



ANNUAL
Equity,
Diversity
& Inclusion
REPORT 2024/25



Contents

<u>Foreword from the Vice-Chancellor</u>	3	<u>Estates & Campus Services</u>	8
<u>Introduction</u>	4	<u>Human Resources (HR)</u>	9
<u>Keele Networks</u>	4	<u>Research, Innovation & Engagement (DRIE)</u>	9
<u>Staff Disability & Accessibility Network</u>	5	<u>Student Services</u>	10
<u>Staff LGBTQI+ Network</u>	5	<u>Academic Registry</u>	11
<u>Staff Race Equity, Culture & Heritage (REACH) Network</u>	5	<u>Keele Institute for Innovation & Teaching Excellence (KIITE)</u>	11
<u>Faculties</u>	6	<u>Student Organisations</u>	12
<u>The Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences (FHumSS) EDI Group</u>	6	<u>Keele Students Union</u>	12
<u>The Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences (FMHS) EDI Group</u>	6	<u>Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)</u>	12
<u>The Faculty of Natural Sciences (FNS) EDI Group</u>	6	<u>Academic Outputs and Achievements</u>	13
<u>Professional Services</u>	8	<u>Pro Vice Chancellors</u>	14
<u>Professional Services EDI Group</u>	8	<u>PVC – Education</u>	14
<u>Strategic Communications & Brand (SCB)</u>	8	<u>PVC – International</u>	14
		<u>PVC – Research</u>	14

ANNUAL EDI REPORT

Foreword

from the Vice-Chancellor

It is a pleasure to introduce this EDI report from Keele University for 2024, especially at a time when I am reflecting on my decade as Vice-Chancellor of the University.

Keele is built around a firm belief in the benefits of having an inclusive, diverse and supportive community. I take great pride in the enormous progress we have made in extending and embedding the formal requirements of national measures of EDI commitment, including the Race Equality Charter and Athena Swan recognition and I am very grateful to those staff from right across the University who have steered our submissions for the various awards.

These would not be possible, however, if it were not for the way the different members of our Keele community live and work together every day. Different parts of our community face challenges on a daily basis and some of these have come into specific focus in the last few years due to activities and attitudes around the world. At Keele we recognise difference and we recognise difference of opinion but we also respect the views and rights of others.

As the diversity of our community has increased we have more to be aware of in terms of the range of backgrounds and the breadth of views that we encounter on campus. But I am confident that the respect we have for each other will mean that genuine mistakes in language are recognised for what they are and that deliberate acts of intolerance, to reference our hugely successful campaign, are NEVER OK.

Universities only exist to provide opportunities for individuals and advance societal knowledge and understanding. Keele has always understood this better than many universities and our sense of community will be at the heart of our successful future.

So as my tenure at Keele draws to a close my hope is that Keele continues to build on its EDI accomplishments and colleagues work collaboratively to achieve the environment that students and staff alike, thrive in. An environment that not only engenders successful outcomes for all involved but also becomes an exemplar of what is possible and a source of admiration for others in the sector.

Best wishes and good luck



Professor Trevor McMillan OBE
Vice-Chancellor



Introduction

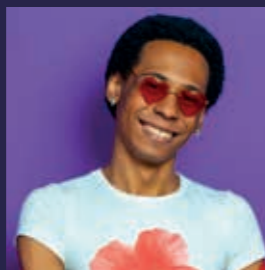
Welcome to the Keele University Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) annual report 2024/25.

The annual EDI report is Keele University's opportunity to demonstrate the great work that is undertaken to sustain and engender inclusivity across the institution. It is well known and publicised that inclusive and diverse organisations outperform those who are not. Therefore, this annual report is a testament to the on-going journey of Keele colleagues to embody these principles.

The Keele EDI strategy outlines the University ambition to create an environment where all students and staff are included, and needs are actively taken into consideration when decisions are made. Every person in Keele has a role to play in inclusivity and creating a culture that facilitates the achievement of potential, the strategic objectives were written with this in mind.

We hope on reading this report that you can see the commitment and dedication of staff included within its pages with an awareness that this is just a sample of the kinds of activities that occur across the University.

Emma Scott
Associate Director EDI



Keele Networks

Staff Disability & Accessibility Network

The Staff Disability & Accessibility network has 40 members. The Co-chairs in place from April 2025 have been able to build upon the outgoing Chair Karen Scott's vision statement agreed after approval from the network.

