



equality of  
inclusion

University  
of Dundee

Equality, Diversity,  
and Inclusion Strategy  
2024-2027





## Foreword



As Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dundee, I am delighted to introduce our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy for 2024-2027. This document embodies the core principles that define our academic community, representing more than just a policy directive.

People, including staff, students, and alumni, are essential to our university's future. We are dedicated to creating an environment that values and celebrates diversity. True academic excellence thrives on inclusivity, enabling everyone to succeed regardless of their background. Our strategy recognises that a diverse and inclusive university is vital to achieving our mission of transforming lives and fulfilling our social purpose.

This EDI strategy is central to our broader institutional goals and vision of a supportive work and study environment. While we have established a strong foundation with progressive policies and equality action plans, we also fully embrace the need to intensify our efforts. We must take bold steps to enhance our approach. Our leaders and managers must exemplify inclusion, challenging themselves and others while taking concrete actions to realise our aspirations. This strategy serves as a roadmap to expedite these necessary changes.

Achieving our goals requires active participation from the entire university community. Each member plays a crucial role in advancing EDI initiatives and driving our cultural transformation. Your support is essential, and I encourage you to engage with this strategy. Together, we can create a brighter, more equitable, and inclusive future for everyone.

**Professor Iain Gillespie**  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Dundee



Our vision for equality, diversity, and inclusion

Dedicated to fostering a diverse and thriving community, the University of Dundee is deeply committed to enduring values and a social purpose that transcends academia, transforming lives locally and globally. We are proud to be a University of Sanctuary, offering refuge and support to those displaced by humanitarian crises; a commitment merging our humanitarian initiatives with our educational objectives, demonstrating a holistic and inclusive approach to societal impact.

Our EDI strategy lays the groundwork for fostering an inclusive environment on campus, aligning seamlessly with our social purpose mission and Strategy 2027. It is developed through collaborative dialogue with a variety of stakeholders and structured around key themes and objectives aimed at reducing inequalities, improving inclusion and diversity, and bridging achievement gaps, such as in student degree outcomes. Our strategy aligns with national policies and accredited frameworks, including Athena SWAN and the Race Equality Charter.

As we pursue excellence in research, education, and engagement, our triple intensity approach will ensure a positive contribution to our future legacy. We embody a spirit of unity and inclusion, where collective action will drive meaningful impact for our campus community and enhance our regional and global reach.

Our EDI Strategy is built on four foundational interlocking themes



Strategic context and key performance indicators (KPIs)

Our EDI Strategy is designed to be agile and responsive, aligning with external influences while simultaneously reinforcing strategic activities throughout the University. We have identified four KPIs that are integral to our foundational themes:

