University of
Staffordshire

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Annual Report 2024–25

CONTENTS

FOREWORD STOKE–ON–TRENT AT 100: A STORY OF PLACE, PEOPLE AND PRIDE

Professor Martin Jones
Vice-Chancellor
and Chief Executive
University of Staffordshire

On 5 June 1925, King George V stood in the grand King's Hall, Stoke, and surprised the gathered crowd with words that would define our identity for the next century:

"The development and importance of your town and industry enable me gladly to consent to the request that the title and status of a City shall be conferred upon your County Borough."

The announcement was met with a thunderous cheer, a proud, collective roar that echoed across the six towns and into the future. Built on clay and coal, Stoke-on-Trent had officially become a city.

As Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of University of Staffordshire, I can say with pride that the importance of place is stitched into the fabric of who we are. Our University does not simply sit in this city; we grow with it, serve it, and belong to it. We are not just proud to be in Stoke-on-Trent. We are proud to be of Stoke-on-Trent.

Our students, staff, and alumni are part of a living, breathing story of place – one that stretches far beyond our campus. We are as excited about the future as we are proud of the past. That is why we are deeply invested in the region's creative economy, digital innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit , helping to raise our communities and equip the next generation of changemakers.

At University of Staffordshire, our commitment to place is not a passing whim – it is a strategy. It informs how we teach, where we invest, and what kind of future we seek to shape. Whether working with local schools and colleges, training tomorrow's NHS heroes, or helping entrepreneurs and small businesses thrive, we are deeply rooted in this city, and we are blooming because of it.

This is why University of Staffordshire is a true 'Catalyst for Change' – a force for social good that transforms lives and, in doing so, transforms society and the places in which we live, as demonstrated in our flywheel. By living our values and delivering our strategic objectives, we continue to honour Stoke-on-Trent's proud past while shaping its bold future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Staffordshire Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report 2024–2025 demonstrates how we continue to be a Catalyst for Change by living our values and delivering on our EDI commitments.

As a fair and inclusive employer, education provider, and partner, we are committed to being curious and daring, ambitious and inspirational. In doing so, we strive to be a Catalyst for Change in delivering innovative and enterprising services for all our students, staff, and communities—ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities to learn, work, and live free from discrimination, harassment, and prejudice.

Since 2022, our work has been guided by the Local Government Equality Framework (LGEF), which helps us benchmark our progress and push beyond compliance into meaningful change.

The LGEF framework sets out clear criteria across five themes:

- Leadership, partnership, and organisational commitment
- Knowing your staff, students, and communities
- A progressive and diverse staff and student cohort
- Involving your staff, students, and communities
- Responsive services, access, and Improving satisfaction levels

Organisations are assessed against these themes as developing, achieving, or excellent in relation to their equality, diversity, and inclusion practices and impacts. These levels of maturity highlight the ability of an organisation to move beyond minimum legal compliance, where commitments are expressed only through policy and strategy, towards an embedded, evidence-based approach that delivers measurable and continuous improvements in student and staff attraction, retention, and overall experience.

This report celebrates the impact we are making together, driving innovation, building belonging, and unlocking opportunity for all.

The University of Staffordshire has made substantial progress in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) throughout 2024/25. This report, aligned with the Local Government Equality Framework, demonstrates achievements across governance, workforce, student experience, and civic engagement.

Each theme has been reviewed with a focus on:

- What's gone well – celebrating achievements, improvements, and areas where measurable progress has been made
- Continuing focus of action – identifying the priorities which remain central to sustaining and accelerating progress

Key highlights:

Governance and Leadership

- Greater diversity within the Board of Governors, with ethnic minority representation at 28.57% (sector benchmark: 13.2%) and disability disclosure at 21.43% (sector benchmark: 5.5%), both well above national averages.
- Through the Data Integrity Project, all data gaps for ethnicity and disability have been closed at governor level, and new disclosure fields for religion and sexuality have achieved full completion — Reducing all unknown data from 14.49% to 0%.

Data Integrity and Transparency

Reductions in "unknown/refused" disclosure rates for staff and students reflect a growing culture of trust and inclusion:

Staff:
- Ethnicity "unknown/refused" reduced from 3.22% (2022) to 2.65% (2025)
- Sexuality "unknown/refused" reduced from . 22.51% (2022) to 16.16% (2025)

Students:
- Ethnicity "unknown/refused" reduced from 2.76% (2022) to 2.3% (2025)
- Sexuality "unknown/refused" reduced from 9.03% (2022) to 8.71% (2025)

These improvements demonstrate the impact of the University's Data Integrity Project, enhancing the completeness and reliability of equality data across all cohorts.

Workforce Diversity

- Representation of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds increased to 15.03% in 2024/25, a 1.98% rise since 2022/23, showing strong progress towards the KPI of 17% ethnic minority staff representation by 2026/27.
- Disability disclosure has grown to 12.78%, and LGBTQ+ disclosure has increased to 7.4%, supported by inclusive recruitment and progression practices.
- The University continues to strengthen its culture through the Target Operating Model (TOM) and Team Engagement and Development (TED) frameworks, embedding fairness and inclusive leadership at every level.

Student Diversity

- The ethnic diversity of the student body stands at 29.51%, aligning with the KPI target for ethnic minority students reflective of the post-92 sector (29%) by 2026/27.
- Disclosure of disability among students remains high at 23.01%, higher than the national sector average (14.5%), reflecting robust inclusion and accessible support services.
- A continued focus on equitable recruitment, retention, and progression ensures that the University's student population reflects both regional and sector demographics.

Inclusive Culture and Belonging

- The University's strengthened Inclusion Group has enhanced accountability and alignment across Schools and Directorates.
- High-visibility campaigns, including Diwali, Eid, Pride Month, International Women's Day, and Black History Month have reinforced a culture of belonging.
- Civic partnerships, such as the Student Village project and collaborations with local charities (e.g. YMCA North Staffs and The Gingerbread Centre), have delivered measurable social value and strengthened regional impact.

Student Experience and Outcomes

- A 4-point increase in National Student Survey (NSS) positivity (rising to 81.5%) and a 22-place climb in national rankings confirm that students increasingly view Staffordshire as inclusive, responsive, and empowering.
- This growth reflects continued investment in student wellbeing, inclusive teaching, and partnership-led learning environments.

Going Forward – Priorities for 2025/26

Building on 2024/25 achievements, the University will:

- Achieve 17% ethnic minority staff representation by 2026/27 and maintain a student profile reflective of post-92 sector diversity (29%).
- Further reduce remaining data gaps across staff and students for ethnicity, disability, religion, and sexuality, aiming for near-100% completeness by 2026/27.
- Continue addressing representation imbalances and pay gap disparities across all protected characteristics.
- Sustain progress in inclusive leadership, staff development, and student satisfaction and progression.
- Embed EDI across community partnerships and civic engagement, ensuring measurable social value and regional transformation.

This report reaffirms the University's commitment not only to celebrating achievements but also to maintaining equality, diversity and inclusion as a strategic and measurable priority — ensuring that University of Staffordshire remains a Catalyst for Change for its people, place, and partners in the years ahead.

HOW OUR STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES ALIGN WITH OUR EDI THEMES

1. Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment

- **Strategic Objective:** Next Generation Environments
- **Strategic Priority:** Building Enterprise
- **Alignment:** Ensures that leadership are accountable for EDI, with strategies, policies, processes, and systems in place. Strong partnerships help deliver our civic university and levelling-up commitments, addressing local and regional inequalities.

2. Knowing Our Staff, Students and Communities

- **Strategic Objective:** Next Generation Experience
- **Strategic Priorities:** Winning and Sustaining our Undergraduate and Postgraduate Market Share and Employer of Choice
- **Alignment:** By building a strong understanding of the staff, student, and community profile, we can deliver inclusive services. Benchmarking against sector performance helps identify disparities, and intelligence-led data supports prioritisation of strategic objectives.

3. Involving Our Staff, Students and Communities

- **Strategic Objective:** Next Generation Engagement
- **Strategic Priority:** Accelerating Research Impact, Culture and Reputation
- **Alignment:** Goes beyond data monitoring to active involvement. Engaging staff, students, and communities in projects provides deeper insights into behaviours and preferences, which informs strategic and operational decisions.

4. Responsive Services, Access and Improving Satisfaction Levels

- **Strategic Objective:** Next Generation Experience
- **Strategic Priority:** Transforming Student Outcomes and Experience
- **Alignment:** Commitment to delivering fair and equitable services, while continuously monitoring accessibility, participation, and satisfaction levels. Regular evaluation ensures that services remain responsive, inclusive, and continually improving.

5. A Progressive and Diverse Staff and Student Cohort

- **Strategic Objective:** Next Generation Education
- **Strategic Priority:** Igniting Work-Based Learning
- **Alignment:** Focuses on creating fair and inclusive experiences for both staff and students. Progress has been made, but disparities remain—particularly for ethnic minority groups. To address this, EDI targets have been embedded within our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2026–2027:
  - Staff demographic profile to mirror the regional profile (target: **17% ethnic minority representation**).
  - Student demographic profile to align with post-92 sector norms (target: **29% ethnic minority representation**).
  - Reduction of awarding gaps to less than **10%**, with a focus on Black students.
  - At least **5% of Staffordshire's young people** progressing into Higher Education at University of Staffordshire.

Progress to Date

- EDI work delivered over the last 12 months has had a positive impact on staff and student experiences.
- A desktop audit demonstrates readiness to enter the Local Government Equality Framework "Achieving" stage by 2026/27.
- Continued focus is being placed on addressing underlying challenges in staff and student outcomes.
- The Annual EDI Report 2024–2025 provides updates on governance, staff and student experience, and sector benchmarking using HESA data and ONS (2011 & 2020) statistics.
- The EDI Annual Report 2024–2025 also includes University of Staffordshire pay gap analysis to ensure transparency and accountability.

THEME 1 – LEADERSHIP, PARTNERSHIP AND ORGANISATION COMMITMENT

What We Have Delivered in 2024/25

Our Commitment

University of Staffordshire recognises that championing inclusion and diversity, together with role modelling appropriate behaviours, must happen at all levels of the University. The Board of Governors plays a central role in embedding and safeguarding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the University's strategy, culture, and values.

Progress in 2024/25

- We have been proactive in our marketing approach to attract an inclusive and diverse membership profile of governors.

