

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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Foreword from the Vice Chancellor, Anthony Woodman



At the University of Hertfordshire, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is fundamental to the kind of institution we are, and the kind we are determined to become. As this is the first EDI Annual Report of my time as Vice-Chancellor, I want to begin by recognising how much has already been achieved and how strongly our community continues to drive this work forward.

The past year has been one of transition for Herts. With the launch of our new Institutional Strategy, we have set out an ambitious vision that places people and culture at its core. EDI is not simply an accompanying theme within that vision; it shapes how we will deliver it. Alongside the University Strategy, we are now developing a dedicated EDI Strategy. This will give us a clearer foundation for the years ahead, ensuring our ambitions for fairness, belonging and opportunity are embedded in all aspects of university life.

This report provides an honest account of the progress we are making and the areas where we still have work to do. Our achievements, including the Athena Swan Institutional Silver Award and our position as a Top 100 Employer in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, reflect significant and sustained effort across Schools, Professional Services, and our vibrant staff networks. I am particularly encouraged by the creativity shown by teams and individuals who continue to find new ways to improve representation, reduce barriers, and support the success and wellbeing of all members of our community. As we shape our new EDI Strategy, it is vital that we remain focused on the challenges we must address with renewed determination.

These include:

- widening representation at senior levels for colleagues from racially minoritised groups
- closing gaps in student outcomes and experience
- recognising the layered and intersectional nature of inequality
- ensuring our curriculum, policies and everyday practices support an environment where everyone can thrive

The world around us is increasingly marked by division, conflict and rising intolerance. In this context, our role as a university is even more important. We must be a place where respect is upheld, where differences are understood, and where discrimination, antisemitism, Islamophobia and all forms of hate are actively challenged. Our community should feel safe to speak, to question, to contribute, and to be themselves.

I am grateful to every colleague and student who contributes to this work, whether through research, teaching, leadership, advocacy, or by supporting others day to day. EDI at Herts is strengthened by your dedication, insight and courage.

We have much to build on, and much still to achieve. I look forward to working with you as we take forward this next chapter in our EDI journey, ensuring that Herts continues to be a university where everyone has the opportunity to succeed and to belong.

Professor Anthony Woodman
Vice-Chancellor

Introduction

The University of Hertfordshire (Herts) has continued to deepen its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion over the past year, strengthening opportunities for all and nurturing a community where every individual feels valued. Building on the foundations laid in previous years, Herts has sustained strong momentum toward its strategic EDI ambitions for both staff and students.

A major highlight of 2024–25 was the University’s achievement of the Athena Swan Institutional Silver Award in September 2024, a significant milestone that recognises sustained progress in gender and sex equality. Looking ahead, preparations are underway for the Race Equality Charter renewal submission in 2026, ensuring that our approach remains evidence-based, reflective and forward-looking. Herts remains among the top 100 organisations in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, demonstrating our continued commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Our nine staff networks remain central to cultivating belonging and representation across the University. Over the past year, networks expanded their membership, strengthened cross-collaboration, and played a vital role in shaping the evolving EDI conversation at Herts. Alongside this, our year-round Diversity Calendar continued to bring staff and students together through events that highlight the breadth of identities and experiences within our community

As part of our statutory and strategic commitments, we publish annual equality and diversity data (as of 31 July 2025) to monitor the representation of protected characteristics among our staff and student populations. The following report outlines our progress over the past year, including updates on Charter Mark activity, key performance indicators, and the wide-ranging projects that continue to advance EDI across Herts.

Key Achievements (2024 - 2025)

Over the past year, Herts has delivered a dynamic range of activities, events, and initiatives to advance EDI across its community.

Celebrating Diversity and Building Awareness



In July 2025, the University of Hertfordshire proudly participated in Pride in London, bringing together staff and students to celebrate LGBTQ+ identities and stand in solidarity for equality. 40 staff, students and UNO staff members joined us. Our presence highlighted Herts’ ongoing commitment to creating an environment where everyone can express themselves freely and thrive. The delegation represented a broad cross-section of our community, reflecting the spirit of inclusion that continues to shape our work throughout the year.

Advancing Equity Through Recognition and Mentorship

Herts’ achievements have been recognised nationally, with the University awarded the prestigious Athena Swan Silver Charter Mark in September 2024 and named among the top 100 employers in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in July 2024.

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The University of Hertfordshire is proud to announce that from January 2026 we will join the 100 Black Women Professors NOW programme, a pioneering 12-month programme run by the Women in Higher Education Network (WHEN), designed to address systemic inequities faced by Black women in academia. By participating, Herts is committing to remove barriers and actively support the career progression of Black women academics, supporting them through dedicated mentoring, leadership coaching, peer networks, and institutional-level engagement.

This initiative aligns with our broader EDI ambitions and represents a concrete step toward fostering a more equitable academic pipeline and inclusive research culture across the University.

Driving Change Through Representation and Recruitment

The University continued to strengthen inclusive recruitment practices through the ongoing implementation of mandatory diverse recruitment panels. Analysis of 2024–25 data shows that sex diversity across shortlisting and interview panels remained consistently high (85.6% and 92.4% respectively), with ethnicity diversity also improving at later stages, averaging 73.5% during shortlisting and 80.3% at interview. Several SBUs, including HR, OVC and Estates, demonstrated exemplary practice with 100% sex-diverse panels and strong ethnicity representation. These findings highlight steady progress and reinforce the positive influence that diverse panels can have on equitable recruitment outcomes.

Enhancing Engagement and Training Impact

This year, the EDI team completely redesigned the mandatory EDI Essentials training for all new starters, ensuring the content is firmly rooted in the Herts context and fully aligned with our institutional priorities. The updated programme places greater focus on real-world scenarios, inclusive behaviours, and the lived experiences of our diverse community. As a result, colleagues are better equipped with the foundational knowledge and confidence needed to contribute to an inclusive culture from their very first day.

Throughout the year, we received highly positive feedback on the EDI Essentials training, including:

- “A good combination of theory and practical elements that challenged what I thought I already knew.”
- “I really liked how interactive it was—the scenarios were very well thought out.”
- “One of the best EDI sessions I have attended. The scenario-based learning was really helpful due to the range of varied examples.”
- “It was an amazing experience. Both facilitators were excellent, making sure everyone was included in the activities.
- This was an outstanding example of demonstrating the very principles they were teaching.”

The EDI Office has also made strides in increasing its social media presence, growing from 500 Instagram followers in April 2024 to over 900 in November 2025, amplifying our message and reaching a wider audience.

Embedding EDI Across Campus

Throughout 2024–25, the EDI Teams (EDITs) across the SBUs continued to play a central role in embedding EDI within local contexts. To strengthen this work, representatives from EDITs participated in a dedicated away day in June 2025. This session provided structured time and support to develop refreshed EDIT action plans aligned with the University’s wider strategic priorities, including the Wellbeing Commitment, Access and Participation objectives, Charter Mark actions, and institutional EDI KPIs. The away day also created valuable opportunities for cross-SBU collaboration, sharing best practice, and building a consistent approach to EDI delivery across the institution.

The central EDI Team has provided significant support to EDITs throughout the year, offering guidance, resources and regular engagement to assist with the development and implementation of these new action plans. This includes recognising the increasing demands placed on EDIT Chairs and EDI Leads, whose roles have expanded as the University’s EDI agenda has matured. Ongoing support has focused on capacity-building, improving clarity of expectations, Charter action progression, understanding of particular SBU equality issues and ensuring that colleagues in these roles are equipped to lead meaningful and sustainable EDI activity within their areas.

Strengthening EDI Governance: Updated Terms of Reference and Membership

During 2024–25, the University undertook a review of the governance supporting EDI, resulting in updated terms of reference and refreshed membership for both the EDI Self-Assessment Team (EDI SAT) and the EDI Committee (EDIC). These updates were designed to create clearer distinctions in purpose, improve effectiveness, and ensure alignment with institutional priorities.

The revised EDI SAT now operates as a more discursive, collaborative, and operationally focused forum. Meetings are themed around specific priority areas, such as race equity, inclusive recruitment, or student success, to encourage deeper exploration of challenges and solutions. This structure supports greater cross-institutional learning, enables members to contribute their expertise more effectively, and strengthens the SAT’s role in shaping and coordinating local EDI activity.

In contrast, the EDIC now has a sharpened strategic remit, providing high-level oversight of EDI delivery across the University and offering guidance and support to the EDI SAT. Its expanded terms of reference make explicit its responsibility for student EDI matters, including oversight of Access and Participation objectives and accountability for progress in these areas. This enhanced governance framework ensures stronger coordination between operational and strategic activity, enabling the University to deliver a more coherent, robust and accountable approach to EDI.

Herts’ Diverse Community

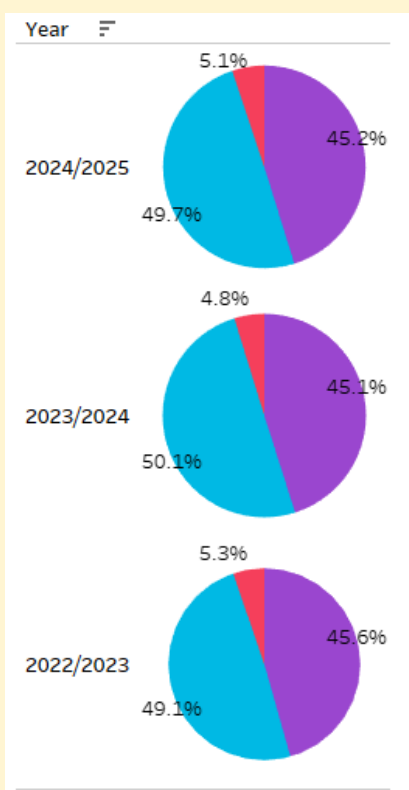
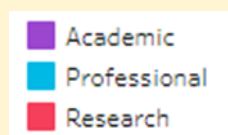


Fig1 - Academic/Research/Professional Staff Profile



On 31 July 2025 Herts employed a total of 2,680.5 (full-time equivalent FTE) staff comprising of 45.2% academic staff, 5.1% research staff and 49.7% professional staff. Our staffing population broken into professional and academic staff has remained relatively static. The Advance HE Statistical Report 2024 reports that in 2022-23 54.7% of staff in universities were academic/research and 45.3% were professional services. Herts therefore has slightly more professional services staff than the sector average. Fig 1 tracks the changes between professional and academic staff.

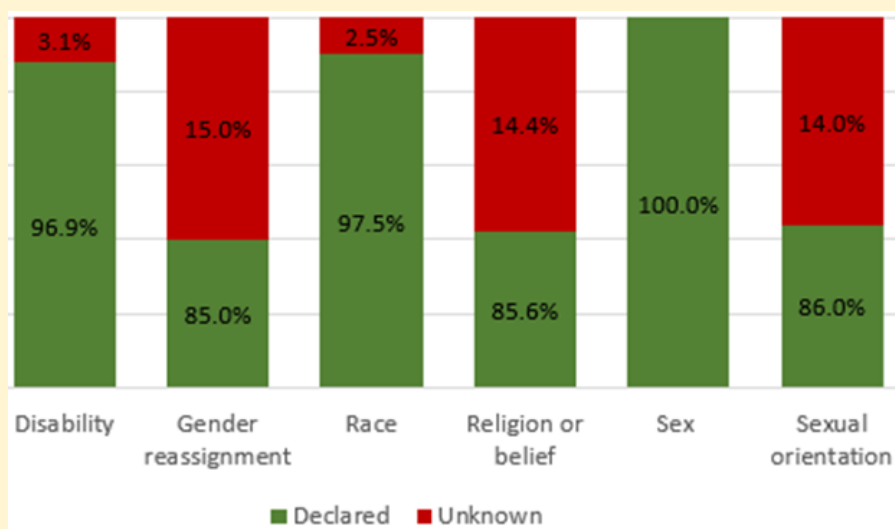
All benchmarking data with the sector has been taken from the Advance HE Statistical Report 2024.

Substantive Staff Declarations

Staff declarations have been calculated based on individual headcount for substantive staff totalling 2,680.5 (FTE) on 31 July 2025.

Across the staff community, declaration rates for most protected characteristics remain high, with sex, race and disability showing the strongest levels of disclosure (100%, 97.5% and 96.9% respectively), indicating good overall confidence in reporting. Lower declaration rates for gender reassignment, sexual orientation and religion or belief (with 14–15% recorded as unknown) reflect sector-wide trends, as these characteristics are often perceived as more sensitive or personal. These patterns highlight the importance of continued communication about how equality data is used, reassurance around confidentiality, and the visibility of supportive networks and inclusive practices to encourage further confidence in voluntary disclosure.

Fig 2 – Substantive Staff Declaration Rates



Compared with last year’s figures, declaration patterns show a mixed picture. Disability unknown responses have increased slightly, rising from 2.8% to 3.1%, indicating a small decline in disclosure after last year’s significant improvement. Gender reassignment shows a positive shift, with unknown responses falling from 16.7% to 15.0%, though this remains the characteristic with the highest non-disclosure rate and continues to require targeted support. Race unknown responses have increased

marginally, rising from 2.3% to 2.5%. By contrast, religion or belief shows improvement, with unknown responses decreasing from 15.2% to 14.4%, and sexual orientation disclosure has similarly improved, with unknown responses falling from 14.8% to 14.0%.

