

**SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME
2013-2017**

SEPTEMBER 2015

HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Introduction

The words “equality” and “diversity” are widely used but it is worth focusing for a moment on what we really mean:

“Equality” means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities on an equal footing.

“Diversity” recognises there are differences between people which should be valued, respected and celebrated.

At Falmouth University, we are committed to building a culture that recognises, values and promotes equality and diversity. We are proud of our diverse community of staff, students and visitors. We are committed to excellence in all we do – Teaching, Research and Innovation. We support this by ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

At Falmouth, we view diversity as being more than a broad range of visible and non-visible differences that characterise people. It is about an inclusive approach that fully recognises the value of the differing qualities, knowledge, skills and abilities that our staff and students bring to the University.

The promotion of Equality and Diversity is the responsibility of all members of the University community. As members of this community, it is expected that we will all contribute to ensuring that Falmouth University continues to be a safe, welcoming and productive environment

2. Background to the Scheme

The Single Equality Scheme (SES) has been developed to support the delivery of the University’s Strategic Plan and to respond to legislation. It has been developed with the involvement of staff, students and other relevant stakeholders. It also recognises the University’s important role in the development and success of our region and responds to the vision outlined in the Corporate Equality & Diversity Framework of Cornwall Council which states:

“Our vision is to make Cornwall a welcoming place, where equality, freedom, fairness and opportunity is open to all. We want everyone to feel valued, to celebrate diversity and to understand people’s different needs and aspirations whether they are living, visiting or working here.”

Being located in Cornwall, the University has been a major recipient of Convergence/European Regional Development funding aimed specifically at the economic regeneration of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This give us particular responsibilities for promoting equality and diversity beyond normal legislative requirements and outside of the 9 protected characteristics set out below. For example we have responsibilities to promote employment and participation in higher education (HE) amongst the Cornish population, and amongst those from socio-economic backgrounds that are not well represented in HE. Positive action in such areas is a requirement of some of our funding streams and a commitment that we make to our wider community.

The SES is an overarching framework for a series of focussed schemes which address each of the protected characteristics. It sets broad priorities for the equality agenda and is delivered through a detailed action plan, which is regularly monitored and updated through the University's Equality Group. The scheme is designed to be dynamic and responsive to changing priorities and drivers.

3. Legislation

Underpinning the scheme is the Equalities Act, which came into force on 1 October 2010, and the public sector equalities duty which applied from 5 April 2011.

The Equalities Act brought together previous anti-discrimination law and established 9 'Protected Characteristics' on the basis of which it is unlawful to discriminate against a person. These are:

- 1) Age (all ages and age groups);
- 2) Disability (physical and mental impairments);
- 3) Gender identity (people undergoing gender reassignment or who are transgender);
- 4) Marriage and civil partnership;
- 5) Pregnancy or maternity;
- 6) Race (including ethnic or national origin, colour and nationality);
- 7) Religion or belief (religious belief systems, non-religious belief systems and non-belief);
- 8) Gender (women and men); and
- 9) Sexual orientation (people of gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual orientation).

As a public body, the University has additional duties to promote equality. This is known as the Equality Duty¹. The Equality Duty requires the University to have 'due regard' to need to:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation on the grounds of a protected characteristic. This includes direct discrimination, discrimination based on perception, discrimination based on association, discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity and indirect discrimination.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means that for each protected characteristic we must actively consider how we can remove or minimise disadvantages resulting from the protected characteristic, take steps to meet the needs of staff and students with protected characteristics, encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in the public life and other activities of the university where their participation is low.
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means identifying opportunities within the University's activities to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Equality Duty can mean treating some people differently to others in order to meet their needs or to address under-representation, provided this does not amount to discrimination against others.

¹ The Equality Duty does not apply in relation to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership, although it remains unlawful to discriminate against a person on these grounds.

The above requirements apply to the University when exercising its functions generally and hence will apply in the context of other users of the University's services.

The University is also subject to further Specific Duties, which require us to publish:

- 1) Equality objectives every four years that are specific and measurable and relate to the achievement of the general duty;
- 2) Information annually to demonstrate our compliance with the general duty;

The information we are required to publish must relate to our staff, students and others affected by our policies and practices (e.g. service users). The information must be published in a manner that is accessible to the public. The SES and our Annual Equality & Diversity Reports are examples of the way in which Falmouth demonstrates the implementation of its equality duty.

4. Vision for Equality & Diversity at Falmouth University

The SES has been developed within the context of our Strategic Plan, which sets out our vision, values, goals and objectives. These ambitions can only be achieved through people; that is the staff and students who make up our community. This scheme will ensure that equality and diversity is central to the delivery of the Strategic Plan by enabling staff and students to realise their potential and to fully contribute to the achievement of our objectives.

Our vision is to build a welcoming University community that recognised the value of sustaining and advancing a safe and welcoming learning environment which strives to treat employees, students and visitors with respect and dignity, treat them fairly with regards to all assessments, choices and procedures and to give them encouragement to reach their full potential.

