



STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

2014 - 2018

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Throughout this Scheme, “equality” means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities on an equal footing and “diversity” acknowledges there are differences between individuals and people which should be recognised, respected and celebrated.
- 1.2 The National Library of Wales is proud of its diverse community of staff, readers and visitors and is committed to maintaining its excellent record in ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity.
- 1.3 The promotion of Equality and Diversity concerns all of us and is the responsibility of all members of the Library’s community. As members of this community, it is expected that we will contribute to ensuring that The National Library of Wales continues to be a safe, welcoming and productive environment.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND AND REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 There are a number of pieces of legislation which outlaw discrimination and some of these (in respect of equal pay, race and sex discrimination) were enacted in the 1970s. In order to give impetus to the elimination of discrimination the UK government has amended acts and/or brought new ones into being with very specific requirements for public sector organisations and the Welsh Government has introduced numerous initiatives that promote equality and diversity. These require us to work to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in all our activities.
- 2.2 There are three areas in particular (Race, Disability and Gender) where we are expected to produce a policy or scheme and a corresponding action plan.
- 2.3 Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) (RR(A)A)
 - 2.3.1 The original Race Relations Act (1976) outlawed discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins and covers employment, education, and the provision of facilities or services. The RR(A)A amends this legislation and requires public bodies to take a more proactive approach to:
 - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
 - promote equality of opportunity
 - promote good race relations between people of different racial groups
 - 2.3.2 In addition the Library will comply with a number of other conditions – we must:
 - prepare a written policy on race equality
 - assess the impact of our policies on users and staff
 - monitor the recruitment and progress of staff
 - set out arrangements for publishing the results of monitoring

2.4 Disability Discrimination Act (2005) (DDA)

2.4.1 The DDA amends the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) which laid out the original definition of disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. The 2005 Act has widened this definition in that it includes some conditions such as cancer from the day of diagnosis and removes the requirement for a mental impairment to be “clinically well recognised”. The Act defines “substantial” as being more than minor or trivial and “normal day to day activities” includes obvious activities but also includes mobility, manual dexterity, lifting, hearing, eyesight, speech, memory and the ability to concentrate, learn, or understand. In general, however, for a condition to be treated as a disability it has to last or be expected to last for twelve months or longer.

2.4.2 The DDA requires us to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

2.4.3 In order to achieve the aims above the Library must produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme, implement it, report on it, and review and revise it at least once every four years. In doing so, there is a very specific requirement on us to involve disabled people in drawing up the Scheme.

2.5 Gender Equality Duty (2007)

2.5.1 The original Sex Discrimination Act (1975) outlawed discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, or gender reassignment and covers employment, education, and the provision of facilities or services. The Equality Act (2006) (which amends the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) introduced the Gender Equality Duty – requiring us to pay “due regard” to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment that is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act and discrimination which is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act and
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women

2.5.2 In addition we need to comply with a number of other conditions – we must:

- prepare a written scheme on gender equality, including an action plan with gender equality objectives
- formulate the gender equality objectives, considering the need to have objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality
- consult employees, service users and others
- assess the impact of current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality

- implement the actions set out in the written scheme and review progress at least once every four years

2.5.3 The term “sex” is used to describe biological differences between women and men. The term “gender” refers to the wider social roles and relationships which structure men’s and women’s lives. The gender equality duty covers men, women and transgender individuals. Transgenderism or transsexualism is a recognised medical condition where an individual believes he or she was born in a body of the wrong sex.

2.6 Summary of requirements - Race, Disability and Gender legislation

2.6.1 As can be seen from the above outline of the legislation regarding Race, Disability and Gender, there are common themes to the requirements they place on us. These are:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination/harassment
- promoting equality of opportunity
- preparing a written policy or scheme on how we will address the aims above
- assessing the impact of our policies, practices and procedures on different groups and publishing results
- monitoring the recruitment of staff and publishing results
- reviewing and revising policies and/or schemes and action plans once every four years

2.6.2 The additional specific requirements for Race, Disability and Gender are summarised in the table below:

Race	Disability	Gender
promote good relations between persons of different racial groups	<p>promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons</p> <p>encourage participation by disabled persons in public life</p> <p>take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons</p>	consider the need to have objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap

3.0 OTHER LEGISLATION

3.1 In addition to the Acts noted above there are other relevant pieces of legislation which impact on our work on equality and diversity.

3.2 Age Discrimination

3.2.1 The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 outlaw age discrimination against employees (including applicants for jobs) and users. Similarly, we cannot discriminate against people in relation to recruitment and selection, access to training and development, promotion opportunities, and retirement. Staff are entitled to request to work beyond their normal retirement date and this request will be considered.

3.3 Sexual Orientation

3.3.1 The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment. Sexual orientation is defined as an orientation to the same sex, the opposite sex, or the same and opposite sex. The Equality Act 2006 widened the scope of the Regulations to cover the provision of goods, facilities, services and education. The law also covers discrimination against someone because of a perception about their sexual orientation, even if that perception is not correct.

