are available to them.

We have introduced a suite of HNC programmes for S6 pupils to study as part of their senior phase to support our efforts to widen access to higher education for those who are furthest from education.

We play an active role in our regional Promise Board supporting the national endeavours to improve the outcomes and life chances of our care experienced community. We have further embedded our transitions support for school pupils with care experience ensuring that our intervention is at an early point and their journey is supported out of compulsory education and into further/higher education.

Since 2024 we have delivered the Multiply programme across our locality. This UK-wide initiative aims to improve adult numeracy skills by offering free personal tutoring, digital training, and flexible courses to help adults enhance their functional numeracy. Our programme targets adults who need to improve their numeracy skills up to SCQF Level 5, providing opportunities to achieve formal qualifications that can lead to better career prospects and further education. |

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
	Embed equality and diversity across all college planning and decision making	Equalities considerations are embedded in our planning processes and progress monitored in an on-going way through a range of mechanisms.	We set annual targets to support the outcomes of our priority groups – care experience, SIMD 10/ most deprived postcodes, disability, BME. These KPIs are monitored in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee and our Student Journey and Enhancement committee and are discussed monthly in our curriculum data presentations to identify any areas of concern. Our quality enhancement cycle ensures that we reflect in an ongoing way on student data and feedback and our annual report on student outcomes identifies any anomalies across learner groups.
		Professional development opportunities are proactively provided for our leaders and managers on aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion.	In 2023 we started to roll out a 2-year programme of professional development for all managers on Collaborative Leadership. This has helped to encourage our leaders to model inclusive behaviours and to gain commitment to promoting inclusive leadership and fostering good relations. The final element of this programme focussed on raising awareness of neurodiverse staff and managing neurodiverse teams. Managers are committed to continuing with an inclusive leadership approach.
		Robust student data sets support further enhancement	We have further developed our data sets and introduced new ways of monitoring our student data. We have introduced monthly data presentations at a School level which scrutinise specific KPIs around equality and diversity including student retention and successful outcomes and student satisfaction by group. This provides opportunity for benchmarking and to identify any concerns or anomalies.
		Engaging with on-going enhancement activity around equalities is part of our culture.	We have furthered our commitment to Gender Based Violence prevention, intervention, and support and have worked with the Emily Test to ensure we create a safe campus for women and girls. By achieving the Emily Test in 2024 we have demonstrated our commitment to further advancing the equal treatment of women and girls in our learning community and to the effectiveness of our policies and procedures in tackling GBV.
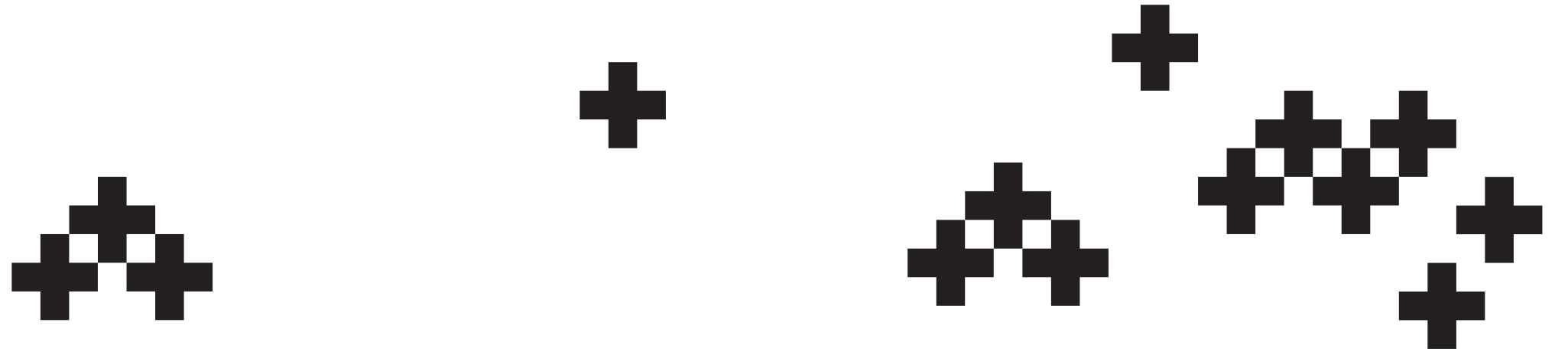
Equality Outcome 2
Learning & Teaching

Learning and teaching are informed by best practice, underpinned by effective professional development, to ensure that the learning experience is inclusive

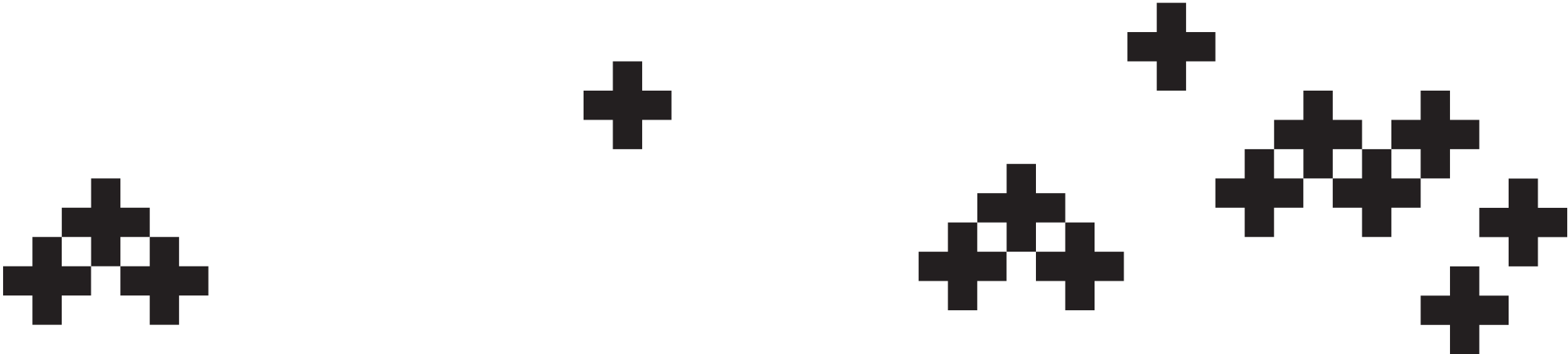**Link to external drivers; Education Scotland Quality Indicators**
Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:
UHI Inverness takes a proactive approach in ensuring that staff have the necessary skills required to deliver an excellent learning experience. Our learning experience is underpinned by our approach to creating an inclusive classroom, regardless of mode of study, ensuring that all students can access appropriate materials in a format which suits them and takes account of their needs.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity. Foster good relations.	Professional development for all staff	All staff are offered professional development opportunities relevant to their role and to support their progression	We have established a professional development SharePoint site and a live calendar which advertises all PD opportunities to all staff. Individual PD opportunities are discussed at team and individual level through our annual Professional Review & Development process which is for all staff. In line with the Professional Development Policy and Procedure, all staff are entitled to six days (pro rata) for professional learning. Over 80% of our lecturers are registered with the General Teaching Council Scotland. Registration requirements include completion of a recognised teaching qualification (usually Teaching Qualification in Further Education) and evidence of ongoing professional learning in line with the GTCS Professional Standards for lecturers in Scotland's colleges These standards include the professional value 'commits to equality and diversity, and promotes inclusiveness, trust and fairness' (1.1.4).
	Develop our approach to the inclusive classroom	All materials on Brightspace (the student VLE) are accessible and meet minimum accessibility standards. Staff have a variety of opportunities to engage in professional development	Blackboard Ally has been further embedded across our curriculum to support lecturers in ensuring their online content is accessible and inclusive. Blackboard Ally scores are monitored and reported through our Digital Learning Leader to management identifying any areas of best practice or further development. Lecturing staff discuss their Blackboard Ally read-outs at team meetings and as part of their PRD to identify any training needs.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
		Teaching practice and learning materials are informed by best practice and effective professional development and supported through our learning and teaching review process.	An inclusive classroom toolkit has been developed and embedded across curriculum areas. This has helped to mainstream our approaches to inclusive practice and has made learning more accessible to all. The PD calendar has a rolling programme of opportunities for teaching staff to engage in workshops on inclusive practices e.g Universal Design for Learning. Our Learning and Teaching Review Programme to support observations is well established and made up of staff from across curriculum areas and backgrounds. We have extended our team of peer reviewers to increase the number of lecturers we can observe. This has supported further professional dialogue around inclusive practice and has enabled us to better gather and share emerging best practice across curriculum areas.
	Inclusive practice in learning and teaching approaches are shared across the college	The use and value of Blackboard Ally are well understood and applied.	Our Digital Learning Leader is the Accessibility Champion at UHI Inverness and presents papers to EDI committee and Student Journey & Enhancement committee outlining the Blackboard Ally scores which indicate the accessibility of the learning materials on the Brightspace VLE. The Digital Learning Leader and the Head of Professional Development also regularly participate in UHI and national meetings to support the sharing best and emerging practice in learning and teaching.
		Re-develop our framework for Excellent Learning and Teaching to take account of inclusive practice.	The revised UHI Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy was launched in June 2022. The strategy underpins professional learning for all staff with specific events aligned to the values of 'supporting the learner as an individual', 'celebrating diversity through learning and teaching', and 'supporting flexible and student-centred learning'. PD opportunities for teaching staff are provided in an on-going way and examples include sessions on Universal Design for Learning and Compassionate Pedagogies.

Outcome 3 Students

Please see Appendix Tables 1-11 for this data on applications and enrolments.

Students from under-represented groups are well represented in post-school education. There is an increase in levels of application and enrolment for students with protected characteristics currently underrepresented.

Link to external drivers; Education Scotland Quality Indicators

Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:

UHI Inverness takes a proactive approach in liaising with schools and external organisations to publicise programs and services for potential applicants to encourage applications from under-represented groups. Disclosure and referral opportunities are made clear as part of our positive declaration environment and are in place within student recruitment, admissions, information and guidance, interview processes and student induction.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity. Foster good relations.	There is an increase in: applications and enrolments for individuals with protected characteristics which are currently underrepresented.	Consistent (and high) application, recruitment and enrolment measures are evident.	Please see Appendix Tables 1-11 for this data on applications and enrolments and an evaluation of progress. UHI Inverness has been committed to widening access to both further and higher education across our communities and to support applications from groups who are currently under-represented. Widening access to under-represented groups will continue to be one of our strategic priorities. This is an aspect of work we will continue with through adoption of the national equality outcomes on Disability, Age and Sex and through our strategic commitment to widening access and encouraging applications from our most deprived postcodes and our care experienced community.
	Actively encourage students to disclose protected characteristics.	There has been an increase in the number of applicant / enrolled student disclosures of disability.	Our FE Admissions policy and our Tertiary Support for Learning policy proactively encourage candidates to declare any disability or additional support need that may create barriers to their success in learning. This declaration enables the college to provide appropriate support during the application stage and throughout a student's journey. Communications to offer holders incorporate information about disclosing any protected characteristics, particularly disability, so that any additional support can be put in place to support individuals. We have further developed the materials on our website to provide information about the support we can provide and to encourage individuals to share their needs. We have established an online booking system for individuals to book needs assessments. All offer holders who declare an additional support need are sent a supportive email with additional information and a link to the booking system.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
		All staff are aware of the protected characteristics and our work to eliminate discrimination.	All new staff complete our mandatory Corporate Induction programme which includes unconscious bias training and training on equality, discrimination and protected characteristics.

All staff also have access to relevant training relating to the protected characteristics e.g. autism awareness, dyslexia, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), deaf & deafblind awareness.

Our PD calendar ensures to PD sessions are run routinely on key aspects of our equalities work with students including, for example, H&S training on Personal Evacuation & Escape Plans, Scottish Mental Health First Aid & our mental health toolkit, learning disabilities such as ADHD and Autism, the use of assistive technologies to support learning. The college has trained 91 staff in Scottish Mental Health First Aid

Annual Staff conference workshops for staff include sessions on accessibility and increasing understanding of LGBTQ+ identities and issues, and how to promote inclusive practice.

The Digital Learning Leader regularly provides bespoke sessions to teams around the use of technologies to support inclusive practice. |
| | Continue to market opportunities for male and female students to access the full range of courses in the College portfolio. | Our marketing material support applications from the under-represented gender in specific curriculum areas. | Please see Appendix Tables 5 & 12 for this data and an evaluative summary.

We have continued to improve our website to be more inclusive in promoting under-represented gender roles in specific curriculum areas, for example, females into STEM subjects and males into Health and Early Years.

We actively develop individual social stories and case studies to highlight individuals from an under-represented gender within curriculum areas to positively support our efforts and detract from stereotypes. |
| | | Our enrolment data shows that males are better represented in female dominated areas and vice versa. | We continue to positively support applications from the under-represented gender in specific curriculum areas and have seen some positive upward trends. We have had an increase in male enrolments in the female dominated areas of Art & Design, Care, Hospitality & Performing Arts and an increase in female enrolments in the male dominated areas of Computing, Land-based Industries & Science.

Gender dominance in specific curriculum continues to be an area of challenge, as it does nationally, and despite actively promoting gender / positive gender role models, we have not seen a significant shift in our student demographics across curriculum. |

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
	Continue to positively support applications from our care experienced community and work closely with external partner organisations	Our care experienced learner outcomes will improve and the attainment gap between this learner group and their non-care peers will narrow.	Much progress has been made on how we support our applicants and learners who have care experience. Our Corporate Parenting plan (now Promise Plan) interim up in 2025 evidences this progress and our learner outcomes for students with care experience in AY 23/24 were 6.3% above the latest published sector benchmark. We positively promote UHI Inverness as a supportive place to study and our marketing materials and website highlight the range of support which is offered to individuals with care experience. We have developed two social stories /case studies of staff who have lived care experience to demonstrate the positive impact which further or higher education can have on life chances. We have a well-established approach to contextualised admissions and provide an offer of place to every applicant with care experience. We have worked with Each and Every Child to provide professional development to key staff introducing trauma informed practice and the importance of how we use language. We have engaged with the CDN Trauma Informed College programme and have established a TI steering group to inform and direct our next steps. Key managers have completed the CDN Trauma Informed course. UHI Inverness has supported one member of the EMT to undertake doctoral research on the FE journeys of care experienced students. This ensures that a care experienced perspective and research informs all strategic decision making about this learner group.
	Continue to positively support applications from our most deprived postcodes (SIMD20) and work closely with external partner organisations .	Our marketing materials and our contextualised admissions policy are effective in supporting applications from SIMD20. Learners from SIMD20 are offered a range of financial support.	We have extended the suite of support available to those from SIMD20 postcodes to support individuals to stay on their programmes. This has included establishing a no-stigma free breakfast & lunch for all students and an on-site food bank. We have updated the information on our website to encompass the suite of support we provide around the cost-of-living crisis acknowledging the greater impact on those from SIMD10. Please see Appendix Tables 2 & 7 for this data and an evaluative summary.

Outcome 4 Performance

Please see Appendix Tables 13, 15, 16 & 17 for this data and an evaluative summary.

Increase retention rates across all programmes, specifically targeting gender, age, disability, care experience.