5. Principles of the SES

Equality matters to Falmouth University because we aim to:

- Recruit and retain excellent and diverse staff and students;
- Establish equality principles in every aspect of our activities;
- Incorporate diverse perspectives as a matter of course in our approaches to all we do;
- Become a model for creative learning as an arts institution that celebrates diversity and excellence.

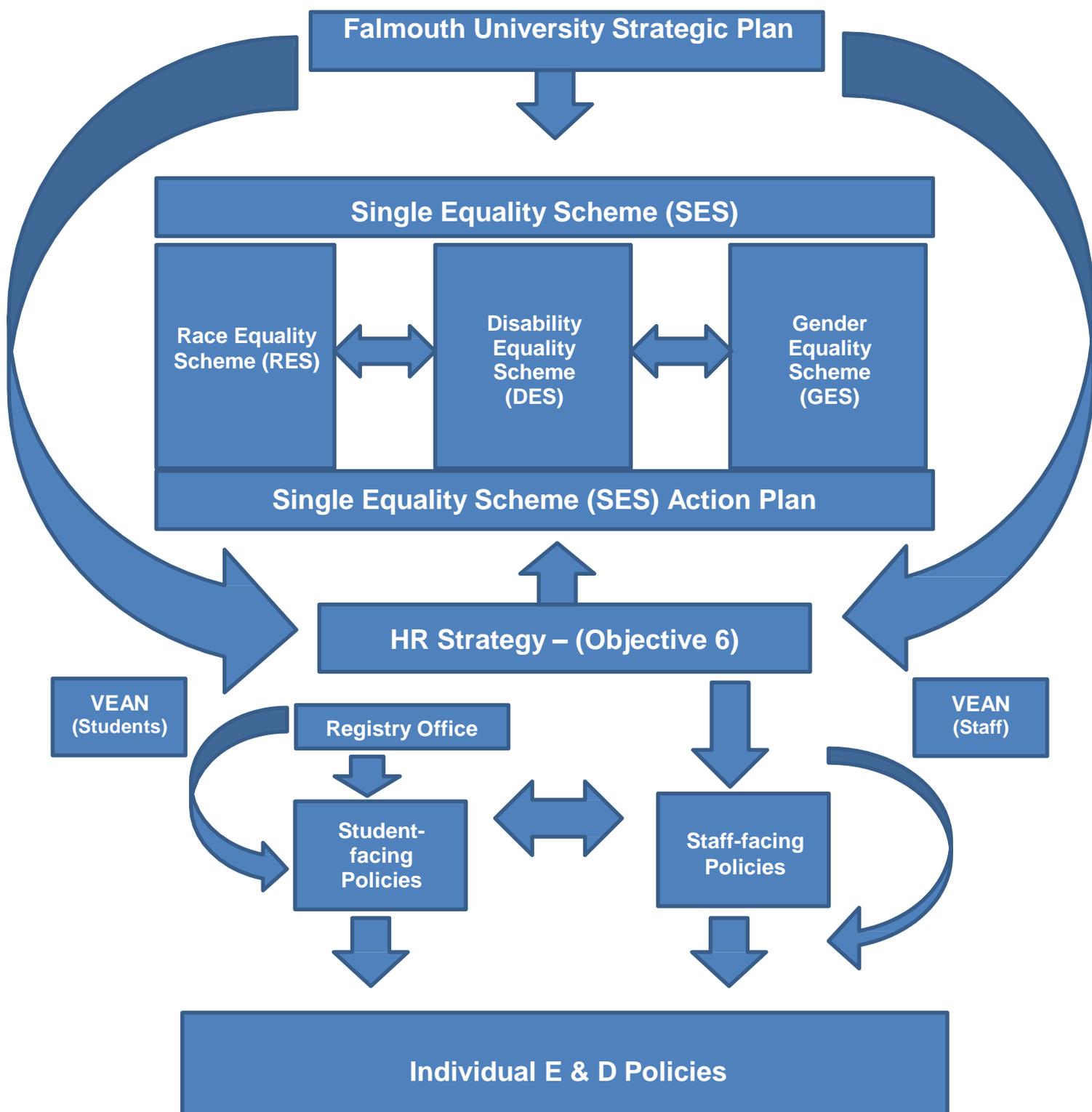
Therefore, we expect our staff and students to adhere to our commitment to six key equality principles by:

- Ensuring that we work and study in a non-discriminatory environment
- Ensuring that all our activities embed and promote equality and diversity
- Ensuring that we admit and progress students fairly
- Providing fair access to education, facilities and information
- Resourcing and employing people fairly
- Responding to and learning from complaints, grievances and incidents in a positive and proactive way

6 Equality Structures.

The SES applies to all Falmouth policies, regulations and schemes. The following diagram indicates where the SES sits in relation to our other 'protected characteristics' equality schemes.

Falmouth currently has three equality schemes covering three of the nine 'protected characteristic.' Specific equality objectives are elaborated in the SES Action Plan. Future schemes covering all of the protected characteristics and other relevant policies would also sit under the SES.



