FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2023

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The purpose of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report is to provide assurance in respect of our Public Sector Equality Duty, which can be summarised as to take steps to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share and those who do not share a protected characteristic; and
- foster good relations between people who share and those who do not share a protected characteristic.

Updated guidance on Public Sector Equality Duty was released for public authorities on 18 December 2023, and has been referenced in the compilation of this report.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Our Values provide a foundation on which we work to ensure more equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. Our Values encourage us to respect differing views, see new ways of thinking and doing, to listen and enable - recognising every individual has their own lived-experience - and to work together to find solutions.

We believe that eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people of different protected groups is essential in order for us to succeed as a university and as a community.

We believe that Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) are fundamental to the delivery of exceptional Higher Education and research. Not only that, but we recognise that equality, diversity and inclusion can power creativity and innovation; the two drivers at the core of Falmouth University's mission.

We endeavour to deliver socially responsible curricula, research and knowledge exchange, maintain inclusive and accessible physical and digital environments, and equitable access to support. This will enable the next generation of creative leaders and explorers to succeed, regardless of background or identity, and ensure that our people are equipped to identify, explore and consider issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion throughout their personal and professional lives.

We seek to be a tolerant community, where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not accept any forms of harassment, bullying, intimidation or discrimination and will take action when necessary.

We acknowledge that we must remain vigilant and agile, responding to the needs of our community and wider society.

OUR VALUES

CREATIVE
Knowing that creativity is the vanguard of progress, we're constantly seeking new ways of thinking, doing and creating.

ACHIEVE
We value the pursuit of excellence and enrichment as a collective aspiration to be the very best we can be.

RESPECTFUL
We have an open mind, we respect differing views, we listen and enable, and we work towards an equitable and diverse world.

SHARING
We collaborate and share knowledge to co-create a positive impact.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION OBJECTIVES

- We will deliver our Access and Participation Plan, which sets out ambitious targets to improve equity of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access Higher Education and support to succeed.

- We will achieve University Mental Health Charter accreditation, taking a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing that seeks to shape a future in which everyone can thrive.

- We will enable our workforce to continually develop socially responsible curricula, research, knowledge exchange and ways of working, and to enact positive, values-aligned change – at all levels of the university.

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- We will place the staff and student voice at the centre of our activity, gathering data, as well as testimony, of the ED&I experience at Falmouth in order to inform our work and encourage a culture where everyone feels safe to speak out.

- We will be open about our work on ED&I issues, communicating with our community clearly and transparently.

- We will invest in our people, such that it encourages positive action in relation to ED&I at Falmouth. This includes mandatory training for staff, continued engagement with the Aurora Women in Leadership programme, support for ED&I related focus groups, collaboration and dialogue.

- We will ensure representation of ED&I issues is embedded across our governance structures and processes.

1.2 During the period the University has paid due regard to the above duty as part of decision-making processes, evidenced by systematic consideration of equality impacts in committee papers and policies, as well as regular consideration of relevant risks in the University's key decision-making forums.

1.3 Following a review of the University's strategic approach to fulfilling its Equality Duty, in May 2023 the Board of Governors approved a new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement of Commitment, which had been collaboratively developed by staff and student representatives.

1.4 The new statement of commitment aligns with the University's Mission, Vision and Values.

1.5 Three major, multi-year cross-institutional activity strands were identified as the core objectives, and this report provides a summary of progress in these three areas.

1.6 Established project steering groups are in place for the Access & Participation Plan, and University Mental Health Charter Programmes, with the University Management Committee and Academic Board monitoring overseeing risks and developments relevant to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion more broadly.