- To ensure accurate reporting, we have updated the Board profile data capture form to align with the diversity data captured by census categories and HESA regulatory requirements.
- To benchmark progress, we have compared our Board profile against the Diversity of Governors in Higher Education Report findings, enabling us to assess sector performance and identify disparities that may need to be addressed.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS PROFILE DATA

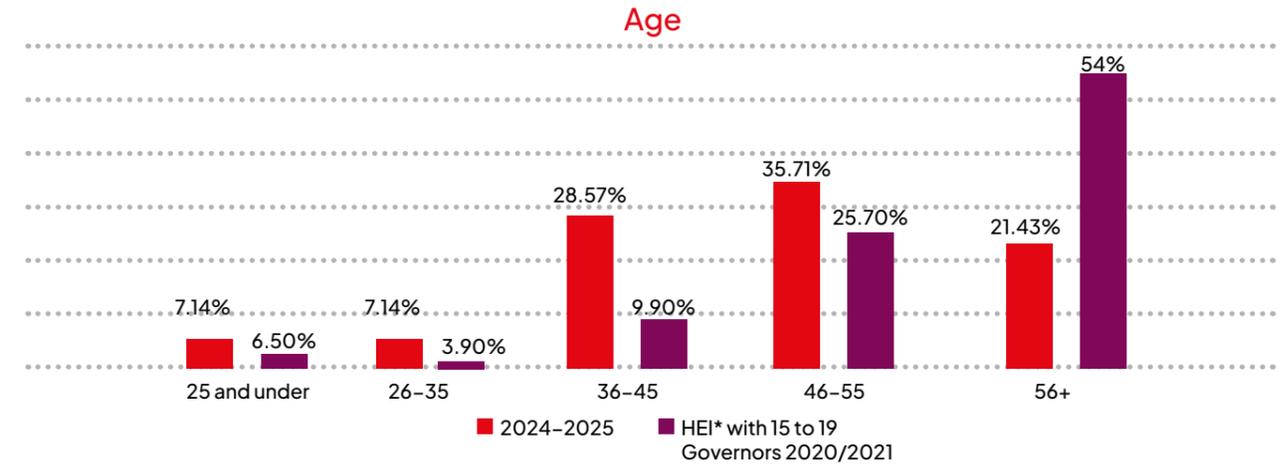The composition of the Board of Governors has evolved over the last reporting cycle. In 2023/24 the Board temporarily rose to 17 members, due to an overlap between new appointments and pending resignations. By 2024/25 this number had returned to 14 members, which is consistent with sector norms for institutions of comparable size.

Age Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

- 42.85% of governors are under the age of 46, compared to 20.3% in the HE sector overall.
- 57.14% of governors are aged 46 or over, compared to 79.7% in the wider sector.

The data demonstrates that our governors' age profile is relatively younger than the sector average, indicating progress in diversifying the age representation of the Board.

Sex Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

- In 2022/23, 35.71% of governors reported their gender as female.
- In 2023/24 this increased to 41.18% and in 2024/25 to 42.86%, this is comparable to the HE sector at 43.50%.

- Our 2023 governors profile form illustrated that we did not capture non-binary gender data. This has now been addressed as a part of our Data Integrity Project which was launched in January 2024. No members reported their gender as non-binary.

The data represents a positive shift towards greater gender balance on the Board with a positive increase of female board members.

Age

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		HEI* with 15 to 19 Governors
2022/2023	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
25 & under	2	14.29%	1	5.88%	1	7.14%	6.50%
26–35	0	0%	1	5.88%	1	7.14%	3.90%
36–45	2	14.29%	4	23.53%	4	28.57%	9.90%
46–55	8	57.14%	8	47.06%	5	35.71%	25.7%
56+	2	14.29%	3	17.65%	3	21.43%	54%
Total	14	100%	17	100%	14	100%	100%

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		HEI* with 15 to 19 Governors 2020/2021
Sex	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
Male	9	64.29%	10	58.82%	8	57.14%	56.50%
Female	5	35.71%	7	41.18%	6	42.86%	43.50%
Total	14	100%	17	100%	14	100%	100%

Sex
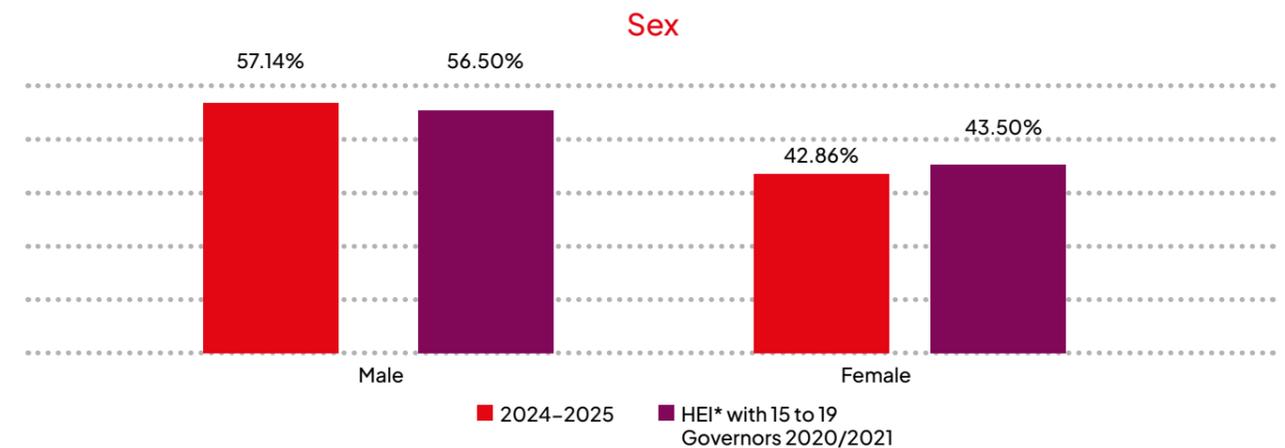
Ethnicity Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

- In 2025, 71.43% of the Board of Governors identified as being from a White ethnicity group, while 28.57% identified as being from an Ethnic minority background.
- As part of our Data Integrity Project, launched in January 2024, we successfully addressed the issue of incomplete ethnicity reporting. In 2023, 14.29% of governor ethnicity data was recorded as "unknown." This has now been reduced to 0% in 2024 and 2025, providing a more accurate profile.
- When compared with the wider Higher Education (HE) sector, where governors from ethnic minority backgrounds represent 13.20%, University's Board is performing strongly at 28.57% percentage points higher (28.57% vs. 13.20%).

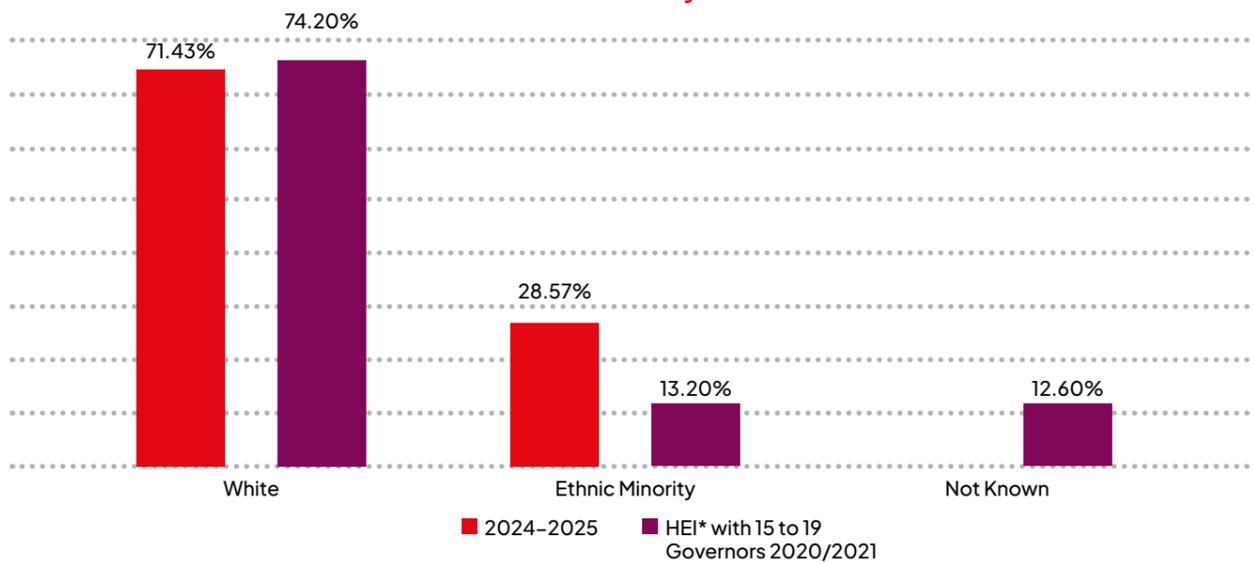The data represents a positive ethnicity balance on the Board with four ethnic minority board members.

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		HEI* with 15 to 19 Governors 2020/2021
Ethnicity	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
White	8	57.14%	12	70.59%	10	71.43%	74.20%
Ethnic Minority	4	28.57%	5	29.41%	4	28.57%	13.20%
Not Known	2	14.29%	0	0%	0	0%	12.60%
Total	14	100%	17	100%	14	100%	100%

Ethnicity

Disability Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

- In 2024 two board members (11.76%) declared a disability
- In 2025 this increased to three board members (21.43%) declaring a disability, which is above the Higher Education sector average of 5.50%.
- The launch of our Data Integrity Project in January 2024 has strengthened the accuracy of our reporting. In 2023, 7.14% of disability data was recorded as 'unknown', whereas in 2024 and 2025 this has been fully addressed, reducing the 'unknown' category to 0%, 2024–2025 academic year.

This reflects our inclusive and proactive approach to recruiting governors that reflect the profile of the wider society.

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		HEI* with 15 to 19 Governors 2020/2021
Disability	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
No known Disability	11	78.57%	15	88.24%	11	78.57%	94.50%
One or more disabilities	2	14.29%	2	11.76%	3	21.43%	5.50%
Not known/ info refused	1	7.14%	0	0%	0	0%	0%
Total	14	100%	17	100%	14	100%	100%

Disability
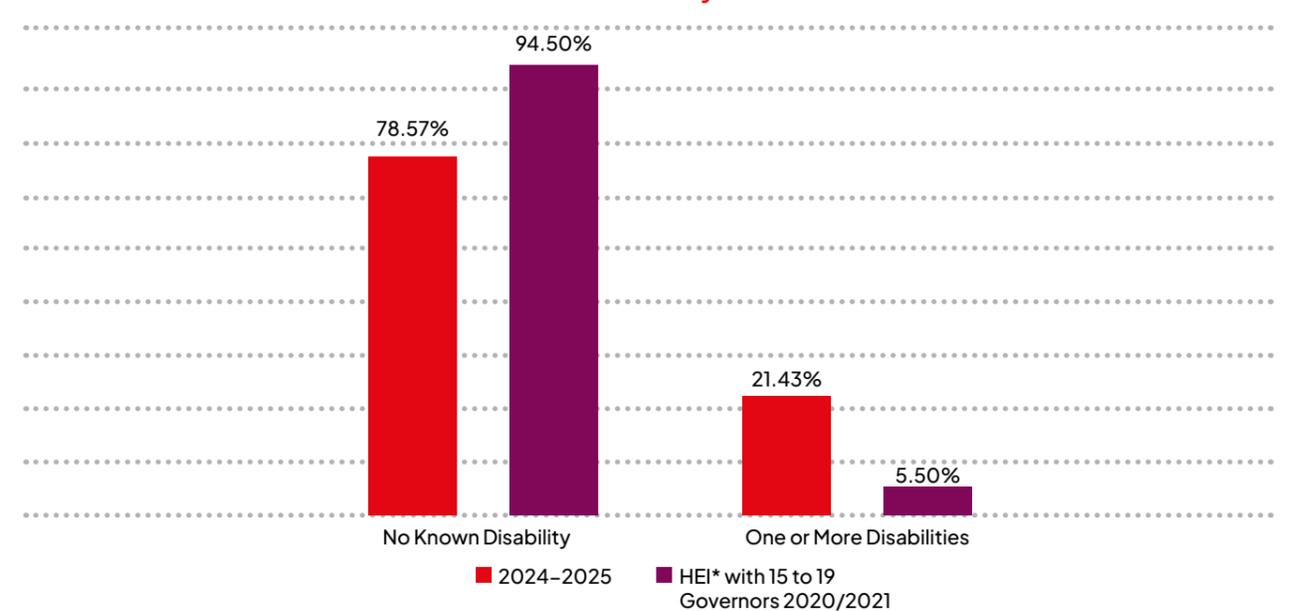
Religion Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