3.3.2 Legislation recognises both direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. A person who is a civil partner in a registered civil partnership of a same-sex couple should not be treated less favourably than a married person in similar circumstances. If a civil partner is treated less favourably, they may be able to bring a claim for sexual orientation discrimination under the Sexual Orientation Regulations or a claim for sex discrimination.

3.3.3 The Regulations outlaw direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of sexual orientation. It is also unlawful to discriminate against or harass someone after the working relationship has ended. The definitions of discrimination includes discriminating against someone because of their perceived sexual orientation (even if this turns out not to be the case) or because he/she is friendly with others of particular sexual orientations.

3.3.4 In very limited circumstances it will be lawful for an employer to treat people differently if it is a genuine occupational requirement that the job holder must be of a particular sexual orientation. For example, a public body advising on and promoting gay rights may be able to show that it is essential to the credibility of its chief executive who will be the public face of the organisation that s/he should be gay. The sexual orientation of the holder of that post may therefore be a genuine occupational requirement.

3.4 Religion or Belief

3.4.1 The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 outlaw discrimination on the grounds of a person's religion or belief, in employment. Religion or belief is defined as being "any religion, religious belief, or philosophical belief". In general, three criteria are used to determine a religion:

- a belief in a supreme being
- worship of that supreme being; and
- a group or following of people who observe the beliefs, values, customs and traditions as set down by that supreme being.

- 3.4.2 However, philosophical beliefs are much less well defined and political beliefs are explicitly excluded from the legislation. The Equality Act 2006 extended the scope of these Regulations to cover the provision for goods, facilities, services and education.
- 3.4.3 The legislation covers discrimination on the grounds of perceived as well as actual religion or belief and the religion or belief of someone with whom the person associates.
- 3.4.4 The Regulations outlaw direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of religion or belief. It is also unlawful to discriminate against or harass someone after the working relationship has ended. The definitions of discrimination includes discriminating against someone because of their perceived religion or belief (even if this turns out not to be the case) or because he/she is friendly with others of particular religions or beliefs.
- 3.4.5 In very limited circumstances it will be lawful for an employer to treat people differently if it is a genuine occupational requirement that the job holder must be of a particular religion or belief. For example, some organisations, such as faith schools, have an ethos based on a religion or belief. They may be able to apply a genuine occupational requirement to some of their posts (but possibly not all) and each case would need to be justified. It is very unlikely that any posts at the Library would fall into this category.

4.0 THE LIBRARY'S VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The existence and work of the Library depend on certain principles and values, shared by those who govern it, work in it and use it. They are seen as complementary to the values and principles of the National Assembly in guiding the Library's work.
- 4.2 The Library has a vital role as a collector and guardian of the intellectual record of the life of Wales and the Welsh people. This is important in itself, and is also an important element in defining the cultural identities of the country.

The new political status of Wales is a product of, and will itself contribute to, a renewed concern with cultural identities. The Library is likely to have an important part to play in reflecting, recording and even forming those identities.

- 4.3 This intellectual record is not confined to any particular medium, format, period or language.

From its inception the Library has been more than what is conventionally recognised as a 'library', that is, a collection of printed works. It stores a wide – and still widening – range of formats capable of carrying intellectual content. Among these are: books and periodicals, manuscripts and archives, pictures, photographs and maps, sound and moving images, and electronic material.
- 4.4 This record of the 'matter of Wales' (and of the other Celtic countries) is, however, part of a wider, indeed worldwide, domain of recorded knowledge, produced in many languages and over many centuries, which the Library attempts to represent in its collections for the benefit of its users.

The Library's wider collections, mainly acquired in print form through legal deposit, are essential to its ability to support study and learning, not only in Welsh or Celtic domains, but also in a very wide range of other subjects.

- 4.5 The Library's collections and services exist to meet the needs of all who can benefit from them.

The Library is proud of the fact that it is a public library, in the sense that any person aged 16 or over is welcome to use its collections for reference purposes with little formality and without charge. Among the groups that make use of the Library at present for consultation and reference are academic and personal researchers, students and other learners, businesses, the media, and visitors from Britain and overseas. This right of unrestricted access is part of the democratic rights of citizens in pursuit of information, knowledge and enlightenment, and contributes to the promotion of 'social inclusion'.

- 4.6 The Library has a duty not merely to 'hold its doors open', but to encourage awareness and use of its collections and services, by all the means at its disposal.

In the past, personal visits to the Library in Aberystwyth were usually necessary to take advantage of what the Library had to offer; in future, remote, and especially digital, networked access will become more significant. Already remote (including online) uses of the Library greatly outnumber visits in person.

- 4.7 The Library has an important role, as the largest and most significant institution of its kind in Wales, in leading, co-ordinating and supporting the development of library and archive services in Wales. This is not an optional part of its mission, but an essential role in a country where library and archive services tend to be small and scattered.

In its turn the National Library is part of a wider, interlocking structure of library, information and archive institutions in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. It co-operates with them to make the best use of the resources that are available to all.