2   STAFF PROFILE

2.1 Staff Profile by protected characteristics (%). This chart illustrates Falmouth's staff profile by protected characteristics. A text description of the figures and trends illustrated by the chart is included in the narrative below.
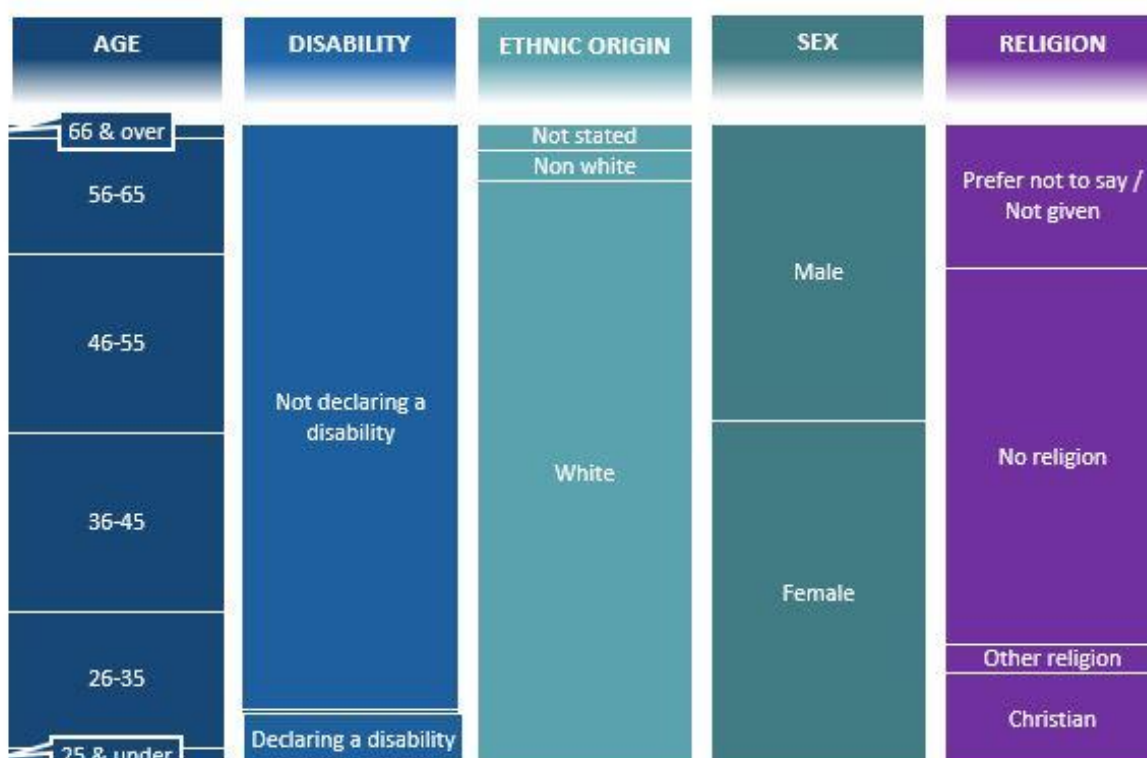

| AGE | As in previous years, it is noted that Falmouth's academic staff group has an older age profile than the national average for the same staff group. Falmouth has a much smaller percentage of its academic staff group in the under 35 age groups than the national average (14.59% |

	compared to 28.30% nationally, and compared to 17.39% at Falmouth in the previous year). The percentage of academic staff at or above the minimum retirement age of 55 at Falmouth has risen from 26.70% in the previous year, to 28.79% this year. The age profile for Falmouth's professional services and support staff group is more closely aligned with the equivalent national age profile.
DISABILITY	The percentage of staff at Falmouth reporting a disability this year (8.62%) is an increase on the same figure from the previous year (7.06%). This is higher than the latest national sector average (6.85%) which has also increased in recent years.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	Falmouth does not currently collect data on staff gender reassignment.
MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	Falmouth has recently stated to collect this information following an update to our HR information system. This protected characteristic will be reported on from 2024 to allow time for this field to be populated by staff.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	Falmouth does not currently collect data about staff members' pregnancy or maternity status.
RACE	Falmouth has a smaller proportion of staff from non-white ethnic backgrounds (4.93%, up from 4.71% the previous year) than the national average for higher education (16.13%). This figure should be viewed in light of the local context. The proportion of Cornwall residents from a non-white ethnic background, as reported in the 2021 census data is 3.2%, compared to 18.3% in England and Wales.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	Well over half of Falmouth staff (58.73%) selected 'No Religion', an increase from 55.78% the previous year. The data also shows that the levels of staff not disclosing their religion or belief continues to decrease (a trend that has been noted at Falmouth in the past 3 years) moving from 24.57% last year to 22.49% this year.
SEX	Falmouth's male / female split has remained relatively unchanged from the previous year, with 46.30% of staff being male and 53.70% female (compared to 54.49% female staff nationally). This balance is not as even when analysed across pay grades. For example, only 30% of grade 8 staff are female, while 76.71% of grade 3 staff are female. These differences across the grades contribute to Falmouth's gender pay gap. This is detailed in Annex B, with separate figures being provided for each employer (Falmouth University, Falmouth Staffing, and Falmouth Agency). A combined core staffing figure that includes the staff in Falmouth University and Falmouth Staffing is also given as this provides a useful comparison with the gender pay gap figures for years prior to the formation of Falmouth Staffing, and includes all of our staff recruited locally / nationally. Falmouth Agency is not

	included within this core staffing figure, as its student workers are recruited from within our student population which has a different profile (58.39% of undergraduates are female). <u>As at 1 September 2023</u> the gender balance of the Board of Governors was 50:50 male: female members, compared with the same point in the previous years since 2020 (46% female), and original benchmark in 2019 (43% female).The gender balance of academic heads (Faculty Deans, previously Academic Directors) was 33%, which is similar to previous years but lower than the 44% benchmark in 2019. The gender balance of the senior management team (University Executive Board) was 43% female, an improvement from the same point in 2022 (42% female) and 2021 (31% female), which is a further improvement since the 28% benchmark in 2019.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	This year 9.65% of staff indicated their sexual orientation as either lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) or other, compared to 8.50% the previous year. This figure is significantly higher than the latest ONS 2022 figures that show an estimated 3.3% of the UK population age 16 or over identify as LGB.

