

Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029 Action Plan and NEO Mapping

Equality Outcome 1 –

Students and staff with Protected Characteristics at Ayrshire College have confidence that reports of harassment and bullying are dealt with appropriately

Strategic Aim

Create a transparent, trusted, and robust institutional culture where all bullying and harassment reports are handled consistently, fairly, and promptly.

National Equality Outcome Alignment

Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system

Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system

Staff and students feel supported and safe and are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress

Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college

Staff and students know how to access support about violence, harassment and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so because the services are fit for purpose.

Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment, and abuse

Theme 1 – Operational Framework

Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Measures
Establish lead for EO1 Develop governance structure for EOs	Identify key staff member Establish Terms of Reference EO Leads group meet monthly	E&D Performance Lead/ VP People, Transformation and Performance	Year 1	Terms of Reference Meeting schedule Action tracker
Embed EO into Teams Operating Enhancement plans Align existing actions with EO Create actions within TOEP to support EO	Meet with CQMs to help develop TOEP actions Delivery of an EO Workshop to support areas to develop TOEP actions Regular input to the CLT and updates from CLT	E&D Performance Lead/ VP of People and Performance/EO Leads/CLT	Year 1	TOEP actions CLT feedback CLT action tracker
Review anti-bullying and harassment policies and procedures	Full policy review against national guidance Embed equality analysis into all updates	Student Experience/HROD/E&D Performance Lead	Year 2	Policy/ process review complete Updated where necessary EqIA
Improve accessibility & visibility of reporting routes	Review and refresh accessible online & anonymous reporting tool (Safe Space) Ensure accessibility for disabled users Promote routes through induction & campaigns	Student Experience/Student Association /EDI Lead	Year 2	Implementation of new reporting tool Report data Feedback from users Increase in appropriate reporting

				Accessibility audit of new reporting tool completed
Standardise communications for case handling of Safeguarding and Safe Space	<p>Set defined communication milestones (acknowledgement, updates, closure)</p> <p>Provide clear information on confidentiality vs anonymity</p> <p>Escalate through complaints procedure where appropriate</p>	Student Experience/Student Association/ HR and Complaints	Year 1	<p>Reduced average case-handling time</p> <p>Staff awareness of Safe Space and the Safeguarding process through user feedback</p>

Theme 2 – Building Capacity and Awareness

Training for staff on bullying, harassment & reporting	<p>Annual promotion campaign for training for all staff</p> <p>Specialist training for first responders</p>	EDI Lead/Staff L & D	Ongoing	<p>No of staff completing training</p> <p>Staff feedback via training evaluation</p> <p>Improved confidence scores in staff surveys</p>
Raise student awareness of what constitutes bullying, harassment and Hate Crime & how to report	<p>Integrate messaging into student induction</p> <p>Run campaigns and by-stander training</p> <p>Collaborate with Student Association</p>	Student Experience/Student Association	Year 1-4	<p>Student surveys/student voice</p> <p>Increased in reporting</p>

Theme 3 – Culture, Communication and Engagement

Include anonymised case numbers and insights into Mainstreaming report	Bi-annual transparency report showing volumes, themes & outcomes within confidentiality limits (aligned with national reporting expectations)	EDI Lead	Bi-Annual	Report published bi-annually trust in survey items relating to fair handling of complaints
Promote zero-tolerance culture	Reestablishment of the Respect Working Group College-wide campaigns Visible leadership messaging Align with College Values	Marketing/SLT	Ongoing	Increase positive responses to “I feel safe” in student and staff consultation Reduction in repeat incidents Reduction in student conduct processes initiated

Theme 4 – Tracking Progress

Through the COEP/TOEP monitoring process	Track inputs, outputs, outcomes & impact Team evaluation Process Produce bi-annual reflection aligned with equality outcomes reporting	CLT/EDI Lead	Bi-Annual	Evidence-based adjustments each year Demonstrable improvement in perception data
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Equality Outcome 2 - All curriculum areas will use their gender equality data to develop actions which will achieve greater gender balance with regard to student recruitment, retention, and attainment.

Strategic Aim: Ensure curriculum teams systematically use high-quality equality data — with a specific focus on gender — to redesign recruitment, retention and attainment strategies so that gender imbalances are reduced across all subject areas.