The Network is dedicated to enhancing the inclusive colleague experience through creating a safe space where individuals with lived experience of disability, neurodiversity, long-term illnesses, and accessibility challenges can find support and collaboration. It is committed to upholding privacy and confidentiality, ensuring that every member feels respected and valued.

Focusing on solution-orientated approaches, the Network's aim is to empower staff and encourage positive relationships while advocating for members across the organisation. We strive to dismantle barriers and promote inclusivity, enabling all staff to thrive and contribute to our community.

The Network has had active engagement within its Microsoft Team Channel providing peer support and raising awareness of disability inclusion and sources of assistance. Members have provided feedback to others including to ensure inclusion of neurodiverse perspectives within an MSc project.

Both Co-Chairs contributed to the Confidential Conversations with the Associate Director of EDI and have input ideas around inclusive recruitment with HR.

Co-Chairs Mary DuGuay & Timothy Smale

Staff LGBTQI+ Network

Staff LGBTQI+ network members, alongside members of the Chaplaincy, supported the student-led Trans Day of Remembrance on 20th November 2024 and, on 28th February 2025, a memorial was held for Muhsin Hendricks, reported to be the world's first openly gay imam, who was shot dead in South Africa.

The staff LGBTQI+ network exists to support LGBTQI+ inclusion at Keele and has a membership of around 30 staff. At the first network meeting of 2024/25, after expressions of interest were sought and received a new network (Co-)Chair was put in place; Daniel Walker, who subsequently became Network Chair, and who is a Professional Services Staff member from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Activities for academic year 24/25 LGBT History Month included:

- a quiz related to LGBT History,
- an informal coffee meeting for network members and allies,
- a film screening introduced by Dr Fiorella Montero-Diaz Keele's academic lead for "Sounding a Queer Rebellion: LGBTI Musical Resistances in Latin America", which draws on ethnomusicology, anthropology, sociology of religion, clinical and social psychology, law, social health, and performance-based activism, and aims to develop responses to violence with LGBTI musicians in Latin American countries, and
- a showing of Will & Harper, a film that documented actor, Will Ferrell, and his friend writer, Harper Steele, who had recently completed a gender transition, as they took a road-trip across the United States.

The network was pleased to see the renewal of the Keele membership to the Stonewall Diversity Champions Scheme as a sign of the Networks continued value towards Stonewall membership as being an important indicator of the commitment to LGBTQ+ EDI.

A commitment was made, from the network, to attend Stoke Pride 2025, members also took part in two group Confidential Conversations with Associate Director EDI, the summary of these conversations will help inform network activities going forwards.

Chair Daniel Walker

Staff Race Equity, Culture & Heritage (REACH) Network

The staff network nominated two new network Chairs who began their role in January 2025. A new name was chosen by members via an online survey and the formerly named (BAME) Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff network was changed to the REACH (Race Equity and Cultural Heritage) network. The network agreed three main annual points of contact and consultation: a survey of members, a face-to-face meeting and an online meeting.

The network agreed mission is:

- To support individuals to act as allies.
- To challenge inequity and foster good relations.
- To ensure that a senior leadership champion actively sponsors racial equity initiatives within the university EDI Steering committee.
- To support staff careers.

Activities to date include the new co-chairs presenting at the annual Research Innovation and Enterprise Town Hall. The Network has also contributed to Confidential Conversations, which will help inform and prioritise future actions.

Network members have also offered their time to mentor senior members of the University to support work towards establishing inclusive leadership. Quotes from two participants (both in Executive level roles):

"The experience was incredibly enriching and enjoyable. We engaged in meaningful discussions on a range of issues, including workplace diversity, cultural challenges, and personal growth... fostering an atmosphere of mutual understanding and support."

"The Race Equality Mentoring Scheme provided me with valuable space to explore with a mentor issues of race equality both at Keele and in wider society, to reflect on approaches taken to date and work on the opportunities to improve the experience of working at Keele for members of our community from Global Ethnic Majority groups in the future."

Co-chairs Natalie Knight & Anirban Banerjee

Faculties

The Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences (FHumSS) EDI Group

EDI engagement and activities have been categorised according to the University EDI strategic objectives as follows:

Accessible and Inclusive University

FHumSS has hosted several events that promote and celebrate inclusivity. Local communities have come together through the annual football tournament for refugees, Chinese New Year and commemoration of women and LGBT activism during the Miners' strike. Visiting researchers, including Nobel prize winning author Abdulrazhak Gurnah, have delivered equality related presentations in each discipline.