Link to external drivers; Education Scotland Quality Indicators

Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:

UHI Inverness takes a proactive approach to ensuring that all students, particularly those with protected characteristics, are provided with on-going support tailored to their individual needs to help keep them on courses. Students with protected characteristics are signposted from pre-start and throughout the duration of their student journey to the variety of support services to help them in sustaining their studies.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity. Foster good relations.	Actively encourage students to disclose protected characteristics.	There is an increase in disclosures from applicants with protected characteristics.	Please see previous updates on Outcome 3 and evaluative summary in Appendix.
	Continue to signpost to the support services available to ensure individuals get the support they need	Learners with additional support needs are provided with a high level of on-going and tailored support and know how to access it.	Enhancements have been made to our INSIGHT monitoring and tracking system to ensure any disabilities, reasonable / assessment adjustments are upheld. We have introduced a new booking system for both learning support and mental health support as well as a new drop in for each service to ensure waiting lists are minimised. This has meant that we have consistently met our KPI around our support measures. We have introduced a new team of Learning Assistants to support classes with the highest volume of support needs. This has had a positive impact on both retention and successful outcomes overall and an improvement in retention for those with disabilities. Our FE FT successful outcomes in AY 23/24 were 7.3% above the latest published sector benchmark at 71.4%. Our outcomes for disabled learners were 3.3% above the sector benchmark, although notably still behind the 'all learner' figure. The Professional Development team works closely with the Student Support teams to provide opportunities for specialist training for these staff e.g. EMDR and deaf & deafblind awareness.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
	Review the types of support available to students to ensure we are meeting demand, including mental health support.	Our support services are sector-leading, continue to keep up with demand, and receive high student satisfaction ratings.	See above update relating to our waiting lists and our KPI. Our service provides a supportive pathway with a stepped care model; this means that learners can access help quickly and get the most effective type of support to meet their needs. We offer specialist wellbeing support online, in person or via telephone for any student experiencing significant or enduring difficulties. We know that every student has individual needs, so we offer a flexible programme. The type of support we provide has been extended to now include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Hypnotherapy, and Eye Movement Desensitization Therapy (EMDR). We support the mental health of all students using both proactive and reactive wellbeing support for students as well as referral routes to other services. We provide specialised support for higher-risk students who have more complex needs and who present with 'at risk' behaviours using a short-term case management model. We also offer One at a Time Therapy (OaaT). This is designed to address students presenting concerns within one session where possible. This appointment is usually sufficient for many students and provides immediate and effective support.
	Collection of KPIs for all students categorised under protected characteristics to ensure that students receive appropriate support to achieve comparable outcomes with the total student population.	The routine analysis of KPIs is well embedded across the student journey ensuring early interventions to support learner retention.	We have a well-established data set around learner groups and protected characteristics. This on monitored in many different forums and points through the academic year to identify any trends, early interventions, and to share best practice across curriculum. With the exception of BME, learners across all protected characteristics perform above the latest published sector benchmark in FT FE. This is an aspect of work we will continue to monitor. Year on year there continues to be an increase in students disclosing additional support needs (ASN). Some areas reporting over 80% of their students having ASN. To meet this growing demand, we introduced a new team of Learning Assistants in AY 23/24 to support classes with the highest volume of support needs. They work collaboratively with lecturers to ensure the management of reasonable adjustments for all students. They help in supporting classroom management, keeping individuals on task and focused providing holistic support and encouragement. Providing support with study skills, individuals' comprehension of knowledge, understanding, skills and supporting individuals to catch up with missed work. This has had a positive impact on both retention and successful outcomes. FE FT successful outcomes in AY 23/24 were 71.4%, 7.3% above the latest published sector benchmark. Our outcomes for disabled learners were 3.3% above sector benchmark in the same year.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
	Lecturers become more aware of the needs of students with protected characteristics.	Professional development is provided to all staff to ensure awareness of the additional challenges faced by some learners.	All new staff, regardless of job role, complete mandatory induction training regarding the student support services to ensure all staff are aware of the relevant teams and the facilities available to all students so they can signpost these to students. All new lecturers participate in the mandatory Learning & Teaching Induction which provides extensive information to lecturers about how they can support all students through learning, teaching and assessment. This includes sessions on high impact learning, the science of learning, student engagement, assessment etc. Following induction, lecturers engage with a development pathway of recognised teaching qualifications including the PDA Teaching Practice in Scotland's Colleges and Teaching Qualification in Further Education. These qualifications are student focused and require lecturers to consider a range of potential barriers to learning and develop their knowledge of how to mitigate these. Assessors have their own internal professional learning sessions which run at various times in the year to support engagement. These focus on supporting students through their learning journey. Assessors also complete professional qualifications Workplace Assessment using Direct and Indirect Methods and Internal Verification of Workplace Assessment to support their knowledge of appropriate assessment methods for all students.
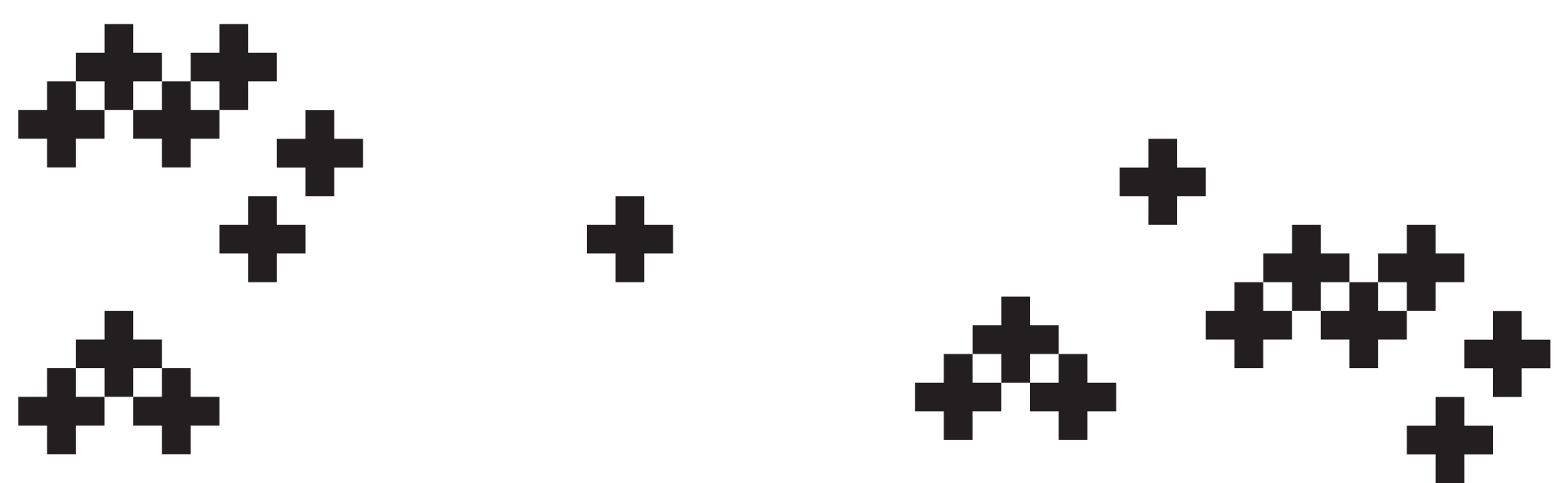
Outcome 5 Professional Development for Staff

All teaching and professional services staff have access to high quality professional learning on all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion which impact on their practice and an awareness of how they can enhance their practice.

Link to external drivers; Education Scotland Quality Indicators

Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:

UHI Inverness provides a robust package of on-going professional development for all staff including access to professional development around a variety of aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion. Staff wellbeing is taken seriously, and all staff are supported appropriately through a variety of mechanisms to ensure they can perform to the highest standards.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity. Foster good relations.	Accessible CPD opportunities to all staff	Increase in participation/ uptake by part-time staff	A range of internal and external professional development opportunities are available online on Brightspace VLE and on LinkedIn Learning. This enables staff to engage in professional learning at a time that suits them best. It is recognised that some staff work part-time and, in some cases, combine their roles with other employment. We aim to make learning opportunities accessible to all staff and support them to achieve a positive work-life balance. For example, the Digital Learning Leader offers all sessions with the option of in-person, online or hybrid to support inclusivity. Printed session overviews are also made available in staff workrooms. This allows staff to review key information in different formats. A new on-campus Staff Learning Hub has been established to provide a quiet, confidential space for up to five staff members to explore various professional development activities. This includes professional learning on digital technologies which can be accessed at their own pace in a safe supportive space, with access to laptops and an interactive smartboard to support collaborative or individual learning. Regular digital learning drop-in sessions are available at the Staff Learning Hub, delivered in-person, online, or in a hybrid format to support flexibility and inclusivity. Session handouts are provided both in print and online, enabling staff to take resources away for further reflection or reference. Sessions are promoted via line managers, through regular email updates and via our Sharepoint site. Staff are also encouraged to contact the Digital Learning Leader directly to arrange tailored one-to-one or small group sessions. This approach ensures accessibility for all staff, including those working part-time or remotely, while fostering a supportive environment for continuous learning and digital confidence.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
	Seek feedback from relevant employee groups regarding their professional development needs, training and career development and respond appropriately	Staff feedback is received through various mechanisms and relevant actions implemented	The Professional Development team receive feedback on learning requests from multiple sources including the Staff Wellbeing group, the Technician forum and the Employee Engagement Group. The team works closely with Curriculum Leaders and Professional Services managers to ensure that professional learning opportunities are relevant and current. Individual staff also regularly feed back their own requirements and suggestions for professional learning. The Professional Development team are available to staff on campus and also online to support engagement with part-time staff. To support ongoing improvement of digital training, an annual survey is shared with all staff. This gathers insights on staff roles (FE, HE, or professional services), working patterns (full- or part-time), and reasons for engagement or non-participation. This data helps ensure the offer remains inclusive and relevant. Each year, the survey is themed by the Digital Learning Leader to support planning for the year ahead. Previous themes have included AI, system transitions, and digital tools. Feedback has directly informed improvements to SharePoint guidance and this year's focus on digital skills development, including the potential use of a self-assessment tool to identify training needs. Suggestions from free text responses feed into future training plans and are reflected in the Digital Learning section of the Professional Development Quality Enhancement Plan. The annual staff survey of professional services teams also provides data on the learning opportunities available to staff and suggestions from this are also fed into the Professional Development team's Quality Enhancement Plan. Our new Employee Engagement Group, established in Spring 2025, enables all colleagues to actively shape our work environment and contribute to the success of the college. It allows communication with all staff about activities and operational matters, and seek views, suggestions and ideas with the aim of enabling active involvement. The group's membership represents the whole organisation, with one member from each professional services team, every Depute Curriculum Leader level and both Research Centres, invited to join the group.
	Implement the HSE management standards on managing workplace stress	Decrease in staff workdays lost due to mental health concerns and incapacity due to stress at work	UHI Inverness have not yet implemented the HSE management standards on managing workplace stress but are fully committed to creating a workplace culture which promotes physical and mental health, whilst being supportive, inclusive, and engaging. We have introduced a new Staff-Wellbeing-Policy.pdf which outlines UHI Inverness's commitment to creating a workplace culture which promotes physical and mental health, whilst being supportive, inclusive, and engaging, and where wellbeing is embedded across working practices. It aims to build resilience by enabling and empowering employees to take ownership of their own physical and mental health, recognising that additional support may be required when staff are experiencing negative effects on their health and wellbeing. UHI Inverness acknowledges that good health and wellbeing are vital to our success and happiness, and that there is much UHI Inverness can do to facilitate this amongst our staff. This policy provides guidance for managers on how to manage both the physical and psychological aspects of work, and to embed wellbeing initiatives which underpin our organisational values and the 8 Dimensions of Wellness. In addition, our new staff wellbeing guidance document for staff provides guidance on those wellbeing initiatives which underpin our organisational values and helps managers to understand and manage both the physical and psychological aspects of work to reduce workplace stress.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
			The College has invested in a range of wellbeing initiatives to support staff in maintaining positive health and wellbeing.
			Employee Assistance Programme - we have undertaken a review of our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provision and our contract with our new provider commenced in 2024.
			Our EAP provision is wide ranging and includes access for all staff to:
			+ A free confidential phone line available 24/7, 365 days per year to provide professional support in dealing with work or personal issues
			+ An online resource called 'Workplace Wellbeing'
			+ A team of wellbeing and counselling practitioners who can offer confidential, independent and unbiased information and guidance.
			The EAP can provide information and support on:
			+ Health and Wellbeing including Mental Health, Physical Health and Bereavement
			+ Carers including Childcare and Eldercare
			+ Work / Life including Work/Life Balance, Personal Effectiveness and Management Support
			+ Money Worries including Financial Wellbeing
			+ Family and Home including Relationships, Children and Social
			+ Consumer and Legal including Family
			Our new provider has a high number of counsellors available in the Highlands for face-to-face counselling and our service level agreement ensures expediency in support - appointments are arranged within 2 working days with the appointment taking place within 7 working days.
			Mental Health Support for Staff - UHI Inverness has partnered with Able Futures who deliver Access to Work's Mental Health Support Service. Able Futures support staff experiencing difficulties including anxiety, depression, grief or stress, or who are struggling to deal with problems such as debt, disrupted sleep or relationships that may be affecting their mental health.
			Confidential support, advice and guidance is available through Able Futures from a mental health professional who will spend time with the individual, understanding any mental health issues that are affecting their time at work. A support plan is created to help improve their mental health over a period of up to 9 months. The focus is on building skills to maintain mental wellbeing and knowledge of how to access treatment, build resilience, suggest reasonable adjustments at work, and to support sustained attendance at work.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
			The Support Plan could include coping strategies such as: + Communication skills + Time management + Problem solving skills + Organisation and planning + Dealing with stress and anxiety + Coping with change + Developing a sleep routine + Healthy eating and drinking + Exercise and fitness + Financial management + Reasonable adjustments Support from Able Futures is available over the phone, video calls and through email at a time to suit the individual so it is fully accessible to all employees. **Health and Wellbeing Risk Assessmen**t – we have introduced a new risk assessment where symptoms of stress are identified by an individual or a line manager. Line managers meet with the employee at the earliest opportunity to discuss the Health and Wellbeing Risk Assessment which looks at potential triggers and what can be reasonably implemented to try and alleviate these. Where stress leads to sickness absence, UHI Inverness has in place a Promoting-Attendance-Policy.pdf to support individuals back to work. **Staff Wellbeing Group** - a new staff wellbeing group has been established to advise the Principal and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing committee on the wellbeing of our staff. The group promotes formal communication and informal dialogue with staff. The group is cross-college and cross-level in its membership and is made up of volunteers from both curriculum and professional services staff. The group promotes wellbeing initiative, signposts staff to resources and support mechanisms, as well as providing a valuable forum to discuss challenges and new initiatives to support the wellbeing of staff. **Employee Engagement Group** – a new employee engagement group has been introduced to provide a platform through which employees can actively participate in shaping their work environment and contribute towards the success of UHI Inverness. The group's membership represents the whole organisation, with one member from each professional services team, every Depute Curriculum Leader level and both Research Centres, invited to join the group. The group fosters a culture of communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement within UHI Inverness, helping to share information, encourage feedback, seek the views of staff on relevant matters, and make recommendations to the UHI Inverness Leadership Forum for consideration.

Outcome 6 Staff data and gender pay gap

Gender pay equality is evident and appropriate steps are taken to ensure any significant identified gaps are addressed.

Please see the following section on Employee Data and the Gender Pay Report

Link to external drivers; Education Scotland Quality Indicators

Leadership & Quality Culture; Delivery of Learning & Services; Outcomes & Impact

Context:

UHI Inverness is committed to eliminating discrimination and to equal treatment of all staff. Although effective arrangements are in place to ensure equity in salary and conditions of service arrangements, the College recognises this is an on-going piece of work and cannot be complacent in respect of these issues. The college will continue to achieve, and openly demonstrate, the commitment to and provision of equal pay across roles. In addition to gender pay equality, we are also commitment to advancing the equality of opportunity across all employee protected characteristics.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Advance equality of opportunity. Foster good relations.	Access to professional development opportunities and career progression	Colleagues feel there are equal opportunities for professional development and career progression, irrespective of protected characteristics. Monitor the uptake of opportunities to ensure equity in participation across protected characteristics.	All professional development opportunities are promoted to all staff and there is a transparent process for the allocation of funding for training and additional qualifications. All vacancies are advertised openly on our staff intranet and our interview and selection panels, where possible, are gender balanced. The Professional Development team track the uptake of development opportunities by gender, and this is included in reports to the HR committee. Further work needs to be done to track data on other protected characteristics.
	Promote supportive and flexible employment practices where appropriate.	Hybrid working practices are well established and the college support flexible working practices, where appropriate and operationally possible.	Hybrid working practices are well embedded across the organisation. To further support this, we have identified that we will develop further staff guidance to aid a clearer understanding of how hybrid working can work effectively across our staff body. We anticipate this guidance will be in place by August 2025. UHI Inverness recognises the importance of enabling staff to develop a healthy work-life balance and is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff through our approach to flexible working requests. Our Flexible-Working-Policy.pdf allows staff to request variation to their working arrangements (from day 1 of employment) as one way of achieving this. All flexible working requests are discussed by the same staff resource panel to ensure consistency of decision making.

General Duty Addressed	Action Area	Anticipated Impact	Progress as of April 2025
			Staff are offered regular training sessions on the effective use of technology that supports hybrid working. All managers have been offered specific 'Working Smart' training to support them in using Microsoft technologies to improve efficiencies and to manage their time. This was followed up with a bespoke playlist of training via the LinkedIn platform. The feedback from managers on the Working Smart training and the positive impact on their working practices has been very positive.
	Monitor and review employee data to ensure no significant disparities.

Recruit and appoint staff on individual merit. | Employee data is gathered and monitored across applicants, appointed staff and leavers and analysed and reported quarterly so any gaps can be identified. | See Employee Data in the next section. |

Employee Data and Gender Pay Report ➡

Overview of Data

UHI Inverness gathers data from applicants and core staff and leavers on gender, age, disability, ethnicity, gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief and marital status. However, we have not yet reported on gender re-assignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief and marital status. Our intention is to report on these for the next reporting period.

New Appointments 2022/2023

Of the 57 staff appointed in 2022/23, 43.9% were female and 56.1% were male. Of the 57 staff appointed in 2022/23, 26% were females appointed to professional services roles, and 32% were males appointed to professional services roles. Of the 57 staff appointed in 2022/23, 17% were females appointed to teaching roles and 25% were males appointed to teaching roles.

Of the 15 non-academic female appointments in 2022/23, 100% were appointed to non- management grades A-H with 0% appointed to management grades I-M.

Of the 18 non-academic male appointments in 2022/23, 100% were appointed to non- management grades A-H with 0% being appointed to management grades I-M.