- 1

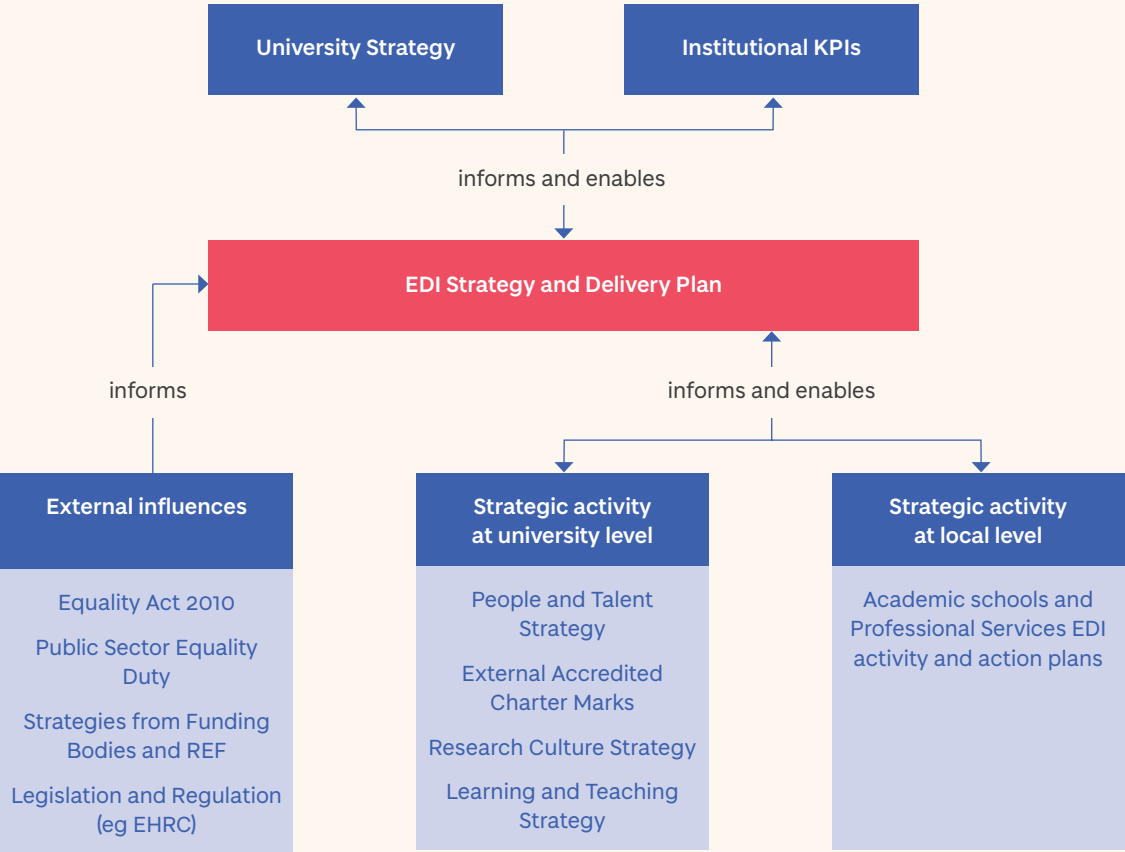
Advancing inclusivity and belonging on our campuses.
- 2

Improving workforce diversity.
- 3

Cultivating a supportive and inclusive research culture that enhances productivity and well-being of all researchers.
- 4

Promoting equity in degree attainment and educational experience.

These KPIs are crucial for driving meaningful improvements aligned with our core values. They also complement and support the objectives and actions of our enabling strategies. By embedding our EDI values in all our activities, we enrich our pursuit of knowledge with diverse perspectives, thereby nurturing an environment where creativity and innovation thrive through an approach that embraces people, culture, and environment. Such attributes are essential not only for delivering impactful research and aligning to the Research Excellence Framework (REF), but for promoting excellence in learning and teaching, achieving our charter mark ambitions, and meeting the equality milestones outlined in our Public Sector Equality Duty.



The following sections delve into the purpose of each theme, the linked actions, and KPIs, and how, together, they will foster academic excellence and inclusion, which is central to our social purpose to transform lives.

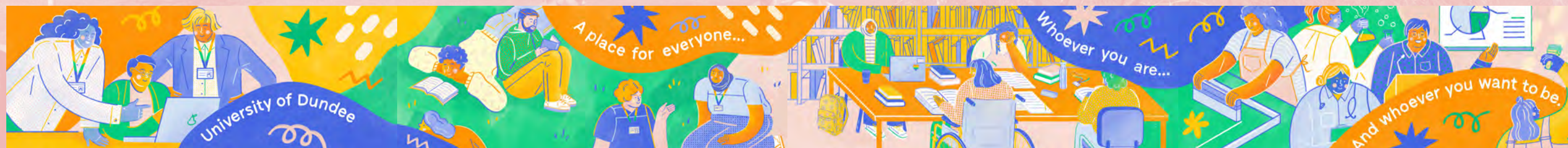


# inclusive campus communities

Our commitment to promote a culture of empowerment, engagement and trust is paramount for unlocking the full potential of our staff and students.

This dedication not only nurtures a thriving research and teaching environment but also underscores the importance of inclusivity in achieving excellence. We recognise that an inclusive environment is essential for the successful execution of our strategic goals, combining our approach to excellence with the core values of our institution.