As part of the updated Governors' Profile form introduced in 2024, we have captured data on religion and sexuality for the first time in 2023/24 and in 2024/25. Currently Higher Education sector data on Religion of Board of Governors is not available. The reported religion data shows the following distribution among our

Board of Governors:
- In 2024 52.94% reported their religious profile as 'No Religion or Belief 'and this reduced to 50% in 2025
- In 2024 29.41% reported their religion as Christianity and in 2025 this has slightly reduced to 28.57%
- In 2025 one board member (7.14%) reported their faith as Sikhism and 2 members (14.29%) 'prefer not to say'

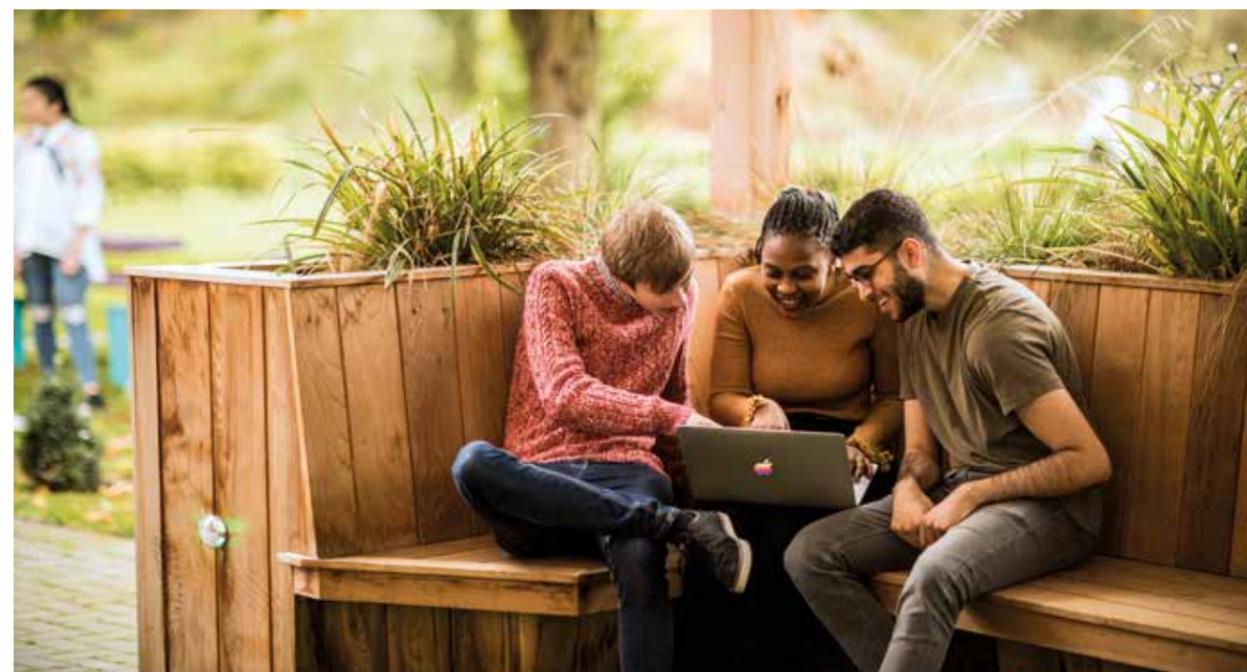The data provides us with a clearer understanding of the religious diversity represented on our Board and areas where we may need to further strengthen this area, i.e Islam is the highest reported religion within our staff and student cohort after no religion/belief and Christianity.

Profile	2023–24		2024–25	
Religion	No	%	No	%
No Religion or belief	9	52.94%	7	50%
Christianity	5	29.41%	4	28.57%
Islam	1	5.88%	0	0%
Sikhism	1	5.88%	1	7.14%
Prefer not to say	1	5.88%	2	14.29%
Total	17	100%	14	100%

Sexuality Profile of Governors (2022/23 – 2024/25)

The updated Governors' Profile form has also enabled us to capture sexuality data for the first time in 2023/24 and in 2024/25. Currently Higher Education sector data on Sexuality of Board of Governors is not available.

The reported data shows that:
- In 2024, 2 board members (11.76%) reported their sexuality as LGBTQ+ and in 2025 this reduced to one member at (7.14%)
- In 2024, 13 board members at (88.24%) reported their sexuality as Heterosexual and in 2025 this increased to (92.86%)

The data provides us with a clearer understanding of the sexuality represented on our Board and areas where we may need to further strengthen this area.

Profile	2023–24		2024–25	
Sexuality	No	%	No	%
Heterosexual/ Straight	15	88.24%	13	92.86%
LGBTQ+	2	11.76%	1	7.14%
Total	17	100%	14	100%

Overall Summary

What's gone well

- The Board of Governors demonstrates stronger diversity than the higher education sector average, particularly in relation to ethnicity and disability representation.
- The age profile of the Board is comparatively younger, supporting generational diversity in governance.
- The Data Integrity Project has significantly improved the accuracy of reporting, closing previous data gaps and ensuring robust information on ethnicity, disability, religion, and sexuality.
- These developments evidence the University's commitment to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion at the highest levels of governance.

Continuing focus of action

- Strengthening diversity further remains a priority, particularly in relation to gender balance, LGBTQ+ representation, and faith groups not currently reflected on the Board.
- Proactive measures will be taken to encourage applications from underrepresented groups as terms of office expire and new appointments are made.
- Continued focus on robust and transparent data collection will ensure the Board's profile remains accurate, inclusive, and reflective of wider society.
- Partnerships that support civic engagement and address regional inequalities will continue to be developed and embedded within the governance framework.

INCAREERS, PLACEMENTS & EMPLOYABILITY

Our Commitment

University of Staffordshire is committed to working within the curriculum to embed career readiness for all students. We continue to identify and expand ways to support staff, students, and graduates in accessing local employment opportunities that drive skills development, career success, and regional growth.

Graduate Outcomes and Regional Impact

Over the past two years, the University has achieved measurable progress in graduate success and regional impact:

- Graduate retention rate in the region has increased by 2%, now approaching 25%, meaning more graduates are choosing to live and work in the region .
- Positive graduate outcomes have risen by 6%, reaching close to 80%, reflecting ask strong rates of employment, further study, and professional development.
- Average graduate salary now stands at £31,974, significantly

above the West Midlands average of £27,233 (Prospects Luminate, 2025).

These achievements highlight how the University equips graduates with the skills and opportunities to thrive, while also boosting the regional economy through increased retention, spending power, and skills contribution.

Careers & Employability Provision

The Careers Team has expanded its services to deliver a more inclusive and impactful offer, particularly supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Provision is structured around four key strands:

1. Career Readiness in the Curriculum – Integrated employability within all courses.
2. Personalised Coaching – Tailored careers and placement coaching.
3. Experiential Opportunities – Placements, micro-placements, and funded international experiences.
4. Graduate Internships

& Enterprise – Over 118 internships delivered this year for unemployed/ underemployed graduates, alongside enterprise and start-up funding through the Be Inspired programme.

Employer Engagement & Inclusive Practices

The University works closely with local employers to promote inclusive recruitment practices, with a particular focus on neurodiversity.

- Delivered targeted neurodiversity training to over 77 local employers.
- Currently developing a toolkit to support employers in understanding and responding to graduates' inclusion needs in the workplace.

This approach strengthens employer capability, ensures graduate inclusivity, and enhances long-term employability outcomes.

To summarise

University of Staffordshire is more than an educational institution – it is a catalyst for regional prosperity, through leading to positively improved:

- Higher graduate retention rates
- Stronger positive outcomes

- Graduate salaries above regional averages, and
- Strategic partnerships with employers

The University is shaping a diverse, skilled, and inclusive workforce that drives innovation, supports local demands, and propels economic development.

Our mission is clear: to prepare graduates not only for successful careers but also to be responsible citizens, innovators, and leaders who contribute to regional and national growth.

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN (2024/25 – 2027/28)

Our Commitment

University of Staffordshire is committed to improving equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education. Our Access and Participation Plan (APP) sets out how we will deliver on this commitment across the 2024/25 – 2027/28 cycle.

Year One Progress (2024/25)

During the first year of delivery, we implemented activities and interventions across four key strands:

- Transforming Access – Focusing on helping disadvantaged students access higher education through activities enhancing skills, introducing university life and fostering a sense of belonging in learners.
- Transforming Transitions – Aiming to support students in their journey from education to employment, empowering them with the tools for success.
- Transforming our Curriculum

– Enhancing the learning experience by improving teaching practices, involving students in co-creation, providing support for placements and work experience and promoting pedagogies for both racial and neurodiverse equity and inclusion.
- Transforming Student Support – Addressing support and well-being objectives through learning analytics, redesigned well-being services, tailored academic mentoring programs, and direct funds for student hardship.

Assurance and Oversight

In 2024, KPMG conducted an audit of our APP, resulting in significant assurance with minor improvements. Actions identified are being addressed within the agreed deadlines.

To ensure robust delivery and oversight, the Inclusive Education and Impact team established an APP Project Board and APP Operational Group in 2023. These structures were refined in 2024/25 to strengthen strategic oversight,

risk management, and evaluation of APP delivery.

Current priorities include:

- Submitting a variation to the existing APP to the Office for Students (OfS) by the end of the calendar year.
- Finalising activity-level evaluations and strand-level, student-created comics, to be published on our website and shared across the University and wider community by year end.

To summarise

University of Staffordshire remains firmly committed to advancing equality of opportunity throughout the student lifecycle. Through governance reform, evaluation, and meaningful student partnership, our APP is delivering tangible progress that supports student success and strengthens our impact on the wider community.