Function	Male	Female
Professional Services	54.5%	45.5%
Professional Services Management	0%	0%
EMT	0%	0%
Teaching	56.5%	43.5%
Teaching Management	100%	0%
Total	**56.1%**	**43.9%**

New Appointments 2023/24

Of the 51 staff appointed in 2023/24, 62.7% were female and 37.3% were male. Of the 51 staff appointed in 2023/24, 45.1% were females appointed to professional services roles, and 21.6% were males appointed to professional services roles. Of the 51 staff appointed in 2023/24, 17.6% were females appointed to teaching roles and 15.7% were males appointed to teaching roles.

Of the 22 non-academic female appointments in 2023/24, 95.5% were appointed to non- management grades A-H with 4.5% appointed to management grades I-M.

Of the 10 non-academic male appointments in 2023/24, 90% were appointed to non- management grades A-H with 10% being appointed to management grades I-M.

Function	Male	Female
Professional Services	31.3%	68.7%
Professional Services Management	50%	50%
EMT	0%	0%
Teaching	47%	53%
Teaching Management	0%	0%
Total	**37.3%**	**62.7%**

Applicants 2022/23

Gender
Applicants in 2022/23 totaled 344 individuals, 25.3% of which were female and 18.9% of which were male. In 2021/22, 55.8% of applicants chose not to disclose their gender when applying for a role.

Age
In 2022/23 the highest proportion of applicants were within the age range 30-49 (25.3%), followed by 50–59-year-olds (9.6%). However, 54.9% of applicants chose not to disclose their age when applying for a role.

Applicant Age Range data:

We would like to continue to focus on encouraging individuals from all protected characteristics groups to apply to the College. We will do this by ensuring that all adverts are available on our website, are accessible, and featured across wider advertising opportunities.

Consistent with the profile of applicants, the highest proportion of staff recruited in 2022/23 was within the age range of 30-49 (59.7%).

Consistent with the profile of applicants, the highest proportion of staff recruited in 2023/24 was within the age range of 30-49 (47.1%).

Applicants 2022/23

Gender
Applicants in 2023/24 totaled 352 individuals, 54.5% of which were female and 42.1% of which were male. In 2021/22, 3.4% of applicants chose not to disclose gender when applying for a role.

Age
In 2023/24 the highest proportion of applicants were within the age range 30-49 (40.3%), followed by 16–29-year-olds (11.9%). However, 30.7% of applicants chose not to disclose their age when applying for a role.

Age Rage	2022/23	2023/24
0-29	6.7%	11.9%
30-49	25.3%	40.3%
50-59	9.6%	10.8%
60+	3.5%	6.3%
Not disclosed	54.9%	30.7%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

Recruited Staff Age-Range Data

Age Rage	2022/23	2023/24
0-29	15.8%	9.8%
30-49	59.6%	47.1%
50-59	21.1%	29.4%
60+	3.5%	13.7%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

Declared Disability

In 2023/24, 7.7% of applicants declared a disability, which shows an improvement on the 2022/23 figure (2.9%).

Ethnicity

The highest proportion of applicants in 2022/23 were from a White Scottish background at 25.3%, with White British at 9% and White Other at 5.2%. Applicants from other Black and Ethnic Minority Groups totaled 4.3%.

The highest proportion of applicants in 2023/24 were from a White Scottish background at 36.4%, with White British at 12.2% and White Other at 5.4%. Applicants from other Black and Ethnic Minority Groups totaled 12.8%. This demographic is in line with our local and regional demographic.

Overview of Data

Gender

The proportion of staff across UHI Inverness divided by gender was:

Gender	Proportion of Staff divided by Gender	
	2022/23	**2023/24**
Female	61.8%	65.2%
Male	38.2%	34.8%

There remain prominent and distinct gender patterns associated with specific academic areas as per the table below:

Academic Area	Gender	Gender 100%	
		2022/23	**2023/24**
Business & Creative Industries	Female	81.4%	82.2%
	Male	18.6%	17.8%
Care, Arts, Sports & Humanities	Female	75.4%	75.8%
	Male	24.6%	24.2%
Construction & Engineering	Female	9.2%	12.9%
	Male	90.8%	87.1%
Forestry, Applied Science, Computing & Teacher Education	Female	57.1%	58%
	Male	42.9%	42%

Traditional patterns of occupational segregation are reflected in the above figures. This has remained fairly constant and consistent with sector benchmarks.

Furthermore, patterns of male dominated occupational segregation are reflected, with the area of particular concern being Construction and Engineering (90.8% male in 2023/24).

Gender segregation has improved within Forestry, Applied Science, Computing & Teacher Education over the past two years and has remained fairly constant within the other areas.

Overall gender equality of academic staff has remained across the three years, with only minor female dominance (54.1% female in 2023/24).

However, this is not the case for professional services staff, where support functions have been strongly dominated by females across all three years, the most recent showing 75% of all professional services roles being occupied by females.

Distinct gender patterns can also be seen associated with many professional services areas. However, those of particular concern, due to having 100% female occupancy in 2023/24, are Admissions and Student Funding, Human Resources, Professional Development and Wellbeing and Learning Support. However, within Access & Progression, Finance, Gender segregation has improved.

Male dominated professional services areas remain Estates and Campus Services (85.7% male in 2023/24), and ICT Services (66.7% in 2021/22). However, Gender segregation has continued to improve within ICT Services over the past two years (40% female in 2023/24).

Academic Area	Gender	Gender 100%	
		2022/23	**2023/24**
Access & Progression	Female	81.8%	84.6%
	Male	18.2%	15.4%
Admissions & Student Funding	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-
Business Solutions	Female	85.7%	86.7%
	Male	14.3%	13.3%
Central Administration	Female	92.3%	92.3%
	Male	7.7%	7.7%
Estates & Campus Services	Female	20%	14.3%
	Male	80%	85.7%
Finance	Female	100%	62.5%
	Male	-	37.5%
Health & Safety	Female	-	-
	Male	100%	100%
Human Resources	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	
ICT Services	Female	37.5%	40%
	Male	62.5%	60%
Library & LRC	Female	66.7%	66.7%
	Male	33.3%	33.3%
Management & Creative Arts	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-
Operations & Commercial Services	Female	80%	73.3%
	Male	20%	26.7%
Operations & External Relations	Female	-	-
	Male	100%	100%
Professional Development	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-
Quality	Female	75%	75%
	Male	25%	25%
Registry	Female	-	100%
	Male	-	-
Research	Female	57.1%	61.1%
	Male	42.9%	38.9%
Student Records	Female	83.3%	83.3%
	Male	16.7%	16.7%
Technology, Environment & Education	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-
Wellbeing & Learning Support	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-

Overview of Data

Part time working

Of the 351 staff working at UHI Inverness in 2022/23, 42.7% were employed on part-time contracts. Of those, 76.7% were female and 23.3% male. Of the staff who worked part-time, 68% represented academic staff and 32% professional services staff.

Of the academic staff on part-time contracts, 27.4% were male and 72.6% were female. Of the professional services staff on part-time contracts, 14.6% were male and 85.4% were female.

2023/24
Of the 383 staff working at UHI Inverness in 2023/24, 42.3% were employed on part-time contracts. Of those, 77.2% were female and 22.8% male. Of the staff who worked part-time, 67.9% represented academic staff and 32.1% professional services staff.

Of the academic staff on part-time contracts, 25.5% were male and 74.5% were female. Of the professional services staff on part-time contracts, 17.3% were male and 82.7% were female.

Age Range

2022/23
Age Range Data for 2022/23: .

Age Range	Staff	Professional Services	Academic
16-29	2.8%	5.3%	1.4%
30-49	45.9%	49.6%	43.6%
50-59	35.3%	32.3%	37.1%
60+	16%	12.8%	17.9%

In 2022/23 the highest percentage (45.9%) of all staff fall within the age range 30-49 and 35.3% fall within the age range 50-59. 16% of all staff are within the 60+ age range and 2.8% of all staff are within the age range of 16-29.

The highest percentage of professional services staff (49.6%) in 2022/23 were within the age range 30-49. This is compared to the next largest group of professional services staff within the age range 50-59 at 32.3%.

The highest percentage of academic staff (43.6%) were within the age range 30-49. The next largest group of teaching staff are within the age range 50-59 (37.1%).

For 2022/23 the lowest percentage of staff (2.8%) is within the age group of 29 and under with 1.4% of roles within the academic staff group.

2023/24
Age Range Data for 2023/24:

Age Range	Staff	Professional Services	Academic
16-29	3.1%	5.9%	1.3%
30-49	46.5%	50%	44.2%
50-59	34.2%	32.2%	35.5%
60+	16.2%	11.9%	19%

In 2023/24 the highest percentage (46.5%) of all staff fall within the age range 30-49 and 34.2% fall within the age range 50-59. 16.2% of all staff fall within the 60+ age range and 3.1% of all staff fall within the age range of 16-29.

The highest percentage of professional services staff (50%) in 2023/24 were within the age range 30-49. This is compared to the next largest group of professional services staff within the age range 50-59 at 32.2%.

The highest percentage of academic staff (44.2%) were within the age range 30-49. The next largest group of teaching staff are within the age range 50-59 (35.5%).

For 2023/24, the lowest percentage of staff (3.1%) is within the age group of 29 and under, with 1.3% roles within the academic staff group.

Declared Disability

2022/23
In 2022/23 5.1% of staff declared a disability; 50% of which were professional services staff and 50% of which were academic staff members.

2023/24
In 2023/24 5% of staff declared a disability; 58% of which were professional services staff and 42% of which were academic staff members.

There is a general pattern that staff declare a disability after appointment to post. It is also recognised that some staff do not declare a disability and therefore are not recorded or counted, however have had reasonable adjustments and engagement with HR and occupational health. We will continue to encourage staff to update their records on our HR system for equality monitoring purposes to improve completion rates.

Ethnicity

2022/23
The highest proportion of staff are White Scottish accounting for 62.4%, followed by White English 10.5 % and White Other 6.8%.

In 2022/23 3.1% of staff self-declared their ethnicity as Black or other ethnic minority. In total 9.1% of staff did not declare their ethnic origin.

2023/24
The highest proportion of staff are White Scottish accounting for 61.6%, followed by White English 9.9 % and White Other 6.5%.

In 2023/24 2.9% of staff self-declared their ethnicity as Black or other ethnic minority. In total 9.4% of staff did not declare their ethnic origin. We will continue to encourage staff to update their records on our HR system for equality monitoring purposes to improve completion rates.

Commitment to Equal Pay and Eliminating the Gender Pay Gap

UHI Inverness is committed to the principle of equal pay for all our employees and to reducing occupational segregation and the pay gap. We aim to ensure that procedures are in place to determine pay and conditions of employment which do not discriminate unlawfully and are free from gender, race and disability bias, and that do not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics. The college currently pays the Living Wage as a minimum to its staff and is an accredited Living Wage employer.

In line our Equality and Diversity Inclusivity Policy, we recognise and support the principles and objectives of equal pay for work of equal value regardless of their 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act (2010) and personal circumstances, as a critical element of fairness and equality within the workplace.

The College recognises that in order to achieve equal pay for employees carrying out equal work we should operate a pay system which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from unlawful bias on any grounds. This is a fundamental principle which is central to college policy on equality and diversity and pay-related policies and practices. We use an analytical job evaluation system for all non-teaching professional services roles across the College to promote equal pay, along with a clear national salary framework for all academic posts.

Gender Pay Gap

UHI Inverness reviewed the average and median hourly rates of pay by gender.

Average Hourly rates of pay - the average hourly rate of pay for 2022/23 and 2023/24 are shown in the table below for College staff:

|	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Female	£19.48	£19.08	£20.04
Male	£20.75	£20.45	£21.48

Median hourly rates of College staff can be seen in the table below for male and female staff:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Female	£20.67	£19.65	£20.47
Male	£22.07	£21.50	£23.02

Hourly rate Quartiles - 2022/23

Gender	Lower (103)		Lower Middle (103)		Upper Middle (104)		Upper (104)	
Male	29	28.16%	38	36.89%	47	45.19%	39	37.50%
Female	74	71.84%	65	63.11%	57	54.81%	65	62.50%
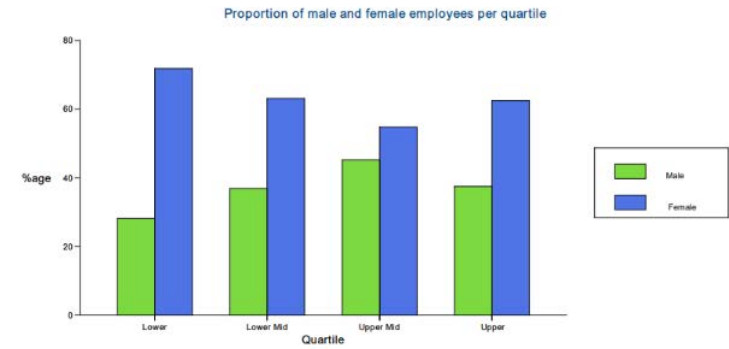
Proportion of male and female employees per quartile

Bonus Gaps

	Male	Female	Percentage Difference
Mean	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Median	0.00	0.00	0.00%

Hourly rate Quartiles - 2023/24

Gender	Lower (112)		Lower Middle (113)		Upper Middle (113)		Upper (113)	
Male	34	30.36%	42	37.17%	51	45.13%	43	38.05%
Female	78	69.64%	71	62.83%	62	54.87%	70	61.95%
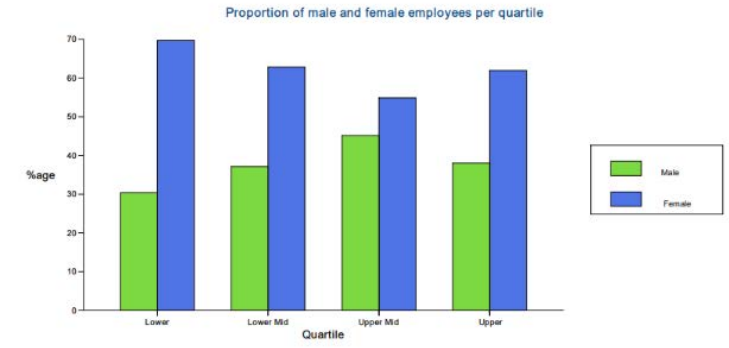
Proportion of male and female employees per quartile

Bonus Gaps

	Male	Female	Percentage Difference
Mean	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Median	0.00	0.00	0.00%

Hourly rate Quartiles - 2024/25

Gender	Lower (108)		Lower Middle (108)		Upper Middle (108)		Upper (108)	
Male	32	29.63%	39	36.11%	47	43.52%	45	41.67%
Female	76	70.37%	69	63.89%	61	56.48%	63	58.33%

Proportion of male and female employees per quartile
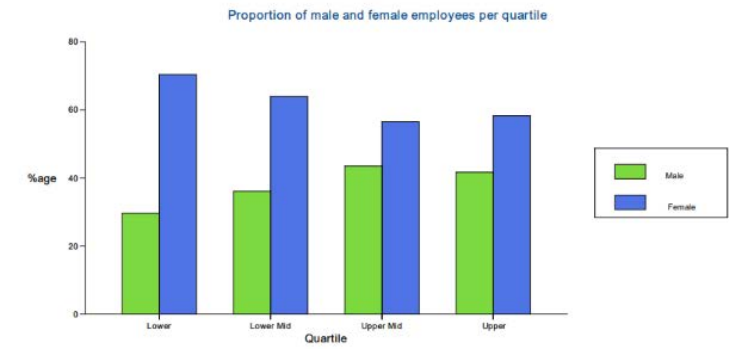
Bonus Gaps

	Male	Female	Percentage Difference
Mean	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Median	0.00	0.00	0.00%

Commitment to Equal Pay and Eliminating the Gender Pay Gap

All staff are placed throughout the full range of grades within the pay model as follows (not including spot salaries):

Grade	Gender	Gender %	
		2022/23	2023/24
A	Female	92.9%	87.5%
	Male		7.1%	12.5%
B	Female	-	-
	Male		100%	100%
C	Female	61.5%	45.5%
	Male		38.5%	54.5%
D	Female	72.7%	53.8%
	Male		27.3%	46.2%
E	Female	71.1%	75.9%
	Male		28.9%	24.1%
F	Female	80.9%	78.6%
	Male		19.1%	21.4%
G	Female	38.5%	38.5%
	Male		61.5%	61.5%
H	Female	100%	100%
	Male	-	-	-
I	Female	50%	33.3%
	Male		50%	66.7%
J	Female	71.4%	77.8%
	Male		28.6%	22.2%
K	Female	100%	100%
	Male		-	-
L	Female	100%	100%
	Male		-	-
M	Female	75%	60%
	Male		25%	40%
N	Female	100%	100%
	Male		-	-
O	Female	-	
	Male		100%	100%
RF	Female	50%	66.7%
	Male		50%	33.3%
RH	Female	42.9%	42.9%
	Male		57.1%	57.1%
RI	Female	-	100%
	Male		-	-
RJ	Female	100%	66.7%
	Male		-	33.3%
Teaching (including teaching management)	Female	55.9%	57.1%
	Male		44.1%	42.9%

Grade	Average Hourly Rates	
	2022/23	2023/24
A	£11.50	£12.34
B	£12.37	£13.04
C	£13.20	£14.11
D	£13.71	£14.28
E	£16.06	£16.71
F	£17.96	£18.65
G	£20.11	£21.08
H	£21.70	£22.83
I	£24.91	£26.10
J	£27.47	£28.44
K	£28.40	£30.43
L	£32.60	£33.43
M	£40.23	£41.05
N	£52.27	£53.09
O	£71.84	£72.66

Median Pay Gap

The median pay gap represents the middle point of the population. In simple terms, if you separately lined up all the women in the company and all the men, the median pay gap is the difference between the hourly pay rate or bonus pay* for the middle woman compared to that of the middleman. *Please note UHI Inverness does not pay bonuses.