Our dedication to inclusivity is integral to energising our community to be active advocates and allies. This commitment fosters a deep sense of belonging and safety throughout our campuses - both physical and virtual and extends into off-campus placements. By embedding inclusivity into our 'triple intensity' model, we weave together academic rigour, robust community engagement, and a profound awareness of social responsibility. In doing so, we not only fulfil our societal goals but also create a dynamic environment where everyone can flourish. This foundation paves the way for exceptional research and groundbreaking innovation, fostering comprehensive growth among our staff and students and amplifying our impact on the world.



By Jagoda Sadowska Illustrator and Designer, and former DJCAD student



What will we do?

- Complement the EDI training programme by incorporating new modules that foster an inclusive campus culture.
- Establish EDI committees within Schools/Directorates, tasked with actively fostering an inclusive work and study environment where diversity is celebrated and integrated at all levels.
- Strengthen decision making by augmenting inclusive governance, addressing representation and aligning with charter objectives.
- Facilitate inclusive working practices through an inclusive policy framework and, where possible, flexible work options for staff at all levels.
- Promote understanding and awareness of the Dignity at Work and Study Policy to foster a safer, more inclusive, and supportive environment for all individuals.
- Promote ability inclusion via a campus accessibility improvement plan and enhanced support for digital accessibility.
- Champion diversity through promoting and supporting events and guest speakers that enhance understanding and appreciation of cultural differences, thus creating a more connected and globally aware university community.



Image above: ©Andrew Leinster  
Image on right: Celebrating Dundee Pride ©Mhairi Edwards/DC Thomson

KPI Objective

This KPI evaluates our strategy’s success in fostering inclusive campuses. We will assess the inclusivity of our campuses and the sense of belonging among staff and students through established surveys, capturing experiences and feedback for continuous improvement to our inclusive campus culture.

Targets

1. By 2027, we aim to achieve a minimum staff engagement index score of 7.0 in the staff survey on the question of whether staff perceive the University is nurturing an inclusive culture where they feel safe and respected.
2. We aim to maintain student engagement with the National Student Survey (NSS) above 75% to ensure responses captured within the survey provide reliable data for analysis of strengths and weaknesses at both University and School levels.
3. We aim to significantly reduce the inclusion disparity between Disabled and Non-Disabled students, targeting near parity in satisfaction with course quality and research degree experiences as measured by the NSS and Postgraduate Research Experience Surveys.
4. We are committed to enhancing the reporting process for harassment and bullying incidents. Our goal is to foster greater confidence in our staff, aiming to raise the current average staff engagement survey score from 7.0 on this issue, and to efficiently track student reports using a new online tool that records incidents and logs the action taken and support offered.

A thriving, inclusive community is important in fostering a sense of belonging and celebrating the individual uniqueness of its members – this is what our campus community is striving towards.

Dr Andrea Mohan University of Dundee Race Equality Charter Lead





## workforce diversity

Promoting workforce diversity goes beyond the mere aesthetics of inclusivity; it forms a core element of our People and Talent strategy.

It is intimately tied to initiatives such as Athena SWAN and the Race Equality Charter, representing a pivotal strategic asset for our university, ensuring diversity is not only a stated value but a lived experience that enriches our academic and professional culture.

We recognise the importance of accountability and transparency in our recruitment practices, and the crucial role of nurturing and retaining talent across all staff roles. These efforts significantly enrich our tapestry of perspectives, experiences, and knowledge, empowering us to effectively tackle the complex challenges faced by our global community. By embracing a wide array of thoughts and experiences, including the invaluable contributions of our professional service, clerical, technical, and operational staff, we establish a university environment and culture that not only fosters a sense of belonging but also enables groundbreaking research discoveries and strong industry partnerships, generating solutions with impact and social relevance.

In addition to fuelling research innovation, a diverse workforce revitalises our teaching pedagogy. It introduces varied ideas and methodologies, sparking creativity and fostering adaptability within our education provision. As our staff move beyond traditional teaching paradigms, we leverage our diversity to enrich our curricula with unique insights and approaches. This amplifies the learning experience for all students, empowering our educators to develop and implement inclusive teaching strategies attuned to our students' diverse needs.