Student Declarations and Data Classification

In 2022–23, a fault in the student record system allowed students to bypass statutory personal characteristics questions, leading to a significant increase in “Prefer not to say/Not Available/Information Refused” responses across all characteristics and reducing visibility of key equalities groups. SIP mitigated this where possible by supplementing data from UCAS and internal sources, although this was more effective for Home Undergraduate students than for Postgraduate and International cohorts. The system issue was resolved in 2023–24 and data quality has improved. However, returning students retained their previous “Prefer not to say/Not Available/Information Refused” responses unless they actively updated them, meaning the impact will take time to fully work through the student population.

Those using characteristic data to form cross-year comparisons are advised to use caution due to this issue.

Historically, student equality data at Herts combined “Prefer not to say” responses with “Not known/information refused” values. In 2024–25, these categories were separated to improve transparency and data quality. As a result, figures for “Information refused/unknown” in 2024–25 represent *unknown values only*, whereas in previous years this category includes both students who actively selected “Prefer not to say” and those for whom data was not captured. This change should be taken into account when interpreting trends over time, particularly where there appear to be sharp reductions in “information refused/unknown” responses in 2024–25.

Age (Staff Data):**Table 1 – Staff Age Profile**

	25 and under	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66<	Grand Total	
2024/2025	Academic	0.2%	1.2%	4.5%	6.6%	7.0%	7.4%	6.1%	6.2%	3.7%	2.2%	45.2%
	Professional	4.3%	7.5%	6.1%	6.2%	5.7%	5.4%	5.5%	4.7%	3.7%	0.6%	49.7%
	Research		1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	5.1%
	Total	4.5%	9.7%	11.7%	13.7%	13.4%	13.1%	12.1%	11.2%	7.6%	3.0%	100.0%
2023/2024	Academic	0.1%	1.8%	4.7%	6.6%	7.3%	6.8%	6.0%	6.3%	3.6%	1.9%	45.1%
	Professional	6.3%	7.6%	5.8%	5.6%	5.5%	5.6%	5.1%	4.8%	3.2%	0.6%	50.1%
	Research	0.2%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	4.8%
	Total	6.6%	10.2%	11.5%	13.0%	13.2%	12.7%	11.5%	11.5%	7.0%	2.8%	100.0%
2022/2023	Academic	0.1%	1.6%	4.4%	6.2%	7.3%	6.9%	6.3%	6.6%	4.2%	2.1%	45.6%
	Professional	5.2%	6.7%	5.6%	5.5%	5.2%	5.8%	5.5%	5.6%	3.5%	0.6%	49.1%
	Research	0.2%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	5.3%
	Total	5.5%	9.3%	11.0%	12.8%	13.0%	13.0%	12.3%	12.4%	7.8%	2.9%	100.0%

Table 1 shows that across the past three years, the age profile of staff has remained broadly stable, with the majority of colleagues clustered in the 36 - 40 age range. Academic staff remain concentrated in older age groups with very low representation among those aged 35 and under. Professional staff have a higher proportion in the 26 – 30 age range. Research staff maintain a younger profile overall but represent a very small proportion of the workforce. The most recent year shows a slight reduction in staff aged 25 and under.

Age (Student Data):**Table 2 – Student Age Profile**

	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Age Group	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
18-20	10451	32.7%	7600	21.9%	9269	27.1%	8993	26.8%
21-24	7142	22.4%	9857	28.5%	8580	25.0%	9663	28.8%
25-29	6094	19.1%	7676	22.2%	7456	21.8%	7273	21.7%
30-39	3914	12.3%	5722	16.5%	5216	15.2%	4424	13.2%
40+	4194	13.1%	3629	10.5%	3383	9.9%	2865	8.5%
Under 18 years	147	0.5%	152	0.4%	349	1.0%	358	1.1%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 2 highlights changes in student age demographics:

- 18–20 years: Following a decline in 2022–23, this cohort has partially recovered and stabilised, accounting for 26.8% (8,993) of students in 2024–25.
- 21–24 years: Continued to increase over the period, rising from 22.4% (7,142) in 2021–22 to 28.8% (9,663) in 2024–25, and now represents the largest age group.
- 25–29 years: Expanded between 2021–22 and 2022–23 and has since remained broadly stable at 21.7% (7,273) in 2024–25.

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- 30–39 years: Increased initially before declining slightly in recent years, representing 13.2% (4,424) of the student population in 2024–25.
- 40+ years: Continued a gradual downward trend, decreasing from 13.1% (4,194) in 2021–22 to 8.5% (2,865) in 2024–25.
- Under 18 years: Remains a small cohort, though proportions have increased slightly to 1.1% (358) in 2024–25.

Disability (Staff Data):

Table 3 – Staff Declared Disability

		Declared disability	Declared no disability	Not Available	Prefer not to say	Grand Total
2024/2025	Academic	4.4%	39.5%	0.1%	1.3%	45.2%
	Professional	7.0%	41.1%	0.4%	1.2%	49.7%
	Research	0.5%	4.5%		0.1%	5.1%
	Total	11.8%	85.1%	0.5%	2.6%	100.0%
2023/2024	Academic	3.9%	40.0%	0.1%	1.1%	45.1%
	Professional	6.3%	42.5%	0.3%	1.1%	50.1%
	Research	0.4%	4.2%		0.1%	4.8%
	Total	10.6%	86.7%	0.4%	2.4%	100.0%
2022/2023	Academic	3.6%	36.2%	4.6%	1.2%	45.6%
	Professional	6.1%	36.1%	6.0%	1.0%	49.1%
	Research	0.5%	4.3%	0.4%	0.1%	5.3%
	Total	10.1%	76.6%	11.0%	2.3%	100.0%

Table 3 shows that there has been a slight increase in staff declaring a disability from 10.6% in 2023-24 to 11.8% in 2024-25. (The sector average in 2022-23 is 7.2%). Professional staff are more likely than academic and research staff to declare a disability and so some work is required to encourage academic and research staff to disclose, and to create an environment in which they feel safe and able to do so.

Disability (Student Data):

Table 4 – Student Declared Disability

	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Disability	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Disability Declared	3307	10.4%	2943	8.5%	3152	9.2%	3777	11.2%
No known disability	28635	89.6%	31693	91.5%	31101	90.8%	29799	88.8%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

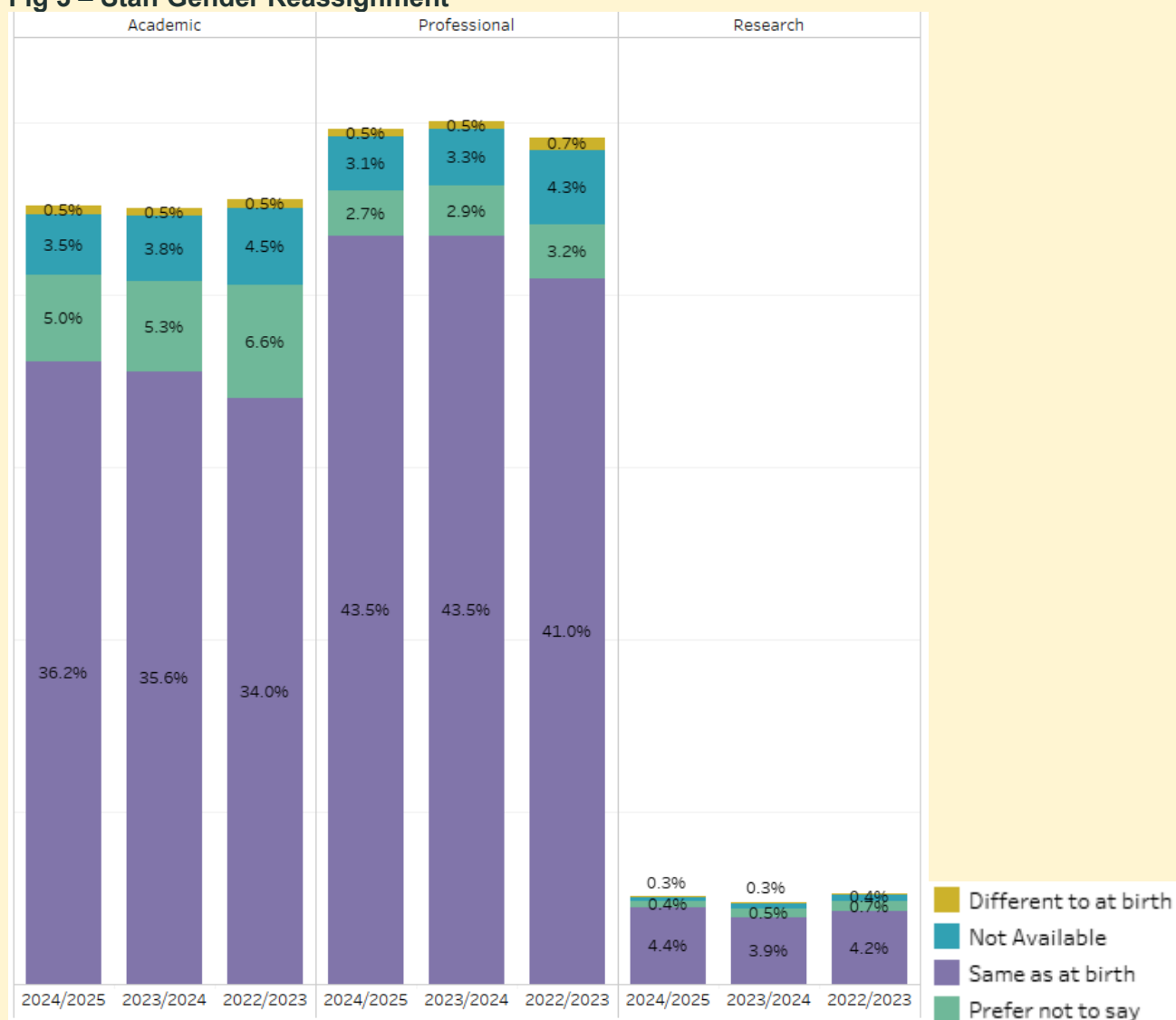
Table 4 highlights trends in student declared disability:

- The proportion of students declaring a disability declined between 2021–22 and 2023–24, before increasing in 2024–25 to 11.2% (3,777).

- The proportion of no known disability increased to a peak of 91.5% (31,693) in 2022–23, before gradually decreasing to 88.8% (29,799) in 2024–25, reflecting the corresponding rise in disability declarations.

Gender Reassignment (Staff Data):

Fig 3 – Staff Gender Reassignment



1.3% of staff have recorded their gender different to that assigned at birth. This is the same as the previous year. Prefer not to say data has reduced slightly.

Gender Reassignment (Student Data):

Table 5 – Student Gender Reassignment

	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Same gender as when you were born	30730	96.2%	25603	73.9%	30450	88.9%	31296	93.2%
Changed gender since birth	89	0.3%	324	0.9%	784	2.3%	887	2.6%
Not available/Information refused	1123	3.5%	8709	25.1%	3019	8.8%	34	0.1%
Prefer not to say							1359	4.0%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 5 highlights trends in student gender reassignment data:

- Same gender as when you were born: Following a marked decline in 2022–23 linked to data capture issues, proportions increased in subsequent years, reaching 93.2% (31,296) in 2024–25 and indicating a return towards typical reporting patterns.
- Changed gender since birth: The proportion has increased steadily over the period, rising from 0.3% (89) in 2021–22 to 2.6% (887) in 2024–25, reflecting improved data completeness and increased confidence in disclosure.

Race (Staff Data):

		2024/2025	2023/2024	2022/2023
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	Academic	15.5%	14.9%	13.3%
	Professional	12.9%	13.2%	10.7%
	Research	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%
	Total	30.0%	29.5%	25.5%
Not Available	Academic	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
	Professional	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%
	Research	0.0%		
	Total	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%
Prefer not to say	Academic	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
	Professional	1.1%	1.0%	0.8%
	Research	0.0%		0.1%
	Total	1.9%	1.8%	1.6%
White	Academic	28.8%	29.3%	31.5%
	Professional	35.3%	35.6%	37.3%
	Research	3.4%	3.3%	3.7%
	Total	67.5%	68.2%	72.5%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 6 – Staff Race/Ethnicity

Table 6 shows that the percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic academic staff has grown steadily, from 14.9% in 2023-24 and 15.5% in 2024-25. There has been a slight reduction in representation in professional roles, from 13.2% in 2023-24 to 12.9% in 2024-25. The representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals in research roles has slightly increased, from 1.5% in 2023-24 to 1.6% in 2024-25. Across all roles, the total representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff rose slightly, from 29.5% in 2023-24 to 30% in 2024-25.

The numbers of Prefer not to Say and Not Available remains reasonably low, although has increased slightly since last year.