3   STUDENT PROFILE

3.1   Student Profile by protected characteristics (%). This chart illustrates Falmouth's **Undergraduate student profile** by some of the protected characteristics. A text description of the figures and trends illustrated by the chart is included in the narrative below.
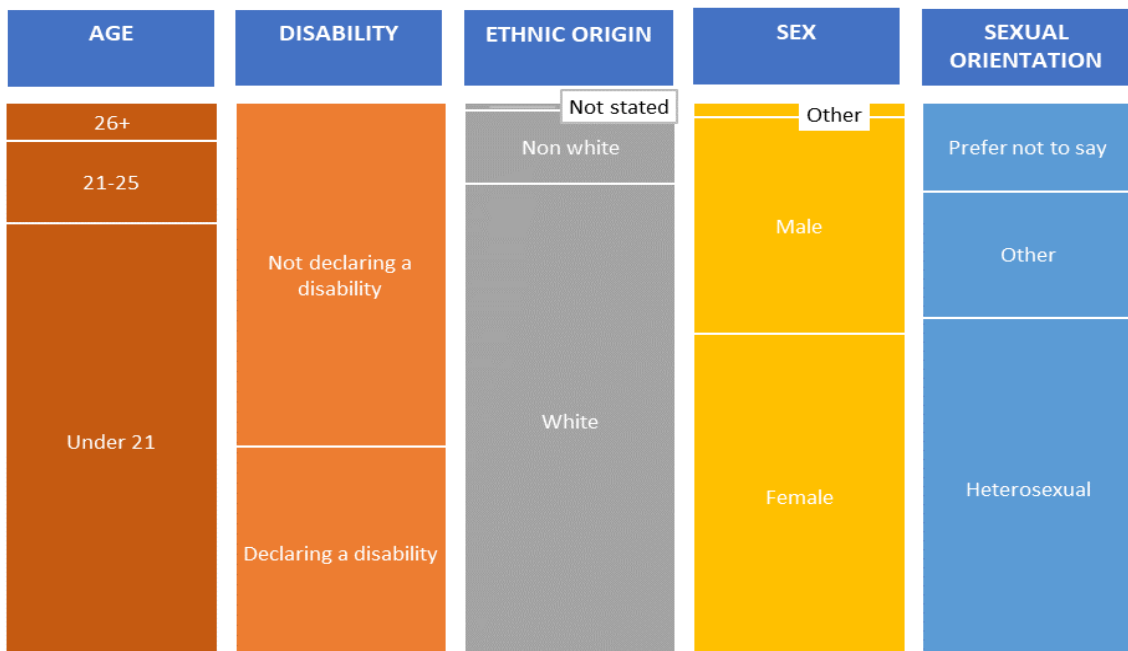
3.2 Student Profile by protected characteristics (%). This chart illustrates Falmouth's **Postgraduate student profile** by some of the protected characteristics. A text description of the figures and trends illustrated by the chart is included in the narrative below.

AGE	DISABILITY	ETHNIC ORIGIN	SEX	SEXUAL ORIENTATION

AGE	The age range of Falmouth students is lower than average but not significantly at variance with other Higher Education Institutions. Our proportion of mature students (26+) is 6.84% in undergraduate study and 70.01% at postgraduate level. This makes sense when viewed in context of our wider portfolio and the relative number of postgraduate courses we offer. We have around 14.87% mature students at undergraduate level between 21 – 25 years old and 28.99% in that age range in postgraduate study.
DISABILITY	The percentage of total UK population that is disabled is approximately 17 - 22%, meaning that Falmouth has around double the UK national average of disabled students. This is additionally significant as when taken in the context that our good degree outcomes are appropriate and steady (i.e., not over-inflated by Office for Students' standards) the proportion of disabled Falmouth students securing positive educational outcomes is high. The numbers from the table above are contextualised further by noting an significant proportion of our 61.77% undergraduate and 69.28% postgraduate students who have declared "no disability" will have nonetheless a non-disclosed disability which can unnecessarily negatively impact on their academic progress. The literature is still clear that attainment in students with a disclosed disability is not significantly at variance with non-disabled student attainment, but the same cannot be said for attainment in students with an undisclosed disability, which influences the focus of our institutional efforts.
GENDER REASSIGNMENT	The University holds partial data on this characteristic but it is not yet reported.