Within this dynamic research and educational setting, students engage with a broad spectrum of perspectives and role models. This engagement fosters deep, meaningful interactions with differing viewpoints, challenging preconceptions, and embracing the complexities of modern society. Such an environment promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for thriving in and contributing to a globally interconnected world.



What will we do?

- We will rigorously analyse our recruitment processes, to support diverse candidate attraction, review selection methods and enhance training to improve workforce diversity.
- We will proactively support colleagues in their career development, ensuring their professional growth, mainstreaming this into inclusive succession and talent management plans.
- We will build trust with colleagues disclosing personal data, and understand how this benefits them, the organisation and their sense of belonging.
- We will support colleague engagement, through participation in the staff survey, to hear feedback from a diverse range of voices.
- We will develop a comprehensive framework for reasonable adjustments to support colleagues with disabilities.
- We will conduct an analysis of pay gaps and implement strategies to address identified concerns.
- We will build capability in our community to promote cultural competency, understand inclusive work and teaching practices and their implementation.

KPI Objective

This KPI aims to cultivate a fair and diverse workplace through strategic refinement of recruitment processes and the empowerment of underrepresented staff, fostering a culture of equity and accessibility. By monitoring demographics such as gender, ethnicity, and disability within various roles, our data-driven methodology will chart our diversification journey, pinpointing areas for development and driving a more innovative and productive organisational culture.

Targets

1. We are dedicated to attaining a gender-balanced representation in senior academic (professorial) and professional service roles, aiming for a 40:40:20 representation (40% men, 40% women, and 20% individuals of any gender), to ensure diversity and equality in our top-tier positions.
2. Our goal is to increase our BAME staff representation from 12% to 15%, nearing the UK HEI sector average of 15.5%. We are dedicated to rectifying enduring disparities in BAME staff representation across all job categories. To achieve this, we will employ flexible, data-driven strategies and proactive measures to tackle the specific challenges contributing to underrepresentation in both academic and non-academic roles.
3. Build trust among our disabled and LGBT+ staff, aiming for higher disclosure rates for disability and sexual orientation. Strive to raise disability disclosure rates from 84% to 95% (as a percentage of total staff disclosure) and decrease non-disclosure for sexual orientation from 36% to 25%.



“Workforce diversity isn’t just a goal; it’s the vibrant pulse that drives innovation, enriches our academic community, and equips us to shape a future full of opportunities for all our staff and students.

Professor Hari Hundal Assistant Vice Principal – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion



# research culture and environment

The interplay between people, culture, and environment at our university forms the cornerstone of innovation and meaningful research impact.

The University's strategic vision, emphasising 'triple intensity' and 'research with impact', underscores this importance. This commitment involves promoting curiosity-driven research to push knowledge boundaries and ensuring that our academic pursuits address critical issues in health, education, sustainability, and social justice.

This vision is supported by external initiatives such as the Researcher Development Concordat and the Wellcome Institutional Fund for Research Culture (WIFRC), along with our ambition to establish a Strategic Research Fund. These initiatives aim to elevate research practices beyond traditional norms and, critically, recognise the role all staff play in achieving our strategic goals. As a signatory to the Technician Commitment, for example, the University acknowledges the significant role technical staff play across our academic disciplines and support services. This acknowledgment reinforces our pursuit of research excellence, while stressing visibility, career growth, and sustainability of our technical workforce, in line with our institutional EDI goals and principles.

We are dedicated to nurturing a vibrant academic community of researchers by actively supporting researchers at all career stages, regardless of background or identity. We will support equitable participation in research funding opportunities and successful outcomes. We will develop and implement programmes to support the visibility of all our research outputs no matter the author. We will provide tailored assistance, including mentorship for grants and fellowships, to attract and empower scholars from varied backgrounds.



Central to our research innovation is our commitment to supporting a diverse pipeline of future researchers. Therefore, we will actively seek to diversify our population of postgraduate researchers, while also developing highly targeted support to ensure their success.

Actions to promote our research culture and environment

What will we do?