Race (Student Data):

Table 7 – Student Race/Ethnicity

	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Ethnicity	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Asian/Asian British	11980	37.5%	2188	6.3%	16114	47.0%	18117	54.0%
Black/Black British	6046	18.9%	2633	7.6%	5661	16.5%	4800	14.3%
Chinese	482	1.5%	90	0.3%	503	1.5%	612	1.8%
Information refused/Unknown	832	2.6%	19826	57.2%	2361	6.9%	7	0.0%
Prefer not to say							1539	4.6%
Mixed	1390	4.4%	662	1.9%	915	2.7%	803	2.4%
Other Ethnic background	1136	3.6%	1550	4.5%	875	2.6%	810	2.4%
White	10076	31.5%	7687	22.2%	7824	22.8%	6888	20.5%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 7 highlights trends in student race and ethnicity:

- Asian / Asian British: The proportion increased over the period, rising from 37.5% (11,980) in 2021–22 to 54.0% (18,117) in 2024–25.
- Black / Black British: After a marked decline in 2022–23 linked to data quality issues, proportions rebounded in subsequent years. In 2024–25, Black students accounted for 14.3% (4,800) of the student population, remaining below 2021–22 levels but broadly stable relative to 2023–24.
- Chinese: Representation has remained relatively stable over time, increasing slightly to 1.8% (612) in 2024–25.
- Mixed: The proportion declined in 2022–23 and has since stabilised, representing 2.4% (803) of students in 2024–25.
- Other ethnic background: This group is at 2.4% (810) in 2024–25.

Religion and Belief (Staff Data):

Table 8 – Staff Religion/Belief

Religion	2024/2025				2023/2024				2022/2023			
	Academic	Professional	Research	Total	Academic	Professional	Research	Total	Academic	Professional	Research	Total
Any other Religion or Belief	1.4%	1.4%	0.3%	3.1%	1.4%	1.3%	0.3%	2.9%	1.5%	1.2%	0.2%	3.0%
Buddhist	0.7%	0.4%	0.1%	1.2%	0.7%	0.5%	0.1%	1.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.1%	1.1%
Christian	14.7%	16.4%	1.0%	32.1%	15.0%	16.3%	1.0%	32.3%	15.2%	16.7%	1.0%	32.8%
Hindu	1.3%	1.6%	0.3%	3.1%	1.3%	1.6%	0.2%	3.1%	1.0%	1.4%	0.3%	2.7%
Jewish	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.9%	0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	0.8%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	0.9%
Muslim	4.6%	2.9%	0.4%	7.9%	4.2%	3.2%	0.4%	7.7%	3.2%	2.5%	0.5%	6.2%
No Religion	14.0%	20.2%	2.3%	36.5%	13.7%	20.3%	1.9%	35.9%	14.4%	19.4%	2.2%	36.0%
Not Available	3.3%	2.9%	0.2%	6.4%	3.6%	3.0%	0.3%	6.8%	4.1%	3.6%	0.3%	8.1%
Prefer not to say	4.4%	3.2%	0.5%	8.1%	4.4%	3.5%	0.5%	8.4%	4.7%	3.2%	0.6%	8.5%
Sikh	0.3%	0.4%		0.8%	0.4%	0.4%		0.8%	0.4%	0.3%		0.7%
Grand Total	45.2%	49.7%	5.1%	100.0%	45.1%	50.1%	4.8%	100.0%	45.6%	49.1%	5.3%	100.0%

Table 8 shows that a high percentage of staff do not follow any type of religion at 36.5% of all staff. Of all staff, Christians make up the largest religious group at 32.1%, with the next largest group being Muslims at 7.9%. 3.1% of the staff population are Hindu, 1.2% Buddhists and 0.9% are Jewish and a further 0.8% are Sikhs.

Religion and Belief (Student Data):

Table 9 – Student Religion/Belief

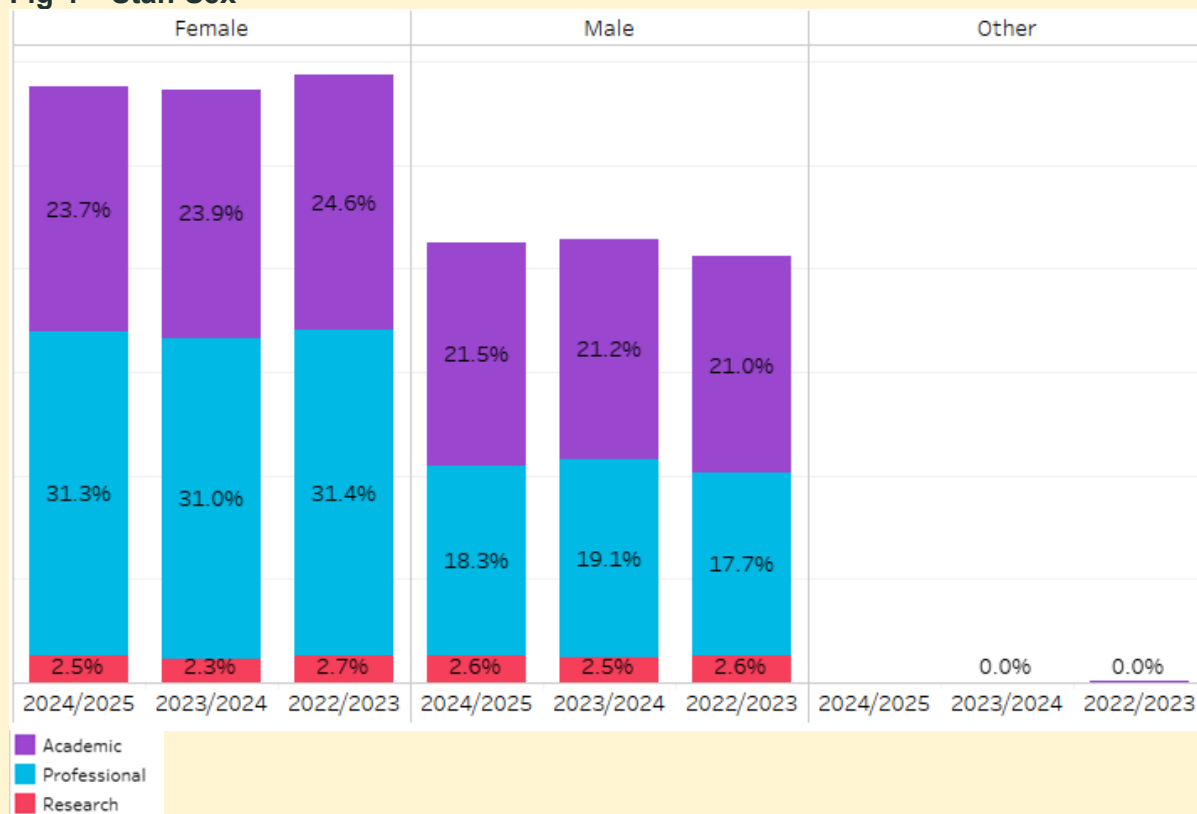
<i>note: for 2022-23 the group "Spiritual" has not been used</i>	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Religious Belief	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Any other religion or belief	760	2.4%	534	1.5%	481	1.4%	451	1.3%
Buddhist	248	0.8%	292	0.8%	466	1.4%	396	1.2%
Christian	10469	32.8%	9369	27.0%	9461	27.6%	8275	24.6%
Hindu	4806	15.0%	4322	12.5%	6246	18.2%	6884	20.5%
Jewish	113	0.4%	116	0.3%	94	0.3%	97	0.3%
Muslim	7054	22.1%	7135	20.6%	9183	26.8%	10630	31.7%
No religion	6367	19.9%	5706	16.5%	5311	15.5%	4978	14.8%
Not known/information refused	1349	4.2%	6832	19.7%	2469	7.2%	1	0.0%
Prefer not to say							1425	4.2%
Sikh	402	1.3%	330	1.0%	542	1.6%	439	1.3%
Spiritual	374	1.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 9 highlights trends in student religion and belief:

- Christian: The proportion has declined steadily from 32.8% (10,469) in 2021–22 to 24.6% (8,275) in 2024–25.
- Muslim: Representation has increased consistently over the period, rising from 22.1% (7,054) in 2021–22 to 31.7% (10,630) in 2024–25, making Muslim students the fastest-growing religious group.
- Hindu: The proportion increased following 2022–23, reaching 20.5% (6,884) in 2024–25.
- No religion: The proportion has declined over time, decreasing from 19.9% (6,367) in 2021–22 to 14.8% (4,978) in 2024–25.
- Smaller religious groups (Buddhist, Sikh, Jewish): These groups remain relatively stable overall, with modest fluctuations across the period. Buddhist representation peaked in 2023–24 and remains above 2021–22 levels.
- Any other religion or belief: This category has declined slightly over time, accounting for 1.3% (451) of students in 2024–25.

Sex (Staff Data):

Fig 4 – Staff Sex



In 2024-25, 57.5% of Herts’ staff were female. Proportionately there are slightly more females working in academic and research (26.2% compared to 24.1%), although there are far fewer males in professional services (18.3% as compared to 31.3%).

Sex (Student Data):

Table 10 – Student Sex

<i>note: for 2022-23 onwards we have the additional grouping of "Unknown" and "Other" for Sex</i>	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Sex	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Female	16254	50.9%	16543	47.8%	16537	48.3%	14306	42.6%
Male	15688	49.1%	16838	48.6%	17715	51.7%	19057	56.8%
Prefer not to say							174	0.5%
Other			220	0.6%	0	0.0%	39	0.1%
Unknown			1035	3.0%	1	0.0%		0.0%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 10 highlights trends in student sex:

- The proportion of female students has declined over the period, decreasing from 50.9% (16,254) in 2021–22 to 42.6% (14,306) in 2024–25.

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- The proportion of male students has increased steadily, rising from 49.1% (15,688) in 2021–22 to 56.8% (19,057) in 2024–25.

Sexual Orientation (Staff Data):

Table 11 – Staff Sexual Orientation

	Bisexual	Gay Man	Gay Woman/Lesbian	Heterosexual or straight	Not Available	Other sexual orientation	Prefer not to Say	Grand Total	
2024/2025	Academic	1.8%	1.7%	0.9%	79.0%	6.6%	0.8%	9.2%	100.0%
	Professional	3.3%	1.6%	1.1%	81.0%	5.2%	0.8%	7.0%	100.0%
	Research	4.1%	2.5%	0.7%	76.4%	4.7%	1.1%	10.4%	100.0%
	Total	2.6%	1.7%	1.0%	79.9%	5.8%	0.8%	8.2%	100.0%
2023/2024	Academic	1.5%	1.6%	1.0%	78.2%	7.2%	0.7%	9.9%	100.0%
	Professional	3.1%	1.2%	0.9%	81.4%	5.2%	1.1%	7.0%	100.0%
	Research	3.8%	1.6%	0.3%	77.0%	6.2%	2.4%	8.7%	100.0%
	Total	2.4%	1.4%	0.9%	79.8%	6.1%	1.0%	8.4%	100.0%
2022/2023	Academic	1.5%	1.9%	0.9%	76.7%	8.2%	0.7%	10.1%	100.0%
	Professional	2.9%	1.4%	0.7%	80.3%	6.3%	1.0%	7.4%	100.0%
	Research	5.5%	1.6%	0.3%	71.9%	7.1%	2.4%	11.2%	100.0%
	Total	2.4%	1.6%	0.8%	78.3%	7.2%	0.9%	8.8%	100.0%

Table 11 shows that the majority (79.9%) of staff are heterosexual, 2.6% bisexual, 1.7% gay men, and 1% gay woman/lesbian. This gives a combined total of 5.3% of the staff population are from the LGB community.

Sexual Orientation (Student Data):

Table 12 – Student Sexual Orientation

<i>note: for 2022-23 the groupings have changed. Gay man and gay woman were previously separate. They are now grouped together</i>	21/22		22/23		23/24		24/25	
Sexual Orientation	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Heterosexual (attracted to opposite sex/straight)	26775	83.8%	23188	66.9%	27349	79.8%	27595	82.2%
Gay or lesbian (attracted to same sex)		0.0%	345	1.0%	358	1.0%	343	1.0%
Gay man (attracted to same sex)	198	0.6%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Gay woman/lesbian (attracted to same sex)	192	0.6%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Bisexual (attracted to both sexes)	957	3.0%	1011	2.9%	1290	3.8%	1183	3.5%
Other	861	2.7%	416	1.2%	322	0.9%	291	0.9%
Prefer not to say							4130	12.3%
Not available/Information refused	2959	9.3%	9676	27.9%	4934	14.4%	34	0.1%
	31942	100	34636	100	34253	100	33576	100

Table 12 highlights trends in student sexual orientation:

- Heterosexual: Continues to represent the majority of students. Following a sharp decline in 2022–23 linked to data capture issues, proportions increased again to 82.2% (27,595) in 2024–25.
- Gay or lesbian: From 2022–23 onwards, gay man and gay woman/lesbian categories were combined. Since this change, proportions have remained stable at around 1.0%, accounting for 1.0% (343) of students in 2024–25.
- Bisexual: Representation increased over the period, rising from 3.0% (957) in 2021–22 to a peak of 3.8% (1,290) in 2023–24, before stabilising at 3.5% (1,183) in 2024–25.
- Other sexual orientation: This category declined slightly over time and has stabilised at 0.9% (291) in 2024–25.

Professional recognition through Advance HE Fellowships

In 2023-4 a Fellowship Performance Monitoring Group was established to monitor retention and success data from Advance HE accredited provision at the University, namely the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education and the CPD Framework. The group looks at analysis of data according to, but not necessarily limited to sex, ethnicity, role, school, and Visa status, with a goal of supporting engagement from staff in underrepresented groups. The group will also report Race Equality Charter and Athena Swan relevant data and associated actions, to the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Self-Assessment Team meetings.