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	The University does not currently collect data about students' marriage or civil partnership status.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	The University does not currently collect data about students' pregnancy or maternity status.
RACE	85.51% of our undergraduate and 72.01% of our postgraduate student populations are white, with a significantly lower proportion either unknown or non-white. Our recently OfS endorsed Access & Participation Plan (APP) outlines the ways we seek to redress this imbalance in context within the wider aims of the APP.
RELIGION OR BELIEF	Collection of this information is in development, but work is not yet at a point to enable reporting.
SEX	Our portfolio offer of courses and subject areas are very clearly attractive to female students, with 58.39% of our undergraduate and 57.70% of our postgraduate cohorts identifying as female. Our data has remained static in this sub-category year on year since 2020.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	In contemporary Higher Education, students who identify as LGBTQ+ have been found to experience an increased risk of developing depression and anxiety (Neves and Hillman, 2017). The literature is also clear that students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans are at risk of experiencing multiple stressors which can result in negative mental health outcomes (Hatchel et al., 2019). Research also indicates that for students who identify as LGBTQ+, perceptions of safety, acceptance and tolerance (Formby, 2014) are important factors which influence university choice-making. When comparing our trends with the Office for Students' reported national picture, we see there that in 2021/22 in UG study: 61.39% (Heterosexual); 38.6% Other or electing not to say and our PG cohorts report 67% (heterosexual) and 33% Other or electing not to say, which together suggests we continue to offer an inclusive and safe community for students of all orientations.

4   KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES

> **a) "We will deliver our Access and Participation Plan, which sets out ambitious targets to improve equity of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access Higher Education and support to succeed."**

4.1   In our current Access and Participation Plan (2020-2025) (see summary document here), we have 9 qualitative targets, and 10 quantitative targets, which were developed in consultation with, and approved by, the Office for Students. Over the last 4 years of the delivery of the APP, we have implemented a range of new processes, policies, initiatives and projects, which have helped the University to meet all of the qualitative targets set and the majority of the quantitative targets. At the most recent point of assessment we had achieved 7 out of the 10 numerical targets:

- Percentage of BAME entrants: **8.4%** (target 8.4% **achieved**)

- Gap in participation rates between IMD (index of multiple deprivation) students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5: **14.4%** (target 15% **achieved**)
- Gap in participation rates between POLAR 4 students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5: **18.6%** (target 20.5% **achieved**)
- Gap in degree attainment between White and BAME ethnicities: **5.9%** (target 14% **achieved**)
- Gap in degree attainment between Disabled and Non-Disabled students: **-0.5%** (target 6.0% **achieved**)
- Gap in degree attainment between POLAR 4 students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5: **9.1%** (target 10.5% **achieved**)
- Gap in continuation rates between POLAR 4 students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5: **-3.8%** (target 5.7% **achieved**)
- Gap in degree attainment between IMD students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5: **23.6%** (target 10.5% not achieved)
- Gap in continuation rates between young and mature (over 21) students: **11.4%** (target 5.7% not achieved)
- Gap in continuation rates between IMD students quintiles 1 and quintiles 5- 1**2.8%** (target 5.7% not achieved)

4.17 Some examples of initiatives delivered in furtherance of the APP and mapped against the above targets include (but are not limited to); a racial equality research project called 'Antiracism, Access & Inclusion', interviewing students from different ethnicities, to inform future practice; a 'Micro-internships' programme targeted at underrepresented groups to obtain crucial work experience; a review of all accessibility processes including the Individual Learning Plan process; the implementation of 3 National Saturday Clubs on campus aimed at local young people from disadvantaged backgrounds; all Academic teams have decolonised their curriculum/literature/photos/reading lists; the Cornish Business School have worked with 'Attitude is Everything' to ensure their event management courses are suitable for any students with hearing loss; a transition programme called 'Step Into Falmouth' has been implemented, to help any students who are anxious or live with a learning difference to easily move from FE to HE study. We have also introduced a 'Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting Strategy' and developed evaluation tools to use, aiming to gather student feedback and therefore improve future practice.

4.18 During this reporting period, the University has developed its second [Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2024-2028](#) (see summary document [here](#)), which has been approved by the Office for Students to come into effect in 2024. The 3 targets we have not yet achieved so far from the 2020-2025 APP have informed the development of our second Access and Participation Plan.

4.4 The overall aims of our APPs are to support students to access higher education, to feel supported whilst studying, to help them to achieve their degree and their ultimate career goals. We also seek to continuously develop an environment where all target students at Falmouth University can achieve their full potential. The plan focuses on improving outcomes for specific groups of students and providing equity of opportunity, in close alignment with our Equality Duty.