UHI Inverness Median Pay Gap is calculated by the following method: (male median average hourly rate - female median average hourly rate) / male median average hourly rate X 100 = Total %

2022/23 - snapshot date 31 March 2022
(£22.07 - £20.67) / £22.07 x 100 = **6.34%**

2023/24 - snapshot date 31 March 2023
(£21.50 - £19.65) / £21.50 x 100 = **8.6%**

2024/25 - snapshot date 31 March 2024
(£23.02 - £20.47) / £23.02 x 100 = **11.1%**

Mean Pay Gap

The mean pay gap is the difference between the average hourly or bonus pay* for women compared to men. *Please note UHI Inverness does not pay bonuses.
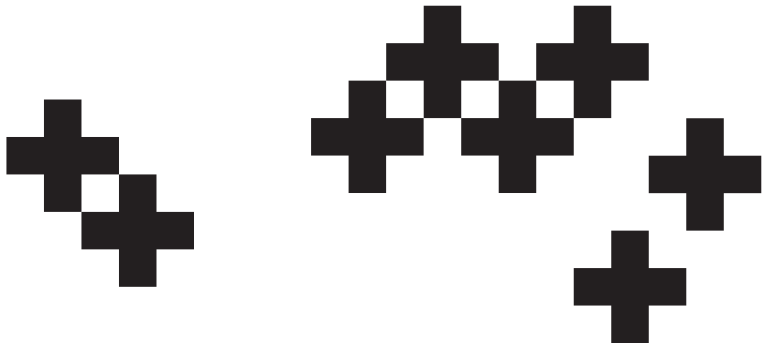
UHI Inverness Mean Pay Gap is calculated by the following method: (male mean average hourly rate – female mean average hourly rate) / male mean average hourly rate X 100

2022/23 - snapshot date 31 March 2022
(£20.75 - £19.48) / £20.75 x 100 = **6.1%**

2023/24 - snapshot date 31 March 2023
(£20.45 - £19.08) / £20.45 x 100 = **6.7%**

2024/25 - snapshot date 31 March 2024
(£21.48 - £20.04) / £21.48 x 100 = **6.7%**

Commitment to Equal Pay and Eliminating the Gender Pay Gap

The analysis of staff pay data indicates that whilst seeing a very small increase of 0.6%, our Gender Pay Gap has had a positive reduction over the past seven years.

GPG Data	Snapshot date	% Difference in hourly rate (Mean)	% Difference in hourly rate (Median)
2024-25	31-Mar-24	6.7	11.08
2023-24	31-Mar-23	6.7	8.6
2022-23	31-Mar-22	6.1	6.3
2021-22	31-Mar-21	7	11.4
2020-21	31-Mar-20	8.7	18.1
2019-20	31-Mar-19	11.3	11.5
2018-19	31-Mar-18	10.5	8.8

An increase in females found in the lower middle, upper middle and upper quartiles has resulted in our gender pay gap decreasing over time. However, UHI Inverness continues to have a higher percentage of females in the lower quartile, which is the lower graded posts, this is a percentage that has remained steady for some time. It is therefore women clustered in these lower paid job families which are contributing towards vertical occupational segregation and our gender pay gap. To mitigate the gap, the College is committed to ensuring availability of more part-time positions in the academic area and welcomes flexible working requests, particularly from these groups of staff in the promotion of our flexible working policy. This will be reflective of the need for a greater work-life balance by women who are more likely to be carers requiring part time employment to balance work and caring duties.

Leaver Diversity monitoring

Leavers 2022/23

Gender
There were 49 leavers in 2022/23 of which 49% were female and 51% were male.

Of academic staff leavers, 31.6% were female and 68.4% were male. Of the professional services staff leavers, 60% were female and 40% were male.

Age Range
The age range of leavers in 2022/23 was predominantly 30-49 (38.8%), with the lowest proportion being 16–29-year-olds (4.1%).

In the 50-59 age range, 26.5% of leavers fell into this group and 30.6% of leavers were aged over 60.

Academic/Professional Services Age Ranges 2022/23:

Age Range	Leavers	Professional Services	Academic
16-29	4.1%	100%	0%
30-49	38.8%	74%	26%
50-59	26.5%	54%	46%
60+	30.6%	47%	53%
Total	**100%**		

Disability and Ethnicity of Leavers

Declared Disability:

	2022/23	2023/24
Declared Disability	12.2%	7.8%

Leavers 2022/23

Gender
There were 77 leavers in 2023/24 of which 74% were female and 26% were male.

Of academic staff leavers, 76.5% were female and 23.5% were male. Of support staff leavers, 72.1% were female and 27.9% were male.

Age Range
The age range of leavers in 2023/24 was predominantly 30-49 (36.4%), with the lowest proportion being 16–29-year-olds (11.7%).

In the 50-59 age range, 29.9% of leavers fell into this group and 22% of leavers were aged over 60.

Academic/Professional Services Age Ranges 2023/24:

Age Range	Leavers	Professional Services	Academic
16-29	11.7%	88%	12%
30-49	36.4%	79%	21%
50-59	29.9%	22%	78%
60+	22%	47%	53%
Total	**100%**		

Ethnicity:

Ethnicity	2022/23	2023/24
White Scottish	40.8%	51.9%
White English	6.1%	7.8%
White British	8.2%	9.1%
White Northern Irish	0%	1.3%
White Other	8.2%	10.4%
White Polish	0%	1.3%
Black African	2%	1.3%
Asian Indian	2%	1.4%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%
Undisclosed	32.7%	14.3%
Other	0%	1.3%

Part 2 ➡

This sets out our forward-looking action plan detailing our SMART goals for 2025-2027 to address the persistent inequalities which the NEOs identify.

SMART goals

UHI Inverness welcome adoption of the National Equality Outcomes as a framework to support our more granular focus on the persistent inequalities across our tertiary setting and in particular, to support our continued efforts moving forward around:

+ Success and retention rates of students across certain protected characteristic groups

+ Satisfaction levels of certain protected characteristic student groups

+ Significant gender imbalance on courses

+ Mental health and wellbeing of our staff and students

+ Safety of our students and staff

+ Proportionate representation of our staff and Board of Management, particularly in relation to gender, race and disability

We have used the outcomes as a framework for setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals over the course of the next public sector equality duty reporting period, 2025-2027. The following action plans have been devised around each of the overarching themes covering all of the outcomes:

+ Age

+ Disability

+ Gender re-assignment

+ Race

+ Religion or belief

+ Sex

+ Sexual orientation

Our action plans will help us to take clear steps in bringing about positive and practical changes across persistent inequalities, bringing practical improvements to the lives of those who experience discrimination and disadvantage. We will monitor progress across our action plan at regular intervals and formally report on our progress every two years through the publication of a progress report.

National Equality Outcome Area: Age

Persistent Inequality	The outcomes of students, as evidenced by SFC and HESA data, by age group shows consistent under-achievement for students aged 25 and over in the university sector and for students under 19 in the college sector. **Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:** Students aged over 25 enrolled on HN and degree programmes perform as well as or better than the 'all HE student' group. In AY 22/23, over 25s achieved +4% successful outcomes by comparison to the 'all HE student' group. Their outcomes dropped slightly in AY 23/24 and over 25s performed -1% compared to the 'all HE student' group. Please see Appendix Tables 20 & 21 for this data and an evaluation. Students aged under 19 enrolled on Further Education programmes perform less well than the 'all other FE student' group. In AY 22/23, 19s achieved -10% successful outcomes by comparison to the 'all other student' group. Their outcomes gap narrowed slightly in AY 23/24 but under 19s still under-achieved by 7% to all other student groups. Please see Appendix Tables 18 & 19 for this data and an evaluation. Please see Appendix Tables 8-21 for data on Age and evaluation.

National equality outcome	**Actions** What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	**Anticipated Impact**
The retention outcomes for students aged 25 and over will improve across our HN and degree programmes	Continue with student survey analysis, with a particular focus on students aged 25 and over who are in HE. Incorporate a new stretch target for retention and successful outcomes for students aged 25+ into our annual target setting exercise Monitor the retention of students aged 25 and over in our School monthly data presentations Track the reasons for withdrawal for students aged 25 and over in HE to identify any trends. Increase the number of Graduate Apprenticeship programmes delivered to support adults in the workplace to engage with education whilst working.	We can identify any distinct issues emerging from student feedback from the HE over 25 age group and . A reduction in early and further withdrawals and improved retention of the over 25 age group. We can identify any distinct issues emerging from student withdrawal data from the HE over 25 age group. Work based learning allows students to earn while they learn and relieves financial pressures experienced by older students in full time HE.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
The success rates for FE students aged under 19 will improve.	Continue with student survey analysis, with a particular focus on students aged under 19 enrolled on FE provision	Identify any distinct issues emerging from student feedback from the FE under 19 age group.
	Incorporate a new stretch target for retention and successful outcomes for students aged under 19 in FE into our annual target setting exercise	A reduction in early and further withdrawals and improved retention of the FE under 19 age group.
	Extend the pre-summer transitions sessions for Senior Phase programmes to support preparedness for study.	A reduction in early and further withdrawals and improved retention on Senior Phase programmes.
	Monitor the retention of students aged under 19 in FE in our School monthly data presentations	Identify any in-year actions which need to be taken.
	Track the reasons for withdrawal for students aged under 19 in FE to identify any trends.	Identify any distinct issues emerging from student withdrawal data from the FE under 19 age group.
	Establish the Dochas Hub to provide pre-start mental health and wellbeing support for offer holders aged 16-25.	Improved mental health and wellbeing of our youngest students.
	Utilise the SDS Data Hub to gain early insight into school leavers with additional support needs.	Early intervention and support plans in place at the start of the programme.

National Equality Outcome Area: Disability

Persistent Inequality	The outcomes of students, as evidenced by SFC and HESA data, shows consistent under achievement for students who declared a mental health condition. The numbers of students disclosing this information is also increasing.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	The outcomes of our students are in line with the sector, and we identify this as a persistent inequality. Students declaring a mental health condition under-achieve by comparison to 'all students'. In AY 22/23, the gap in successful outcomes was 17% between those declaring a mental health condition and the 'all student' group.
	The number of students disclosing this information is increasing but not at point of enrolment. Enrolment disclosures of a mental health condition have remained steady. However, in-year disclosures, sometimes at the point of a mental health crisis, have increased significantly. In AY 23/24 there was a 32% increase on the previous year in students requiring mental health support. The counselling team reported a further increase this AY and note an increase in the severity of need.
	Please see Appendix Tables 8, 16, 22 & 27 for data on Disability and evaluation.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
The retention and success rates of students who declare a mental health condition will improve	Capture data on the volume of students who do not disclose at application/enrolment but who disclose later in academic year. Establish the Dochas Hub to provide pre-start mental health and wellbeing support for offer holders aged 16-25. Continue to be proactive in promoting our inclusive learning environment and encouraging students to share any learning support needs. Continue to embed the principles and practices of a trauma informed college. Incorporate a new stretch target for retention and successful outcomes for students with a mental health condition. Monitor the retention of students with a mental health condition in our School monthly data presentations. Invest in additional permanent counselling resource in our Learning Support & Wellbeing	Clear data on enrolment v's in-year disclosures to identify whether improvements are being made Increased early intervention and improved mental health and wellbeing of our youngest students. Increased number of student disability disclosures at earliest point and completed Personal learning support plans at the pre-start stage. Our campus and spaces will be trauma informed and neurodivergent–friendly for students and staff. The outcomes and retention gap between students with a mental health condition and 'all students' will narrow/close.

Persistent Inequality	Feedback from students to Lead Scotland, input from students into the SG/SAAS Disability Related Student Support Review and input into the Disabled Students Employment Action Plan all outline issues from disabled students in relation to the access and implementation of reasonable adjustments.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	Our student satisfaction for students with a disability is very high and in line with our overall student satisfaction at 93% this academic year, just 1% below the 'all students' rate of 94%. Satisfaction in the quality of our learning support provision is also very high at 93%. We therefore do not feel this is a significant concern for us but feel we can still continue to make enhancements in this area.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Disabled students report feeling satisfied with the overall support and reasonable adjustments received, including from teaching staff, while on their course	Include a specific question about satisfaction around support needs/reasonable adjustments in both student surveys (ESES, SSES) in AY 2025/26. Investment in a further 3 staff being trained as DSA assessors. Continue to embed and extend the Learning Assistant team to support FE programmes and individuals with disabilities. Continue with a series of professional development workshops on the 'inclusive classroom' across Engineering & Construction to ensure all students, including apprentices, have all the support they need.	Clarity in student feedback and relevant actions implemented Reduced waiting time for assessments and HE students will have resources/support in place at earliest point. Improved retention and successful outcomes for students disclosing a disability. Improved retention and successful outcomes for apprentices disclosing a disability.

Persistent Inequality	Scottish hate crime statistics evidence increased harassment to people with a disability.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	Our student satisfaction for students with a disability is very high and in line with our overall student satisfaction at 93% this academic year and we have received no complaints of harassment to people with a disability. We therefore do not feel this is a significant concern for us but feel we can still continue to make enhancements in this area.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system	Include a specific question about students feeling safe in both surveys (ESES, SSES) in AY 2025/26. Focus on Neurodiversity in the workplace and managing neurodiverse teams as part of our Collaborative Leaders management programme. Run a positive awareness raising campaign about all learning disabilities in AY 25/26 to support understanding and disabled staff and students feeling safe on campus.	Clarity in student feedback and relevant actions implemented if required. All managers are well informed about Neurodiversity and confident in how to support neurodiverse colleagues in the workplace. Positive reinforcement of our supportive environment and a greater understanding across our learning community.

Persistent Inequality	Disabled people are under-represented in College Boards. The proportion of disabled staff are not always in line with the local population (outlined in the 2022 Census) and are not in line with the national census. **Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:** The 2022 census confirmed that 23.8% of our local population has a declared disability. Our Board of Management data since the last reporting period shows 6% of Board members have declared a disability. The small number of Board members should be taken account of and the impact on statistical relevance. Our staff data in AY 23/24 shows that 7.7% of applicants declared a disability, an increase of 2.9% since AY 22/23. 5% of our workforce have a declared disability across the reporting period, significantly higher than the disability statistic across the local population. Please see Appendix Tables 27 for data on our Board of Management and the Employee Data section.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college Boards of Management.	Continue to promote all staff and Board of Management vacancies across the UK to attract diversity across applications.	Our workforce and our Board of Management will be representative of our local community.

National Equality Outcome Area: Gender re-assignment

Persistent Inequality	There is limited quantitative data about the outcomes for trans staff and students. Research from Stonewall and TransEdu suggests that Trans people face harassment on account of their trans status.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	We have received no complaints of harassment to Trans staff or students but are keen to ensure that we do not assume this is not a concern for individuals. Our 2023 data shows that since 2019, double the number of students at enrolment identify as a different gender to at birth, although we note the small numbers. However, we also note a growing proportion of students prefer not to share their gender status, in line with national trends. This also aligns with the national trend of a growing proportion of students who prefer not to share their sexual orientation. We therefore want to ensure that we continue to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all our students.
	Please see Appendix Tables 5, 10, 23 & 26 for data on Gender Re-assignment.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system	Ensure student surveys have representative categories for gender for AY 25/26. Include a specific question about students feeling safe in both of the all-student surveys (ESES, SSES) in AY 2025/26	Clarity in student feedback across learner groups and relevant actions implemented if required.
	Continue to support the UHI Inverness student's association (HISA) Trans society and listen to any feedback on further enhancements. Continue to provide the option and demonstrate to staff how they share their pronouns on their email signature.	All students feel valued and safe within our inclusive environment.
	Seek greater clarity on any implications arising from the UK Supreme Court ruling on the term "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 and it referring to biological sex.	An understanding of any implications which need to be considered by the college around our policies and practices related to sex discrimination, gender reassignment, and single-sex spaces or services
	Continue to provide support to all students, including those from the transgender community, to allay any fears of increased marginalization.	All students feel valued and safe within our inclusive environment.