THEME 2 – KNOWING OUR STAFF, STUDENTS, AND COMMUNITIES

What We Delivered in 2024/25 – Data Integrity Project

Our Commitment

University of Staffordshire is committed to understanding and meeting the diverse needs of our staff, students, and communities. To support this, we launched the Data Integrity Project, a comprehensive review of our profiling categories to ensure the collection of inclusive, sufficient, and appropriate data.

The University of Staffordshire Inclusion Group (USIG), working in partnership with our Business Intelligence and Human Resources and Origination Development Functions, reviewed and updated staff and student profile categories in line with census classifications and HESA regulatory requirements. Approved in December 2023 and launched in January 2024, these categories underpin our staff and student data promotion campaign, which encourages individuals to update their information, particularly in underreported areas such as disability, sexuality, and religion.

Key Progress in 2024/25

- **Governors' Data**- Closed all data gaps for disability and ethnicity.
  - For the first time, collected and reported data on governors' religion and sexuality and non-binary data.
- **Staff Data** - Introduced a non-binary category in profile capture forms to improve inclusivity in sex and gender reporting.
  - Reduced ethnicity "unknown/refused" data from 3.22% in 2022 to 2.65% in 2025
  - Reduced religion 'unknown/refused' data from 23.49% in 2022 to 17.02% in 2025
  - Reduced sexuality 'unknown/refused' data from 22.51% in 2022 to 16.16% in 2025
- **Student Data** - Maintained 100% robust data for age, gender, and disability.
  - Reduced ethnicity unknown /refused data from 2.76% in 2022 to 2.30% in 2025
  - Reduced sexuality 'unknown/refused' data from 9.03% in 2022 to 8.71% in 2025

Overall Summary

What's gone well

- The Data Integrity Project has delivered measurable improvements in profiling data across governors, staff, and students.
- All data gaps for ethnicity and disability have been closed at governor level, and for the first time religion, sexuality, and non-binary categories have been successfully collected.
- Among staff, unknown or refused data for ethnicity, religion, and sexuality has been reduced year-on-year, reflecting increased trust in disclosure.
- Student data capture remains robust, with full completeness across age, gender, and disability.

Continuing focus of action

- Further reduce the proportion of "unknown/refused" staff and student data, particularly for religion and sexuality.
- Keep data categories aligned with national census and HESA standards.
- Use intelligence-led data to identify disparities and direct interventions.
- Continue to develop the Data Integrity Project as a long-term improvement programme.

THEME 3 – A DIVERSE, SKILLED AND COMMITTED STAFF AND STUDENT COHORT

What We Delivered in 2024/25

A Skilled and Committed Workforce

At University of Staffordshire, our ambition is to be recognised as an Employer of Choice, attracting, retaining, and developing talent regardless of background. We believe that a diverse workforce not only enriches the staff experience but also strengthens our ability to understand and serve our students and communities.

As of July 2025, the University employs 1,510 staff, representing a decrease of 173 staff since July 2024. This reduction reflects the University's ongoing organisational transformation. In 2023, the Academic Schools were remodelled, consolidating five schools into two:
- Digital, Technical, Innovation and Business (DTIB)
- Health, Education, Policing and Sciences (HEPS)

From 2024/25, the Target Operating Model (TOM) was introduced to realign Professional Services, resulting in the creation of new merged Functions designed to support the University's future direction. Throughout these changes, EDI considerations were embedded into the design and implementation process to ensure fairness, transparency, and inclusivity for all staff.

Progress in Workforce Diversity

We have made positive progress in improving the diversity of our workforce:
- The proportion of staff from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased from 13.05% in 2022/23 to 15.03% in 2024/25 – a rise of 1.98%
- The proportion of staff that have declared a disability has increased from 7.64% in 2022/23 to 12.78% in 2024/25 – a rise of 5.14%

- The proportion of staff that have declared their Sexuality as LGBTQ+ has increased from 6.13% in 2022/23 to 7.42% in 2024/25– a rise of 1.29%

This growth reflects our ongoing commitment to inclusive recruitment and progression practices and ensures that our staff body more closely reflects the communities we serve.

Cultural and Organisational Development

Our Commitment: To foster an inclusive culture that recognises and supports the diverse needs of our staff.

We continue to embed our Fair and Inclusive value into how we support, develop, and engage our people. Key developments include:
- YourCareer platform – rebranded and enhanced with resources to empower staff to take ownership of professional development. Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) now incorporate structured values-based conversations.
- Team Engagement and Development (TED) Tool – rolled out to leaders to strengthen team cohesion, inclusivity, and leadership capability. TED enables teams to reflect, co-create actions, and give every member a voice in shaping team dynamics.
- Induction programme – redesigned to ensure all new staff and those transitioning into new roles under TOM are welcomed with clarity, support, and structured access to development opportunities.
- Through these initiatives, we are shaping a culture where staff feel seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Target Operating Model (TOM)

Our Commitment: Embedding fairness and inclusion in

organisational change. The TOM represented a significant transformation of our Professional Services, ensuring they are aligned with future needs. The process was underpinned by transparency, support, and staff engagement:

- Communication and engagement – open channels included all-staff briefings, a dedicated MS Teams space, regular updates, anonymous feedback opportunities, and trade union involvement.
- Staff support – resources included career development tools, wellbeing services, leadership support, and a new CPD framework to prepare staff for future roles. Change management training and Leaders Connect sessions helped managers guide their teams effectively.
- Structured implementation – the TOM is being delivered in three 100–day phases, focusing on People, Process, and Technology. This phased approach allowed for reflection, feedback, and continuous improvement.

An independent audit by KPMG rated the implementation of TOM as significant assurance with minor improvements and commented on our inclusive approach, transparent communication, and investment in staff development as examples of good practice. While challenges arose, the TOM reinforced our commitment to embedding equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles in organisational change.

To summarise

Through structural transformation and a continued focus on diversity, University of Staffordshire is building a workforce that is skilled, representative, and committed. These achievements support our ambition to be an Employer of Choice and strengthen our ability to deliver inclusive, high–quality education for all students.

STAFF PROFILE DATA

Staff Age Profile comparison– 2022/23 to 2024/25

The University's workforce now spans four generations, each bringing unique perspectives, values, and expectations of work:

- Generation Z (1997–2012) – typically early-career, many under 25
- Millennials (1981–1996) – 29–44 years
- Generation X (1965–1980) – 45–60 years
- Baby Boomers (1946–1964) – 61–79 years

Being an inclusive age organisation means recognising the strengths of each generation, providing flexible working, wellbeing provision, and professional development at all career stages. This intergenerational workforce strengthens innovation, resilience, and our ability to meet diverse student needs.

The staff age distribution continues to reflect a broad generational spread. Staff under 25 have decreased to 3.97% (60 staff), a con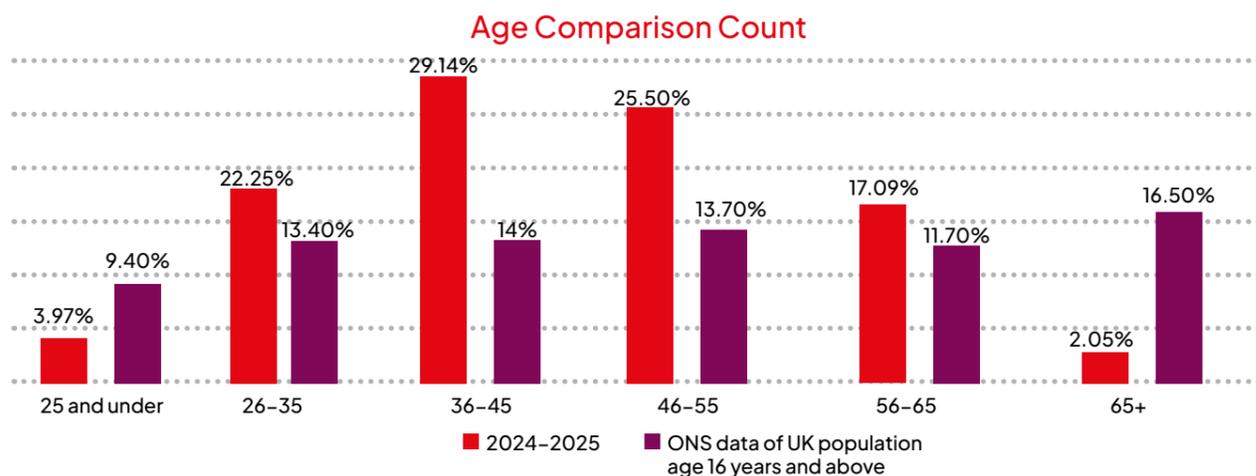tinuation of the downward trend seen in 2023/24. This partly reflects structural changes under the TOM, where admin posts were reduced, which are often undertaken early in an individual's career.

The proportion of staff aged 36–45 years has increased to 29.14%, exceeding regional benchmarks (14%), highlighting a strengthening of the mid-career workforce. Representation in the 56–65 group (17.09%) remains higher than the regional norm (11.7%), reflecting strong retention of experienced staff.

Staff Age Profile Comparison Data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONS data of UK population age 16 years and above
Age	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
25 & Under	116	6.03%	80	4.75%	60	3.97%	9.4%
26–35	434	22.56%	379	22.52%	336	22.25%	13.4%
36–45	483	25.10%	464	27.58%	440	29.14%	14%
46–55	517	26.87%	435	25.86%	385	25.50%	13.7%
56–65	323	16.79%	289	17.17%	258	17.09%	11.7%
65+	51	2.65%	36	2.14%	31	2.05%	16.5%
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%	100%

Staff comparison Age data 2024/25 with ONC data

Age Comparison Count

Legend: ■ 2024–2025   ■ ONS data of UK population age 16 years and above

Age group	2024–2025	ONS
25 and under	3.97%	9.40%
26–35	22.25%	13.40%
36–45	29.14%	14%
46–55	25.50%	13.70%
56–65	17.09%	11.70%
65+	2.05%	16.50%

Staff Sex Profile comparison – 2022/23 to 2024/25

The workforce remains broadly balanced but continues to employ more female staff (54.97%) than male staff (45.03%).

This aligns closely with regional patterns, with a slight year-on-year decrease in female representation (–0.7%). Recruitment practices continue to embed inclusive approaches to ensure no gender is disadvantaged, with improvements in inclusive recruitment training rolled out in 2024/25.

Gender Representation and Equality – We continue to monitor the gender balance (recognising that sex is biological, while gender relates to identity and social roles) to ensure equal access to recruitment, progression, and leadership. Inclusive recruitment training and flexible working policies are critical to supporting a gender-diverse workforce.