There is a University level KPI around recognition at a minimum level of Fellowship for all academic staff, which has recently been set at 85%, at the end of 2024/25 this stood at 63% although 76% hold some form of recognition. The group closely monitors the proportions within recognition and considers how well they reflect the overall university population.

Recognition amongst academic staff

The different categories of Advance HE fellowship, for academic staff, are made up of the following demographics (as of September 2025)

Table 14 - Categories of Advance HE Fellowship by Sex

	September 2025	
	% Male	% Female
Associate Fellowship	44.6	55.4
Fellowship	45	55
Senior Fellowship	36.5	63.5
Principal Fellowship	34.8	65.2
No Fellowship	49.7	50.3

On 31 July 2024 Herts employed a total of 2,702 (FTE) staff comprising of 45.1% academic staff (1218.6 FTE), 53% of these are women, 47% are men. Women are slightly over-represented in Associate Fellow and Fellowship categories of recognition and significantly over-represented in Senior and Principal Fellowship categories when compared to the proportions in the University academic population.

Table 15 - Categories of Advance HE Fellowship by Disability

	September 2025		
	% No disability	% Disability declared	% No declaration
Associate Fellowship	84.8	12	3.3
Fellowship	89.3	8.2	2.6
Senior Fellowship	83.9	11.7	4.4
Principal Fellowship	78.3	21.7	0
No Fellowship	85.1	11.4	3.4

In the EDI report 2023-24 it suggests that 3.9% of academic staff declare a disability, but the proportions reported amongst colleagues with categories of recognition is above this, which is pleasing to see and hopefully a testament to the scheme’s “inclusive-first” approach to assessment.

Table 16 - Categories of Advance HE Fellowship by Residential Status

	September 2025	
	% UK	% Non-UK
Associate Fellowship	63	37
Fellowship	71.7	28.3
Senior Fellowship	74.5	25.5
Principal Fellowship	91.3	8.7
No Fellowship	78.9	21.1

Tableau data for the residential status of staff suggests that the academic staff body is split between 76% UK status, and 24% overseas / EU status. Our Overseas staff are over-represented in the Associate Fellow and Fellowship data, perhaps pointing to recent trends in recruitment, these staff have been joining the accredited PgCert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education in greater numbers in recent years. There is significant under-representation of Overseas colleagues at Principal Fellowship, an area for development (but noting there are smaller numbers recognised overall in this category).

Table 17 - Categories of Advance HE Fellowship by Race

	September 2025						
	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	PNTS	NA	White
AFHEA	18.48	8.7	2.17	4.89	2.17	0.54	63.04
FHEA	19.03	9.52	3.08	4.29	2.01	0.13	61.93
SFHEA	15.33	13.14	2.92	2.18	1.46	-	64.96
PFHEA	13.04	8.7	-	-	4.35	-	73.91
None	14.86	5.71	5.71	3.43	2.29	0.29	67.71

Information from the EDI report 2023-24 indicates that 31% of teaching staff are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, with the following classifications within 13% Asian, 8% Black, 4% Chinese, 3% Other, 3% Mixed, 2% Not Known, 67% White. Recognition at Associate Fellow and Fellowship is above the proportions of the overall academic population for our colleagues from Asian, Black, Mixed and Other backgrounds, and above for Senior and Principal Fellowship for our colleagues from Asian and Black backgrounds. This data would indicate that it is our White staff who are under-represented in the Advance HE recognition data in categories Associate through to Senior Fellow.

Progress against Institutional Equality Objectives

KPI 1: To increase senior Black Asian Minority Ethnic Staff at grade UH9 and above to 16% by 2025

The aspirational target for this KPI was to achieve 20% Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic staff representation at UH9 and above by 2025, which has been met (24%). The number of staff in grades UH9 and above indicating that they would PNTS or unknown has decreased from 3% (2023-24) to 2% (2024-25).

Table 18 - Disaggregated Data of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff UH9 and above.

Ethnicity		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	Asian	5.5%	4.9%	5.5%	6%	6%	13%
	Black	3.3%	3.6%	3.7%	4%	4%	7%
	Chinese	3.6%	3.7%	3.9%	4%	4%	-
	Mixed	1.4%	2.4%	2.4%	3%	3%	2%
	Other	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	2%	2%	2%
	Total	15.5%	16.6%	17.5%	19%	19%	24%
Not Known		1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	2%	3%	2%
White		82.8%	81.7%	80.6%	79%	78%	74%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%	100%	100%

This KPI was amended to include Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic staff at grade AM1 and above. Reframing this KPI brings it in line with the Herts’ Senior Academic Women KPI.

Table 19 - Disaggregated Data of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff at AM1 and above.

Ethnicity		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	Asian	3.6%	4.1%	4.4%	5.0%	8.8%	11%
	Black	0.4%	0.9%	1.8%	2.5%	2.4%	3%
	Chinese	1.8%	1.8%	2.2%	2.1%	%	%
	Mixed	1.8%	2.3%	1.8%	2.5%	2.8%	3%
	Other	2.2%	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	2.0%	2%
	Total	9.8%	10.4%	11.4%	13.4%	15.9%	19%
Not Known		1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	2%
White		88.4%	87.8%	86.8%	84.9%	82.5%	79%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%

In 2023-24 Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic staff representation at AM1 and above was 15.9%. The aspirational target of 20% for AM1 and above is very close to being met (19%) in 2024-25. However, there is still some work to be done if the University wishes to achieve proportionate representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic senior staff (30%).

Representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff at grade AM1 and above has increased over the past six years, rising from 9.8% in 2019/20 to 19% in 2024-25. Growth has been strongest among Asian and Mixed ethnicity staff, who now account for 11% and 3% of senior roles respectively, while representation of Black staff has also improved to 3%.

Although White staff remain the majority at senior levels, their representation has reduced from 88.4% to 79% over the period. Overall, the data demonstrates meaningful progress towards diversifying senior leadership, while also highlighting the need for continued focus on strengthening pathways for Black staff into senior roles.

KPI 2: To increase Black Asian Minority Ethnic Teaching Staff to 25%

Table 16 highlights the year-on-year trends in the representation of teaching staff across various ethnic groups from 2020-21 to 2024-25. Representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teaching staff has increased over the last five years, rising from 23% in 2020/21 to 33% in 2024-25.

This means Herts now exceeds both the local population benchmark, where 28.2% of Hertfordshire residents identified as an ethnic minority in the 2021 Census (including White minority groups), and the sector benchmark, with 27.4% of academics on teaching-only or teaching-and-research contracts coming from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (Advance HE, 2024).

Growth at Herts has been strongest among Asian staff (now 17%) and Black staff (now 9%), with Mixed and Other ethnic groups also showing gradual increases. Chinese staff are now reported within the Asian staff population figures. Over the same period, White staff representation has decreased from 74.7% to 65%, indicating meaningful diversification of the teaching workforce.

While this progress is positive, it is important to note that staff diversity still does not reflect the much higher diversity of the student body, where 74.9% of students identify as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (including ‘mixed’ and ‘other’ categories), highlighting the continued need to strengthen representation across all ethnic groups in the teaching community.

Table 20 - Disaggregated Data of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Teaching Staff.

Ethnicity		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	Asian	8.1%	9.1%	11.0%	13.0%	17%
	Black	5.6%	6.5%	7.0%	8.0%	9%
	Chinese	4.8%	4.5%	4.0%	4.0%	-
	Mixed	1.9%	2.4%	3.0%	3.0%	3%
	Other	2.6%	2.4%	3.0%	3.0%	4%
	Total	23.0%	24.9%	28.0%	31.0%	33%
Not Known		2.3%	1.8%	1.0%	2.0%	2%
White		74.7%	73.3%	71.0%	67.0%	65%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%

KPI 3: Increase Senior Academic Women (grade AM1 and above) by 10% (from 44.7% to 49.2%) by 2025.

The aspirational target is to increase Senior Academic Women at grades AM1 and above to 50% by 2025.

The proportion of senior academic women has shown overall positive progress across the six-year period, rising from 44.4% in 2019/20 to 49% in 2024-25. The KPI target was to increase representation to 49.2% by 2025, and the latest figure of 49% indicates that the University is very close to meeting the target, with only a 0.2 percentage point gap remaining.

Representation increased steadily between 2019/20 and 2022/23, reaching a high of 51%, where senior academic women briefly outnumbered men. This position was maintained in 2023/24, after which the proportion dipped slightly to 49% in 2024-25. Despite this small decline, the longer-term trend remains positive, showing a sustained shift towards greater balance at senior academic levels. This fluctuation suggests that while progress has been made, female representation at senior levels remains sensitive to annual staffing changes, such as recruitment, promotion and turnover.

Overall, the University has made strong and almost complete progress towards the KPI, successfully moving from a male-majority to an almost evenly balanced senior academic workforce. Continued focus on equitable promotion pathways, leadership development and recruitment practices will support the stabilisation and further advancement of sex equality at senior academic levels.

Table 21 - Academic Women at Grade AM1 and Above.

Increase Senior Academic Women (grade AM1 and above) by 10% (from 44.7% to 49.2%) by 2025						
Sex	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Female	44.4%	44.5%	49%	51%	51%	49%
Male	55.6%	55.5%	51%	49%	49%	51%

Reduce the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic awarding gap by half by 2025 (baseline 2019-20 18% - target 9%)

This is a Board of Governors KPI. It should be noted that the awarding gap is the difference between the proportion of students getting a 2:1 or a 1st a “good degree” and therefore only applies to all undergraduate students.

Data for academic years 2019/20 through to 2021/22 is not included, as students graduating in this period had the “Safety Net Policy” was applied to mitigate against the impact of the Covid pandemic. This policy no longer applies to the data from the academic year 2022-23 onwards.

Table 22: Undergraduate (All)

Student population	Proportion of students awarded a ‘good degree’ (upper second / first)		
	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
All students	75	74	72
White students	83	84	83
B.A.M.E. students	70	67	63
Asian students	73	68	65
Black students	62	64	57
Gap between White and B.A.M.E. students	13pp	17pp	20pp
Gap between White and Asian students	10pp	16pp	18pp
Gap between White and Black students	21pp	20pp	26pp

Table 23: Undergraduate (All) by School

Student population	Awarding gap (percentage points)		
	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
University	13	17	20
Business School	12	18	22
Creative Arts	17	20	19
Physics, Engineering and Computer Science	17	20	20
Education	3	16	11
Law	7	14	20
Health and Social Work	-	20	27
Life and Medical Sciences	-	14	14
Health, Medicine and Life Sciences	13	-	-

The KPI has been missed by 4pp, however given the disruption to the work supporting the awarding gap within this period due to the pandemic, we believe that this improvement in the awarding gap is to be cautiously celebrated whilst reaffirming the commitment to further improvement and elimination of this gap.

Table 24: Undergraduate by fee status

Student population	Proportion of students awarded a ‘good degree’ (upper second / first)		
	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
All Home students	76	76	73
All Overseas students*	71	71	69
Home White students	83	85	85
Home B.A.M.E. students	70	67	62
Overseas White students**	85	79	76
Overseas B.A.M.E. students	70	67	66
Gap between all Home and all Overseas students	5pp	5pp	4pp
Gap between Home White and B.A.M.E. students	13pp	18pp	23pp
Gap between Overseas White** and B.A.M.E students	15pp	12pp	10pp
Gap between Home White and Overseas White** students	2pp*	6pp	9pp
Gap between Home B.A.M.E. and Overseas B.A.M.E. students	none	none	4pp

* It should be noted that prior to August 2021 EU students were grouped with Home students, and after the departure of the UK from the European Union, these students are now Overseas student status. They appear in

the Overseas students figures for awards from 23/24 onwards.

** Numbers of graduating overseas White students in 2024-25 was 34, compared to 301 in 2022/23 so caution should be exercised in looking at percentages.

Home Students

- 2641 Home undergraduate students graduated in 2024-25, 45% of whom were White and 53% were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, with the remainder unknown, or information refused.
- Good degrees for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students increased to 70% from 67% in the previous year, and the low of 56% in 2018/19. There is no sector data available on equivalence as the Office for Students has moved away from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic category in preference of more specific ethnicity groups.
- In this context, our two largest ethnicity groups within the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic dataset are our Asian and our Black students. In 2024-25, 73% of our Asian students are awarded a good degree compared to 70.3% nationally, and 62% of our Black students are awarded a good degree compared to 59.9% nationally.

Overseas students

- 953 Overseas undergraduate students graduated in 2024-25, 4% of whom were White and 87% were from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, with the remainder unknown, or information refused.
- The proportion of Overseas students getting a good degree has remained relatively stable. However, as the population is extremely imbalanced, the awarding gap data for Overseas students should be treated with care.

New Institutional Equality Objectives and KPIs

As part of the University's new Strategic Plan (2025–2030), a refreshed set of EDI Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has been introduced to accelerate progress towards a more equitable, transparent and inclusive institution. These KPIs reflect both our ambition and our responsibility to ensure that staff and students from all backgrounds can thrive at Herts.