As a University we have particular responsibilities to promote and deliver Widening Participation (WP) targets set out in our Office of Fair Access (OFFA) agreement. We have developed a WP strategy and associated targets to assist us with meeting these responsibilities.

The Equality and Diversity Group is responsible for advising the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group on all matters relating to the SES and the Equality and Diversity Agenda.

7. Relationship of the SES to our Partners

The SES applies to all staff, students and visitors to the University. On the Penryn Campus, Falmouth works closely with our partners, Exeter University and FX Plus, to deliver shared higher education services and facilities in Cornwall.

Each partner is responsible for its own policies and procedures as these relate to Equality and Diversity. We recognise that there may be times when situations arise in which it is not clear which institution's policies and procedures should apply; for example where an FX Plus employee alleges harassment by a member of Falmouth's staff. In these instances the affected institutions will work together to review matters and agree on the appropriate policies and procedures to be employed on a case by case basis taking account of the views of the individual's affected.

8 Publishing, Delivering, Monitoring and Reviewing the SES

The SES is delivered through Falmouth's SES Action Plan and through the use of equality assessments. It is monitored through the Equality Group using regular reports and data to measure our success and to publish our results. The outcomes of this inform regular reviews of our schemes, activities and plans.

SES Action Plan

Falmouth's SES Action Plan (2013-2017) sets out planned activities to support our general equality duty compliance in a comprehensive four-year action plan. It sets out specific institutional equality goals with the anticipated timescale for achieving them across the following five areas:

- Governance
- Staff Services
- Student Services
- Learning, Teaching & Research
- Estates

This plan includes KPIs and assigns responsibility for the delivery of each action so that it is clear what is to be achieved and who is responsible for achieving it.

Equality Analysis (EA)

Falmouth is committed to ensuring that an EA is conducted when necessary. An equality analysis uses evidence and informed judgment to evaluate whether a policy, procedure or practice is likely to have a discriminatory impact on people from protected groups when implemented. It also looks at identifying opportunities to promote the equality objectives in ways that support the strategic plan.

Data, Monitoring and Reporting

We will closely monitor our progress against the key performance indicators agreed for the objectives in the SES Action Plan. In addition, we will analyse a wide range of equality monitoring data and act on it, including revising our objectives and plans where appropriate. Our annual monitoring and reporting arrangements consist of a cycle whereby we analyse different information in different years.

An Annual Report, written at the conclusion of each academic year, serves to provide key equality and diversity data with regard to staff and students that will be measured against the goals in the SES Action Plan and provide recommendations for achieving future equality goals and targets.

Publishing Information

Our SES will be published and available in a variety of formats to meet the diverse needs of internal and external stakeholders. We will publish our annual action plans with on-going updates on progress and/or changes as may be required.

Review

A review of the SES and its supporting policies and schemes will be conducted every four years from the anniversary of its implementation. The Equality Group has responsibility for the review of the SES, monitoring and updating the action plan, and oversight of the publication of equality information.

9 Institutional Responsibility

The Board of Governors and the Vice Chancellor have overall responsibility for Equality and Diversity within the University. The Equality Group will formulate policy and report on progress on this scheme and the associated equality objectives.

Line managers, supervisors and Directors are responsible for monitoring that their staff and students comply with the scheme and attend necessary training, for carrying out actions arising from the associated Equality Objectives and for promoting equality and diversity to their staff and students.

All members of the University community are expected to comply with this scheme, with the Equality Objectives, with any of the University's equality and diversity initiatives and to attend equality related training as required.

10 Education and Training

Training will be offered through the Staff and Organisational Development Team via 'Staff Space'. This will include web-based training and workshops to run over the period of each academic term. Staff will have the opportunity register for training as required and as part of their professional development. A key focus of equality training will be based on building awareness of equality and diversity schemes and action plans and the responsibilities arising from these. We will provide an integrated programme of training to ensure that staff will have a clear awareness of issues relating to equality and diversity in general. This will include the incorporation of equality related issues into existing provision such as staff and student induction and management development, and also the provision of specific equality training.

Falmouth will identify good practice when incorporating equality and diversity issues into the development and delivery of assessment, learning and teaching, and research. Through this approach we aim to make the curriculum accessible and representative, and to raise awareness in students of equality and diversity issues.

11. Advice and Support

Advice and support in relation to Equality and diversity issues is available from:

- The Equality and Diversity office (Insert email link),
- Link Human Resources Business Partners for staff,
- From the Head of Registry or Head of Student Support Services for students queries.

Information and access to all policies, guidance and reports is available through the Equality and Diversity sharepoint site.

The information referred to in our SES can be accessed through the following links:

- Strategic Plan 2012-17
http://www.falmouth.ac.uk/sites/default/files/download/falmouth_university_strategic_plan_2012-17.pdf
- Equality Objectives 2013-17
http://www.falmouth.ac.uk/sites/default/files/legacy_downloads/Equality_and_Diversity/equality-objectives_2012.pdf
- Widening Participation Supporting Plan 2012-17
<https://sp.falmouth.ac.uk/groups/ab/Meeting/WP%20Strategy%202012-17%20v6.pdf>