National Equality Outcome Alignment

Institutions will have regard to significant imbalances on courses and take action to address it.

Theme 1 – Policy, Data and Governance

Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Measures
Establish lead for EO1 Develop governance structure for EOs	Identify key staff member EO Leads group meet monthly Communicate Leads Group via CLT sessions	E&D Performance Lead/VP People, Transformation and Performance	Year 1	Terms of Refence Meeting schedule Action tracker
Strengthen accountability and collaboration	Establish a Gender Leadership Group	EO2 Lead/ E&D Performance Lead	Year 1	Creation of a Gender Action Plan
Standardise gender-disaggregated data analysis across curriculum areas	Create a consistent data dashboard broken down by gender for recruitment, retention, attainment.	BIIS/ EDI Lead	Year 2	Data dashboard TOEP actions Staff training numbers Training feedback

	Train curriculum managers to interpret equality data effectively (aligned with PSED data-improvement requirements)			
Embed gender analysis within course review processes	<p>Require each curriculum area to review gender patterns during annual self-evaluation.</p> <p>Include gender targets where imbalances are significant (in line with national guidance on addressing gender imbalance in subject</p>	Curriculum Heads/Head of Quality Enhancement	Year 2	<p>All course reviews include gender analysis</p> <p>Course evaluation output</p> <p>Agreed gender improvement targets set for relevant subjects</p>

Theme 2 – Recruitment & Access

Improve gender-diverse recruitment into under-represented subject areas	<p>Work with marketing to develop gender-inclusive promotional materials.</p> <p>Target outreach to schools and communities to challenge gender stereotypes.</p> <p>Use role models and student ambassadors</p>	Marketing /Curriculum Teams	Year 1 - 4	<p>Delivery of targeted gender specific events</p> <p>Increased proportion of under-represented genders applying to targeted subjects</p>
Remove potential gender bias from admissions processes	<p>Review entry requirements and interview processes.</p> <p>Train curriculum staff on bias and inclusive recruitment</p>	CLT/EO Lead	Year 2	<p>Increased gender diversity in applicant pool.</p> <p>Positive changes in gender representation in recruitment KPIs.</p>

Theme 3 – Retention and Student Experience

<p>Implement targeted retention interventions for under-represented genders</p>	<p>Identify gender-specific barriers through focus groups and surveys.</p> <p>Provide mentoring programmes, peer support and academic coaching for under-represented genders networks).</p>	<p>Curriculum / Student Experience/Equality and Diversity Lead/Student Association</p>	<p>Year 1-4</p>	<p>Improvement in retention rates for under-represented genders.</p>
<p>Ensure classroom culture supports gender diversity</p>	<p>Offer staff development on inclusive pedagogy.</p> <p>Monitor feedback from students of under-represented genders.</p> <p>Address microaggressions or gendered experiences promptly</p>	<p>Curriculum/ Teaching Academy & Staff L&D/Equality and Diversity Performance Lead</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Improved satisfaction scores disaggregated by gender.</p> <p>Reduction in gender-related concerns raised.</p>

Theme 4 – Attainment and Progression

<p>Identify gender gaps in attainment and implement targeted support</p>	<p>Analyse success rates for each gender in each curriculum area.</p> <p>Adapt assessment strategies to reduce gender-linked disparities.</p> <p>Provide targeted academic interventions.</p>	<p>BIIS/CQMs</p>	<p>Year 1-4</p>	<p>Reduction in attainment gaps.</p> <p>Improved success rates for under-represented genders.</p>
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Boost progression of under-represented genders	Map progression patterns by gender. Increase visibility of transition opportunities and employer links for under-represented genders	Careers and Employability team/Curriculum Heads/EO Lead	Year 2-3	Increased progression rate for under-represented genders.
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Theme 5 – Culture, Communication and Engagement

Promote gender equality across the college	Run campaigns challenging stereotypes. Use student stories, case studies, events. Include gender balance discussions in induction	Marketing/Equality and Diversity Lead/Curriculum	Yearly	Events delivered Engagement with gender-equality activities. Student feedback/student voice
Work with external partners to influence gender balance	Collaborate with schools, employers and community groups to challenge occupational gender segregation. Promote diverse placement and apprenticeship opportunities.	School/College Partnership Team/Marketing/Curriculum	Years 2-4	Stronger gender diversity in employer-linked pathways. Increased partner participation in gender-equality initiatives.