4.5 In our new APP, we have analysed data to identify 6 risks to students achieving equal opportunity, set ourselves 6 objectives to mitigate these risks, and added numerical targets to each. We have then developed interventions which are the initiatives/projects/events/processes that will help us to meet our objectives and

targets. A high level summary of this is detailed within the published APP summary document [here](#).

> **b) "We will achieve University Mental Health Charter accreditation, taking a whole-university approach to mental health and wellbeing that seeks to shape a future in which everyone can thrive"**

4.6 In In addition to these APP target student characteristics, we also aim to support a range of other underrepresented student groups and intersectionality, for example: young carers; care-leavers/care-experienced/estranged students; students from Gypsy/Roma/traveller heritage; students from military families; asylum seekers/refugees; and students who identify as LGBTQ+.

4.7 Work toward achieving the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC) has been undertaken by four workstreams. The workstreams are overseen by a Steering Group, chaired by the Vice Chancellor & Chief Executive, and have met bi-monthly. The first activity commissioned by the Steering Group was for the workstreams to analyse the University's position against the expectations of the 100 Principles of Good Practice detailed in the UMHC, this assessment formulated the overarching heatmap which informed action planning for each workstream, in readiness for achieving the early 2025 timeline for Falmouth's accreditation submission.

**4.8** **Summary of achievements for each workstream:**

- **LEARN Workstream:** the priority for the workstream this year has been 'Institutional Placement Provision: developing culture and practice'. This has been achieved whilst implementing the recent [UUK Guidance](#) on Supporting Placement Students. Further consideration has been given to how best develop the Falmouth Curriculum to align with the expectations of the UMHC. After consultation it has been decided to undertake a Healthy Curriculum diagnostic review. Course documentation will be assessed via the Healthy Curriculum Ladder methodology. Each course will receive an output-based report demonstrating strengths and areas for improvement based on the application of the analysis. Guidance and a set of core resources to assist course teams to improve the areas for improvement will be developed. In parallel we are initiating a project to review, improve and embed transition into Falmouth, throughout the first year and across the provision.

- **SUPPORT Workstream:** This Workstream has completed seven projects:
  - Developed and delivered a refreshed focus on 'Cause for Concern' processes.
  - Developed a staff training requirements matrix for non-clinical teams.
  - Developed student experience feedback mechanism for welfare services.
  - Reviewed the approach to the management of student confidentiality, and information sharing for FX Plus teams.
  - Reviewed the emergency contact process/policy, updating it in accordance with [UUK Guidance](#).
  - Implemented the Compassionate Comms Guidance by updating communications (e.g., SITS and Compass templates) with a compassionate lens.
  - Developed structures and processes for follow up and ongoing support for students who are referred into an external service which has a known long wait list.

This workstream are also on track to deliver the following projects by September 2024:
- Developing an evaluation mechanism for welfare services.
- Drafting a Risk Management Policy for Student Support.
- Developing a, 'Something not right/working' statement to help students raise a concern about a support process (e.g., Therapy, Accessibility, DSA, Student Support).
- Student Support resource and activity benchmarking.
- Continued operation of the student co-creation Wellbeing Opinion Panel.
- Broadening and formalising of Student Support on-call responsibility.
- Developing a referral guidance for external DSA support providers.
- Working closer with students whose support is provided by external DSA providers.
- Regular (ideally termly) updates from external DSA suppliers.
- NSS Q26 action plan.

A significant part of the SUPPORT Workstream activity during the period has been focussed on developing and delivering Falmouth's Suicide Safer University Implementation Plan based on UUK guidance. This plan has 50 actions, of which 41 are either complete or on track for completion. Completed actions include; introduced online suicide safer training, improving students' access to support services, developing trauma informed practices and improving information sharing processes within the University. The remaining actions are being addressed as a priority.