Inclusive leadership and decision making

FHumSS School EDI leads attend research and education committee meetings. Action has been taken to address issues of senior female under-representation.

Inclusive student experience/ student lifecycle

Alongside workshops on the Inclusive Education Framework in each school, the Language Centre has delivered sessions on Deaf Awareness, BSL and Visual Impairment, Law has formed a subgroup on Black Students Outcomes and EDI leads are sharing practice on reducing student anxiety in the classroom.

Inclusive colleague experience

FHumSS has produced equality audits of all research funding allocations in the faculty, conducted Gender Pay Gap and Promotion workshops and is preparing a Faculty Athena Swan submission.



The Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences (FMHS) EDI Group

Inclusive student experience/ student lifecycle

Students from the faculty have produced a travel safety infographic to provide advice on how to stay safe after students reported feeling concerned travelling to placement on public transport after the Southport riots.

A student-staff group have been supported by the University Chaplaincy to produce a multi-faith guide to help students identify support for their religious observance both on campus and out on placement.

Disabled students and faculty staff are working with the Student Experience and Support Manager to develop a placement toolkit to help support students gain reasonable adjustments whilst on placement. This has now been approved for use across the university. Student services are now looking to pilot the toolkit with a small number of programmes in advance of the new academic year.

Accessible and inclusive University

School EDI leads have begun rolling out in-person staff Active Bystander training to School of Medicine staff to educate them regarding what microaggressions are and how to tackle these, after receiving feedback from students who requested an improvement in staff awareness about this type of behaviour.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery hosted a Spirituality in Healthcare online conference in June 2024 with their placement partners to share best practice on how spiritual care can work alongside healthcare across a range of intersectional experiences.

Inclusive colleague experience

The School of Medicine relaunched their Menopause Chat Room. These sessions are facilitated by clinical staff from local hospitals and GP practices and give an opportunity to raise staff awareness of the impact of symptoms of (peri)menopause at work and gain support and advice from other staff members experiencing the same symptoms.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery was awarded Silver for their Athena Swan submission made in summer 2024.

The Faculty of Natural Sciences (FNS) EDI Group

Inclusive student experience

A Royal Society of Chemistry funded Missing Elements grant (£58k) to address racial and ethnic inequalities in the chemical sciences entitled My Chemistry, My Culture is underway in the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences.

A belonging project is continuing between Foundation Year and the School of Life Sciences aiming to increase the diversity of students entering and succeeding on BSc programmes by supporting the transition from foundation year.

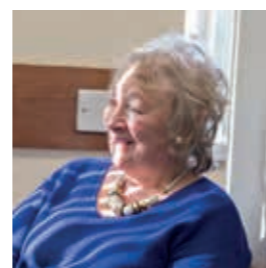
Inclusive colleague experience

Faculty promotion workshops were held, in September 2024, for academics on Education & Research and Education & Scholarship career pathways, with a panel discussion format to dispel myths and promote conversations around preparing promotion applications.

A Happiness Officer (FNS) role has been created to increase inclusion by providing cross-faculty social networking opportunities.

The School of Life Sciences was awarded Silver for the Athena Swan submission made in summer 2024.

Inclusive leadership and decision making Technical and professional service staff (PSS) representatives have been recruited to the FNS EDI committee to better represent all faculty staff. Stronger links have additionally been built with staff networks leads to elevate the voice of minoritised groups in the faculty, and at FNS EDI meetings.





Professional Services

Professional Services EDI Group

Inclusive leadership and decision making

The Professional Services EDI Group has continued to operate and is co-chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Student Support and Success. The group utilises the Professional Services staff voice to help shape and deliver EDI strategy and initiatives.

PSS EDIG together with PSG (Professional Service Group – a Directors of Directorates group) have had a focus on Gender Pay Gaps during the period, with Directors developing their own actions in conjunction with EDI staff. This has included support for Organisational Development (see HR section). Example work has included looking for appropriate transferrable skills and attributes in staff where they are under-represented by gender in roles that have potential for career advancement, e.g. in IT roles within the Directorate of **Information and Digital Services**, or to attract men into some lower paid roles e.g. Student Ambassadors in the Directorate of **Global Student Recruitment and Admissions (GSRA)**. Additionally, PSG has had a focus on issues raised as part of the Keele Pulse Surveys (see HR section).