Staff Sex Profile Comparison Data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONC 2011 West Midlands sex profile	ONS gender in employment data
Sex	No	%	No	%	No	%	%	%
Female	1069	55.56%	937	55.67%	830	54.97%	50.8%	72.7%
Male	855	44.44%	746	44.33%	680	45.03%	40.2%	80.1%
Unkown/other	–	–	–	–	–	–	9%	
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%		

Staff Sex Comparison with ONC data

Sex Comparison Count

Legend: 2024–2025 | ONC 2011 West Midlands sex profile | ONC gender in employment data

Female: 54.97%, 50.80%, 72.70%
Male: 45.03%, 40.20%, 80.10%

Staff Ethnicity 2024/25 data comparison with ONS data

Ethnicity (Detailed Grouping) Comparison Count

Legend: 2025 | ONS 2021 Data on UK Ethnicity

White: 82.32%, 77%
BAME: 15.03%, 23%
Unkown: 2.65%
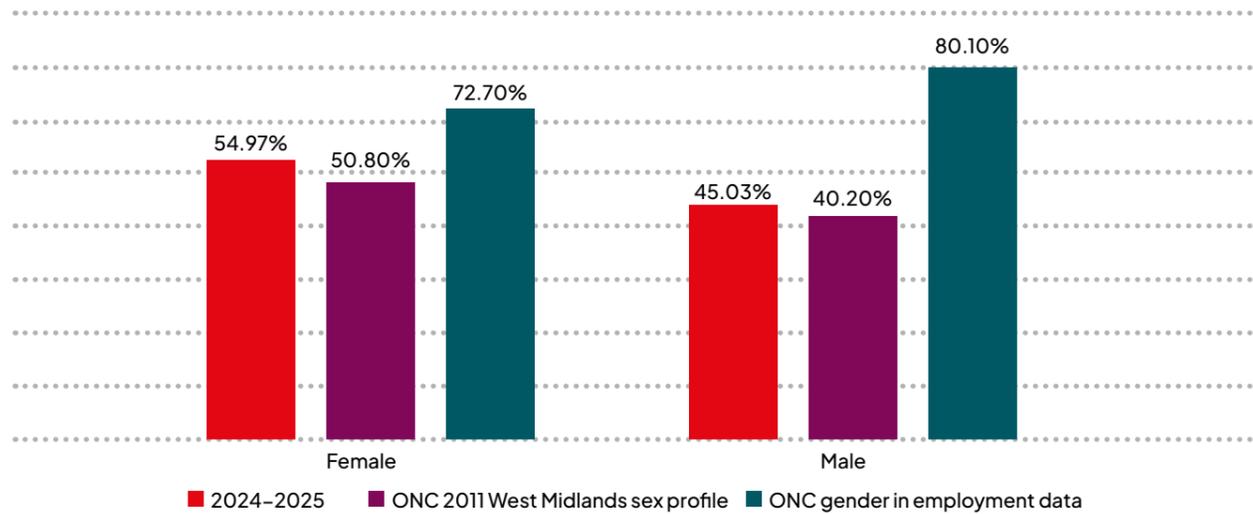
Staff Ethnicity Profile comparison – 2022/23 to 2024/25

The proportion of staff from an ethnic minority backgrounds has risen to 15.03% (up from 13.61% in 2023/24). This positive increase of 1.42% reflects ongoing investment in inclusive recruitment and leadership pipelines. This steady growth shows progress towards the University's KPI of 17% ethnic minority staff to be employed by 2026/27.

Representation and Progression - As diversity improves, the focus shifts to ensuring minority ethnic staff have equal access to leadership and development opportunities. Representation across the organisation, within all job roles and pay levels, is a key next step. Progress is being monitored via quarterly reports to the Strategy and Performance Committee and through Inclusion Group meetings, ensuring accountability and visible progress.

Staff Disability Profile Comparison – 2022/23 to 2024/25

Staff disclosure of disability has increased from 9.51% in 2023/24 to 12.78% in 2024/25. This reflects a more inclusive culture of disclosure supported by campaigns led through HR, the Inclusion Group, and wellbeing initiatives. Unknown or refused data rose slightly to 3.44% in 2024/2025 vs data from 2.5% in 2023/24 data, which will be addressed through continued data integrity campaigns.

Supporting Disabled Staff - With disclosures rising, our priority is to ensure adjustments, wellbeing provision, and career progression pathways are accessible and consistently applied. The increase also signals a more open culture around disability.

Staff Ethnicity Profile comparison data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONS 2021 data on UK ethnicity
Ethnicity	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
White	1611	83.73%	1407	83.60%	1243	82.32%	77%
BAME	251	13.05%	229	13.61%	227	15.03%	23%
Unknown	62	3.22%	47	2.79%	40	2.65%	0%
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%	100%

Staff Disability Profile comparison data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONS 2021 data on UK ethnicity
Disabilty	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
No kown Disability	1721	89.45%	1481	88%	1265	83.77%	81%
One or More Disabilities	147	7.64%	160	9.51%	193	12.78%	19%
Unkown/Info Refused	56	2.91%	42	2.5%	52	3.44%	0%
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%	100%

Staff Disability 2024/25 data comparison with ONC data

Disability Comparison Count

Legend: ■ 2025   ■ ONC 2011 Data on Disclosed Disability

Categories: No Kown Disability (83.77% / 81%), One or More Disabilities (12.78% / 19%), Unkown/Info Refused (3.44%)

Staff Religion 2024/25 data comparison with ONC data

Religion Comparison Count

Legend: ■ 2025   ■ ONC 2011 Data on Disclosed Religion

Categories: Any other religion (7.75% / 4.10%), Christian (31.66% / 46.20%), Muslim (5.10% / 6.50%), No Religion (38.48% / 37.20%), Not known / Info Refused (17.02% / 6%)

Staff Religion profile comparison – 2022 to 2025

Staff disclosing no religion increased to 38.48%, while those reporting Christianity remained stable at 31.66%. Staff identifying as Muslim rose to 5.10%, continuing a steady upward trend.

The proportion of 'Not known / refused' has decreased to 17.02%, showing the effectiveness of targeted campaigns encouraging disclosure.

Faith groups add to the richness of our community. Ensuring space, flexibility, and recognition of diverse faith needs, alongside support for those with no religion, is central to fostering belonging. All these aspects are being actively addressed via the University through chaplaincy services, awareness campaigns, and Inclusion Group oversight.

Staff Sexuality Profile comparison – 2023/24 to 2024/2025

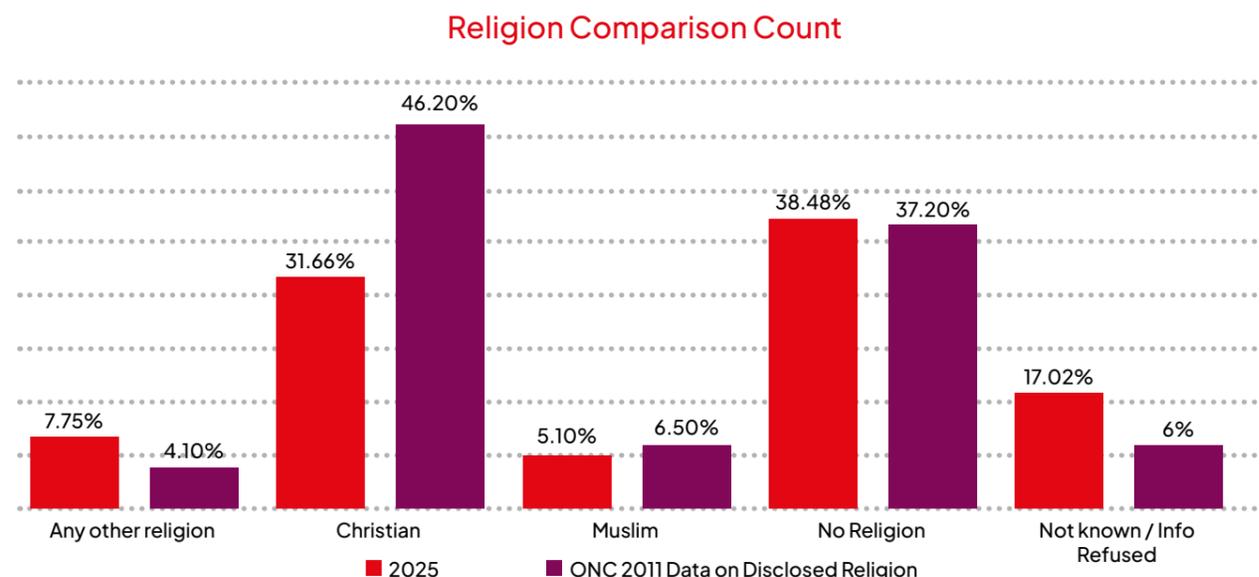Heterosexual staff profile is 76.42%, with 3.44% of staff identifying as gay/lesbian and 3.25% bisexual. The proportion of 'Other' has increased slightly to 0.73%, while 'Unknown/refused' reduced to 16.16% from 22.51% in 2022/23 a reduction of 6.35%, delivering progress made under the Data Integrity Project. Monitoring sexual orientation enables us to identify trends and address barriers. With 'unknown/refused' rates reducing, trust in disclosure is improving. Continued support for LGBTQ+ staff and visibility campaigns remains a priority.

Staff Religion Profile comparison data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONC 2021 data on UK ethnicity
Detail	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
Any other religion	128	6.65%	127	7.55%	117	7.75%	4.1%
Christian	596	30.98%	531	31.55%	478	31.66%	46.2%
Muslim	80	4.16%	79	4.69%	77	5.10%	6.5%
No Religion	668	34.72%	605	35.95%	581	38.48%	37.2%
No Known / Info Refused	452	23.49%	341	20.26%	257	17.02%	6%
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%	100%

Staff Sexuality Profile comparison data – 2022 to 2025

Profile	2022–23		2023–24		2024–25		ONS 2021 data on disclosed sexuality
Detail	No	%	No	%	No	%	%
Bisexual	57	2.96%	51	3.03%	49	3.25%	1.3%
Gay Man or Lesbian	57	2.96%	59	3.51%	52	3.44%	1.5%
Heterosexual	1373	71.36%	1252	74.39%	1154	76.42%	89.4%
Other	4	0.21%	8	0.48%	11	0.73%	0.3%
Unkown/ Refused	433	22.51%	313	18.6%	244	16.16%	7.5%
Total	1924	100%	1683	100%	1510	100%	100%

Staff Sexuality 2024/25 data comparison with ONC data

Sexual Orientation Count

Bar chart showing Sexual Orientation Count comparing 2025 data (red) with ONC 2021 Data on Disclosed Sexuality (purple):
- Bisexual: 3.25% / 1.30%
- Gay Man or Lesbian: 3.44% / 1.50%
- Hetrosexual: 76.42% / 89.40%
- Other: 0.73% / 0.30%
- Unkown: 16.16% / 7.50%