A core focus of the new KPIs is improving the quality and completeness of our EDI data, with a commitment to significantly reducing “Prefer not to say” responses across all protected characteristics. Enhanced disclosure rates will strengthen our understanding of staff and student experiences and enable more targeted interventions.

The Strategic Plan sets clear targets to:

- Increase representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues at senior levels, aiming for 25% of staff at AM1 and above and
- Increase representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues at UH9 25% of staff
- Increase the proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teaching staff to 41%, ensuring our workforce more closely reflects the diversity of our student community.
- Increasing disability declaration rates to 13%, recognising the importance of creating an environment where disabled staff feel confident in formally disclosing their status and accessing the support available.
- Reduce the ethnicity awarding gap by 3.5–4 percentage points each year, with the aim of achieving no awarding gap by 2030. This aligns with our Access and Participation commitments and reinforces our institutional dedication to achieving equitable outcomes for all students.

Together, these KPIs provide a clear framework for accountability, progress and transparent reporting. They place EDI at the heart of institutional planning and signal a decisive step forward in embedding equity and inclusion across the University community.

Academic Promotions

The 2023-24 promotions round saw 78 applications made, a small increase from the previous year where there were 68 applications. Herts continues to mandate for academic promotion interview panels to be diverse and representative as possible, and that the Chair of the promotion interview panel has completed the relevant EDI training beforehand.

Table 25- All academic promotion applications by Sex and Ethnicity

Sex/Ethnicity	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	Prefer not to say	White	Grand total
Men	9%	9%			3%	37%	58%
Women	4%	8%	1%	5 %		24%	42%
Grand Total	13%	17%	1%	5%	3%	61%	100%

The academic promotion application data for 2024–25 shows notable differences in the ethnicity profile of applicants by sex. Men accounted for 58% of all applications (overall male population is 42.4%), with the majority identifying as White (37%), indicating a strong concentration of applications from White male staff. Among male applicants, 9% were Asian and 9% were Black, suggesting some diversity within the male applicant pool, while small proportions fell into Other (3%) or prefer not to say categories.

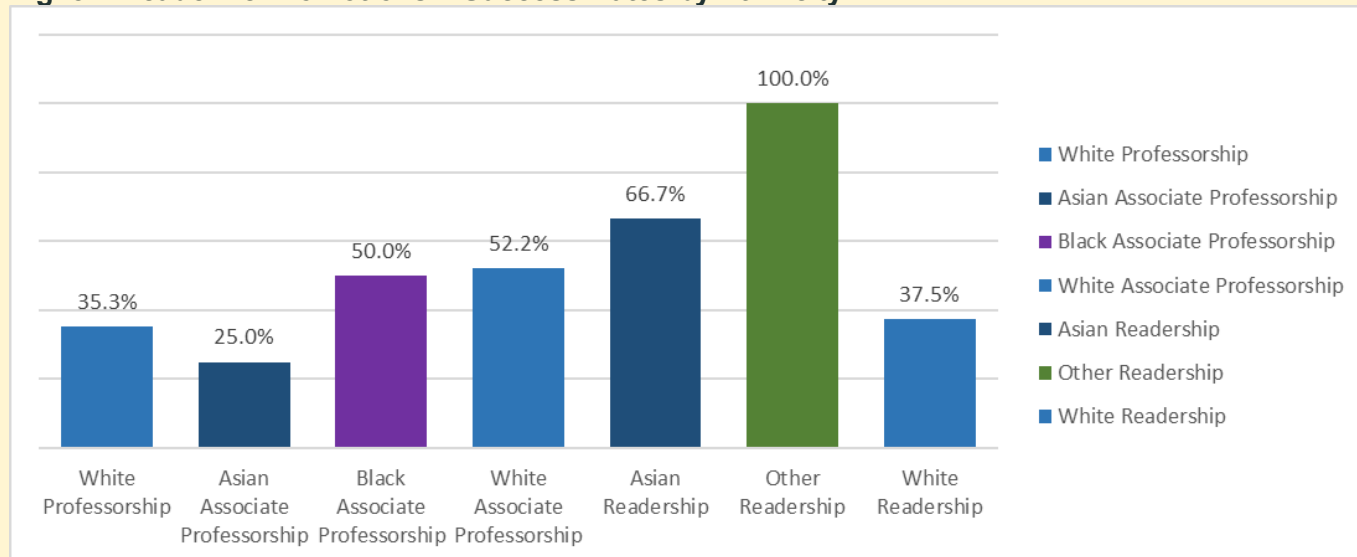
Women made up 42% of promotion applications, compared with their representation of 57.6% in the overall staff population, indicating that women remain under-represented in the applicant pool. White women accounted for 24% of all applicants, a lower proportion than White men. Applications from ethnically diverse women included 8% Black, 4% Asian, and 5% Other ethnicities, with a very small number identifying as Mixed ethnicity (1%). This reflects a more even distribution of applications across ethnic groups among women, although total application numbers remain lower than for men.

Looking across the whole applicant pool, 61% of applications were from White staff, while 39% were from minority ethnic groups. Therefore, proportionately a greater number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff applied for promotion. Black staff made up 17% of all applicants, the highest representation among ethnic minority groups, followed by Asian applicants (13%). Other groups collectively accounted for the remaining 9%.

Overall, the data suggests that while White staff remain the majority of applicants, there is strong ethnic diversity within the total applicant pool, particularly among Black and Asian staff. Women applicants show a more balanced ethnic profile than men, but lower overall application numbers highlight the importance of continuing to support and encourage progression for women across all ethnic backgrounds.

Academic promotions – Success Rates by Ethnicity

Fig. 5 – Academic Promotions – Success Rates by Ethnicity

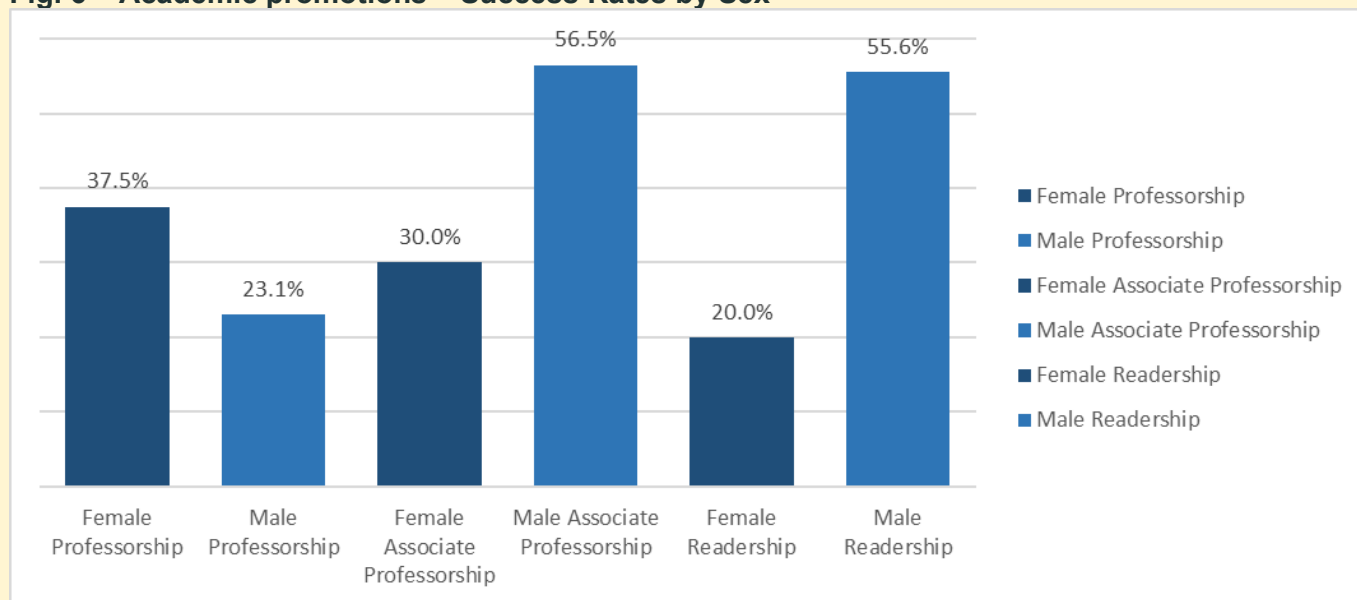


There are also some differences in proportionality across ethnic groups when compared with the wider academic workforce. Asian colleagues make up 18.9% of academic staff but only 13% of promotion applicants, indicating under-representation and suggesting the need for enhanced support and development opportunities. In contrast, Black colleagues represent 8.8% of the academic workforce but 17% of applicants, demonstrating strong engagement with progression opportunities, although their continued low representation in senior roles highlights persistent structural barriers. White staff apply broadly in line with their workforce share. These patterns underscore the importance of targeted interventions into the promotions pipeline and to ensure equitable outcomes for Black colleagues who are applying in high numbers.

Promotion outcomes indicate positive progression for some minority ethnic groups, particularly Black staff at Associate Professor level and Asian staff at Readership. However, disparities remain, with Asian staff showing lower success rates at Associate Professor and White staff continuing to dominate promotions to Professor.

Academic Promotions: Sex

Fig. 6 – Academic promotions – Success Rates by Sex



Academic promotion data for 2024–25 shows some imbalances between the proportions of applications and the proportions of successful outcomes across both sex and ethnicity. Men submitted the majority of applications (58%) and achieved higher success at mid-career levels, particularly at Associate Professor and Readership, while women, who accounted for 42% of applications, had a higher success rate at Professorship, indicating strong outcomes for those reaching the senior level. Ethnically, 39% of applicants were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Black staff achieved strong success at Associate Professor, and Asian staff had the highest success at Readership, though Asian colleagues had low success at Associate Professor. Despite this progress, White staff remained the only group represented at all promotion levels and the only group achieving Professorship. These patterns highlight ongoing structural barriers affecting women and minority ethnic staff, particularly in progressing through the mid-career stages of the academic pipeline.

Academic promotion outcomes for 2024–25 show a mixed picture for sex equity. Women had higher success at Professorship, but men were significantly more successful at both Associate Professor and Readership levels, where success rates for men were almost double or triple those for women. These disparities suggest continued challenges in supporting women’s career progression at key mid-career stages and highlight the importance of strengthened mentoring, equitable workload allocation and targeted development opportunities.

Advancing Equality

EDI Charter Marks

Herts continues to demonstrate strong commitment to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion through active participation in a range of national Charter Mark schemes. These frameworks provide external scrutiny, help structure institutional improvement, and ensure accountability for sustained progress. In 2024–25, significant developments were made across Athena Swan, the Race Equality Charter (REC), Disability Confident, and Stonewall.

Athena Swan



The University continues to embed the commitments recognised through its institutional Athena Swan Silver Award (2024) and existing departmental awards. Work this year focused on strengthening local implementation and monitoring progress across SBUs.

Key progress includes:

- Sustained support for departmental submissions and renewals, including ongoing work for School-level applications.
- Increased alignment between Athena Swan actions and institutional KPIs, especially in relation to sex equity in senior roles and intersectional analysis.
- Improved data sets on a dedicated Tableau dashboard to support departmental Athena Swan applications.
- Continued visibility and engagement, supported by the EDI Charters Manager through targeted updates and development sessions for Schools.

Athena Swan remains a central driver of sex equality work, reinforcing our ambitions under the new 2025–2030 Strategic Plan.

Across our Academic Schools we hold silver awards in the School of Life and Medical Sciences (2023), School of Health and Social Work (2024) and department of Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics (2024) Bronze renewal awards have been achieved by Hertfordshire Business School (2025), and the School of Creative Arts (2025). A bronze award is held by the School of Law and Education (2020) which is due to renewal in 2026. The department of Engineering and Computer Science has submitted a Silver Athena Swan application in November 2025 and await the outcome.

Race Equality Charter (REC)



REC remains the University's largest and most complex Charter, with extensive actions across all SBUs and central functions. Significant progress has been achieved this year, with clear evidence of momentum and improved governance. The REC action plan is split into two sections: Institutional overall actions and Strategic Business Unit actions.

Progress on REC SBU Action Plans:

According to the latest institutional monitoring report out of 333 actions

across the SBU action plan:

- 59% of SBU-level actions (195 actions) are completed,
- 30% (101 actions) are progressing, and
- Only 4% (14 actions) require renewed attention or closure.
- 7% (23 actions) of actions are superseded.

These figures reflect strong engagement across SBUs and demonstrate meaningful advancement since the last reporting period. The EDI team worked closely with EDITs to advance progress between September and November 2025.

Across the institutional REC action plan which has 256 actions:

- 82% of actions (211 actions) are progressing or completed,
- 10% remain red (25 actions), and
- 8% (20 actions) have been superseded as processes or structures have evolved.

SBU's have been asked to progress outstanding amber actions by January, after which they will be integrated into a streamlined REC SBU plan for the 2026 submission cycle. The next submission will occur in summer 2026 and the aim will be to achieve a REC Silver award.

Disability Confident Scheme



Herts continues to hold Level 2: Disability Confident Employer status and is actively working toward Level 3: Disability Confident Leader over the next three years.