Strategic Communications & Brand (SCB)

Inclusive colleague experience

Monitoring of media activities in 2024 found that external media engagement by gender was 60% male, 40% female. However, some female academics had some of the most prestigious coverage and were also more regular contributors, resulting in news coverage that was broadly at parity between men and women. Some broadcasters, including the BBC, will strive for a 50:50 gender split where possible, but expertise is ultimately what secures the interview, and this is an approach we adopt in our pitching.

For internal news items the split by gender was:

- 54% female, 46% male for Internal Week at Keele articles,
- 68% female, 32% male for internal “Learn about” sessions presenters, and
- All three Podcasts produced in 2024/25 were of Keele women.

SCB have celebrated EDI-related awards and certifications for the University – including the Race Equality Charter (REC) Silver Award in October 2024, and Stonewall Gold Award in July 2024.

Inclusive student experience

Work to improve the student experience has been conducted jointly with Student Services and is reported under the heading “Student Services”.

Estates & Campus Services

Inclusive colleague experience

Work has been undertaken with cleaning colleagues on their uniforms, including tabards, that the cleaning team have worn for several years with a view to update and make them more comfortable. Staff members reviewed several uniforms and have helped select several options, all of which have moved away from the traditional gendered uniforms. Team members are now able to select their preference of uniform style.

Estates staff have discussed the Instep women in leadership level 3 and 5 apprenticeship programmes with relevant staff, and a small number have registered.

Associate Director EDI was invited to speak to Estates staff on issues relevant to our staff group. Staff were very receptive towards EDI initiatives that are being adopted by the University and being made aware of current and future EDI activities.

Inclusive student experience

Working with Keele Students’ Union (SU), the Director of Estates and Campus Services, met with SU representatives, including Sabbatical Officers, to undertake a review of the campus with students with lived experience of accessibility requirements.

Accessible and inclusive University

Two Muslim prayer rooms and a multi-faith quiet space have been established in Chancellors Building. Additionally, a multi-faith quiet room, and an additional staff break-out room has been provided for Professional Service Staff in the building where many are based.

Human Resources (HR)

Inclusive colleague experience

An Associate Director for EDI was recruited into the Directorate in September 2024 to support the fulfilment of the University EDI Strategy and other EDI related activities.

The Directorate hold bi-annual meetings and have recently undertaken an all-Staff Well-Being survey to ensure staff are given the opportunity to communicate how they are feeling about their roles and general working experience of Keele.

As a commitment to the development of female leaders across the organisation, Keele has committed to support ten female leaders each academic year to attend the **Aurora Advance HE Programme**. Additionally, in 2024/25, 17 women took the **Springboard Programme**: an award-winning women’s personal development course. The **Instep Women in Leadership apprenticeship programme** has also started this year, with twenty staff registering.

In relation to recruitment, the HR Resourcing and Talent Management Team has continued work to increase inclusivity in recruitment. For example, in supporting a pilot on providing questions to candidates in advance of interviews.

Inclusive leadership and decision making

The second event of the Keele Leadership Series was attended by over 50 leaders from across the institution. This session focused on the theme of inclusive leadership. The event enabled Keele leaders to gain insights into how inclusive behaviours positively impact employees’ sense of value and engagement.

Keele has committed to a twice-yearly pulse survey with the initial survey held in January 2024, followed by surveys in October 2024, and April 2025. Results were widely communicated including through a “University Learn About” led by Chief People Officer, Ms Frances Hewison, in December 2024, a hybrid in-person / online presentation by Chief Operating Officer, Dr Mark Bacon, in February 2025, and an online presentation by Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Mark Ormerod, in April 2025.

Research, Innovation & Engagement (DRIE)

Inclusive colleague experience and inclusive student experience

During the past year, DRIE has collaborated with Pete Quinn from Pete Quinn Consulting to develop a comprehensive set of neuroinclusive meeting practices. This initiative aimed to create more inclusive and supportive environments for online meetings, in-person meetings, and events such as workshops and exhibitions. Through two Directorate-wide workshops, DRIE and Pete Quinn Consulting crafted guidelines that address the diverse needs of neurodivergent individuals.