- Enhance data governance to enable robust data-driven strategies to address EDI challenges within our research environment to facilitate a more inclusive and equitable research community.
- As part of our WIFRC initiative, enhance our inclusive research culture by exploring additional study leave and research seed funding for individuals returning from extended breaks, such as parental leave. In tandem, we will pilot child-friendly campus areas to normalise the role of working parents and evaluate its impact on helping staff balance career and caregiving responsibilities.
- We will ensure our research leadership training programmes are accessible to diverse cohorts and emphasise inclusive, culturally aware management and leadership practices, thereby enhancing skills and empowerment across our entire research community.
- We commit to fostering diversity in our competitively selected researcher and research leadership programmes, including Fellowship Academy activities, aiming to match or exceed the ethnic and gender diversity of the university's researcher population.
- We will enhance visibility and support for staff in often unacknowledged roles, such as administrative, finance, and core services personnel, by celebrating their contributions to a more inclusive research environment.

“The world faces grand challenges that demand innovative solutions, achievable only through collaboration with diverse perspectives. Attracting and sustaining such diversity requires a supportive and inclusive research culture. Let’s commit to building this culture and empowering everyone to drive the change we need.

Professor Lisanne Gibson Vice Principal - Research

- Encourage technicians to pursue professional accreditation, apply for funding, attend conferences, and engage in outreach activities as part of our dedication to their professional development under the Technician Commitment.
- Implement academic development and career guidance programmes to increase and diversify our postgraduate researcher community, ensuring equal growth and career opportunities for all talented future researchers, regardless of background.



Achieving our goals and measuring progress  
**KPI: Cultivating a supportive and inclusive research culture that enhances productivity and well-being of all researchers.**

KPI Objective

Promote a diverse and inclusive research culture and environment that enhances creativity, innovation, and productivity. We aim to improve collaborative opportunities, resource accessibility, and professional growth, directly elevating research quality and impact, ensuring our institution remains competitive, attracts top talent, and leads in research advancements.

Targets

1. We will evaluate staff perceptions of our commitment to well-being, collaboration, and innovation through the staff engagement survey. This includes focusing on openness, sensitivity, and responsiveness to mental health issues, work/life balance, and satisfaction with the research environment, disaggregated by protected groups. Our target is a minimum engagement score in the staff survey of 7.0 in these areas, reflecting an equitable workplace culture.
2. We will assess the impact of leadership development initiatives by conducting surveys and interviews to evaluate improvements in inclusive leadership skills and styles. We aim to involve 40 participants over two years, ensuring diversity in participant selection. Our target is for no fewer than 75% of participants reporting significant growth in their ability to lead inclusively, reflecting enhanced cultural competence and diversity awareness.
3. Encourage all technical staff to pursue external professional recognition, measured by the acquisition of accreditation within a calendar year. Target at least 5 technicians annually, showcasing the university’s commitment to valuing technical expertise, supporting career development, and enhancing credibility in their fields.
4. Promote growth, diversity and disclosure of protected characteristics among PGR students, while closing the satisfaction gap for ethnic minority students (currently 7% below global benchmark based on the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey) and improving the experience of disabled students (currently 15% below their non-disabled peers at our University) within the strategic time frame.



## equity in educational achievement and experience

At the core of our strategy on education and student experience lies a steadfast commitment to equity in academic achievement and experience.

Recognising the multifaceted nature of education, we have established an Education Academy that will serve as a catalyst for positive change and support our community's efforts. The Academy will amplify existing initiatives, foster collaboration, and facilitate the development of resources and practices that promote digital literacy, evidence-based pedagogy, and inclusive support for all staff and students.

The Education Academy will champion a rigorous scrutiny of disparities in student access, retention, progression, and educational outcomes, with a particular focus on the persistent degree award gap. We aspire to eradicate this gap, but our commitment extends beyond surface-level metrics. The Academy will collaborate with academic schools and services to delve into the root causes of inequalities embedded in all aspects of the student journey. Through this collaboration, we aim to transform the framework of education, ensuring it is inclusive and fair at its core.