This year the focus was on:

- Strengthening inclusive recruitment, including reviewing data on the outcomes of disabled applicants.
- Implementing SBU-level REC and disability-related actions, particularly around training, reasonable adjustments, and improving staff confidence in disclosure.
- Developing key resources, including the Workplace Adjustments Passport and enhanced disability guidance.
- Supporting local action through the DAWN network and EDI team, with increased engagement during Disability History Month and expansion of neurodiversity-related support.
- Maintaining our memberships with Hidden Disabilities and the Business Disability Forum.

These improvements provide a strong foundation for the external validation required for Level 3 recognition.

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index/Proud Employers



Building on the University's achievement as a Top 100 Employer (ranked 98th) in the 2024 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, work has continued this year to strengthen LGBTQ+ inclusion and address feedback from the benchmarking review.

Key progress includes:

- Updating policies and guidance.
- Increasing visibility of LGBTQ+ staff experiences through events, campaigns, and targeted communications.
- Strengthening systems for reporting discrimination and improving staff confidence in raising concerns.
- Further developing LGBTQ+ training and LGBTQ+ allyship, including work through the LGBTQ+ Staff Network, LGBTQ+ Allies scheme and LGBTQ+ mentorship programme.

The University continues to shape our LGBTQ+ inclusion work and awaits the result of the Proud Employers Accreditation submission in December 2025.

Stammerers Through University Consultancy (STUC)

Herts remains one of only 21 UK institutions partnering with STUC, advancing support for staff and students who stammer. This work enhances our wider commitment to inclusive communication practices and disability visibility.

Strategic Business Units

The following section will provide brief updates and progress from the last twelve months. This is not a comprehensive outline of activities or planned actions but provides a brief overview of the breadth of work across Herts. SBU updates are presented as concise summaries and are not intended to provide a comprehensive record of all activity.

Academic Registry

- Launched a new EDIT SharePoint page, including an anonymous EDI feedback form, advancing actions identified in last year's report.
- Delivered a whole-SBU Q&A session to raise awareness of EDIT activity, the role of Wellbeing Champions and opportunities for staff involvement.
- Ensured full EDIT participation in developing the AR EDI Action Plan and gathered staff feedback on the first draft; the Chair will present the final plan to the SBU in the new year and establish a progress reporting process.
- Used the new AR communications strategy to promote EDI and wellbeing news and events through targeted SharePoint updates.
- Collaborated with OVC and LCS to host a "Celebrating Diversity Through Food" bring-and-share picnic.
- Invited Chairs of staff networks to present at EDIT meetings to strengthen cross-network awareness and engagement.

Business School

- Recruitment and shortlisting processes were reviewed to support fairer outcomes and more diverse candidate pools, alongside increased visibility of underrepresented groups in leadership and academic roles. Mentoring activity has supported progression, contributing to increased representation of women and minoritised groups at senior levels.
- EDI principles were embedded across all modules and assessments, supported by staff development on inclusive teaching practices and the use of diverse, global case studies. As a result, all programmes have been reviewed and updated, with positive feedback on inclusion reflected in NSS and internal surveys.
- EDI Champions were established among staff and students, alongside regular forums and listening sessions. This has driven strong engagement in EDI activity, including high participation in events and the growth of active EDI student societies.
- Mandatory unconscious bias and cultural competency training was delivered and supported by online EDI resources and campaigns, achieving over 95% completion and strengthening shared understanding of inclusive practice across the School.
- The collection and analysis of staff and student demographic data were strengthened, with EDI progress monitored against KPIs and reported transparently, supporting continued external recognition through sector Charter Marks.

Creative Arts

- Submitted the School's Athena Swan Bronze renewal application which was awarded in Nov 2025
- Led a large discussion exercise on attendance recording, prompted by Access and Participation priorities around active learning and reducing non-continuation among vulnerable student groups. Conversations focused on practice, data use and the relationship between attendance monitoring and teaching identity.
- Delivered two programme-level race equity workshops to date, with a third planned, beginning with the School's largest undergraduate programmes.
- Continued routine EDI activity, including promoting University-wide EDI events, progressing SBU action plans and contributing to institutional reporting.
- All EDI Leads completed APDG progress reports, capturing student-side activity and insights to inform wider School and institutional EDI priorities.

Estates

- Extended accessible parking arrangements and responded to individual accessibility requests, including the installation of automatic doors.
- Progressed a programme of physical accessibility improvements across Mercer, Lindop and the Art and Design Building, alongside design development for the new Health Building to improve access across the College Lane Campus.
- Renewed the AccessAble contract to deliver updated campus access guides with improved photography and clarity.
- Collaborated with UNO to extend bus pass provision to UH6 residents, supporting access for lower socio-economic groups.
- Established the Estates Disability Forum as a formal sub-group of EVSAG, strengthening governance and decision-making on disability-related actions.
- Delivered awareness-raising activity, including LGBTQ+ History Month engagement and an ADHD talk for staff.

Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (Reporting Period: March 2025 – Nov 2025)

- Strengthened placement support through the appointment of key leads: *Head of Placement Learning (Dr Cathy Hamilton), Placement Complaints Lead (Lynne Gordon), Placement Learning Advocate (Mariya Shabbir), HML-HAS co-leads (Andrew Smith and Shipa Begum)*.
- Produced new student-facing placement support resources, including the regularly updated *HML Placement Support 2025–26* pack and *Speaking Up* guidance.
- Offered drop-in sessions and 1:1 support for students preparing for or experiencing challenges during placements.
- Delivered a *Placement Preparation Bootcamp*, including sessions for neurodiverse learners and overseas students adjusting to UK culture.
- Developed a Staff Resource Pack to support Practice Educators working with Black and Minoritised Ethnic students; launched November 2025 (led by Dr Echo Yeung).
- Made EDI training resources available to staff before and after sessions via SharePoint

Health and Social Work (HSK)

- PREL (Promoting Racial Equality in Learning), co-chaired by Dr Vida Douglas and Radica Hardy, continued to lead targeted work to reduce awarding gaps and strengthen race equity across HSK.
- Held a staff inclusivity celebration event to build community and showcase good practice.
- Delivered a practice placement conference “*A Safe Space to Grow*” with employers, partners and students (June 2025).
- Shared examples of programme-level good practice, including curriculum diversification and research insights into student experience.
- Created a *Freedom to Speak Up* video to support students in raising concerns.
- Established a dedicated HSK email inbox for placement concerns and delivered monthly student drop-ins for placement issues and staff drop-in sessions.
- Developed a *Raising Concerns* flowchart, adapted from existing Pan London guidance.

Human Resources

- Continued delivery of *Morning EDITion* sessions, providing regular opportunities to engage staff on a wide range of equality, diversity, inclusion, belonging and wellbeing topics.
- Reinvigorated work on career progression mapping, with an initial focus on clarifying pathways and expectations across roles.
- Began exploratory work on identifying and articulating transferable skills to support staff progression and build confidence in career development opportunities.
- Established a longer-term project aim (2026) to develop clearer and more inclusive career pathways, supporting progression and retention, particularly for underrepresented groups within the HR workforce.

Law and Education

- In Law, the Home student awarding gap reduced from a peak of 25 percentage points in 2022–23 to 5 percentage points in 2024–25. In Education, the gap widened to 16 percentage points in 2023–24 before reducing to 3 percentage points in 2024–25.
- Between March 2024 and March 2025, the mean gender pay gap reduced to near parity (-0.4% in favour of women). Over the same period, the mean disability pay gap reduced by 1.6% and the median gap fell from 16.2% to 4%.
- As of August 2025, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic teaching staff representation increased from 23% to 26%. Women accounted for 67% of senior academic staff at Grade AM1, and disability declaration increased from 4% to 7.3%.
- EDIT Student Officers supported the Disabled Allyship Scheme with the Students' Union, producing neurodiversity training resources, and marked International Women's Day through an event with the local Soroptimist chapter.
- Promoted scholarships and sector initiatives (including the Freshfields Stephen Lawrence, Haleema Sanotra and Aziz Scholarships) and strengthened partnerships with organisations supporting access to legal careers.
- Established an active EDIT student representative group, meeting monthly and contributing to diversity calendar events, alongside the development of inclusive careers talks and work experience opportunities.

Library and Computing Services



- Delivered a coordinated programme of EDI events aligned to the University diversity calendar, using reading lists, displays, workshops and co-created activities to promote inclusion, wellbeing and belonging.
 - Established a cross-department EDI Events and Activities Working Group to plan and deliver inclusive, community-led activity across LCS.
 - Strengthened partnership working with the Students' Union, UH Arts, Student Wellbeing and the EDI team, delivering creative and reflective engagement spaces.
 - Introduced a dedicated sensory study room at College Lane LRC, supporting neurodivergent students and those requiring low-stimulation learning environments.
 - Improved EDI training compliance through strengthened monitoring and senior oversight, achieving over 93% completion for Unconscious Bias and EDI training.
- Advanced inclusive access and digital accessibility through frontline staff briefings and monthly digital inclusivity training.

Life and Medical Sciences

- Delivered a major staff training event, *Supporting International Students* (Jan 2025), equipping LMS staff with guidance and resources to better support international cohorts; recordings and materials now available on SharePoint.
- Achieved excellent participant feedback, with a proposal to repeat the event in the new School structure.
- Worked with WASS to strengthen understanding of outreach and undergraduate recruitment activity with Widening Access Target Secondary Schools.
- Ran *Biosciences: Antibiotics Unearthed* pilot project with The Thomas Alleyne Academy, including in-school and on-campus sessions for Year 11 students.
- Delivered Geography fieldwork days at Bayfordbury for Fearnhill School, giving sixth-form students hands-on experience of data collection and analysis.

Marketing and Communications

- Delivered a programme of EDI-focused campaigns and events, including Pride, Trans Awareness Week, Black History Month, Juneteenth, Diwali and Rosh Hashanah, promoting visibility and inclusion across the University.
- Supported staff and student engagement through workshops, talks and awareness sessions on pronouns, disability, mental health, ADHD and digital accessibility.
- Facilitated confidential race equality drop-ins and contributed to Race Equality Charter activity through focus groups and critical friend input.
- Strengthened collaboration with staff networks, including LGBTQ+, Disability and Mental Health initiatives.
- Continued to evolve an inclusive communications approach, supporting institutional EDI priorities and community cohesion.
- Delivered an allyship training session for colleagues led by the EDI Office
- Promoted Advance HE *Diversifying Leadership* through talks at MCM EDIT, EDI HOPE Conference,

Office of the Vice Chancellor

- Supported delivery of the University EDI Conference and promoted key wellbeing initiatives, including World Mental Health Day.
- Delivered awareness sessions on trans and gender-diverse identities, neurodiversity and menopause, alongside wellbeing-focused drop-ins.
- Launched and promoted mentoring schemes, including OVC mentoring and EmpowerED.
- Supported Race Equality Charter engagement and staff participation through targeted communications and events.
- Promoted inclusive schemes including Disability Confident and the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower.
- Delivered community-building activity to strengthen connection and belonging.
- Delivered a discussion on the intersection of neurodiversity and race; launched menopause awareness training.

Physics, Engineering and Computer Science

- New 0.5 FTE EDI Lead appointed to coordinate initiatives, drive the SBU agenda, and strengthen collaboration with CESS, WASS and the central EDI Team.
- Silver Award application for Engineering & Computer Science submitted in Nov 2025, building on progress since the 2019 Bronze Award.
- SPECS Education and Student Experience Success Team established to enhance cross-functional communication and coordinate EDI, teaching quality and student experience work.
- Two wellbeing champions delivering campaigns and newsletters to support staff connection and wellbeing.
- New leadership course launched, with 40–50% participation from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues, supporting diverse leadership development.
- Celebrated International Women’s Day and Black History Month, bringing staff and students together to recognise diversity and inclusion.
- Increased international student enrolments prompted efforts to diversify teaching staff. Recruitment processes were revised to widen candidate reach, use inclusive language and ensure equitable shortlisting and interviewing, in collaboration with HR and visa teams.

Staff Training and Development

The University remains strongly committed to supporting the continuous professional development of staff, with EDI learning playing a central role in building an inclusive culture. Completion of mandatory, refresher and bespoke EDI training ensures that colleagues across Herts are equipped with the awareness, skills and confidence needed to embed inclusive practices in their day-to-day work. In 2024–

25, staff completed a total of 4,008 EDI training modules. The table below provides an overview of the EDI training available and corresponding completion rates for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

Table 26 – Staff Training

Course titles	Times Run-delivered workshop	Participants	Previous 12 months (number of attendees)
Active Bystander	3	109	221
Communicating Effectively with International Students	6	78	79
EDI Legal Update	1	37	Unknown
Equality and Diversity	Online	1610	1567
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference	1	97	Unknown
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Essentials	14	343	646
Herts Disability Workshop	1	8	
Sexual Harassment Awareness	Online	1936	New
Trauma Informed Training	1	30	
Unconscious Bias	Online	1566	1574
Total	27	5814	4008

Wellbeing

Wellbeing Commitment

The Herts Wellbeing Commitment (2025–2030), launched in May 2025, embeds wellbeing across University life to support staff and students to thrive. Structured around seven domains: Belonging, Collaboration, Transitions, Support, Education, Prevention and Timely Intervention. It aligns closely with EDI priorities and Charter Mark activity, including the University Mental Health Charter and the Race Equality Charter. Wellbeing has been integrated into SBU EDITs to support coordinated discussion, action planning and alignment with institutional priorities.