National Equality Outcome Area: Race

Persistent Inequality	The EHRC Racial Harassment Inquiry found that most students and staff who experienced racial harassment did not report it to their university. It found that some had did not know how to report complaints and some had no confidence in how their complaint would be handled. Some universities were overconfident in their complaint handling processes and the majority of universities did not seek feedback on the complaints process.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	Unlike some other colleges and universities, the local and regional demographic of the UHI Inverness area of the inner Moray-Firth is not very ethnically diverse and the 2022 census data for Highland showed 2.3% of the population identified as BME or mixed-race. 4% of students enrolled in 2023/24 were of BME or mixed-race, comparatively high in relation to our local communities.
	We do not routinely gather equalities information from complainants. We have received <5 complaints in the last three years which related to aspects of racial harassment on social media and on campus which involved students. All cases were subject to our student disciplinary process.
	The successful outcomes of learners identifying as BME or Mixed Race are below that of the 'all student' group. There is a 2% outcomes gap between BME learners and that of 'all students'. There are more significant and variable outcomes gap for those identifying as Mixed Race but the small number of individuals in this learner group inevitably leads to more statistical variation.
	Please see Appendix Tables 9, 24 & 27 for data on Ethnic Groups and evaluation.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Staff and students feel supported and safe and 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.	Ensure that all students and staff understand the options to report complaints through our Complaints policy and procedure or through our Dignity in the Workplace policy. Continue to train managers in how to investigate complaints so complaints handling is led by impartial staff who are trained to understand and investigate harassment, including racial harassment.	Staff and students have a clear awareness of how complaints can be raised, and they understand the possible outcomes from the start. Complainants have confidence in how their complaint will be handled.
Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.	Incorporate a new stretch target for retention and successful outcomes for students enrolled as BME and mixed-race. Continue to extend the suite of translated induction materials for ESOL students.	The retention and attainment gap between BME and mixed-race students and the 'all student' group is narrowed. ESOL students feel well supported and part of our college community.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of college Boards.	Continue to promote all Board of Management vacancies across the UK to attract diversity across applications.	The racial demographic of the Board of Management is representative of the local and regional population.
Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching staff to align with student representation in the sector.	Continue to advertise staff vacancies across the UK to attract to attract diversity across applications.	The racial demographic of the staff body is representative of the local and regional population.

National Equality Outcome Area: Religion or Belief

Persistent Inequality	There is limited quantitative data about outcomes based on religion and belief. The SFC have used research presented by the Jewish Union of Students, and the lived experiences of people of faith in the development of the race equality project. **Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:** Unlike some other colleges and universities, the local and regional demographic of the UHI Inverness area and the inner Moray Firth is not diverse across religion and beliefs. Just 20% of enrolled students in 2023/24 identified with any religion or belief and the majority, 62%, reported they did not identify with a religion. This is well above the national average of 51% in the 2022 census. However, it is notable that 18% preferred not to say if they identified with a religion or belief. We do not feel this is an area of significant concern for us but feel we can still continue to make enhancements in this area.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.	Include a specific question about students reporting confidence in reporting mechanisms (including complaints process) in both of the all-student surveys (ESES, SSES) in AY 2025/26. Continue to provide discretionary time off for staff and students for religious holidays out with the college calendar of closures. Establish a UHI Inverness Chaplaincy service in partnership with a cross section of community faith groups	Clarity in student feedback across learner groups and relevant actions implemented if required. Students from faith groups feel their rights are being respected. Students from faith groups feel they have a supportive and empathetic campusculture that respects and values the spiritual identities of all students.

National Equality Outcome Area: Sex

Persistent Inequality	Evidenced from the Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy including issues, predominately from women, relating to accessing support and reporting issues.
	Our UHI Inverness data shows that:
	UHI Inverness is committed to continuing to provide a safe campus for all students and taking a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence. Our Board of Management supported our strategic commitment to this by taking the White Ribbon pledge in 2022 as we worked towards achieving the Emily Test Charter award in 2024. We know that this is not the end of our work, and we continue to see this as an area of enhancement.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Staff and students know how to access support about violence, harassment and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so because the services are fit for purpose.	Train all staff on the new duty to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Continue to work on the enhancement actions identified by the EmilyTest to further build on the existing principles, practices and culture of the organisation.	Employees feel safe and respected in the workplace and know how to report any concerns and seek support. The appropriate responses and support are in place for students, and they feel safe.
Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.	Achievement of the EmilyTest demonstrates the high standards UHI Inverness have set which have been assessed against this independent quality assurance framework. We will continue to engage with our colleagues at EmilyTest to support our further enhancement work. Seek greater clarity on any implications arising from the UK Supreme Court ruling on the term "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 and it referring to biological sex.	Remain as a centre of excellence for support, education and prevention of gender-based violence. An understanding of any implications which need to be considered by the college around our policies and practices related to sex discrimination, gender reassignment, and single-sex spaces or services.

Persistent Inequality	Statistical data outlines that men in society are three times more likely than women to die by suicide. Men are less likely to access mental health support. **Our UHI Inverness data shows that:** Male suicide in our locality and across Highland is significantly higher than the national average. In AY 23/24 there was an 32% overall increase in students requiring mental health support. The counselling team reported a further increase this AY and note an increase in the severity of need. However, our data tells us that our male students are less likely to come forward for support. We do not shy away from this societal issue and are proactive is providing a forum to discuss this across our college community. We have run some high profile campaigns with our charity partners James Support Group and Mikeysline and have a regular presence of groups such as these on campus. We recognise supporting the mental health and wellbeing needs of all students, and in particular encouraging our male students to seek support, as an ongoing priority for us.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).	Work with James Support Group and the Business Solutions team to provide a session on mental health and wellbeing to all male dominated courses in Construction and Engineering. Further promote our online resources about suicide and our suite of support - Wellbeing - Suicide Support Make our suite of staff support more visible and accessible to all staff through promotion in Wee Connect and Connect+ Continue to train staff in Scottish Mental Health First Aid and to highlight the prevalence of male suicide during training. Establish the Dochas Hub to provide pre-start mental health and wellbeing support for offer holders aged 16-25 and prioritise young males. Invest in additional permanent counselling resource in our Learning Support & Wellbeing team.	Male students are more aware of their wellbeing needs, how to access support, and the importance of doing so at an early stage. Resilience across the staff body in staff who are SMHFA trained, who can identify early warning signs and can support colleagues/signpost to support. Increase early intervention and improved mental health and wellbeing of our youngest male students.

Persistent Inequality	Statistical data shows that course choice and sex imbalance on courses remain an issue. However, the specific targets of the past have not had the required impact. Institutions have asked for flexibility to focus on key subjects where they could make an impact. **Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:** We continue to positively support applications from the under-represented gender in specific curriculum areas and have seen some positive upward trends. We have had an increase in male enrolments in the female dominated areas of Art & Design, Care, Hospitality & Performing Arts and an increase in female enrolments in the male dominated areas of Computing, Land-based Industries & Science. We do however recognise there is further work to be done to support these early improvements. Please see Appendix Tables 5 & 12 for this data and evaluation.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.	Continue to market opportunities for male and female students to access the full range of courses in the College portfolio. Continue to positively support applications from the under-represented gender in specific curriculum areas by applying a contextualised approach to admissions.	Applicants recognise the full range of courses available to them and are encouraged to apply. A further increase male enrolment in: Art & Design, Care, Hospitality & Performing Arts. A further increase in female enrolment in: Computing, Land-based Industries & Science

National Equality Outcome Area: Sexual Orientation

Persistent Inequality	Stonewall Research suggests some LGB students hide their identities in universities and that staff experience barriers that prevent them from being 'out' at work.
	Our UHI Inverness trend data shows that:
	Our enrolment data shows that the volume of students identifying as gay wo/men or bisexual has remained static since 2019 at 2% and 4% respectively. The volume of students wishing not to share their sexual orientation has increased over time and accounted for 16% of students in 2023, a slight decrease of 4% since the previous year. This reflects a similar pattern in the growing proportion of students over time who prefer not to share their gender status, in line with national trends. We therefore want to ensure that we continue to create an inclusive and supportive environment for all our students.

National equality outcome	Actions What steps are we going to take to address the persistent inequality	Anticipated Impact
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college.	Include a specific question about students feeling safe in both of the all-student surveys (ESES, SSES) in AY 2025/26 Continue to support the UHI Inverness student's association in promoting the LGBTQ+ society.	Clarity in student feedback across learner groups and relevant actions implemented if required. All students feel valued and safe within our inclusive environment.

Concluding Remarks

This report has provided a snapshot of some of work UHI Inverness has achieved to mainstream equality and progress our equality outcomes since 2023. Many of the examples within this report evidence how the college is effectively responding to the legislative requirements set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and others demonstrate how the college regularly goes beyond what is required, exceeds usual practices, and delivers sector leading work.

We are committed to this next stage of our equalities journey and to continuing the positive strides forward we have taken over the last reporting period due to the efforts of our staff, students and community partners. We are aware of the persistent inequalities faced on a national level and have a good grasp of how we perform against sector norms. We are passionate in continuing to work towards reducing these inequalities and embrace the new national equality outcomes as a useful framework to bring about positive and practical changes to those who face some of the greatest challenges.

Appendix ➡

Student Data

Outcome 3 – Students

Applications

Table 1

Total Applications

■ 2019/20 ■ 2020/21 ■ 2021/22 ■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24

FE: 4452, 3411, 3406, 3420, 3545
HE: 3430, 3566, 3325, 3376, 3349

Table 2

Applications by SIMD Most Deprived

■ 2019/20 ■ 2020/21 ■ 2021/22 ■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24

20% MOST DEPRIVED: 11%, 11%, 11%, 11%, 10%
NOT IN 20% MOST DEPRIVED: 89%, 89%, 89%, 89%, 90%

Table 3

Applications by Declared Disability

■ 2019/20 ■ 2020/21 ■ 2021/22 ■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24

Disability Declared: 23%, 24%, 26%, 29%, 29%
No Disability: 68%, 66%, 64%, 63%, 62%
Mental Health Condition: 9%, 10%, 10%, 8%, 8%

Table 4

Applications by Ethnic Origin

■ 2019/20 ■ 2020/21 ■ 2021/22 ■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24

BME: 3%, 4%, 4%, 7%, 6%
Mixed: 1%, 1%, 1%, 1%, 1%
Not Known, Not Given or Prefer Not to Say: 8%, 10%, 9%, 9%, 10%
White: 88%, 86%, 86%, 83%, 83%

Outcome 3 – Students

Table 5

Applications by Sex

Table 6

Applications by Age Group

*Apprentices do not come through the "usual" application process.