To achieve this holistic vision of equity, we recognise that our commitment to equity goes beyond academic achievement; it ensures every student enjoys a supportive university experience. This includes prioritising student well-being alongside providing comprehensive career advice. Ultimately, our goal is to secure equitable outcomes for all students after graduation. The creation of the Education Academy is one example that underscores our commitment. It is not just about closing the degree award gap. It is about cultivating a culture that embraces equity at every stage of the student journey, creating a nurturing environment where students from all backgrounds can flourish and excel.





Actions to promote equity in educational achievement and experience

What will we do?

- We will monitor student performance, retention, and progression data, disaggregated by demographics, to proactively identify and address achievement gaps, ensuring equitable academic opportunity for all.
- Collaborate with education-focused services to create an inclusive learning environment that fosters belonging, support networks, and empowers all students to thrive.
- We will incorporate student perspectives into decision-making through surveys, focus groups, and representation on committees, shaping the education experience to meet their diverse needs.
- Promote inclusive teaching and assessment practices that recognise diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and needs, ensuring all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- Promote scholarly research on inclusive teaching and learning practices, ensuring ongoing development of evidence-based strategies that benefit all students.



Achieving our goals and measuring progress  
KPI: Promoting Equity in Degree Attainment and Educational Experience

KPI Objective

Recognising that the degree award gap is symptomatic of broader systemic issues, we view this KPI as a powerful instrument for enforcing accountability across multiple dimensions, including student admissions, curriculum development, teaching, and assessment, as well as enhancing the diversity of our staff who inspire and guide our student body. These are crucial for closing unacceptable gaps in degree outcomes.

Our data<sup>1</sup> reveal a consistent and notable degree attainment gap between our UK domiciled BAME students and their White peers: while 85% of White students secured a ‘good’ first/2:1 degree in the 2021/22 academic year, only 64% of BAME students achieved the same distinction. Our goal of reducing the degree award gap directly intersects with our aim to improve the proportion of our students entering graduate level destinations within six months of graduation from our current baseline of 83%.

<sup>1</sup>University of Dundee ARPOC Report, 2023

“At Dundee, we support all students to succeed on their chosen course, by ensuring that all programmes are inclusive by design and relevant to everyone in the class. Whatever your background our courses will be current, evidence-based, and engaging, and will provide you with the necessary knowledge and skills to move into the world of work.

Professor Blair Grubb Vice Principal – Education

Targets

1. We commit to understanding and addressing the root causes of the degree award gap between White and BAME students and implementing evidence-based strategies to progressively decrease this gap by up to 10 percentage points over the next five years, as a substantial step towards ultimately eradicating the disparity.
2. We aspire to attain an 85% positive graduate destination rate by 2027, ensuring equitable outcomes across gender, ethnicity, disability, and Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. This will be measured by the percentage of graduates securing employment, further education, or meaningful career paths within 6 months post-graduation.





## Empowering the future: solidifying our EDI commitment

As a university, we aim to transform our EDI strategy into tangible, dynamic action and shaping a future that not only mirrors our firm commitment to continuous development and responsiveness but also exemplifies it. By actively engaging with our community, encouraging broad participation, and valuing diverse feedback and continual improvement, we ensure that our EDI initiatives will remain relevant, impactful and integrate a diverse range of perspectives. Our EDI approach is an agile and evolving journey, underpinned by robust methods of assessment and innovation. This commitment transcends a mere plan; it embodies a vision where our university stands as a beacon of progressive change.

We will cultivate a supportive EDI culture that fosters allyship, and an environment in which every individual feels encouraged and empowered to contribute. Our call to action is both clear and compelling.

**We invite every member of the University community to actively engage in this journey, making it an integral part of our collective experience. This is more than a strategy; it is our commitment to fostering a more inclusive, understanding, and diverse future for everyone at the University of Dundee.**





equality o  
diversity inclusion





University  
of Dundee



**University of Dundee**  
Nethergate, Dundee, DD1 4HN  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0)1382 383000  
[dundee.ac.uk](http://dundee.ac.uk)

The University of Dundee is a registered Scottish Charity. No. SC015096

# diversity

24707