Legend: ■ 2025   ■ ONC 2021 Data on Disclosed Sexuality
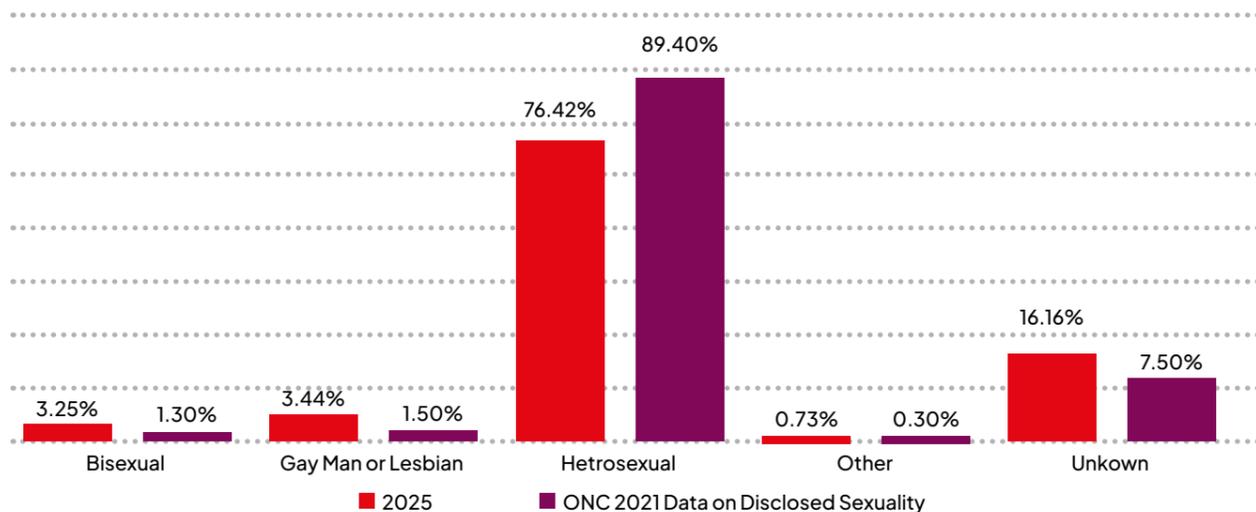
Overall Summary

What's gone well

- Staff diversity has grown: ethnic minority (15.03%), disability disclosure (12.78%), LGBTQ+ disclosure (7.4%).
- Gender balance remains stable (54.97% female, 45.03% male).
- The Target Operating Model (TOM) has embedded fairness and inclusion into structural change, with external assurance from KPMG.
- The Team Engagement and Development (TED) tool and YourCareer platform have strengthened inclusive leadership and career development.
- Pay gap analyses show narrowing or reversal across gender, disability, and sexuality.

Continuing focus of action

- Progress towards the KPI of 17% ethnic minority staff representation by 2026/27, particularly in leadership.
- Address occupational segregation affecting gender pay gaps, especially in technical and estates roles.
- Ensure rising disclosure rates for disability and LGBTQ+ staff are matched with consistent support.
- Continue close monitoring of pay gap fluctuations, particularly ethnicity, where small sample sizes affect results.
- Embed inclusive practice across recruitment, progression, and retention.

Staff Pay Gap Analysis 2025

As part of our ongoing commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, the University monitors staff pay gaps across gender, ethnicity, disability, and sexuality. This ensures fairness and transparency in our employment practices.

Gender pay gap reporting is a statutory requirement for organisations with more than 250 employees. The University goes further by also publishing ethnicity, disability, and sexuality pay gap data to ensure disparities are understood and addressed across all protected characteristics.

Two measures are reported:

- The Mean Pay Gap – the average difference in hourly pay between groups. This is calculated by adding all hourly rates of pay for each group (e.g. male and female staff) and dividing by the number of staff in that group.
- The Median Pay Gap – the midpoint difference in hourly pay when all staff are lined up from lowest to highest paid. This is often considered more representative as it is less influenced by very high or very low pay.

The 2022 and 2023/24 analyses demonstrated progress in narrowing the gender pay gap and provided important insights into ethnicity, disability, and sexuality pay data, helping us to better target future action.

The 2025 analysis offers an updated picture and shows how initiatives such as the Target Operating Model (TOM), the Team Engagement and Development (TED) Tool, and the Data Integrity Project are supporting progress and embedding fairness.

Gender Pay Gap data comparison from 2020 to 2025

The gender pay gap reflects the difference in average hourly earnings between men and women.

In 2024/25, the workforce was made up of 54.97% women and 45.03% men, with no staff identifying as non-binary. Although the gap showed some fluctuation during 2023/24, the longer-term trend indicates steady progress. Over the past five years, the mean pay gap has narrowed from 9.00% in 2020/21 to 7.14% in 2024/25. However, the median gap rose slightly in 2024/25 by 0.87%, highlighting that, on average, male staff continue to earn marginally more than female staff.

The persistence of a gap is linked to occupational segregation, with women more likely to be employed in health, wellbeing, and student support roles, and men more often in technical and estates functions, areas which typically carry different pay scales.

To address this, the Target Operating Model (TOM) has introduced clearer progression pathways across Academic Schools and Professional Services, while the Team Engagement and Development (TED) tool has supported managers in embedding inclusive leadership and holding values-based career conversations. Together, these initiatives are helping to narrow the gender pay gap by supporting fairer progression and development.

Year	Mean	Median
2020/21	9.00%	0%
2021/22	8.10%	0%
2022/23	7.80%	0%
2023/24	8.08%	0%
2024/25	7.14%	0.87%

Gender Pay Gap (Mean %)
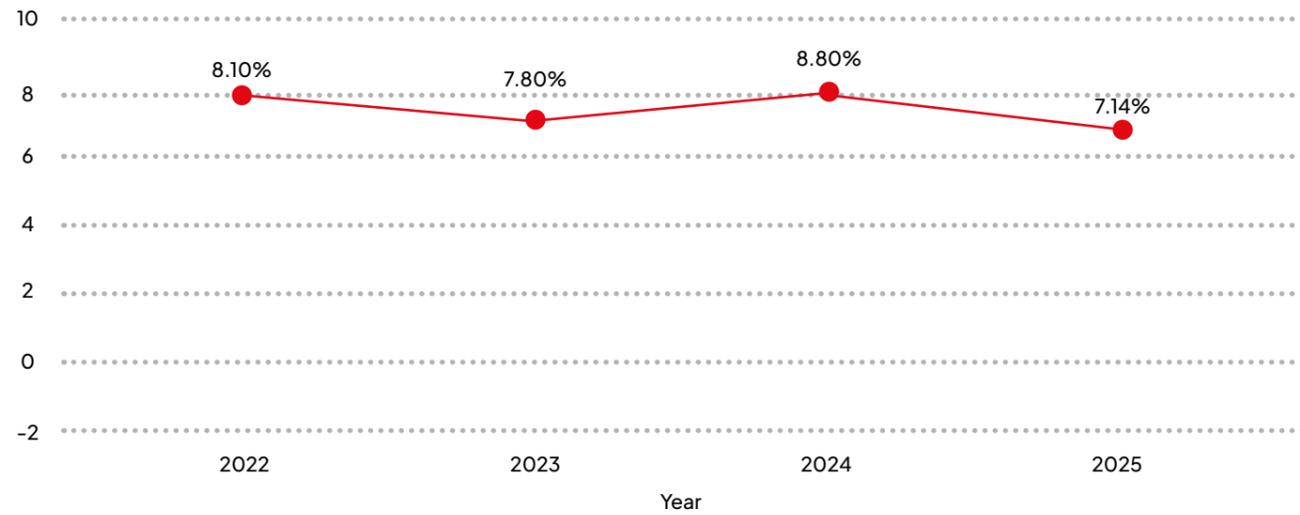
Ethnicity Pay Gap (Mean %)
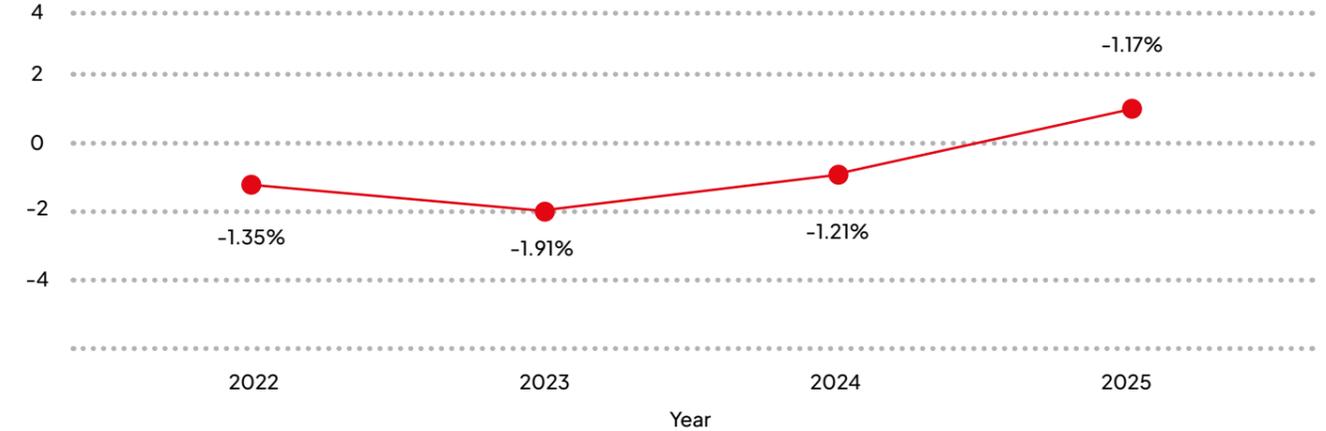
Ethnicity Pay Gap data comparison from 2021 to 2025

The ethnicity pay gap compares the average hourly pay of ethnic minority staff with that of White staff.

By 2024/25, 15.03% of staff identified as ethnic minority, up from 13.61% in 2022/23, marking steady progress towards the University's KPI of 17% ethnic minority representation by 2026/27.

In 2023/24, the mean ethnicity pay gap was –1.21% (in favour of ethnic minority staff), with a median of 0%, indicating parity at the midpoint. In 2024/25, the mean shifted to +1.71% (in favour of White staff). This movement is largely explained by the increasing proportion of ethnic minority staff, where small changes in higher pay bands can disproportionately affect results due to the overall size of the group.

Despite this fluctuation, the broader direction is encouraging. Recruitment practices, progression pathways, and improved data quality are all contributing to inclusivity. The TOM, TED, and the Data Integrity Project have been particularly important in embedding fairer career structures, empowering teams to challenge barriers, and reducing unknown ethnicity records, ensuring that reporting more accurately reflects staff experience

Year	Mean	Median
2021/22	–1.35% (EM)	0%
2022/23	–1.91% (EM)	0%
2023/24	–1.21% (EM)	0%
2024/25	1.17% (White)	0%

Disability Pay Gap data comparison from 2021 to 2025

The disability pay gap measures the difference in average hourly pay between staff with a declared disability and those without.

In 2024/25, 12.78% of staff disclosed a disability, compared with 9.51% the previous year, while 3.44% preferred not to disclose.

The disability pay gap has steadily reduced, from 4.70% in 2021/22 to 4.18% in 2023/24, and in 2024/25 it reversed to –2.29%, meaning staff with a disability now earn slightly more on average than their non-disabled colleagues.