Mental Health

Mental Health Awareness Training

Workplace Wellbeing and Student Wellbeing delivered the second phase of the in-person Mental Health Awareness training pilot, providing practical strategies for supporting colleagues and students, sharing lived experience, and applying frameworks such as Boundaries and the Drama Triangle. The training supports EDI objectives by promoting psychological safety, reducing stigma and strengthening confidence in having supportive conversations. A key recommendation emerging from the pilot is the development of standalone training for line managers to further embed compassionate and accountable leadership.

Leafyard – ‘Couch to 5km for mental health’

Leafyard continues to support staff mental fitness and resilience, with varied uptake across staff groups. Professional staff demonstrated the highest uptake (72%) and engagement (82%), academic staff showed moderate uptake (36%) with strong engagement (70%), while technical staff uptake remained low (6%) but engagement among active users was high. Wellbeing scores varied by group, with professional staff reporting strong rest and activity but higher anxiousness, academic staff reporting

strong concentration alongside lower optimism, and technical staff reporting the highest mood and attention scores. Willingness to recommend Leafyard remained consistently positive across all staff groups (7.8–8.3).

Wellbeing and EDI Linked Initiatives

Throughout 2024–25, a programme of wellbeing-focused initiatives was delivered in support of wider EDI objectives, reflecting the close relationship between wellbeing, inclusion and belonging. Activity included World Mental Health Day, Stress Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness Month, menopause awareness training, neurodiversity-focused sessions, peer-support initiatives and wellbeing drop-ins, alongside collaborative events with partners such as Samaritans. These initiatives supported awareness, prevention and early intervention, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive workplace culture.

Supporting Students

Dean of Students

The Dean of Students (DoS) continues to work collaboratively with various teams including Herts Academic Skills, SPECs SASH, CLASS, Widening Access, and Herts Student Union to ensure that our students are supported during their time with Herts. The DoS encompasses all disability, counselling and mental health support for students at Herts, and also has responsibility for Chaplaincy, Residence Life and community engagement, safeguarding and the nursery.

Staff Training and Development

Throughout 2024–25, the Dean of Students Office delivered an extensive training programme designed to enhance staff capability in supporting student wellbeing, safeguarding, and inclusive practice. The programme included sessions on:

- Supporting distressed students
- Safeguarding adults at risk
- Domestic abuse awareness
- Neurodiversity and ADHD
- Study Needs Agreements (SNAs)
- Crisis management and suicide prevention
- Faith-related issues and inclusive practice

As part of the DoS programme, Herts Mind Network offered a suite of specialist mental health workshops, including:

- Emotional wellbeing and coping strategies
- Reducing isolation and social anxiety
- Managing anxiety and panic
- Study stress and burnout
- Mental health crisis intervention
- Spot the Signs suicide prevention

Mental Health Training (E-learning and In-person)

Development of a new online mental health awareness module, in partnership with the Charlie Waller Trust, continued during the year. Launch has been delayed due to staffing and IT changes within the partner organisation. Once complete, the module will provide tailored guidance for staff on supporting themselves, colleagues, and students.

Half-day in-person Mental Health Awareness training:

Piloted in December 2024, this interactive session created space for discussion, sharing best practice, and increasing confidence in supporting student mental health. A further five sessions were delivered between July and October 2025. Staff feedback highlighted increased confidence in having supportive conversations and signposting effectively.

Progress and Key Achievements

The University Wellbeing Commitment was completed and launched in 2024–25. It sets out clear priorities across seven domains: Transitions, Belonging, Collaboration, Education, Prevention, Support, and Timely Intervention.

The commitment aligns with and strengthens delivery against:

- The University Mental Health Charter
- The Race Equality Charter
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (social pillar)

Wellbeing goals have also been embedded into EDIT Teams to sustain a culture of inclusive practice and proactive wellbeing support.

Disability Services

- 1,848 disability adviser appointments held between 2 Sept 2024 and 29 Aug 2025.
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) remain the most common disclosure.
- Significant growth in students disclosing multiple disabilities, reflecting increasing complexity of needs.
- Rising numbers of students presenting with housing difficulties, with ResLife supporting staff and students, including cases related to homelessness.
- 44 Study Needs Agreements issued without formal evidence, up from just 1 in 2023–24, demonstrating increased understanding of evidence thresholds and the value of professional judgement when responding to student-reported difficulties.
- Ongoing collaboration with:
 - WASS for Access and Participation Plan (APP) provision
 - ResLife on student events
 - Herts Academic Skills on awareness-raising activities

Planned Activity for 2025–26:

- Launch of an ADHD support group (October 2025)
- Continued monthly Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) support group
- Herts Vision Loss Partnership launching November 2025, including peer and professional support groups
- Development of the Disabled Student Commitment, with the first draft due for consultation in Semester B 2025–26

Counselling and Mental Health Service

- 1233 student referrals
- 4466 Mental Health Adviser appointments
- 2955 counselling appointments
- 317 Mental Health SNA appointments
- Anxiety and depression remain the leading reasons for accessing support.

The service continues to experience higher-acuity presentations:

- Actively self-harming: 74 students
- Active suicidal ideation: 306 students
- Intent to end life on the day of appointment: 37 students
- Mental health impacting studies: 946 cases
- Students considering withdrawal: 154 cases

These figures illustrate both increased need and strong engagement with support services.

- Targeted work to support men's mental health, including the *Momentum* therapeutic group.

- Participation in the Black Students' Mental Health Research Project, in partnership with three other universities. Initial scoping commenced summer 2025.

Report and Support/ Speak Up (Students)

The University of Hertfordshire remains committed to ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all, and does not tolerate bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, hate crime or discrimination.

From 2022 to June 2025, students were able to report incidents through *Report and Support*, an online tool provided by Culture Shift. Reports could be submitted anonymously or with contact details for follow-up support. Over the three years, the platform was used consistently, with reporting increasing across all incident types, likely reflecting growing awareness and confidence in using the system. Data for 2024-25 covers only up to 9 June due to the contract end date, meaning final figures would have been higher.

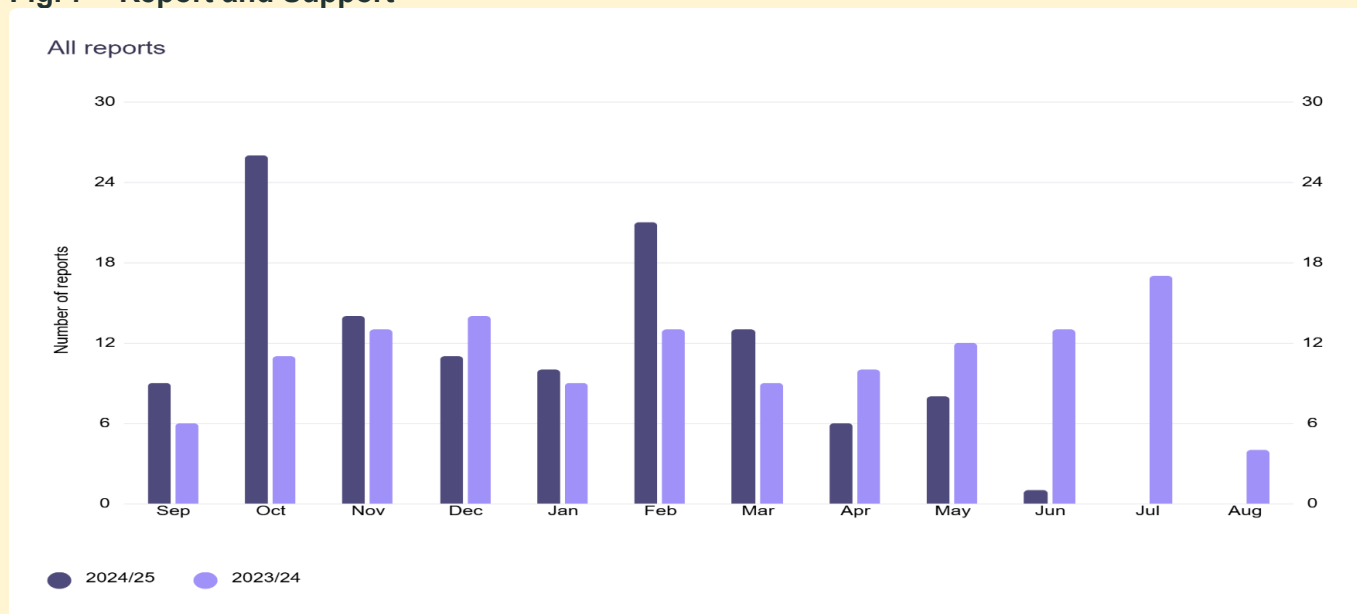
Reporting patterns were broadly consistent each year, with peaks in October and February as students settle into the academic cycle, and lower activity during exam and holiday periods. Women continued to report more frequently than men, though the gap has narrowed. Younger students (18–21) were the most likely to report, and a notable proportion of reporters chose not to disclose information such as sex, ethnicity, or School affiliation. Incidents occurred both on and off campus, with College Lane Halls of Residence the most frequently named on-campus location. Targeted interventions, for example within the LRCs, have contributed to reductions in reporting in specific areas.

The *Report and Support* contract ended in June 2025, delivering a saving of approximately £25,000. It has been replaced with *Speak Up*, a new reporting platform integrated into the Dean of Students system (Simplicity – Advocate). *Speak Up* offers a streamlined workflow and centralised record-keeping for staff and student reports, enabling improved case management and more robust data collection.

Table 27 – Report and Support Incidents

Reported Incident	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025 NB: until 9/6/25
A hate crime	2	12	6
Academic issue	12	22	17
An assault	13	22	18
Bullying	14	26	25
Discrimination	8	20	21
General complaint	17	30	36
Harassment	24	37	38
I'm not sure	10	10	11
Sexual Misconduct	8	8	11
Other	27	17	13
Total Reports	135	204	196

Fig. 7 – Report and Support



Centre for Education and Student Success

The Race and Ethnicity Equity Student Success group continues to co-ordinate institutional work on reducing the awarding gap, on behalf of the Education and Student Experience Committee. In 2024, Academic Board made a significant commitment to re-energise engagement in staff development activities associated with the awarding gap, with an acute focus in Schools on modules with high failure rates to develop a culture of ‘pass first time’. Members of the Learning and Teaching Excellence team and Academic Quality teams within the Centre for Education and Student Success worked throughout the year to identify and resolves issues behind high failure rates on identified modules. In 2024-25 the group focussed energies on piloting and re-designing programme level race equity workshops which will be held with every undergraduate programme over the next three years as part of our Access and Participation Plan commitments. The work was relaunched in the summer of 2025 with School wide events supported by external sector expert, Nathan Ghann of The Educate Group, to re-establish a threshold understanding amongst the staff body of the awarding gap, the issues and potential solutions known the sector, and a topline examination of the specific challenges within their School.

Access and Participation

Access and Participation is an Office for Student (OfS) strategy designed to improve equality of opportunity in higher education. Access and Participation Plans (APP) set out how higher education providers will improve equality of opportunity for students from underrepresented groups to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. The Widening Access and Student Success team (part of the Lifelong Learning and Student Success department) have lead responsibility for the University’s access and participation work.

In 2024-25, the concluding year of our APP 2020-25, we continued to deliver on our commitment to equality of opportunity. Through outreach initiatives, we delivered 107 activities to over 7000 young people in Hertfordshire. A wide range of support was also made available to just under 2000 University of Hertfordshire widening participation students. Please see here for more information and to read our [2024-25 annual impact report](#).

The University’s [newly implemented APP](#) for 2025-2029 identifies 13 key risks to equality of opportunity across the continuation, awards and progression parts of the student lifecycle. These risks have been grouped into six ‘at risk’ student groups: Students who are Male; Students who identify as Black or

Asian; Students with BTEC/non-traditional entry qualifications; Students who declare a Mental Health Condition; Students from Indices of Multiple Deprivation Q1; and Students who have been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). The plan includes targets, objectives and interventions to address the identified risks. The intervention for 'Students who identify as Black or Asian' includes a project called Herts Against Racism. This is a comprehensive four-year anti-racism project which plans to address racism by focusing on five areas:

- 1) Structures (Conduct reviews and reforms of existing structures and practices to ensure equity and inclusivity are embedded at all levels);
- 2) Policy Reform (Develop and implement policies that actively combat racism and discrimination. Regularly review and update these to reflect evolving best practice and legal standards);
- 3) Staff Development (Provide comprehensive anti-racist education and cultural competency professional development opportunities for all staff members);
- 4) Student Support (Enhance support systems for students from diverse backgrounds, focusing on mentorship, academic resources, and mental health services)
- 5) Student voice (Establish student-led forums to ensure their voices are central to our efforts).

Herts Against Racism aims to set a standard for anti-racist practice in higher education, fostering a community where every individual is empowered to succeed without prejudice or discrimination. Please see here for an [accessible summary of the APP](#).

Flexible ICS Internships

Funded by the UHICS Partnership Programme, the Flexible ICS Internship scheme will provide fully funded 150-hour internships in non-clinical roles at employers across the local health & social care system to undergraduate students deemed "at risk" in terms of equality of opportunity in achieving positive graduate outcomes. Traditional internship opportunities typically have a rigid structure, with set start & end dates built around a full-time working pattern. This can be a barrier for students with caring responsibilities, part-time jobs or mental health conditions, which can in turn contribute to poorer graduate outcomes.