These guidelines include practical adjustments and support mechanisms to ensure that all participants can engage effectively and comfortably. The resulting document outlines strategies for enhancing accessibility, improving communication, and fostering an inclusive atmosphere across various meeting formats. This effort reflects DRIE’s commitment to promoting inclusivity and ensuring that all voices are heard and valued in their professional settings.

Keele University EDI Awards



Student Services

Inclusive leadership and decision making

Student Services are trialling inclusive recruitment practices, for staff, with anonymous shortlisting processes and providing interview questions in advance to candidates to ensure inclusivity in our approach.

Student Services have introduced a new annual Service Review process. The review includes Access and Participation Plan and Race Equality Charter data to ensure services are targeted, effective and continually improved, allowing increased agility and adaptation. This process has established actions to be completed by the support team for all APP students, including care leavers, estranged students, carers and transgender students, ensuring a holistic wraparound support whilst at Keele and when departing for, or returning from, a leave of absence. The Student Experience and Support Officer, in each academic school, has enabled consistency for (i) exceptional circumstances, (ii) support to study and (iii) wellbeing.

In line with the Inclusive Education Framework, a new Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Process was approved in June 2024. This includes a commitment to mainstream traditional reasonable adjustments to ensure that individual adjustments become the exception and not the rule.

Inclusive Student Experience

A Student Experience Benchmark survey in March-April 2025 focused on University professional service use. This gathered demographic data and feedback on services, including Disability Support and Mental Health/Wellbeing support. This will enable focussed improvements.

A new Domestic Abuse Liaison team, in addition to the Sexual Violence Liaison Officer team, has externally trained Officers who are available to provide support and advice to students experiencing domestic (or relationship) abuse. The approach is survivor-led and provides information on reporting options, facilitates referrals to counselling and local authority services, and coordinates appropriate University support. The team act as a liaison service to ensure that students feel believed, supported and safe whilst studying.

Arrival and orientation support for international students was enhanced ensuring additional information was provided both before, and on, arrival in the UK on living in the UK and in Keele's local area. Additional events were provided to international students throughout the year, including trips to places of interest which have received a high uptake and positive feedback.

Strategic Communications and Brand have led a new 'Let Us Know' initiative. This has resulted in feedback and actions taken around several elements, including campus accessibility and mental health or other specific support.

A new Student Engagement Steering Group was formed in 2024 with membership of Keele Students' Union CEO, Associate Director EDI, Director of Strategic Communications and Brand, and the Director of Student Support and Success. This group considers and approves priority campaigns and engagement themes. The adoption of agreed campaign themes, for 2024/25 being:

- 1. Promotion of our mental health support services
- 2. #NeverOK
- 3. Celebrating a diverse community
- 4. You said, we did

Our chaplaincy team continue to organise faith-based events such as a Grand Iftar and an Eid celebration, and to support student led events such as SikhSoc's annual Langar and ISoc's One Blessed Night which aims to increase awareness of all faiths represented on campus. Student Service led events also help enable senior leaders to show support for diversity. For example, nine senior leaders attended the Grand Iftar held in Keele's Chapel.

Accessible and Inclusive University

In April 2025 the University Chapel was licenced for weddings of same-sex as well as mixed-sex couples for staff and students, past and present.

Keele University works closely with AccessAble, who provide an accessible guide to disabled staff, students and visitors highlighting accessible routes, rooms, toilets etc. They additionally work with Accommodation and Estates teams to look at potential improvements.

Keele University understands and supports the challenges that can be faced by students who stammer and resources have been identified in 2024/25.

The Student Services Centre moved location, to form a new Student Services Hub, incorporating a range of services in one place. Importantly, this has increased visibility, accessibility and the working environment for colleagues.

Access and Participation Plan

Keele's Access and Participation Plan (APP) 25/26-28/29 was approved by the Office for Students (OfS) in September 2024. The strategy outlines our commitment towards supporting students from underrepresented groups to access, succeed in, and progress successfully from, Higher Education.