This improvement reflects both the increasing representation of disabled staff in higher grades and the support in place to help them progress, including targeted recruitment, workplace adjustments, and career development opportunities. The Data Integrity Project has been central in driving higher disclosure rates, reducing the number of "unknowns" and providing a stronger evidence base to shape future action.

Year	Mean	Median
2021/22	4.70% (Non-Disabled)	0%
2022/23	5.29% (Non-Disabled)	0%
2023/24	4.18% (Non-Disabled)	0%
2024/25	–2.79% (Disabled)	0%

Disability Pay Gap (Mean %)

Data points: 2022: 4.70%, 2023: 5.29%, 2024: 4.18%, 2025: −2.79%
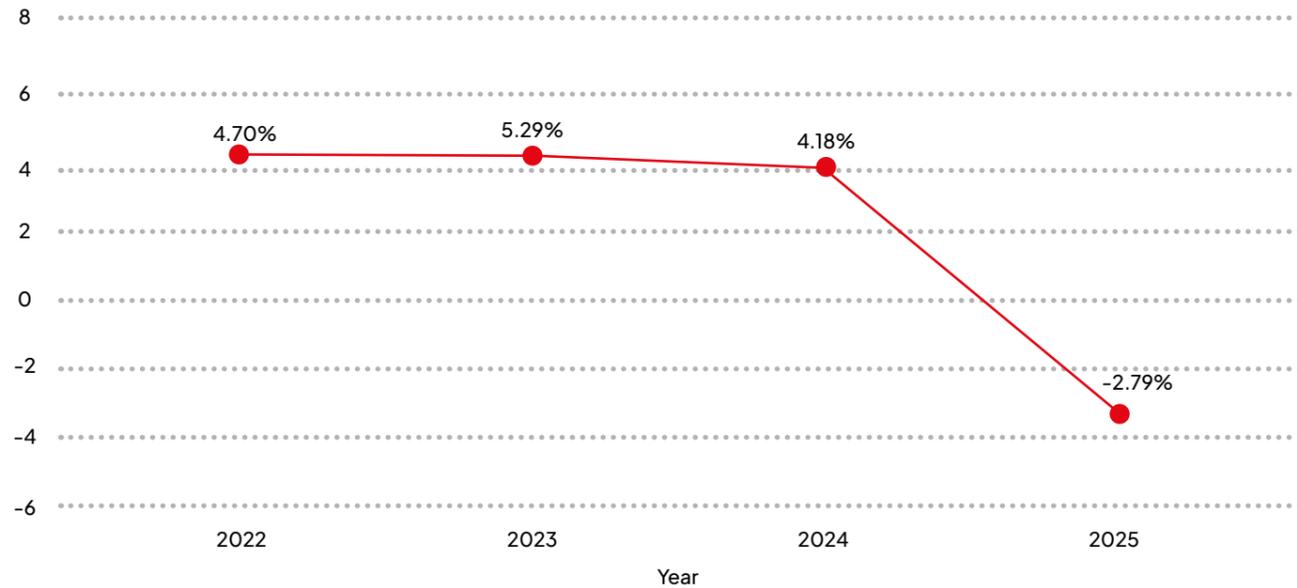
Sexuality Pay Gap Data 2025

The sexuality pay gap compares the average hourly pay of LGBTQ+ staff with that of heterosexual staff.

In 2024/25, 76.24% of staff identified as heterosexual and 7.42% identified as LGBTQ+ (3.44% gay/lesbian, 3.25% bisexual, 0.73% other), and 16.16% preferred not to disclose.

The mean pay gap is at −4.39% showing that LGBTQ+ Staff now earn slightly more on average.

Median figures have remained close to parity throughout.

In previous years, 2022–2024 the methodology used a different formula. From 2025 onwards, the approach was refined to compare LGBTQ+ staff directly with heterosexual staff, rather than the whole workforce, aligning with sector best practice.

The Data Integrity Project has also boosted disclosure rates, reducing the number of staff listed

as "unknown." Alongside this, cultural change supported by TOM and TED has improved inclusivity, strengthened fairness in role design, and supported career progression for LGBTQ+ staff.

Year	Mean	Median
2024/25	−4.39%	0%

To summarise

Between 2023 and 2025, the University has made strong progress in reducing pay gaps and strengthening the integrity of workforce data.

- **Gender**: Mean gap reduced from 9.00% (2020/21) to 7.14% (2024/25), with the median close to zero.
- **Ethnicity:** Moved from −1.35% (2021/22) to +1.71% (2024/25), alongside rising minority ethnic representation to 15.03%.
- **Disability:** Reduced from 4.70% (2021/22) to −2.29% (2024/25), with more disabled staff represented in higher grades.
- **Sexuality:** Narrowed from 19.34% (2021/22) to −4.39% (2024/25), supported by cultural change and improved methodology.

The combined impact of the TOM, TED, and the Data Integrity Project has been to create fairer career structures, foster inclusive leadership, and deliver more accurate reporting through stronger disclosure rates. Although fluctuations remain, particularly where smaller staff populations make the data more sensitive, the overall direction is positive. Pay gaps are narrowing, representation is improving, and the University is steadily advancing towards its ambition of being an inclusive employer of choice.

What We Delivered and Achieved for Our Students in 2024/25

At University of Staffordshire, we create opportunities that transform lives. Our students, in turn, will go on to transform society and the communities where they live and work, both in the UK and internationally. We continue to build a welcoming, inclusive, and culturally diverse environment where students feel connected, supported, and able to thrive. While much progress has been made, we also recognise that more can be done to deepen inclusion and address barriers to success.

Enhancing Student Support and Wellbeing – 2024/25:

- Single Access Point for Support – Student Life services were restructured to create a unified access point, making it easier for students to receive timely help and specialist advice.
- Solve: Digital Front Door – Launched to provide seamless online access to Student Life services, connecting students to the right support more efficiently.
- Wellbeing Services – Restructured to include out-of-hours wellbeing support in Residential Services, ensuring integrated and continuous care for students living on campus.
- Risk Assessments Simplified – Institutional processes for Personal Risk Assessments and Emergency Evacuation Plans were reviewed, reducing the administrative burden on students requiring adjustments, ensuring we capture everyone that has additional needs

Supporting Student Transitions–2024/25

- Inclusive Move-in Experience – Residential students benefitted from quieter, tailored move-in processes, easing the start of university life.
- Autistic Students Transition Event – Delivered in partnership between ResLife and Student Advice, this provided opportunities to build friendships, explore campus, and prepare for student life.
- Weekly "Wellness Wednesday" Programme – The Wellbeing & Safeguarding team's Out of Hours advisors (with support from the Reslife team) delivered activities that fostered independent living skills and reduced social isolation.

Improving Access to Wellbeing and Safeguarding

- Student engagement with Wellbeing and Safeguarding services continues to grow, with particularly positive progress among underrepresented groups:
- Male student usage increased from 39.6% in 2020/21 to 46.6% in 2023/24. This has been maintained in 2024/25 with 46.38% of males accessing the service.
- Students from Black ethnic backgrounds accessing services increased from 4.2% in 2020/21 to 6.4% in 2023/24. This growth has also been maintained in 2024/25 with 6.27% of students from Black ethnic backgrounds and and rise in students from Asian Pakistani backgrounds rising to 4.76%.

These increases are encouraging, given that both groups are often identified nationally as 'hard to reach' in wellbeing support

Targeted Financial and Pastoral Support

- Student Success Fund – Brought into the remit of Student Life, enabling more targeted support for disadvantaged students and those with protected characteristics. The Advice Team reviewed application processes and award types to broaden accessibility, aligned with the University's Access and Participation Plan.

Nurturing Inclusion, Faith and Belonging

- Chaplaincy and Friends of Faith – Our multifaith chaplaincy supported students and staff in their spiritual wellbeing, fostering inclusion through student-led celebrations and religious festivals. Highlights included Christmas and Easter gatherings, Hannukah and Diwali celebrations, and tailored support during Ramadan fasting.

To summarise:

In 2024/25, we have undertaken work that is assisting in removing barriers, enhancing student wellbeing, and fostering inclusion. Our work has:

- Strengthened wellbeing provision, particularly for underrepresented groups.
- Supported smooth and inclusive transitions into university life.
- Enhanced financial and pastoral support for disadvantaged students.
- Celebrated cultural and faith diversity across our community.
- We recognise the need to diversify our staff within Student Life so that it better reflects our student population, and this remains a priority for 2025 and beyond

Together, these achievements demonstrate our commitment to shaping a student experience that is inclusive, supportive, and empowering, enabling every student to succeed.

Student Profile Data

2024/25

In 2024/25, the University enrolled 17,331 students, reflecting a broad mix of age, background, and experience.

The last few years have been challenging for the higher education sector, shaped by demographic shifts, economic pressures, and regulatory change. Locally, young people from lower-participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4 deciles 1 and 2) remain underrepresented in higher education, reinforcing the importance of our Access and Participation Plan and targeted outreach. Nationally, new UK visa rules have reduced international student numbers, particularly at postgraduate level, reshaping the profile of our cohorts.

While these challenges create financial and cultural pressures, they also sharpen our focus on resilience and opportunity. The University remains committed to inclusivity and growth, ensuring that every student, whether from Stoke-on-Trent, across the UK, or overseas, feels welcomed, supported, and able to thrive.

The age profile shows a steady

Student Age Profile data comparison – 2023–2025

intake of younger students, with those 18 and under now making up 18.27% of the student population, an increase from previous years. Students aged 19–21 remain the largest group at 20.58%, while the proportion of students aged 26–35 has reduced to 23.8% from 27.42% in 2022/23, though they are still the most significant mature student group. Those aged 36+ have grown slightly to 20.75% from 19.01% in 2022/23.

Further analysis of the data show

that age distribution varies by school:

- DTIB (Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business) attracts a younger cohort at 29.3%
- HEPS (Health, Education, Policing and Sciences) continues to see the largest mature student intake, particularly in the 26–35 bracket (28.2%).

These disparities are monitored at

the Universities Inclusion Group meetings and inputs into our approach to Student Recruitment and Conversion Strategy and action plan

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Age	No	%	No	%	No	%
18 & Under	3246	14.66%	3161	15.73%	3167	18.27%
19–21	4380	19.78%	3890	19.35%	3566	20.58%
22–25	4237	19.13%	3614	17.98%	2877	16.60%
26–35	6073	27.42%	5390	26.82%	4124	23.80%
36+	4310	19.01%	4044	20.12%	3597	20.75%
Total	22146	100%	20099	100%	17331	100%

Student Sex Profile Data comparison – 2023 to 2025

The student gender profile continues to be broadly balanced, with male students at 51.66% and female students at 47.75%, alongside a small but rising proportion of students identifying as 'Other' (0.58%). The trend shows a gradual increase in female representation year-on-year, narrowing the gap between male and female students.

Distribution by school indicates a gender imbalance that is due to subject mix and select subject segregation:

- DTIB reports a notably high male intake (71.7%),
- HEPS maintains a stronger female representation (77.9%), reflecting subject-based trends in student recruitment.