- **WORK Workstream**: Initially tasked with developing the Universities Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy the workstream, supported by the communications team designed an overarching engagement and communications framework, underpinned by Falmouth's Mission, Vision and Values within which all of the UMHC Workstreams operate, this is our approved Our Commitment (LINK) and Our Approach (LINK).
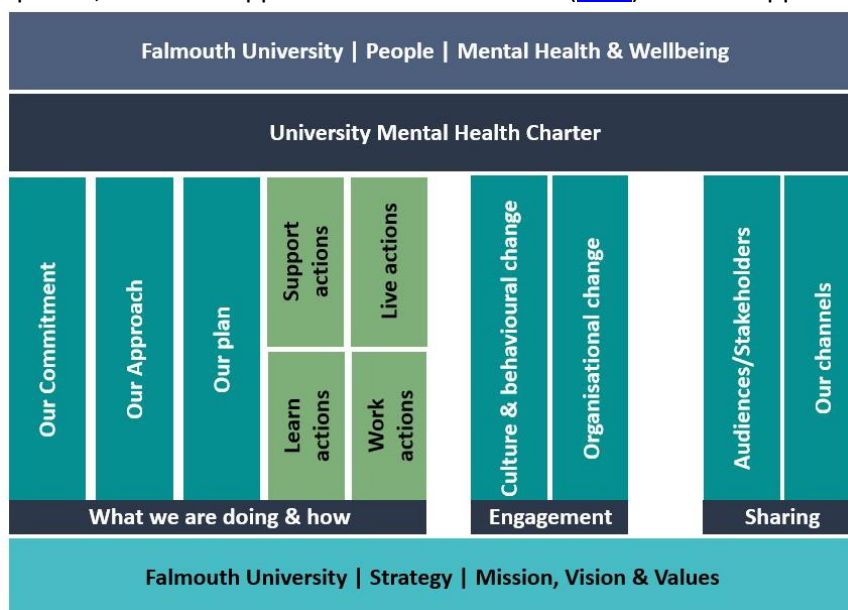
Alongside the development and delivery of Falmouth's Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, the workstream also designed and implemented the University's first Wellbeing and Belonging Staff Survey and reviewed the insights, which gave a clear indication of the University's top three priorities: (1) Work pressures, (2) Wellbeing as a priority and (3) psychological safety. The workstream overlaid the survey outcomes against the original assessment which had been made using the UMHC Principles of Good Practice to ensure alignment. Survey highlights were communicated by the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive across the University, with team level insights shared and localised conversations had to further explore the narrative and encourage team support and

engagement. Many of the associated actions require HR expertise and therefore fall into the remit of the People and Culture Team - progress has been made in the following areas: line manager training (including mental health), Performance Development Review (PDR) culture, a people experience review considering the University's recruitment, induction, progression and retirement journeys and developing a training matrix for the Student Support Team.

- **LIVE Workstream:** There are six sub-workstreams, each being managed as part of a cross partnership programme with FX Plus, The Students' Union and the University of Exeter. The achievements of each are:
  - **Mentally Healthy Campus Community**: a cross partnership communications solution via the FX Plus [Community page](#), Employee Wellbeing calendar with wellbeing activities coordinated and facilitated by staff; such as, writing, walking, ecoanxiety support, staff networks, including neurodiverse and the Menopause Cafés.
  - **Social Connection and Sense of Community**: event planning for groups more at risk of isolation for example, mature/international/disabled students at induction and throughout year, a student communications review to assist cross partnership communication campaigns, increased neurodiverse isolation support including enhanced induction activities.
  - **Inclusivity and Intersectional Mental Health**: two Wellbeing and Inclusion Fairs, Talk to Us project to better understand the lived student experience, monitoring of the [Speak Out tool](#), now collecting examples of best practise across the partnership with a view to sharing, upskilling and ultimately a conference style event.
  - **Residential Accommodation**: conducting a review of all information sent to students living in university owned and managed accommodation and all purpose built student accommodation providers, identifying best ways to introduce key staff contacts to students, improving processes for weekly meetings between student services, safety and support and accommodation, reviewed ResLife offer surrounding student events, health and wellbeing and life skills, creation of a safety and support and accommodation team mental health training matrix, reviewed current support provided for flat mates sharing living space with mentally ill students, reviewing mental health support offering for staff, including any post-traumatic incidents and ongoing supervision.
  - **Physical Environment**: reviewing wayfinding, in particular accessibility routes, developing a suicide safer building risk assessment.
  - **Gender Safety**: coordinating approach to reducing violence against women and girls across the partnership, including working with external agencies and increasing their presence on campus.

4.9   This significant and meaningful programme of work demonstrates the University's commitment across both our Student and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing agendas. We recognise the importance of this work and the creation of the new People Success team will further support the University's commitment in achieving the UMHC. We are aiming to be ready to apply for the UMHC Charter Award in early 2025.

> ### c) "We will enable our workforce to continually develop socially responsible curricula, research, knowledge exchange and ways of working, and to enact positive, values-aligned change at all levels of the University"

i)   Socially responsible curricula

4.10   Socially responsible curriculum design is a theme that many higher education providers are grappling within the new post-pandemic context. With complex student needs and health/mental health more prominent than ever, there is need to design curriculum that weaves many drivers into and around the core disciplinary learning. At Falmouth we have taken a scholarship-informed way around several key aspects; wellbeing and sustainability and adopted a research methodology to evaluate and test the rigor of our curriculum design. Broadly defining socially responsible through the lens of wellbeing and sustainability allows us to measure and develop our curricula in a systematic way to ensure student success and student outcomes reflect our values and what it means to obtain a Falmouth University degree.