Keele's APP was developed following OfS regulatory guidance. In addition, an institutional Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) was developed to identify key areas of local need, informing the 7 APP intervention strategies with targets to be met or exceeded, by 2029 as follows:

- 1. **Socio-economic Access to Keele** to increase to: 15.2% (TUNDRA Q1) and 15.7% (students eligible for free school meals).
- 2. **Ethnicity Attainment** gap reduction to: 17.1%pts (Black students), 7.1%pts (Mixed heritage students), 8.3%pts (Asian students) and 12.5%pts (Other ethnicities).
- 3. **Socio-economic Attainment** gap reduction: 14%pts (IMD Q1)
- 4. **Disability Attainment** gap reduction to 5.6%pts for students with Mental Health disabilities and 3%pts for Multiple Impairments.
- 5. **Mature Student Success:** to reduce continuation and completion gaps to 5.1%pts and 4%pts, respectively.
- 6. **IMD Q1 & Black Students Progression:** to reduce the gap to 7%pts (IMD Q1) and 3.6%pts (Black students).
- 7. **Care Leavers, Estranged Students and Asylum-Seeking Students** – to adopt a full lifecycle approach to underpin success at each lifecycle stage.

Since the OfS approval of the APP, work has focused on the following areas of development establishing an:

- APP Governance Structure,
- Evaluation Framework,
- Ethics Process and Reviews, and a
- Project management framework

Academic Registry

Inclusive Leadership and Decision Making

In February 2025, A consultancy delivered their report into identifying the causes and remedial actions for the over-representation of GEM students in casework. Findings indicated the need for a holistic and fundamental approach to change.

The casework committee composition is being reviewed for 2025/26 to improve inclusion of staff from diverse backgrounds in decision-making roles and better reflect the student body.

Training is being enhanced for casework panel members to understand case complexities, promote a more consistent approach across committees, mitigate bias and align with the given recommendation to design and deliver practical, scenario-based supporting materials.

Inclusive Student Experience

Work with the SU is underway to review information they publish to students pertaining to Appeals, Complaints and Discipline, such that (1) language is accessible, and content is aligned across the University, and (2) refreshed anonymised case studies are employed as a learning tool.

Going forward, the annual student casework report will be accompanied by a student-facing infographic, with high-level statistics and case studies to promote transparency and awareness raising.

A more flexible and reflective approach to evidence requirements for academic procedures is being introduced to reflect cultural differences and potential barriers in relation to evidence for extenuation. A cultural lens will be adopted, for example, to address any misconceptions around written language proficiency that might lead to assumptions of AI misuse.

We will also explore adapting delivery from an 'inform' model to an educational one, to benefit all students, as many seek support after an allegation, and for some, such as taught postgraduate international students, the time to learn about Keele's expectations and procedures before commencing their programme is limited.

Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE)

Accessible and Inclusive University

KIITE developed 8 Inclusive Education toolkits in 2024 to support the implementation of the Inclusive Education Framework (IEF). The toolkits cover:

- Assessment and Feedback
- Digital Learning Environments
- Fieldwork and Placements
- Group Work
- Laboratories
- Large Lectures and Seminars
- Student Presentations
- Communicating with students

The toolkits are based on the five key principles and themes set out in the IEF:

- anticipatory action
- accessibility
- celebrating diversity
- building belonging
- maximising success and student attainment

Staff are encouraged to engage with the toolkits and the associated resources. Each toolkit includes a new and improved self-assessment diagnostic tool, which allows user to rate their practice and identify actions for future development. Bespoke workshops are available, with a series of school-based engagement activities planned for 2025-26.

The Learning Experience Design team have also worked collaboratively with academic and professional services staff across the University to signpost and co-create bespoke resources.

Next steps include the development of five further toolkits for the 2025-26 academic year:

- Allyship, advocacy and mentoring
- Student support
- Transitions
- Building sense of belonging
- Decolonising the curriculum





Student Organisations

Keele Students Union

The Students' Union has implemented several targeted EDI initiatives. Recruitment practices have been updated to promote diversity, including transparent interview processes, advance provision of questions, and a commitment to informal dress to create a welcoming environment—encouraging candidates to express their full identities, including cultural or religious attire.

In the period, the Students' Union has engaged 20.91% of its postgraduate community (646) – 23.98% of Postgraduate Researchers and 20.37% of Postgraduate Taught. It has also engaged 52.23% of all international students enrolled at Keele University (585) across its activities. The SU engages 71.30% of all UG students and is continuing to close the gap each year with the target of a more consistent engagement percentage across all students by the end of the new three-year Strategic Plan (2025-2028) for which there are clear KPIs.