Table 7

Enrolments SIMD Most Deprived

Table 8

Enrolments by Declared Disability

Outcome 3 – Students

Table 9

Enrolments by Ethnic Group

Table 10

Enrolments by Sex

Table 11

Enrolments by Age Group

Table 12

% of Enrolments by Gender 20219/20 and 2023/24
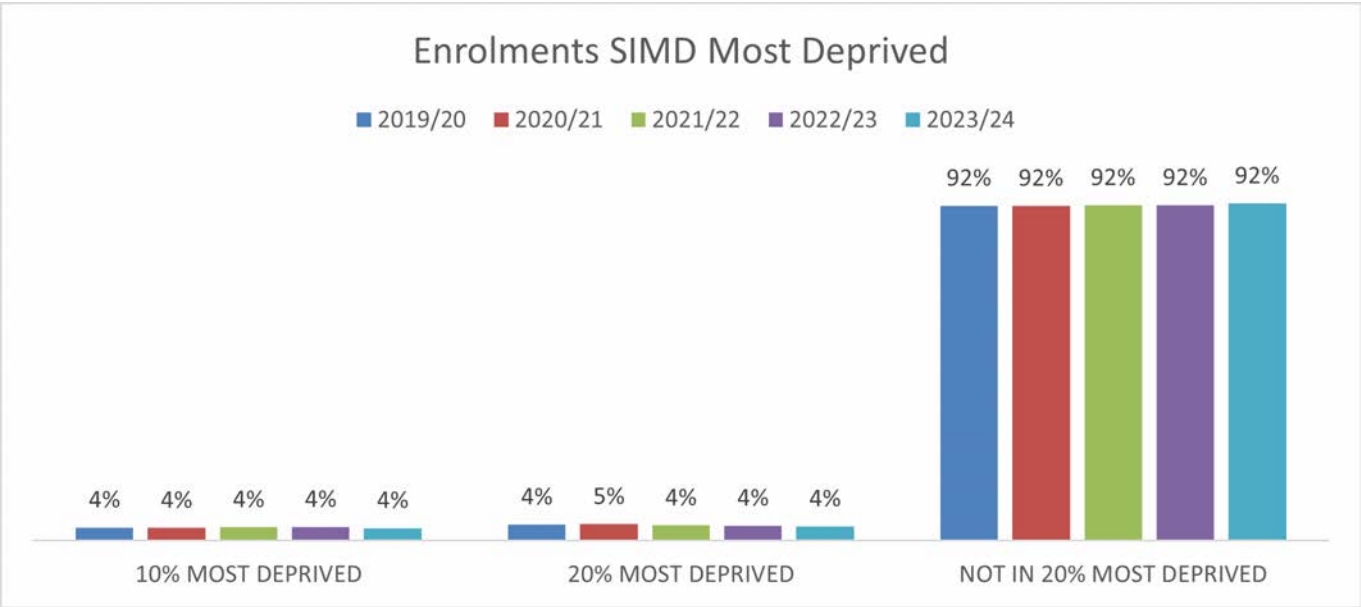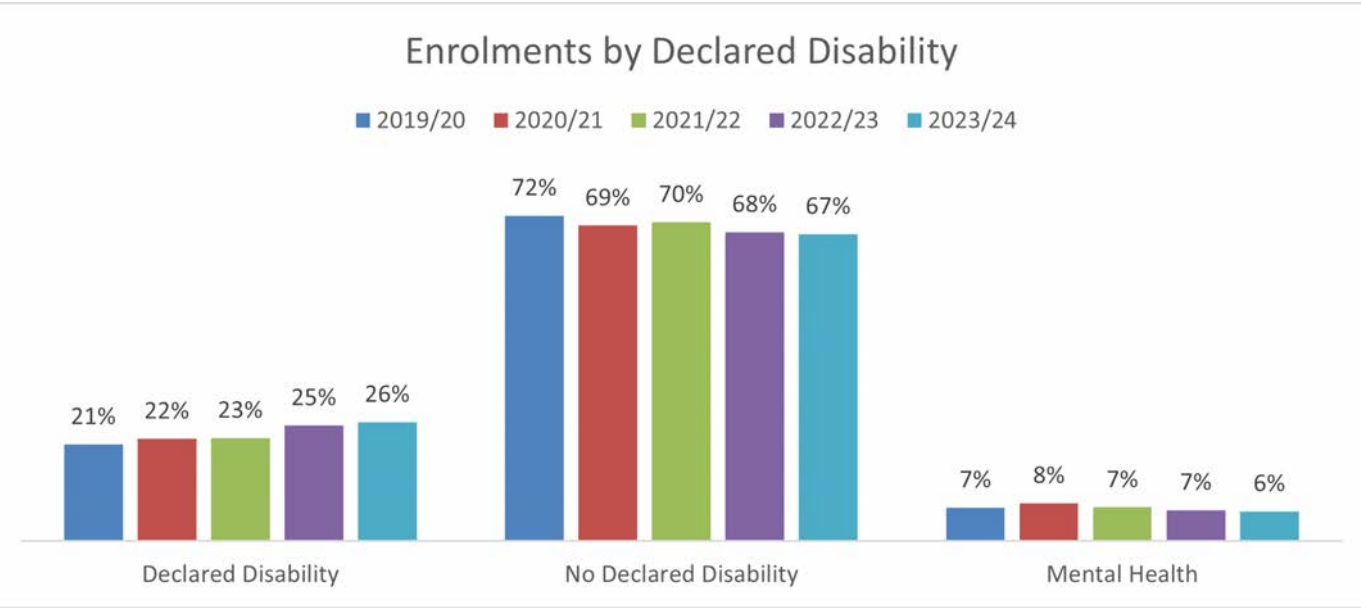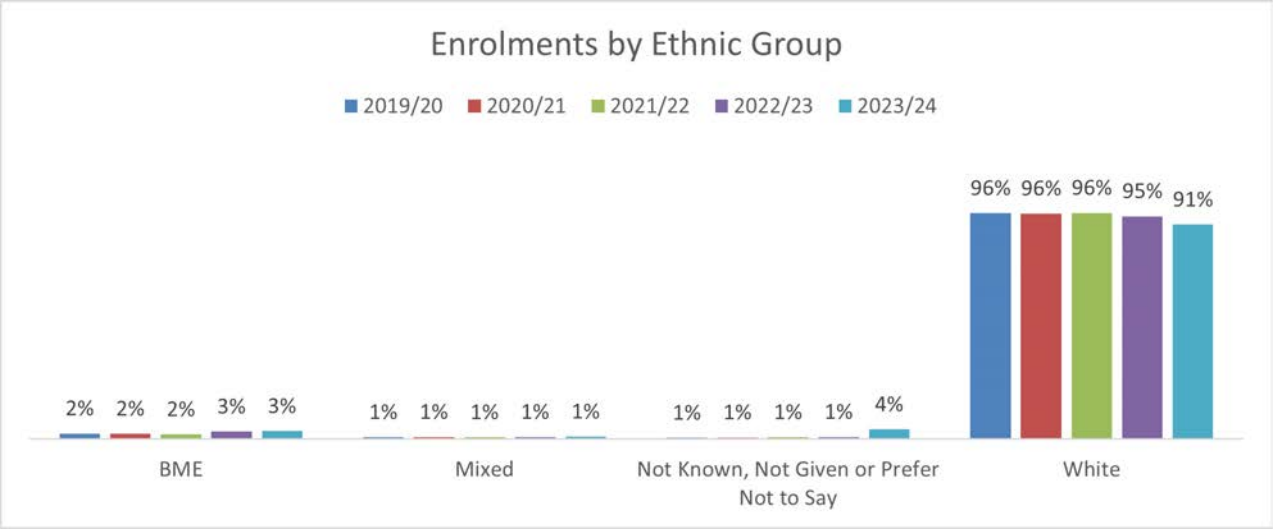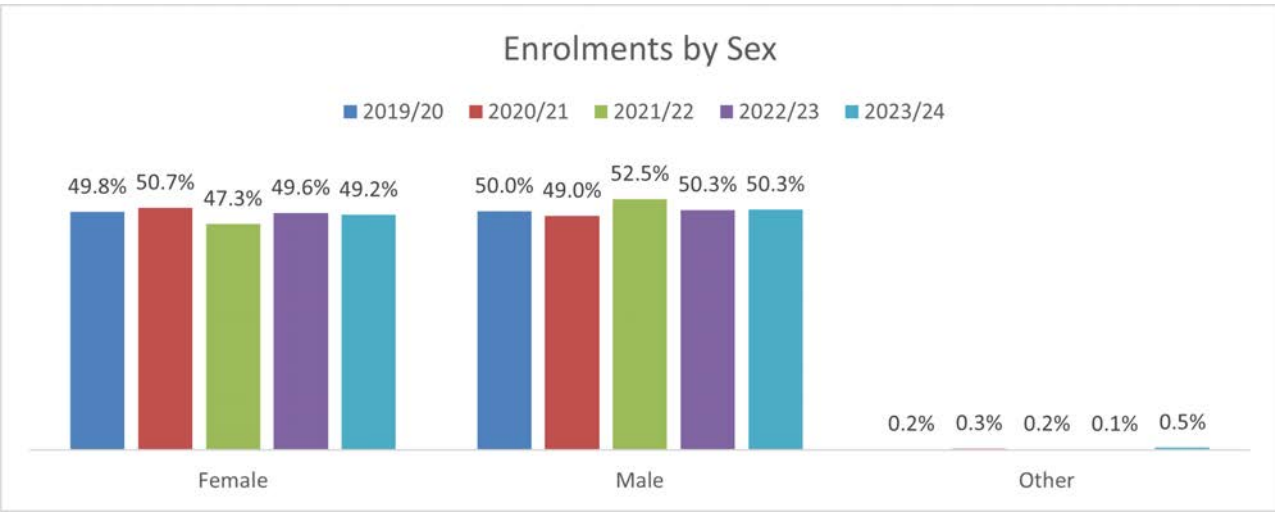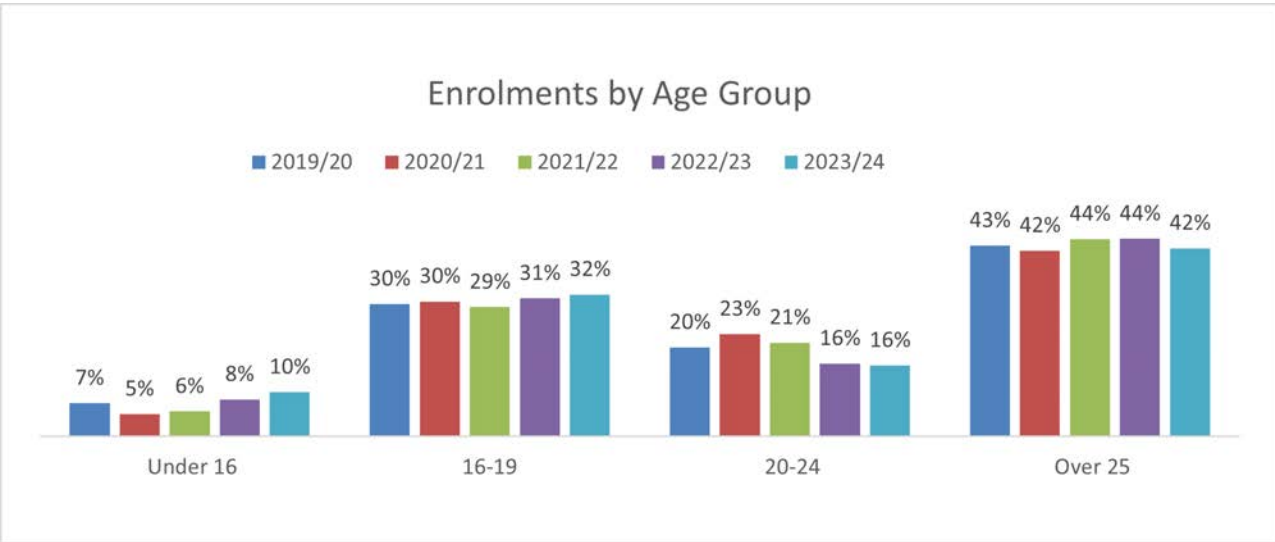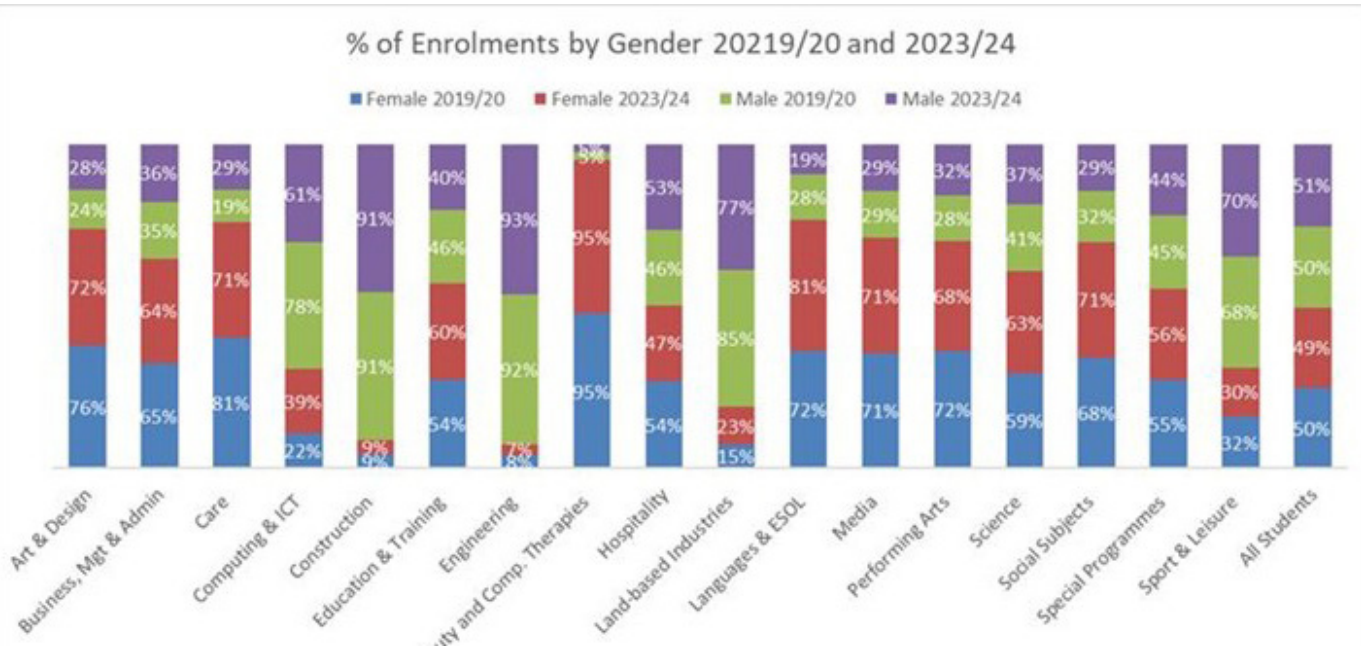
Summary

Our applications and enrolments profile and representation from individuals from under-represented groups have not seen significant change over the last reporting period and access AY 22/23 – 23/24.

Applications and enrolments from our most deprived postcodes/SIMD10 & SIMD 20 have remained static and account for 4% of our enrolments. Applications and enrolments from individuals with a declared disability have also remained static and account for 29% of our enrolments. This is significantly above the sector benchmark. The latest set of statistics from Colleges Scotland show that 24% of students nationally have a recorded disability. The volume of disclosures of individuals with a declared mental health condition have remained static in both applications and enrolments. However, as noted in the Disability national equality outcome section, we have experienced a significant increase in in-year disclosures from learners identifying a disability, including a mental health condition, during the course of their studies.

Our gender profile of enrolments has remined static with 59% of enrolments female, 39% male and 1% other in AY 22/23. At a subject level, we have had some positive changes in the gender profile of enrolments - an increase in male enrolments in the female dominated areas of Art & Design, Care, Hospitality & Performing Arts and an increase in female enrolments in the male dominated areas of Computing, Land-based Industries & Science.
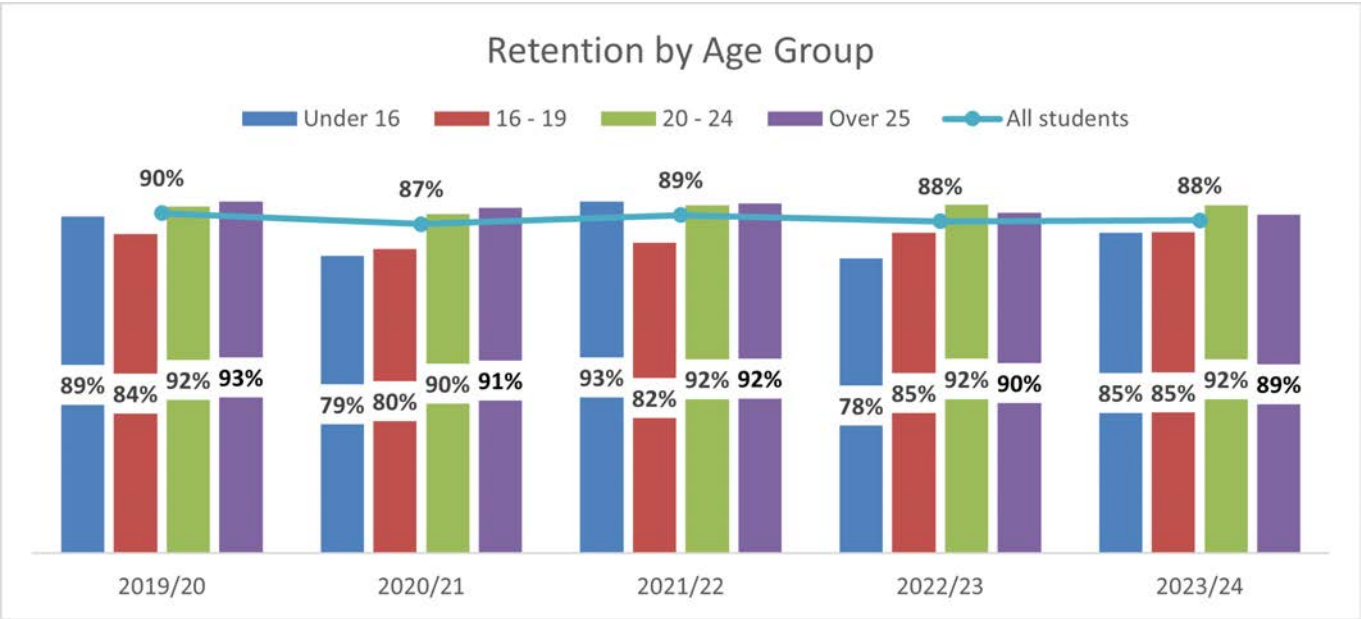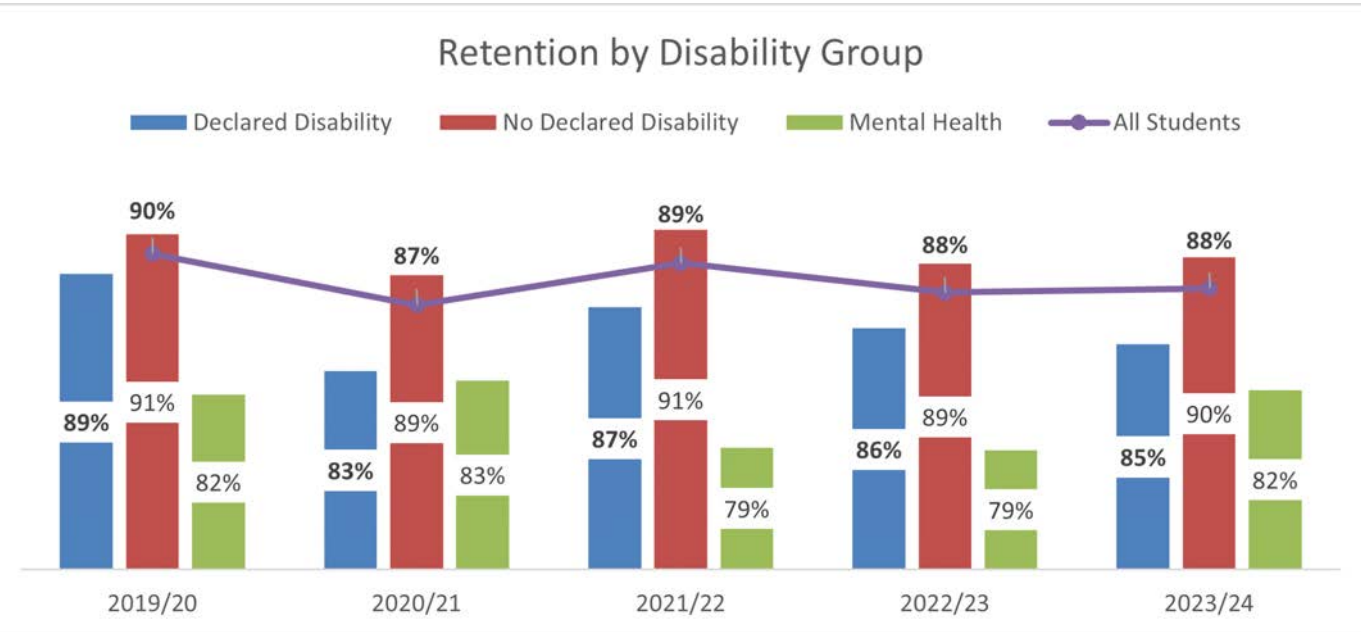
Outcome 4 – Student Retention