4.11   Sustainability as a lens
In the 2021-22 academic year, we made sustainability a mandatory consideration during the academic course validation or re-validation process. That means that as our academic portfolio evolves, sustainability principles and practices will have to be embedded. Our Sustainability Team reviewed the curriculum documentation for 51% of our course portfolio using our Falmouth Curriculum Ladder for Sustainability (FCL-S) framework approach and has assessed that 36 courses have now embedded – or are in the process of embedding in the coming academic year – sustainability learning outcomes in their course delivery. A total of 25 courses deliver, or will deliver from September 2024, a whole sustainability-focused module as part of the course. Using our methodology, within the formal descriptions of the course documentation analysed, we identified 1,011 individual references to our core sustainability themes which helps us generate a baseline understanding of how sustainability content, initiatives and assessments are embedded within our curricula.

4.12   Case Study Exemplar - 'Exploring Sustainability', Cornwall Business School
The 'Exploring Sustainability' module will be delivered from September 2024 and will sit across all seven courses delivered by the Cornwall Business School. The module aims to inspire and engage first year students in sustainable development, across all three social, environmental, and economic elements.

4.13   Wellbeing as a lens
Ongoing work applying our above methodology (which has been published and peer reviewed) has seen us adopt the curriculum diagnosis approach to our undergraduate provision in an at-scale way to evaluate the level of wellbeing in a course mapped against the Universities Mental Health Charter criteria in such a way that we will be able to design interventions to address gaps at the course level and share best practice in doing so collaboratively and across disciplinary boundaries.

4.14   These two examples showcase just two instances of a breadth of innovative projects as happening at Falmouth in this year, they represent our values in action.

ii)   Socially responsible research and knowledge exchange

4.15   Postgraduate research:
Work has been undertaken at the postgraduate research level to ensure that we continue to instil an awareness and understanding of the importance of foregrounding equality, diversity and inclusion in research practices. To this end the Research Student Development Programme has expanded to include sessions with explicit focus on wellbeing (Writing for Stress Management; Self-Care as a Researcher), acknowledgment

of diversity of learning needs (Neurodiverse Learning) and embracing of alternative narratives (Decolonising Your Research), alongside more established sessions on Research Ethics.

4.16   The postgraduate research community has been an active voice in equality, diversity and inclusion contexts, with students in the last two years contributing to national reports (Guild HE's "Understanding the lived experience of ethnic minority students in post-graduate research"), publishing on the intersection of gender and feminism, Black history and cultural studies, writing on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic's messaging in the UK on BIPOC communities, and contributing podcast materials to the Oxford led Attune project. Continued work with The Brilliant Club (a university access charity focused on increasing the number of less advantaged students accessing universities) ensures that Falmouth PGR students contribute to projects with wider social benefit.

4.17   **Research and knowledge exchange projects**
We continue to prioritise mental health, neurodiversity and arts based/creative practice research with an intention to actively influence policy and strategy through the insight and learning. Find out more about our portfolio of research projects [here](#).

4.18   **Attune**
The [Attune Project](#) is progressing and has early findings which are both nationally, locally and organisationally relevant. Two policy asks have been developed by the young people in the project directly from the arts-based research, these are: (1) all policy, strategy, practice and financial decisions to be trauma impact assessed prior to sign off and (2) all staff who work directly with young people (including university lecturers) to have trauma informed practice embedded within the curriculum (e.g. PGCE, social work degrees, teachers, GPs). A multi-agency focus group is forming to co-design a trauma impact assessment tool with young people, and we are looking to develop and pilot trauma informed practice research project within the university (early-stage discussions). This project will also provide insight for pedagogy and staff wellbeing as well as organisational ways of working.

4.19   **Springboard Studios**
[Springboard Studios](#) came to an end in December 2023. We are exploring a further programme focused on retention of students in the first year. The Springboard programme provided place based, blue mind, creative opportunities, based on the 5 ways to wellbeing to support students to emotionally regulate, reduce self-sabotage, increase confidence and self-belief and support their transition into employment through the development of live briefs with local Charites and Social Enterprises. The optimisation of place, alongside the implementation of blue mind demonstrated the power of creative thinking when supporting students in this crucial transition.

4.20   **CREATE**
Through the [CREATE project](#) we are exploring bringing youth, science and art researchers together to develop methods and resources that unlock the learning potential from arts-based processes and outputs in mental health research. The insight from the project will be brought back into the university to influence mental health arts-based research within the Centre for Arts and Health.