Theme 6. Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitor progress of EO through equality reporting cycles	Curriculum areas submit annual gender-equality progress reports. Findings integrated into mainstreaming and PSED reporting	EDI Lead/SLT	Annually	Evidenced year-on-year improvement.
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Equality Outcome 3 – Recruitment, retention, and attainment of all students with a declared mental health condition have improved.

Strategic aim - To remove barriers and ensure that students with declared mental health conditions can access, remain, and succeed in learning through targeted support, data-driven improvements, and an inclusive learning environment.

National Equality Outcome Alignment

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

Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group)

Theme 1 – Data, Policy and early Identification

Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Measures
Strengthen the use of mental-health-related data at curriculum and college-wide levels	<p>Build dashboards showing recruitment, withdrawal, and attainment patterns for students declaring mental health conditions.</p> <p>Train curriculum managers to use this data for improvement planning.</p> <p>Monitor intersectionality (e.g., young carers, gender, disability combinations).</p>	BIIS/Curriculum/EDI Lead	By year 3	<p>Dashboard adopted by all curriculum areas.</p> <p>Identified priority programmes with gaps reduced over 2–3 years.</p>
Improve and streamline mental-health disclosure processes	<p>Improve disclosure questions in admissions forms.</p> <p>Offer multiple disclosure points throughout the year (not just at enrolment).</p>	BIIS/EO Lead/Student Experience	Year 2	<p>Increase in numbers of disclosing mental health conditions.</p> <p>Increase in student confidence to disclose a mental health</p>

	Ensure immediate referral routes to Student Engagement and wellbeing (wellbeing plans) .			condition as captured through student surveys and focus groups Referral numbers to support services.
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Theme 2 – Recruitment and Access

Ensure prospective students with mental health conditions can access courses without obstacles	Review admissions practices for potential bias against applicants with declared conditions. Provide pre-entry wellbeing advice sessions.	Curriculum/Student Experience	Year 1 - 2	Number and proportion of applicants declaring a mental health condition year-on-year. Conversion rates for Application to Interview and Interview to offer and offer to enrolment Application drop-off stats for this group Numbers of reasonable adjustments Attendance monitoring (retention tool)
Promote positive messaging around mental health	Feature mental-health-inclusive narratives on website. Promote available support clearly.	Marketing	Annual	Increased enquiries from students with mental health conditions.

	<p>Highlight success stories of students with lived experience (with consent).</p> <p>Review and development of SMHA</p>			<p>Survey feedback shows improved confidence at application stage.</p> <p>Short pulse surveys Induction surveys Focus groups</p> <p>Student Voice</p> <p>Self-referrals to counselling</p> <p>Number of students accessing services</p>
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Theme 3 – Retention and Ongoing Support

<p>Strengthen student retention through personalised support</p>	<p>Develop Mental Health Support Plans with students (Wellbeing plans).</p> <p>Ensure regular check-ins during the first 6–8 weeks.</p> <p>Coordinate support between lecturers, advisors, and wellbeing staff.</p>	<p>Student Engagement and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Years 1- 3</p>	<p>Number of wellbeing plans</p> <p>Retention rates improve in targeted programmes.</p> <p>Fewer crisis-withdrawal cases</p>
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Expand both preventive and responsive mental health services	<p>Embed wellbeing workshops into core curriculum timetables.</p> <p>Provide drop-in wellbeing hubs on campus.</p>	Engagement and Wellbeing Team	ongoing	<p>Increased uptake of wellbeing services.</p> <p>Positive wellbeing-related feedback student surveys/focus groups.</p>
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Theme 4 – Attainment and Learning Experience

Address barriers in learning, teaching, and assessment	<p>Audit assessments for stress-creating bottlenecks (e.g., clustering deadlines).</p> <p>Offer flexible deadlines and alternative assessment formats where appropriate.</p> <p>Embed wellbeing check-ins at key academic pressure points.</p>	Curriculum and Head of Quality Enhancement	Years 2-3	<p>Reduced non-submission rates.</p> <p>Improved attainment in targeted groups.</p> <p>Number of reasonable adjustments made</p>
Create learning environments that support mental wellbeing	<p>Maintain quiet study spaces and sensory-friendly rooms.</p> <p>Provide inclusive facilities for changing</p> <p>Encourage flexible attendance for episodic mental health conditions.</p>	Curriculum/HS & W/SA/Estates	Years 3 & 4	<p>Improved satisfaction and sense-of-belonging scores in student survey/focus groups/Student Voice.</p> <p>Fewer withdrawals due to environmental stressors.</p>