Table 13

All Students KPIs

Table 15

Retention by Age Group

Table 14

Retention by Sex

Table 16

Retention by Disability Group

Outcome 4 – Student Retention

Table 17

Retention by Care Experienced Group
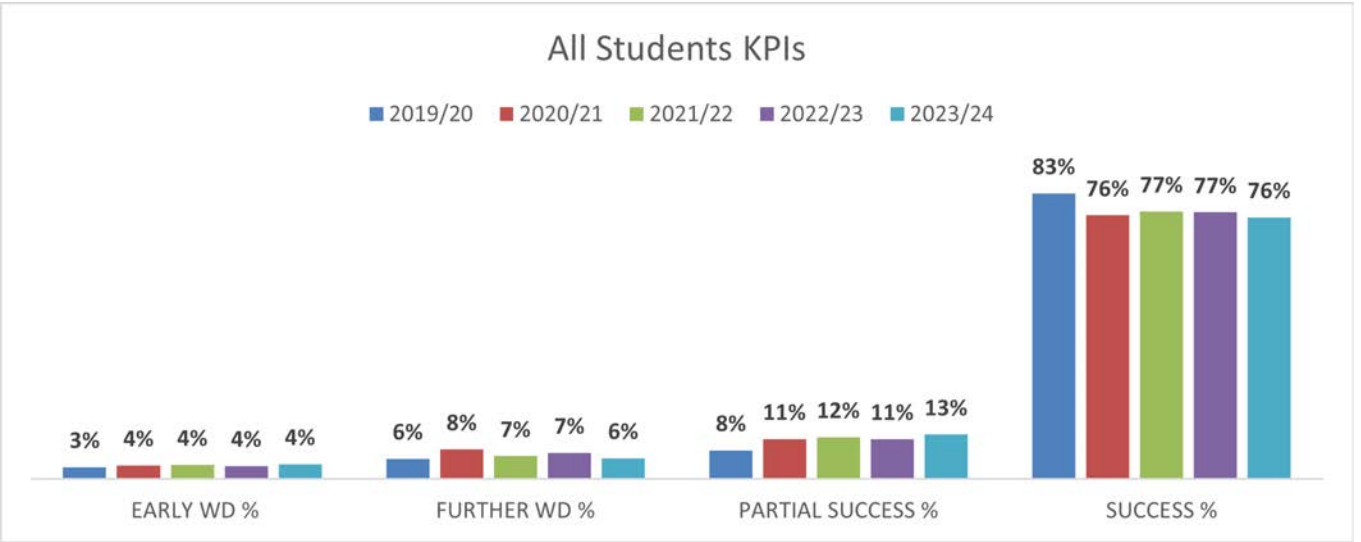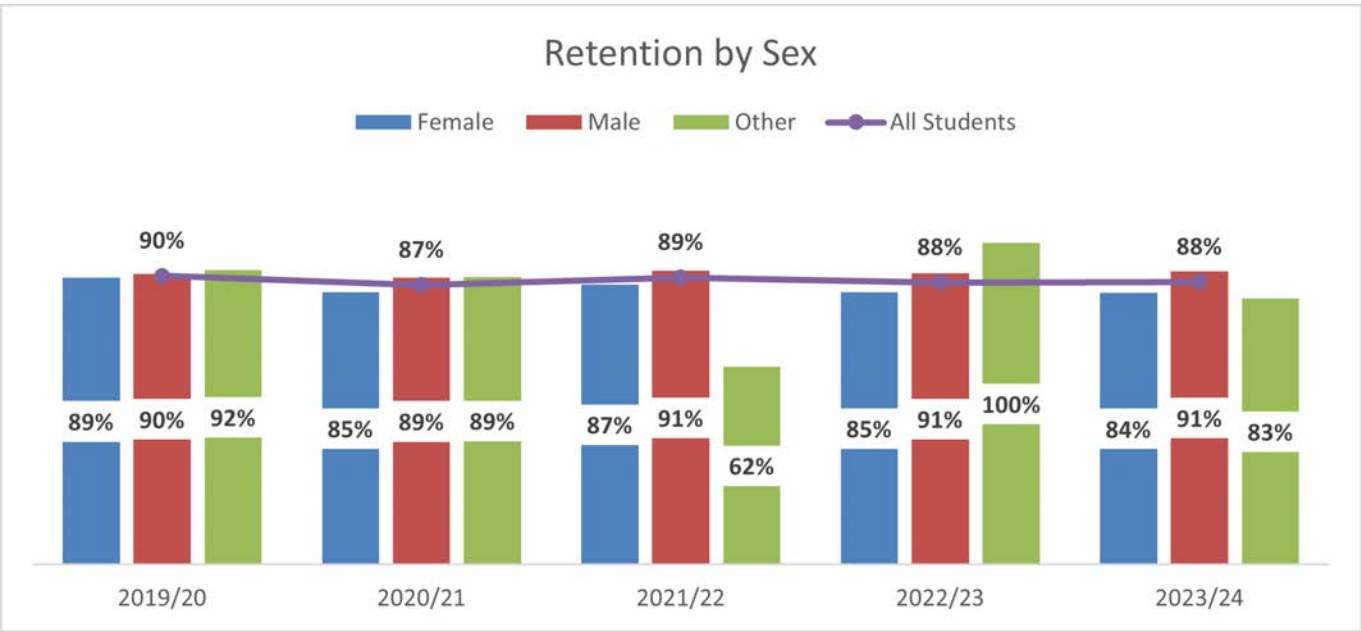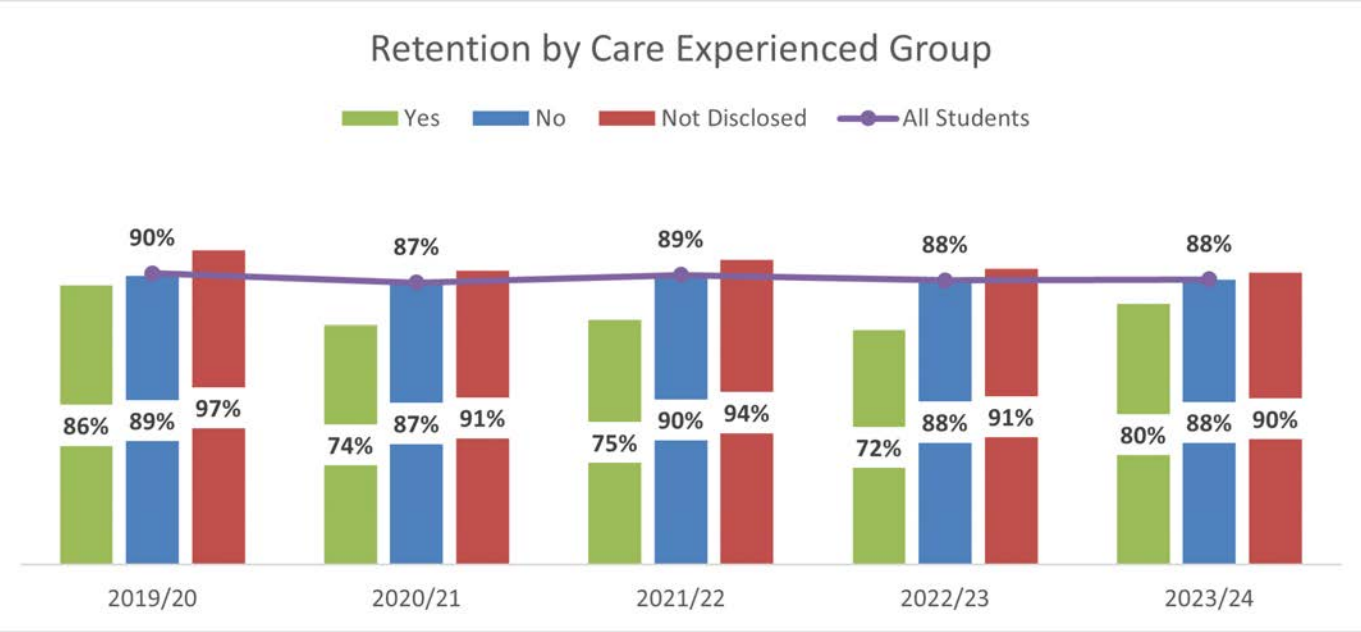
Summary

The college has been successful in continuing to perform above national sector benchmarks by maintaining high levels of overall student retention since the last reporting period and a 1% decrease in further withdrawals (Table 13).

Retention rates by Sex have remained static since the last reporting period and males continue to perform consistently better than females. This is largely due to the disproportionate volume of males on work-based Modern Apprenticeships programmes and the on-going assessment feature of these. Retention for those identifying as 'Other Sex' has dropped significantly but the small number of individuals in this learner group inevitably leads to more statistical variation (Table 14).

Retention by Age Group has generally remained static since the last reporting period although there has been a significant improvement in the retention of our under 16 learners. Retention for this learner group has improved by 7% between AY 22/23 and 23/24 (Table 15).

Retention of learners with a Declared Disability continues to be above the sector benchmark although it has dropped by 1% and continues to 3% behind the retention of the all-student group. More notable however is the significant improvement in the retention of learners declaring a mental health condition. Retention of learners in this sub-category of declared disability has improved by 3% since the last reporting period. Despite this improvement, retention of this learner group continues to lag behind the retention of the all-learner group by 6% (Table 16).

Retention of learners with Care Experience continues to be above the sector benchmark and has seen a significant improvement since the last reporting period, improving by 8% since AY 22/23 (Table 17).

The National Equality Outcomes Data

The following datasets have helped us to understand our starting point against each of the persistent inequalities. This data has been referenced in our context overview of the UHI Inverness position and has helped to inform our action planning against each of the national equality outcomes.
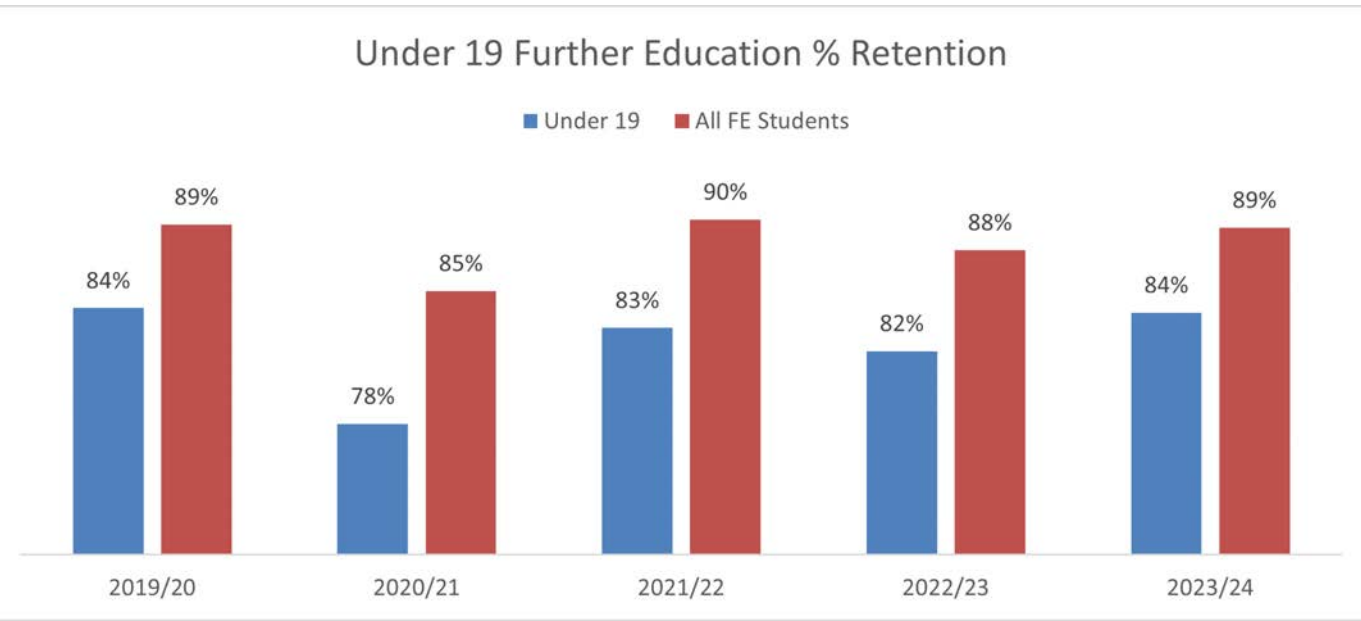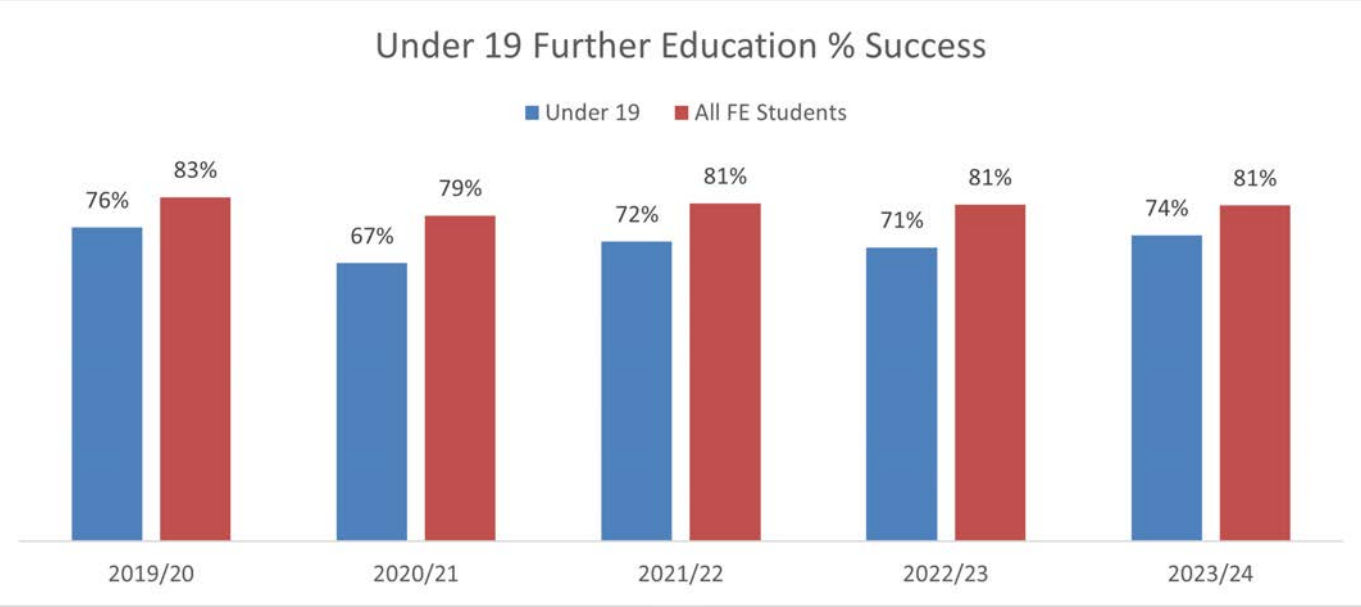
Age

Table 18

Under 19 Further Education % Retention

Table 19

Under 19 Further Education % Success

The National Equality Outcomes Data

Table 20

Over 25 Higher Education % Retention
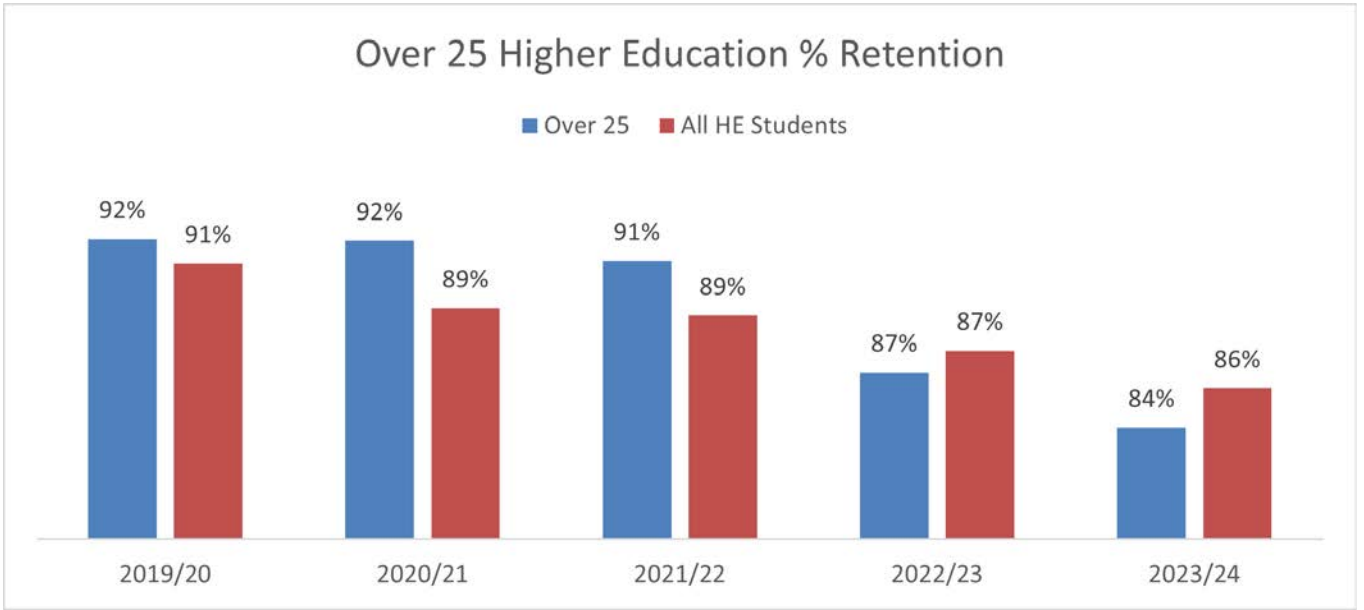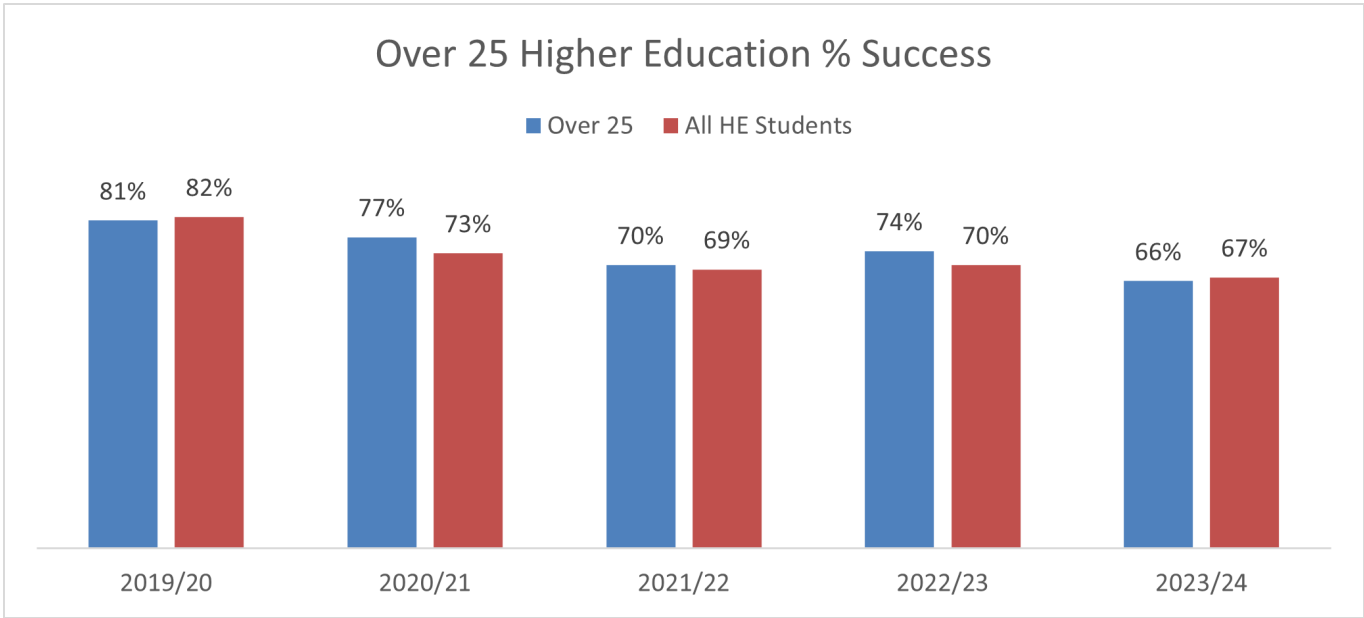
Table 21

Over 25 Higher Education % Success

National equality outcomes:

The success rates for FE students aged under 19 will improve.