As part of a Disability Awareness campaign, the Union hosted wheelchair basketball sessions and worked with Estates to assess accessibility by navigating campus in a rented wheelchair, highlighting barriers faced by some disabled students.

Social media campaigns celebrated individuals with visible and invisible disabilities, including the CEO sharing his ADHD diagnosis.

In response to the Supreme Court ruling on the legal definition of “woman,” the Union expressed solidarity with trans students while upholding principles of free speech and alternative/philosophical beliefs.

Leadership has also addressed internal issues relating to student complaints of race profiling and have engaged in cultural celebrations including attendance at the Grand Iftar.

Meetings with Student Networks led to new, externally sourced, campaign training for September 2025 to further equip and empower student voice within our protected characteristic communities.

Keele Postgraduate Association (KPA)

The KPA hosted a wide variety of events, designed to foster community spirit, support well-being, encourage cultural understanding, and provide light-hearted social opportunities for postgraduate students. Events included:

- A **Coping with Anxiety** Workshop
- A Fun Squid Game Event & **Money Week Activity** an interactive social event inspired by the Netflix TV show, combined with a Money Week activity where PG students shared personal money-saving hacks with their peers.
- **Iftar Party** – an inclusive event where students learned about the significance of **Ramadan**, listened to a talk by our Student Trustee, and broke the fast together.
- Badminton Social – an active sports session promoting **physical well-being** and **peer connections**.
- Outdoor Bowling – a relaxed, fun outdoor bowling session designed to **encourage socialising** and help students bond outside of academic spaces.
- **Cultural Celebration** – students wore their traditional attire, cooked and shared food from their home countries, presented aspects of their cultures, shared phrases from different languages, and engaged in meaningful cross-cultural conversation over a shared meal.

Of the 155 postgraduate students who attended these events there was strong representation from international students (79%) and there was representation both from taught (73%) and research (27%) students.

In addition to these events which enhanced the **inclusive student experience / student lifecycle**, the KPA have designed all activities with **accessibility** in mind, and have made active efforts to include both on-campus (33.5% of attendees) and off-campus students (66.5% of attendees). The KPA also demonstrates **Inclusive leadership and decision making**, through elected student trustees, open forums, and student-led initiatives.

Of the
155
postgraduate students
who attended these
events there was strong
representation from
international students

79%
and there was
representation
both from taught

73%
and research

27%
students.



Academic Outputs & Achievements

Academic colleagues have continued to publish work in relation to EDI. In the last 12 months research news noted by Strategic Communications & Brand included the following, which target areas of inequality, locally and/or globally:

Mentoring for a successful maternity leave and return to work

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2025/march/maternity-mentoring/return-to-work

New study to improve digital connectivity across rural areas

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2025/march/new-study/digital-connectivity-rural-areas

Emotion aware chatbot developed by Keele scientists offers transformative potential for mental health care

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2025/february/emotion-aware-chatbot/mental-health-care.php

Keele researchers host summit on protecting displaced people in North Africa

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2024/october/research-symposium/protecting-displaced-people

New research suggests deaf children interact with parents like their hearing peers

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2024/october/largest-study/maternal-mental-health

Ethnic minority patients experience stigma and discrimination in accessing Long Covid care

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2024/june/ethnic-minority/long-covid-care

Keele partners with regional universities to tackle maternity inequalities across the West Midlands

keele.ac.uk/health/facultynews/2024/november/maternity-inequalities/regional-research-partnership.php

These research successes and collaborations being in addition to medical research on specific disabling conditions, global health research, work associated with global food security and environmental sustainability.

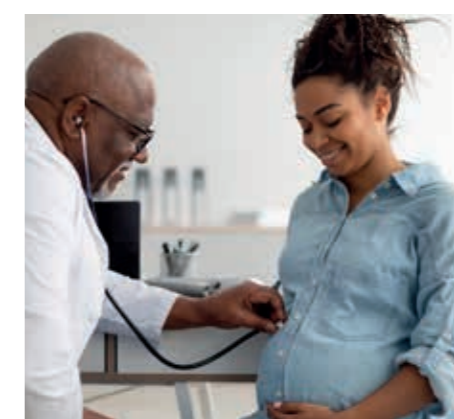
Academic talks in relation to health inequalities included a high profile lecture: Decolonising and the NHS, by Dr Annabel Sowemimo.