Theme 5 – Community, Culture and Partnership Work

<p>Reduce stigma around mental health conditions</p>	<p>Deliver college-wide campaigns (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Week).</p> <p>Use consistent messaging from SLT endorsing mental-health openness.</p> <p>Provide student-led discussion opportunities.</p>	<p>Marketing, Equality and Diversity Performance Lead/Student Association</p>	<p>Yearly</p>	<p>Increased disclosure confidence.</p> <p>Improved Student Voice indicators relating to mental health.</p>
<p>Strengthen support networks for student mental health</p>	<p>Formalise partnerships with NHS MH services, voluntary sector, and crisis support teams.</p> <p>Provide warm-handover referral routes.</p> <p>Co-deliver workshops with partners.</p>	<p>Engagement & Wellbeing team</p>	<p>Annual</p>	<p>Reduced crisis escalations.</p> <p>Increased engagement with external support.</p>

Theme 6 - Monitoring, Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

Establish lead for EO3 Develop governance structure for EOs	Identify key staff member EO Leads group meet monthly	E&D Performance Lead/VP People, Transformation and Performance	Year 1	Terms of Refence Meeting schedule Action tracker .
Monitor quarterly recruitment, retention and attainment for this student group	Produce quarterly Student data reports. Require curriculum areas to discuss mental-health data at course reviews.	BIIS & Quality Enhancement	Quarterly	Demonstrable year-on-year improvement in all three indicators.
Integrate lived experience into improvement cycles	Run focus groups and pulse surveys. Involve students in shaping the support pathway.	Student experience and SA	Yearly	Case studies Focus groups Survey results
Publish Progress Bi-Annually	Report via Equality Mainstreaming Report. Share findings with Board and SLT for oversight.	E&D Performance Lead	Bi-Annually	Published progress shows reductions in gaps and increased transparency.

Equality Outcome 4 - Our staff and Board of Management represent the diversity of the community that Ayrshire College serves, with a particular focus on disability and race, to support a more inclusive and innovative College community.

Strategic Aim - To build a College workforce and leadership that reflects the diversity of the communities Ayrshire College serves—particularly in relation to disability and race—so that decision-making, governance and everyday practice are more inclusive, representative and innovative.

National Equality Outcome Alignment - Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the representation of disabled staff in the workforce and on college Boards and university Courts.

Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of Court members and address any racial diversity issues in college Boards.

Where representation is not proportionate to the relevant population, increase the racial diversity of teaching and non-teaching staff to align with student representation in the sector.

Theme 1 – Understanding Our Data

Report to PIFCO Committee	Create workforce data dashboard	E&D Performance Lead/BIIS	Year 1-4	Data dashboard complete and available
Mapping exercise to determine pinch points in employee journey	Extract data on applications, shortlisting, interviews, offers, appointments, probation outcomes, promotion, and turnover. Ensure data is disaggregated by disability status,	E&D Performance Lead/HROD Team	Year 1-2	Reliable, complete dataset on representation and outcomes. Improved accuracy of equality monitoring.

	<p>race/ethnicity, job family, grade, and department.</p> <p>Improve disclosure rates by reviewing data quality and running communications to encourage voluntary disclosure.</p>			<p>Increased confidence in analysis and findings through staff feedback</p>
<p>Re-establish Positive About Disability Staff Forum</p>	<p>Hold quarterly focus groups with staff</p> <p>Use structured conversation guides to gather insight on barriers, opportunities, and lived experience.</p> <p>Ensure participation from a range of job roles, grades, and campuses.</p>	<p>E&D Performance Lead/HROD Team</p>	<p>Years1-4</p>	<p>Clear, documented themes and issues raised by under-represented groups.</p> <p>Actionable insights directly informing equality priorities.</p>