Our data shows students aged under 19 enrolled on Further Education programmes perform less well than the 'all other FE student' group. In AY 22/23, 19s achieved -10% successful outcomes by comparison to the 'all other student' group. Their outcomes gap narrowed slightly in AY 23/24 but under 19s still under-achieved by 7% to all other student groups.

The retention and outcomes for students aged 25 and over will improve across our HN and degree programmes.

Our data shows students aged over 25 enrolled on HN and degree programmes perform as well as or better than the 'all HE student' group. In AY 22/23, over 25s achieved +4% successful outcomes by comparison to the 'all HE student' group but their outcomes lagged behind the 'all HE student' group by 1% in AY 23/24.

Disability

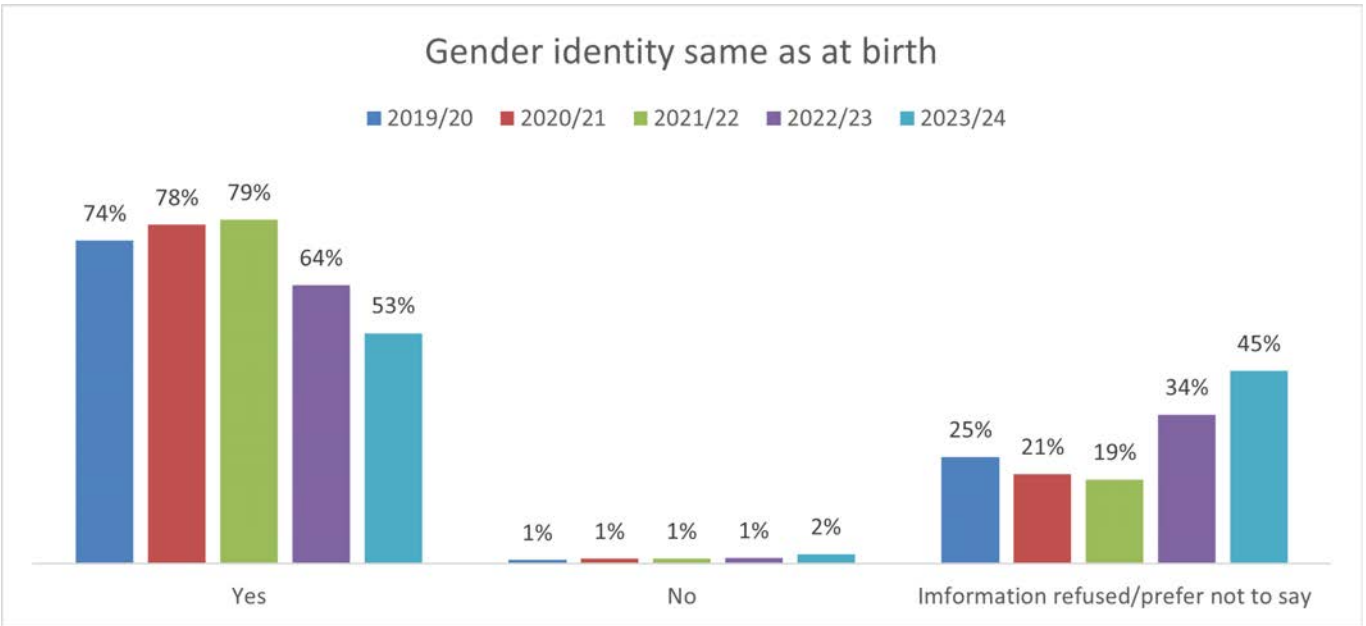**Table 22**

Success by Disability Group

National equality outcomes:

The retention and success rates of students who declare a mental health condition will improve.

Our data shows the outcomes of students declaring a mental health condition persistently under-achieve by comparison to 'all students' and is in line with the sector data. In AY 22/23, the gap in successful outcomes was 17% between those declaring a mental health condition and the 'all student' group rising to 18% in AY 23/24.
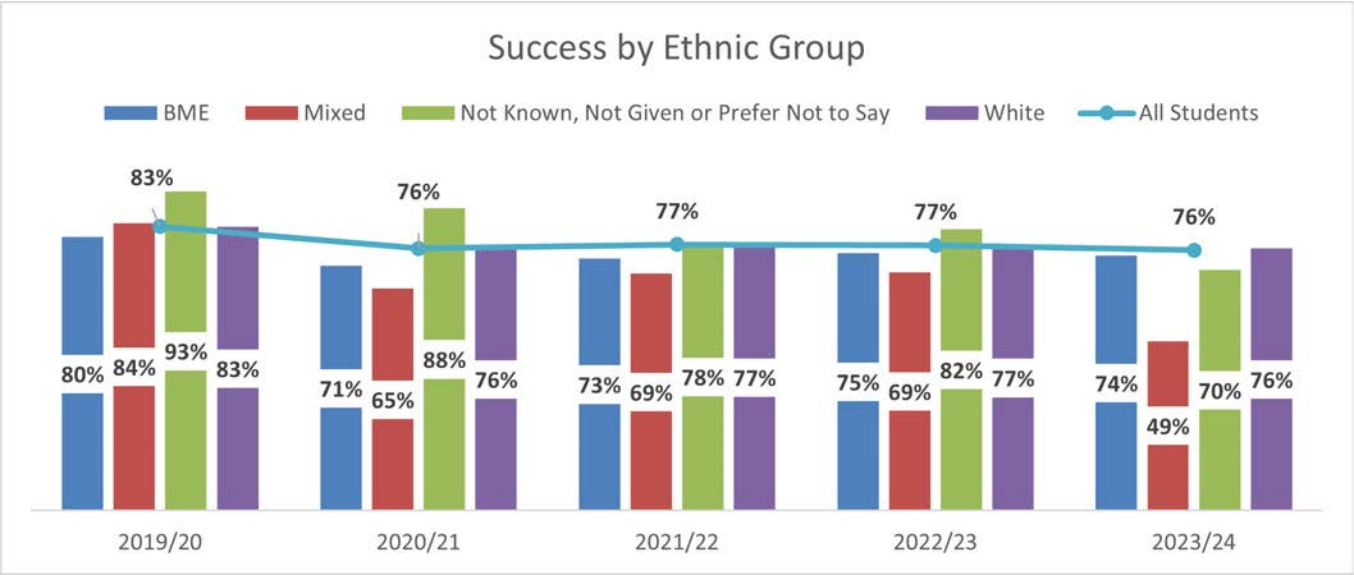
Gender Re-assignment and Sex

Table 23

Gender identity same as at birth

Race

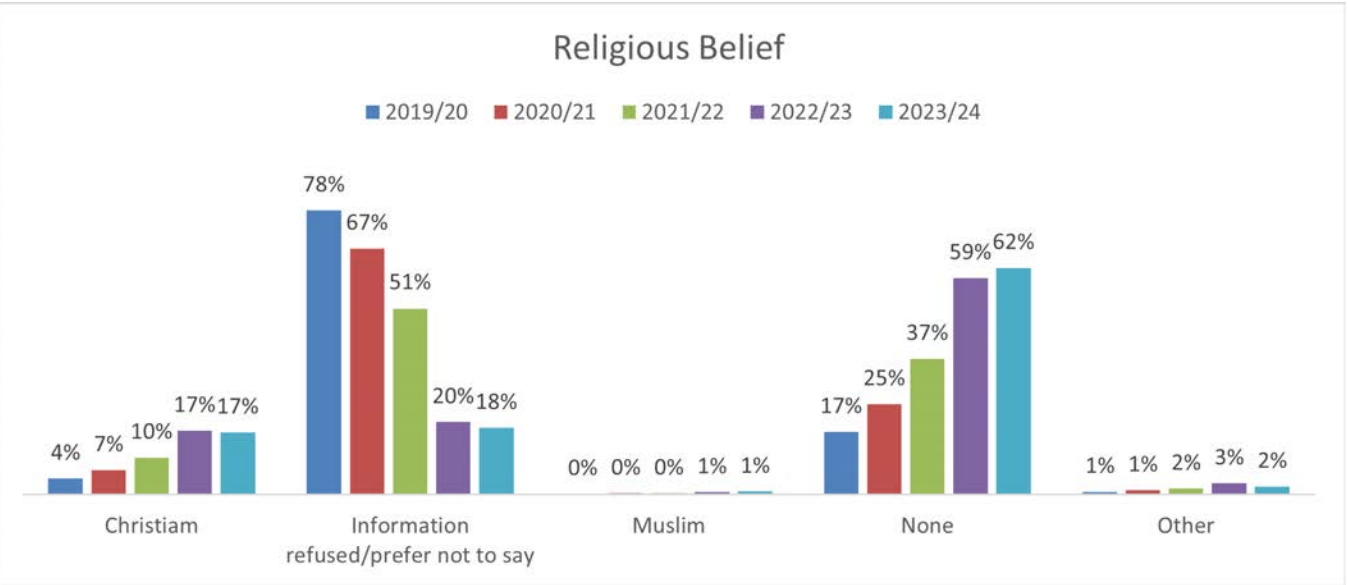## Table 24

Success by Ethnic Group

National equality outcomes:

Institutions should also have regard to attainment levels by racial group and ensure that their curriculum is diverse and anti-racist.

The successful outcomes of learners identifying as BME or Mixed Race are below that of the 'all student' group. There is a 2% outcomes gap between BME learners and that of 'all students'. There are more significant and variable outcomes gap for those identifying as Mixed Race but the small number of individuals in this learner group inevitably leads to more statistical variation.
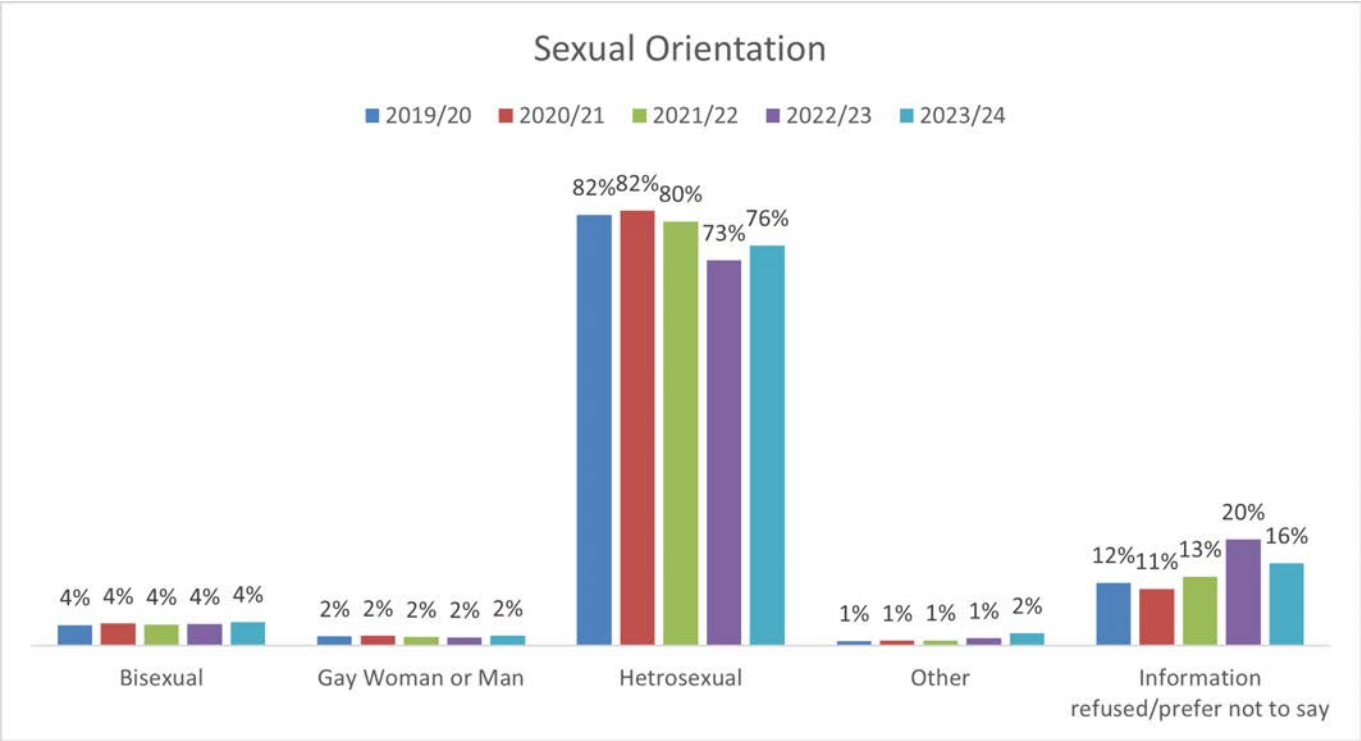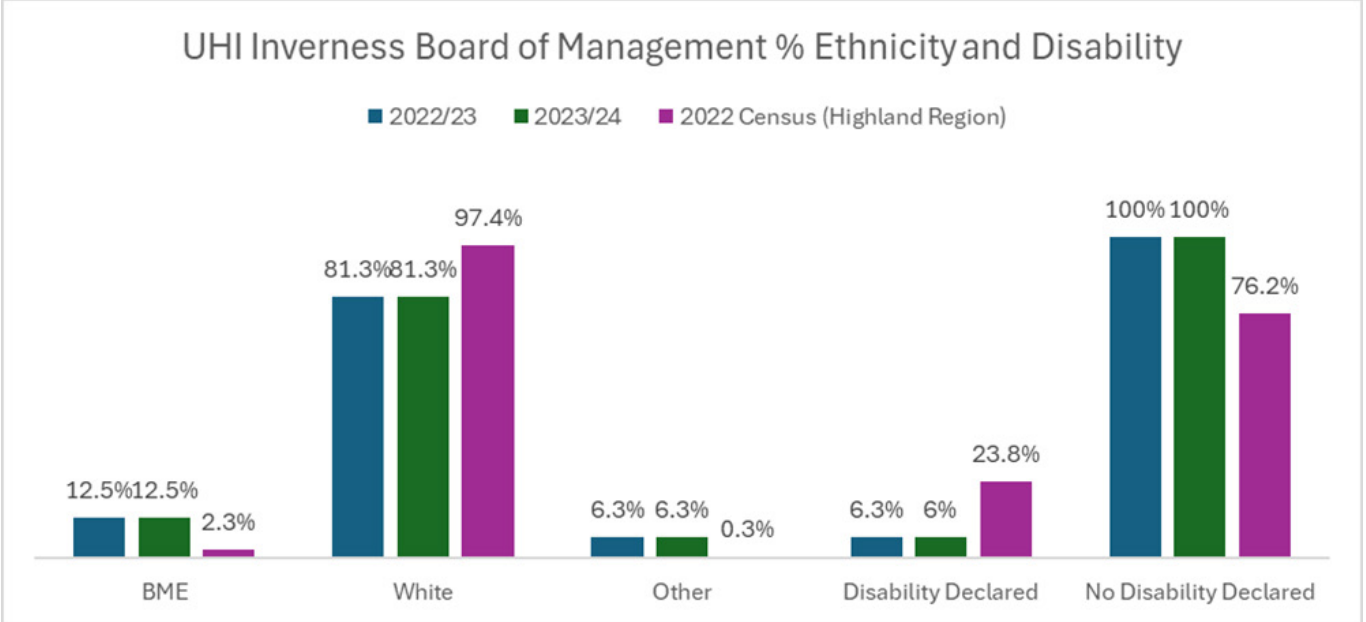
Religion

Table 25

Religious Belief

Sexual Orientation

Table 26

Sexual Orientation

Board of Management Representation

Table 27

UHI Inverness Board of Management % Ethnicity and Disability

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