4.21   **Research & Knowledge Exchange Staff Support Schemes**

The staff support schemes created using core QR funding and HEIF have been utilised to support a breadth of relevant knowledge exchange and research projects, including:

Live Audience Accessibility & Augmentation (LAAA) which aimed to increase the accessibility of live music events for the deaf and disabled through the evaluation of audience experiences of engaging with authentic 'live' music performances, including those augmented with haptic technology which transforms sound into felt vibration. LAAA was delivered by Cornwall Business School, in partnership with the Academy of Music & Theatre Arts.

4.22   Truro Foodbank project
Working collaboratively with Truro Foodbank and a local chef, a number of printed recipe cards were developed with the majority of the ingredients being made up of the dried, tinned and non-perishable goods found in donated foodbank boxes. The idea behind the project was to support and aid foodbank users in creating, tasty, nutritious, and nourishing food with the aim of minimising potential food waste, and to help destigmatise foodbank use by offering users the ability to build a collection of dishes that they can cook for themselves promoting self-worth, health, and wellbeing. A range of short cookery videos were created to accompany the recipe cards.

4.23   South West Creative Technology Network (SWCTN) Inclusion Review
Falmouth was part of a Research England-funded connected capabilities consortium called the South West Creative Technology Network (SWCTN) from 2018-2021. Socially responsible research and knowledge exchange was threaded through the whole programme and at the culmination of the funding, SWCTN published here.

iii)   People and Culture
4.24   There are several initiatives being progressed and led by the People and Culture Team, which support workforce enablement, as well as progressing our achievement towards the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC).

4.25   Talent Development
We have continued to enhance our suite of training resources. This includes e-learning resources covering essential training, continued leadership development opportunities, as well as bespoke sessions providing key line management skills. For 2023, we also have enhanced our approach for Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs), which included improved system functionality and a revised PDR form which aligns better to our values. Development activities have also been promoted alongside to aide PDR conversations, such as the Aurora Women in Leadership Programme, our mentoring and coaching schemes, as well as our suite of training resources.

4.26   People Experience
We have actively progressed new initiatives and feedback mechanisms, which includes:
- New starter and leaver surveys for all staff to facilitate regular feedback.
- Launch of our Academic Career Pathways and Progression for academic staff.
- New Occupational Health provider onboarded, which has received excellent feedback, and introduces regular Health Checks for our front-line staff.
- Face to face induction sessions which are now available for all new staff and managers, to provide a good grounding around employment arrangements, benefits, and resources available.

4.27 Dynamic Workforce Modelling (DWM) has also been introduced at Falmouth to enable us to become more agile in our ways of working, with a focus on bringing colleagues together from across the University who have critical skills, allowing us to adapt and grow for future success. This is particularly important in the current financial context, therefore, the ability to have flexibility in our workforce is crucial to support growth opportunities, mobilising our skills and resources to high priority activities. The initial roll-out of DWM provides 28 new opportunities that will support the delivery of our Business Plan.

4.28 Finally, in support of our work to progress achievement of the UMHC, we undertook a staff survey during the summer of 2023 focussed on mental health and wellbeing. As a top-level view, 'Overall Wellbeing' scored 59% across the University. The metric is made up of an average from five key indicator questions:

- I rarely feel overstressed by my work: 31% agreed
- Overall I feel productive in my work: 76% agreed
- I tend to bounce back quickly after challenging times at work: 60% agreed
- I usually have enough energy to overcome challenges at work: 60% agreed
- I generally feel positive to my work: 70% agreed

4.29 It is very positive to hear that a large majority of colleagues feel productive and positive about their work at Falmouth University. However, we have identified three priority areas that we are actively focussing on improving:

- **Work pressures**
  We can see across the questions relating to work pressures that there are trends that need to be addressed.
- **Wellbeing as a priority**
  The survey indicated that many staff both do not believe that employee wellbeing is a priority as a matter of principle at the University, and that managers and leaders do not demonstrate that employee wellbeing is important. This will be our second focus area.
- **Psychological safety**
  Finally, we can also see from the survey results that not all colleagues feel comfortable raising a concern, expressing their true feelings, or voicing a contrary opinion without fear of negative consequences.

4.30 To obtain the UMHC, we recognise that it is vital to respond directly to the areas of concern while acknowledging where improvement is essential, as highlighted in the staff survey insights. As part of the work that is ongoing through the UMHC working groups, prioritised actions that address the three identified focus areas, is underway.

5   ACTION

5.1 The Board of Governors is asked to: **note and approve** the draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report for publication.

6   ANNEXES

a) [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Statement of Commitment](#)
b) Staff Equality & Diversity Dashboard 2023
c) Access & Participation Plan 2024-2028 ([full plan](#), [3-page summary](#))