Theme 2- Strengthening Attraction and Recruitment

<p>Development of Ayrshire College's recruitment portal</p>	<p>Capture benefits of working at Ayrshire College</p>			<p>Launch of new look recruitment portal.</p>
<p>Development of case studies and shared stories from existing staff and alumni</p>	<p>Provide all materials required for interview such as key documents (including in accessible formats)</p>			<p>Application and recruitment data - Increase in applicants from underrepresented, especially with regards to race and disability.</p>

	<p>Create graphics for campaign headlines and branded job templates.</p> <p>Build and maintain recruitment landing pages using existing templates.</p> <p>Package a mini look and feel guideline for college careers, including templates and process documentation.</p> <p>Collect and process staff testimonials and case studies using the agreed form.</p> <p>Monitor applicants in relation to protected characteristics.</p>			<p>College Careers Project action tracker.</p> <p>New staff feedback.</p>
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Theme 3 - Workforce Development, Progression & Retention

Development of Learning and Teaching Academies	<p>Creation of channels on the Ayrshire Way Hub</p> <p>Development of cross college collaborative projects</p> <p>Peer education and support on a range of L & T topics</p>	L&T Academy Leads/Head of Quality Enhancement	Years 1-4	<p>Learning & Teaching Academies set up</p> <p>L&T Academy membership</p> <p>L&T Action trackers and output</p>
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	Showcasing innovation and recognising effective practice			
Festival of Practice	<p>Create FoP steering group with key staff</p> <p>Recruit staff, student and external partner contributors</p> <p>Create a Festival Hub for descriptors and activities and booking</p>	Staff L&D Team /FoP Steering Group	Years 1- 4	<p>Delivery of Festival of Practice</p> <p>Feedback from external partners through evaluation form</p> <p>Feedback from staff through evaluation form</p>
Development of a Menopause Action Plan	<p>Map current menopause support and identify gaps in provision</p> <p>Review policies</p> <p>Conduct staff consultation Identify gaps in line managers knowledge and awareness</p> <p>Create dedicated Menopause section on the Wellbeing Hub</p>	Equality and Diversity Performance Lead/Health, Safety and wellbeing Advisor/Women's Health Working Group	Year 2	Menopause Action Plan in place

Theme 4 – Governance, Evaluation and Monitoring

Establish lead for EO4 Develop governance structure for EOs	Identify key staff member EO Leads group meet monthly	E&D Performance Lead/VP People, Transformation and Performance	Year 1	Terms of Refence Meeting schedule Action tracker
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National Equality Outcomes that are not directly aligned to our College Equality Outcomes, and rationale:

Retention rates of students under 19 will improve: Although improving retention rates of students under 19 is recognised nationally as a significant equality issue in the tertiary education sector, Ayrshire College elected not to adopt this NEO directly for the 2025–2029 cycle. The reasons are as follows: The College already manages under-19 retention through: Learning & Teaching Strategy, Student Experience processes, Curriculum planning processes, Corporate Parenting Plan and youth transitions and partnership work.

Because substantial work already exists under these core strategies, the College determined that duplicating this as an Equality Outcome was unnecessary and would dilute focus from areas where inequalities are more acute.

Disabled Students report feeling satisfied with overall support and reasonable adjustment received, including from teaching staff, while on their course: While the College recognises the importance of supporting disabled students, the most recent internal evidence and student-experience there is not enough evidence to have this as a stand-alone College Equality Outcome. The experience and satisfaction of our disabled students is captured through the student voice, through the Student Association’s Disabled Students

Officers, through the Accessibility Forum for students and through satisfaction surveys, complaints process and College audits of processes and the physical environment.

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

The College's analysis of student attainment data did not show a consistent or significant pattern of poorer attainment among minority ethnic students when compared to the wider student population (e.g. the difference was 0.7% in 2023/24 and 2.1% in 2024/2025). Therefore the issue did not meet the criteria for becoming a standalone Equality Outcome. The College already embeds anti-racist and inclusive curriculum principles through the Learning and Teaching Strategy, professional learning for staff, inclusive curriculum design frameworks and partnership work with student groups. The College did not need to add a separate Equality Outcome that would duplicate activity already taking place. The evidence showed significantly stronger and more urgent areas of local priority, which have been reflected in our College Equality Outcomes.