The Flexible ICS Internship scheme allows students to spread their 150 hours over a period of 4-12 weeks, agreeing a mutually beneficial schedule with their host employer. Internship placements have been secured in NHS Trusts, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations, and new employers are being engaged as the programme progresses. The pilot cohort will see 13 students placed across 7 employers, with the first interns starting their roles in December 2025. Funding has been secured for a total of 66 interns over up to four cohorts through 2026 and 2027.

Advancing Inclusive Research Participation at Herts

The Research and Innovation Hub delivered a PARITY-funded initiative to address long-standing underrepresentation of ethnic minority and other underserved groups in health and social care research. Students from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds participated in advisory sessions and research, engagement workshops designed to identify barriers to research participation and inform more inclusive approaches.

Across workshops attended by 126 students, the initiative gathered important insights into issues such as low awareness of research opportunities, concerns about cultural relevance, and the need for clearer, more accessible information. Despite these barriers, most students expressed strong interest in participating in research when studies were meaningful to their identities or communities. The work has strengthened understanding of how to embed inclusive research design and communication, and has

informed next steps, including further engagement activities and development of student/peer Research Champions to support a more equitable research culture at the University.

Fostering Inclusion and Community Cohesion

Staff Allyship Project

During 2024–25, the EDI Team have progressed a Staff Allyship Project aimed at strengthening inclusive culture through effective, evidence-informed allyship. The project focuses on improving the existing LGBTQ+ Allies scheme and developing new Disability Allies and Race and Ethnicity Allies schemes, aligned to the LGBTQ+ Action Plan, Disability Confident commitments and the Race Equality Charter.

The project is grounded in academic research and sector best practice, defining allyship as an ongoing practice of learning, listening, action and reflection that is recognised as supportive by the communities it serves. Work to date has included a comprehensive literature and sector review, consultation with staff networks and Stonewall, redevelopment of LGBTQ+ Allies materials, centralisation of the sign-up process, and the design and piloting of allyship training. A new Allyship Hub on HertsHub has also been developed to provide a central space for resources, guidance and engagement.

Looking ahead, the Allyship Hub will launch in January 2026, followed by a phased programme to co-produce and implement Disability and Race and Ethnicity Allies schemes. Delivery will be supported by a coordinated communications plan, training for EDITs, and ongoing evaluation using engagement and uptake metrics to monitor impact and refine the schemes over time.

Staff Networks



The staff networks form a vital means of support for staff, give a platform to disadvantaged groups and challenge and provide feedback on Herts' approach - each is also supported by a Senior Champion from the Senior Leadership Team. They are integral to the University's governance to mainstream and embed EDI. We are proud of the engagement of our staff networks, the passion and dedication of all the Chairs and the difference they make. The following highlights illustrate, rather than exhaustively capture, the contribution of staff networks over this reporting period.

Academic Women's Action Group (AWAG)

AWAG continued to deliver inclusive and celebratory activities throughout 2024–25, strengthening connections across the University and creating spaces for women and colleagues who identify as female to share experiences and support one another. The network hosted its annual festive celebration, bringing members together for an informal end-of-year gathering.

Plans for International Women's Day 2026 are progressing in collaboration with the LGBTQ+ Staff Network, reflecting AWAG's commitment to intersectional practice. The event will feature opportunities for colleagues to share short messages of courage and inspiration, alongside a keynote speaker discussing her experience of breaking the glass ceiling. Staff and students will also be invited to post photos and tributes to women who have inspired them.

AWAG will additionally work in partnership with the Network of Women+ Professors to deliver the Women Rise Conference. This annual event continues to be a cornerstone of sex and gender-equity

activity at Herts, providing a platform for learning, reflection and community-building across the institution.

Carers Network

The Carers Network delivered a programme of support and advocacy focused on building community, raising awareness and strengthening institutional understanding of carers' needs. Early in the year, the Network conducted a staff poll to inform proposals to the EDI Committee on carers' support, and successfully secured institutional membership with Employers for Carers. Regular "How Are You" sessions provided peer support, alongside talks and sessions with external partners and targeted activity during Carers Week. Leadership capacity was strengthened with the appointment of an interim Co-Chair, Jamal Pasha, in October 2025.

Future plans include continuing peer-support sessions and themed discussions, wellbeing-focused Carers Week activity, and exploring cross-institutional collaboration with other universities and the NHS. The Network will also continue discussions around signing up to the Carers Confident Charter Mark to further strengthen support for staff with caring responsibilities.

Disability and Wellbeing Network (DAWN)

The Network continued to grow steadily, reaching a membership of around 60 staff. Recent promotion via LinkedIn and Facebook aims to expand engagement further and increase visibility across the University. The Network maintained regular meetings and delivered a well-attended Lunch and Learn session on ADHD at the start of the year. The Network supported a varied programme for Disability History Month, including a charity quiz, a My Story to Tell session, a Digital Accessibility workshop, and a Disability Sport Symposium.

Looking ahead, the Network plans to launch the Workplace Adjustments Passport to ensure consistency and continuity of reasonable adjustments when staff move roles. Further priorities include developing a Disability Allies scheme with the EDI Office and other interested colleagues, expanding the Lunch and Learn series, and organising a cross-network event exploring intersections between disability, wellbeing and other identities such as gender and sex, caring responsibilities and ethnicity.

LGBTQ+ Network

The Network underwent several leadership changes during the year, with Derek Ong continuing as Co-Chair, supported by outgoing Co-Chair Matthew Maddock until April 2025. Co-Chair Natascha Basedau joined in July, and Professor Penny Carey became the Network's Senior Champion, strengthening leadership representation and strategic support.

LGBTQ+ History Month featured events including: the Herts LGBTQ+ Memory Scrapbook, flag raising ceremonies, 'Queer Conversations', a keynote address on LGBTQ+ inclusion at work, research-focused sessions, film screenings, creative activities and community events. Additional activity throughout the year included a Trancestry Museum outing, publication of a Wonkhe article on national EDI policy implications, and a full-day workshop on creative research methods for LGBTQ+ inclusion. Following the Pride flag raising in June, network members joined Pride in London in July, and new outreach to staff networks at other universities from November 2025. The Network also launched a book club, issued a statement on the May 2025 Supreme Court Judgement, and introduced a refreshed committee structure representing a wide range of identities.

The Network continued to play an active institutional role, with Co-Chairs representing all the Staff Networks at the EDI Self-Assessment Team and EDI Committee.



May 2025: Trancestry Museum, London



June 2025: Pride flag raising

Menopause Network

The Menopause Staff Network continued to grow in visibility and influence during 2024–25, reaching 190 members by December 2025. Co-Chairs Laila Salamat, Carol Taylor and Tricia Bryan led collaborative work across the University to strengthen menopause support, policy and awareness. A major achievement was the development of the new Menopause Policy and Guidance, produced in partnership with HR, Occupational Health and the EDI team, published in October 2025.

The Network worked closely with HR, Wellbeing and EDI to introduce online Menopause training for all staff, with 148 colleagues completing the course to date. World Menopause Day was marked with a well-attended event featuring specialist input on sleep, joint health, movement and mobility, alongside contributions from Unison. The University's Vice-Chancellor, signalled institutional commitment by contributing a pre-recorded Q&A.

Throughout the year, the Network continued to run open events offering information and support around menopause, and plans are in place to expand engagement with Strategic Business Units, EDI Leads and Wellbeing Champions to create further opportunities for line manager training and local conversations.

Men's Health and Wellbeing Network

The Network continued to offer a supportive space for male staff to connect, share experiences and discuss issues related to men's wellbeing. Monthly catch-ups were temporarily paused during the Chair's parental leave, with plans to resume activity in early 2026. The Network also continued to share opportunities for wider engagement, including signposting to external events such as the 'Men and Menopause: What Everyone Needs to Know' webinar, supporting inclusive conversations around men's roles within broader health topics. Further updates and events are planned for 2026 as the Network resumes regular activity.

The Network shared opportunities to engage in Men's Health Awareness Month (November 2025) through accessing reading lists curated by colleagues in the Library & Resource Centre Teams and events hosted by colleagues in the Marketing & Communications Team around ADHD and prostate cancer.

Network of Women+ Professors (NW+P)

NW+P strengthened its role in advancing sex and gender equity in academic leadership, growing membership to 90 colleagues and supporting career progression, including promotions to Professor. The network played a key role in shaping institutional policy discussions on academic promotion, research workload and progression pathways. The network played a key role in shaping institutional policy conversations, presenting papers to senior leadership that captured members' concerns regarding the

academic promotions pause, clarity around Significant Responsibility for Research Policy, research time allocations in the Herts Workload Allocation Management System, and the renewal processes for Associate Professors and Readers.

NW+P delivered a programme of events including a well-attended International Women's Day seminar and the Women Rise Conference, co-hosted with the Academic Women's Action Group and attended by over 100 participants. The network also continued its international engagement through a British Council-funded project with partners in Vietnam, supporting women's leadership development through research, mentoring and career-focused workshops.

Its mentoring scheme, recognised within the University's Athena Swan Silver Award, continues to demonstrate strong impact, with future activity focused on leadership development, research culture and international collaboration. The scheme supported 53 women+ mentees through a pool of 50 trained mentors, with half of all women promoted to Reader or Associate Professor in 2024 having participated in the programme. Good practice is being shared with the Herts' Black Women's Research Collective.

A new Senior Champion, Professor Wendy Wills, was appointed to support the network's strategic priorities.

Race and Ethnicity Equality Network

The Race and Ethnicity Equality Staff Network continued to grow and strengthen its presence across the University during 2024–25, reaching nearly 200 members. The Network meets regularly with online and in-person strategic sessions to encourage collaboration, networking and discussions on career progression. The Co-Chairs work closely with senior leaders, including regular meetings with Senior Champion Damian Ward.

Events delivered throughout the year included sessions on microaggressions, discussion around the Race Equality Charter Mark progress, survey and results, the UH Refugee Support Group and the LGBTQ+ Network. The Network contributed to the EmpowerED mentoring scheme matching process and, Held a bring-and-share lunch in July to foster community and celebrate shared achievements.

Co-Chairs met with embRACE Network leaders from the Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, agreeing to collaborate on future initiatives, including a joint event for Stephen Lawrence Day. In December, the Co-Chairs presented at the Staff Q&A and hosted a second bring-and-share lunch. The Network continues to contribute to policy development, including work on the Race Equality Charter Action Plan, anti-racism training for staff, and the promotion of inclusive recruitment through mandatory diverse panels. Future plans include collaborative events with NHS partners, delivery of Black History Month activities and further cultural events to celebrate and support the University's ethnically diverse community.

Working Parent's Network

The Network expanded significantly during 2024–25, supported by targeted promotion and increased visibility. A series of six pop-up events showcased the network, a promotional video was shared on LinkedIn, and the network was featured in an all-staff newsletter. These efforts, combined with regular online activity and in-person engagement, resulted in a 42% growth in membership.



The network updated its description to more clearly reflect its inclusive remit, supporting all parents and carers, regardless of family structure or circumstance, including those with children of any age, individuals considering parenthood, and those trying to conceive. Over the year, the network hosted six 'How Are You?' sessions, two best-practice discussions, and an informal meet-up. Collaborative activities with other networks, free training signposting, and the launch of a member-led parenting book club further strengthened peer support and community building.

Future plans include continuing regular activities and promotion to extend membership, and delivery of HR spotlight sessions on Herts' family-friendly policies. The network also plans to develop events with external speakers, including sessions on supporting children in navigating social media and the online world.

Herts Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy made a significant contribution to fostering inclusion and belonging across the University community during 2024–25. With a growing and increasingly international student population, the Chaplaincy provided vital spiritual and pastoral support that recognised the diverse faiths, identities and lived experiences represented at Herts. Activities such as reflective services, quiet spaces for prayer, and opportunities for spiritual expression helped students and staff navigate the emotional impact of global events, personal challenges and cultural transitions. This work aligned closely with the University's EDI priorities by ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds had equitable access to safe, welcoming and culturally sensitive support.

The programme of social and wellbeing-focused activities, including craft sessions, cultural celebrations and community-building events, played a key role in reducing isolation, strengthening community cohesion and supporting mental wellbeing. Pastoral work increased in both volume and complexity, with the Chaplaincy offering compassionate, person-centred support to individuals facing a wide range of emotional and practical difficulties. The Chaplaincy also regularly engaged in institutional initiatives connected to EDI and sustainability, such as Black History Month, demonstrating its contribution to an inclusive campus culture. Feedback from staff and students emphasised the Chaplaincy's role in creating a sense of safety, belonging and connection, underscoring its value as an inclusive support service within the wider University environment.






Looking Ahead

During 2025-26, we will continue to build on the progress we have made this and previous years and strive to continue to make a difference for our diverse student and staff community. Some of the upcoming projects and initiatives include:

- EDI Conference 2026
- Completion of the EDI Strategy
- Race Equality Charter Silver application submission
- Allyship Scheme implementation
- Co-ordinating and supporting the EDI Diversity Calendar of events.
- Setting up an Equality Impact Assessment working group to review the EIA process
- Anti racism training
- Development and support of Dignity and Respect Advisers

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