Pandemic exposed inequalities and shortfalls in availability of 'decent work' across the Midlands

keele.ac.uk/about/news/2024/july/decent-work/pandemic-exposed-inequalities.php

Professor Caroline Mitchell, receiving the 'Ally of the Year' award at the 'Black Professionals in Life Sciences' conference, nominated from a competitive field and judged by a panel of Life Sciences industry and academic leaders. Caroline said “with the changing landscape in EDI over the Atlantic, it might be a nice time to celebrate some things that we're getting better at in UK academia. It's been a busy 4 weeks with the award, delivering keynotes on Research Equity and 'Evidence-Biased Medicine' at Queens University Belfast, Oxford University and for the NIHR first national Deep End research delivery webinar”.



Results of largest ever study on British South Asian maternal mental health

keele.ac.uk/research/researchnews/2024/october/largest-study/maternal-mental-health



Pro Vice Chancellors

PVC – Education

Inclusive student experience/ student lifecycle

The University will ensure that a high-quality student experience remains at the heart of Keele's key priorities, to provide a safe, respectful and welcoming environment and experience, supporting the success of all, regardless of personal characteristics or background.

A key component of our education strategy is to ensure a learning environment which supports and meets the needs of our diverse learners, highlights of which are reported in earlier sections on the Access and Participation Plan, Student Services and the Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence.

Additionally, we prioritise activities to enable all students to access a range of curricular, co- and extra-curricular opportunities to support their success, including global study, local community activity in work placements, volunteering, field trips and projects with employers.

Following approval of the Inclusive Education Framework principles by Senate in June 2024, we have begun to implement changes, supported by the creation of a set of on-line toolkits (see section on KIITE above)

We have enhanced our approach to student induction and transition, focussing on sense of belonging. Both new intake and returning students have engaged with Welcome Week. A Welcome (Back) survey, with 2800 full responses, 1767 of which were new students, has been conducted to further inform our approach. Around 90% of respondents felt the Welcome had met their expectations, and that they had all the information they needed about their courses.

For new students the process of induction begins pre-arrival, with access to on-line resources (Keele Essentials), and extends throughout the first weeks and months of the academic year. A group including student representation has reviewed the content of Keele Essentials and work is now underway to enhance some content. Initial changes will be in place for July 2025.

During December 2024 we conducted the International Student Barometer survey, into the experiences of international students across their UG, PGT and PGR cohorts (from pre-application to graduation and beyond). This is a benchmarked survey, with 118 institutions worldwide participating and 31 in UK. Keele had 246 responses (23.3% response rate, increased from 14.8% in 2023). Detailed analysis of the results by student cohorts, discipline and level is currently being undertaken to inform an institutional response.

PVC – International

In addition to work on international student support and consultation as detailed in earlier sections, on-campus colleagues across departments have extended induction, pick-ups and support for incoming international students, before and during arrival, supporting a more accessible and inclusive Keele. We continue to establish closer institutional support for academics and students – both at Keele and overseas.

Work on internationalisation continues to take an ethical approach in keeping with Keele's founding principles and vision, as described in the Keele Institute for Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS) Global Challenges lecture given in March 2025 and which can be viewed on our YouTube channel. Keele has actively expanded its international collaborations into new countries in East Asia.

Our Deans of Internationalisation & Partnerships have worked closely with Academic Registry, Global Student Recruitment and Admissions, School International Directors and Faculty Executives to develop Faculty International Plans with associated governance. These are now aligned and embedded to reporting processes for Education, Research and University Executive and its sub-groups.

The University continues to appoint more international staff across academic and professional services to move us closer to sector benchmarks.

PVC – Research

Including input from Associate PVC-Research and Acting Executive Dean FMHS

We are practicing **inclusive leadership and decision making** in preparing for the introduction of our new EDI-focused Research Culture Committee. Our inaugural workshop will discuss and agree our collective norms about how we will work together, including how to make meetings more neuroinclusive.

Keele's research culture has supported **inclusive colleague experience** in recognizing and valuing the contribution made by research enablers. We have been proud to be part of the Midlands Innovation TALENT programme, to enhance the career opportunities for technicians.

Inclusive student experience is demonstrated by our Health Faculty's NIHR grant for the INSIGHTs programme: co-created with two students from an ethnic minority heritage, their work means that the new MRes in Health and Care has been designed to prioritize student inclusivity.