- 4.8 In everything it does - whether answering enquiries, publishing books, mounting exhibitions, or any other relevant activity – the National Library aims for the highest possible standard, with excellence as a constant ideal in mind.

5.0 VISION FOR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE LIBRARY

5.1 As noted in the Introduction at 1.0 above, the Library is proud of its diverse community. This Scheme is designed to further articulate the Library's commitment to equality and diversity in a coherent and structured manner, accompanied as it is by a set of objectives and priorities detailed in the Action Plan.

6.0 VISION FOR EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE LIBRARY

6.1 The Library has, in recent years, drawn up a variety of policies, schemes and action plans both in response to legislation and because of its own desire to articulate its Strategy and Vision.

6.2 In identifying how best to progress, this Plan has been developed to give further momentum to the equality and diversity agenda by reporting on actions to date, and identifying an overarching action plan which will address all equality strands and take us forward for the next four years. As noted above, the ambition is to promote equality and diversity in every area of the Library's life.

6.3 This Plan will supersede the following documents:

- Equality and Diversity Policy and Action Plan
- Race Equality Policy and Action Plan
- Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Welsh language Scheme

6.4 The Plan (*Appendix A*) has taken into account progress on the existing action plans, and the Library's strategy and vision. The plan has been drawn up in order to try and achieve a holistic approach to equality and diversity at the Library, and as such includes actions on all the equality strands.

6.5 The Library has consulted on, and involved, staff and its users on the contents of this Plan.

7.0 ONGOING CONSULTATION, INVOLVEMENT, TRAINING

7.1 The Library will seek to continue consulting and involving staff, users and any other interested parties on this Scheme, and the Action Plan and any other equality and diversity initiatives as appropriate. In addition it will continue general awareness training on equality and diversity; specific training initiatives will be included in the Action Plan.

7.2 The Library has a number of methods for consulting with, and involving, staff and users:

- Equality and Diversity Group (EDC), which reports to the Executive Team
- Diversity departmental representatives
- Advisory Body
- Critical Friends Network (Disability)
- Trade Unions and the Whitley Council
- Ethnicity Committee

8.0 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1 The Librarian who reports to the Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for Equality and Diversity within the Library. The Equality and Diversity Group will formulate policy and report progress on this Scheme and associated Action Plan to the Executive Team (ET). Membership of the Equality and Diversity Group is approved by the ET to ensure representation across staff and users.
- 8.2 Line managers, supervisors and Heads of Department are responsible for monitoring that their staff are complying with the Scheme, for carrying out actions arising from the associated Action Plan and for promoting equality and diversity throughout the Library.
- 8.3 All members of the Library community are expected to comply with this Scheme, and with the Action Plan and with any of the Library's equality and diversity initiatives.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 9.1 During April – December 2015 a project will be undertaken whereby policies, practices and procedures of the Library will be assessed for their impact on equality either centrally or locally in departments. The results of these assessments will be collated, and reported to the Equality and Diversity Group early in 2016.
- 9.2 The project will also identify how equality impact assessments can best be incorporated into the day to day operating of the Library.
- 9.3 In addition, all new policies which are presented and formally approved by the ET will be accompanied with an EIA.
- 9.4 Finally, an Equality and Diversity Annual Report will be presented for discussion and approval to the Board of Trustees during its first meeting of the new calendar year.

10.0 MONITORING AND ONGOING MAINTENANCE

- 10.1 A number of activities will continue to be undertaken, as a matter of good practice, and are outlined here rather than separately in the Action Plan:
- monitoring (staff) – applications for vacancies, the staff profile, promotions, training and development activities, grievances and disciplinary procedures, resignations, dismissals and redundancies, incidents of harassment, and participation in training and development (see section 12.0 below)
 - monitoring (officers and Trustees) – applications for appointments profile (see section 12.0 below)
 - consultation will take place regularly with staff and users and through the variety of methods outlined above. As and when required, consultations on specific topics will be undertaken
 - Equality Impact Assessments – see above under 9.0

- Data Cleansing Exercise - will take place regularly to ensure that staff data is as up to date as possible
- benchmarking against other institutions - Human Resources will continue to benchmark the Library's activities in terms of equality and diversity issues to ensure we identify and, where appropriate, utilise best practice
- continuation of the Welsh Language Scheme

11.0 REPORTING ON PROGRESS

11.1 Each year the Equality and Diversity Group will forward reports with appropriate recommendations to the SMT.

11.2 These reports will contain the following:

- a review of this Scheme, including any feedback and proposed revisions
- a review of progress on the Action Plan
- a review of any relevant equality and diversity policies, and proposals for any new policies
- staff profile (see 11.1 above)
- a report of learning and development activities
- any other relevant activities which have taken place during the year

12.0 CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

12.1 Further information is available from <http://www.llgc.org.uk>.

If you require this publication in hard copy or in an alternative format please contact Annwen Isaac on 01970 632577 (cai@llgc.org.uk).

13.0 REVIEW

13.1 The Equality and Diversity Group will review this Scheme on an annual basis.