Our Recruitment and Conversion Strategy will specifically target areas of gender imbalance to ensure a more equitable distribution across subjects.

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Sex	No	%	No	%	No	%
Female	10305	46.53%	9467	47.11%	8276	47.75%
Male	11806	53.31%	10581	52.65%	8954	51.66%
Other	35	0.16%	49	0.24%	101	0.58%
Total	22146	100%	20097	100%	17331	100%

Student sex comparison per school*

Legend: ■ Female ■ Male ■ Other
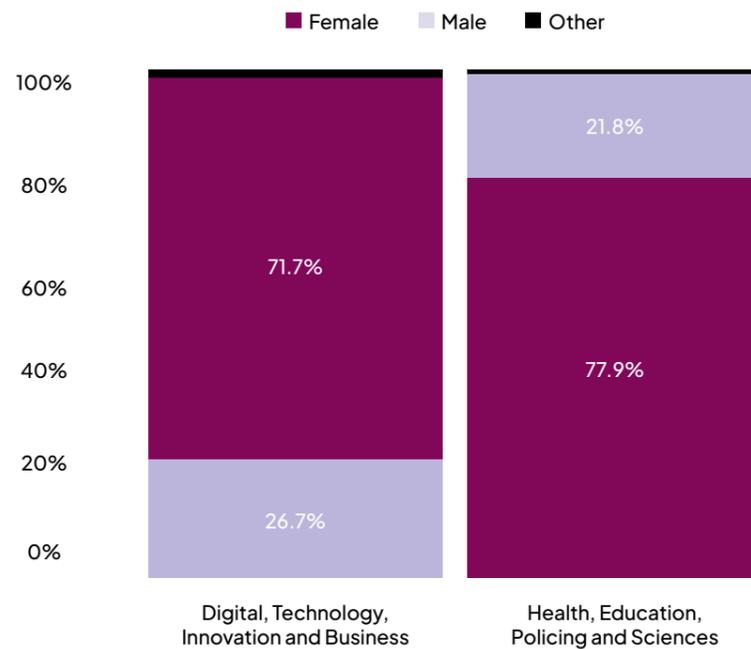
*Undergraduate students on full time courses

Student Ethnicity Profile data comparison – 2023–2025

The ethnic diversity of the student body has remained broadly stable, with 29.51% identifying as ethnic minority, 68.2% White, and 2.3% Unknown. While slightly below the 2023–24 peak (30.79%), ethnic minority enrolments remain above sector averages.

Further analysis of that data shows that Full-Time, Undergraduate Home students Ethnicity rates for 2024–2025 were 31.25% and

distribution across schools is uneven:

- DTIB reports the highest proportion of ethnic minority students (33.3%), compared with 29.2% in HEPS, highlighting differences in portfolio appeal and regional reach.

The University has set a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for

29% of the student population to be drawn from ethnic minority groups by 2026–2027, and current performance indicates we are meeting this target. We will continue to address disparities in ethnicity representation through targeted actions within the Student Recruitment and Conversion Strategy and action plan.

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Ethnicity	No	%	No	%	No	%
BAME	5672	25.61%	6188	30.79%	5114	29.51%
Unkown	612	2.76%	528	2.63%	398	2.30%
White	15862	71.62%	13383	66.59%	11819	68.20%
Total	22146	100%	20099	100%	17331	100%

Student Ethnicity comparison per school*

Legend: ■ BAME ■ White ■ Unknown
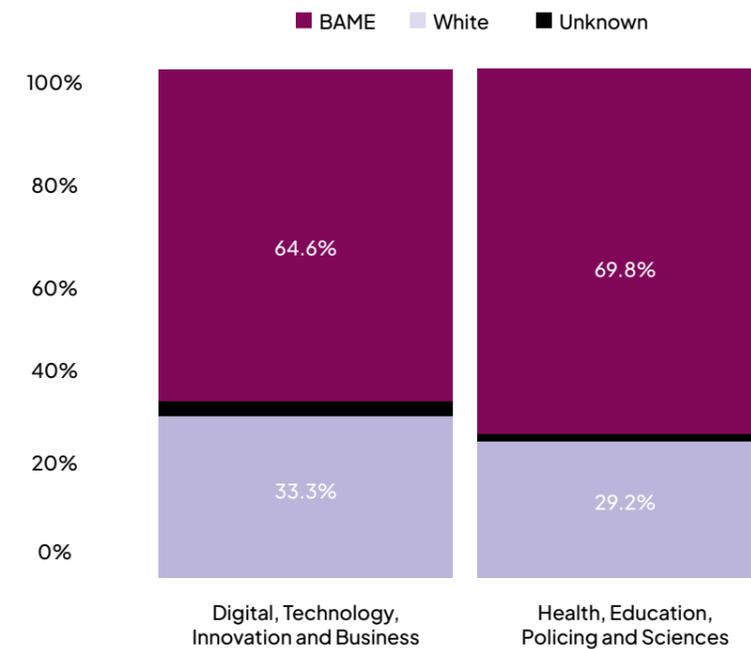
*Undergraduate students on full time courses

Student Religion Profile data comparison – 2023 – 2025

Students reporting 'No Religion' continue to be the largest group at 52.5%, showing a small year-on-year increase. The proportion of Christian students has remained steady at 28.4%, while Muslim students represent 7.29% and Hindu students 1.79%. Other religious groups (Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, Spiritual, and Other) collectively make up under 5%.

Around 5.64% of students did not disclose their religion.

Distribution across schools reflects wider regional demographics:

- HEPS showing higher proportions of students declaring faith affiliations

- DTIB attracts a larger share of students reporting no religion

Where disparities exist in faith representation or disclosure rates, these will be addressed in our Recruitment and Conversion Strategy and action plan.

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Detail	No	%	No	%	No	%
Other	277	1.25%	257	1.28%	246	1.42%
Buddhist	195	0.88%	192	0.96%	132	0.76%
Christian	6312	28.50%	5708	28.40%	4922	28.40%
Hindu	504	2.28%	433	2.15%	310	1.79%
Jewish	20	0.09%	14	0.07%	18	0.10%
Muslim	1962	8.86%	1751	8.71%	1264	7.29%
No Religion	11148	50.34%	10197	50.74%	9099	52.50%
Sikh	266	1.20%	226	1.12%	148	0.85%
Spiritual	293	1.32%	253	1.26%	215	1.24%
Unkown	1168	5.27%	1066	5.30%	977	5.64%
Total	22145	100%	20097	100%	17331	100%

Student Disability Profile data comparison – 2023 – 2025

Students declaring a disability account for 23.01% of the student population, a slight reduction from the previous year but still significantly higher than the national sector average (14.5%). Those without a declared disability remain the majority at 76.99%.

Further analysis on Disabled students shows that Full-Time Under Graduate Home students

disability rates for 2024–2025 are at 30.3% are evenly distributed across schools:

- 27.9% in HEPS and 30.9% in DTIB, showing consistent support for inclusion across academic areas.

This highlights the University's success in encouraging disclosure and embedding support provision

at point of enrolment. Any disparities in disclosure or support will be considered and acted upon within the Student Recruitment and Conversion Strategy and action plan.

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Disability	No	%	No	%	No	%
No Declared Disability	17854	80.62%	15413	76.69%	13344	76.99%
Declared Disability	4288	19.36%	4686	23.31%	3987	23.01%
Unkown Disability	4	0.02%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	22146	100%	20099	100%	17331	100%

Student disability comparison per school*

■ Declared Disability ■ No Declared Disability

	Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business	Health, Education, Policing and Sciences
Declared Disability	69.1%	72.1%
No Declared Disability	30.9%	27.9%
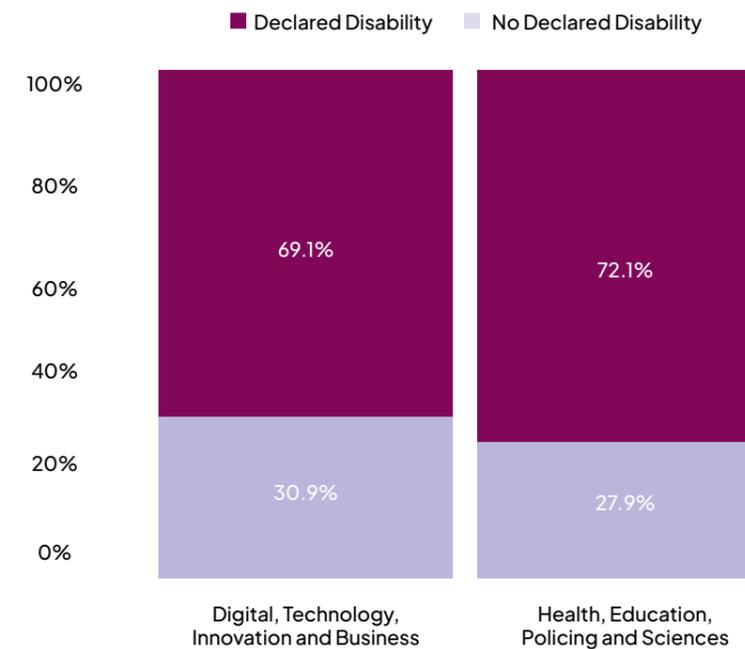
*Undergraduate students on full time courses

Student Sexuality Profile data comparison – 2023 – 2025

The sexuality profile shows 79.08% of students identify as heterosexual, while LGBTQ+ students (bisexual, gay men, and gay women/lesbian) account for 9.59% of the total. Bisexual students are the largest LGBTQ+ group at 6.29%. A further 2.61% identify as 'Other', and 8.71% of students preferred not to disclose.

Distribution across schools show:

- Higher disclosure rates of LGBTQ+ identity among younger cohorts in DTIB and University of Staffordshire London, reflecting national trends where younger age groups are more comfortable to identify as LGBTQ+.

Any disparities in disclosure or representation will be actively addressed through our Student Recruitment and Conversion Strategy and action plan.

Profile	July 2023		July 2024		July 2025	
Detail	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bisexual	1128	5.82%	1220	6.07%	1090	6.29%
Gay Man	310	1.40%	309	1.54%	276	1.59%
Gay Women / Lesbian	362	1.63%	337	1.68%	296	1.71%
Hetrosexual	17627	79.59%	15883	79.03%	13706	79.08%
Other	559	2.52%	541	2.69%	453	2.61%
Unkown/Information Refused	2000	9.03%	1807	8.99%	1510	8.71%
Total	22146	100%	20097	100%	17331	100%

Overall Summary

What's gone well

- Student diversity remains strong, with 29.51% of the student body from ethnic minority backgrounds, aligning with the University's KPI to mirror the post-92 sector benchmark (29%) by 2026/27.
- Students declaring a disability account for 23.01% of the total population, which is higher than the national sector average (14.5%), reflecting robust inclusion and the success of early-stage disclosure and support provision.
- LGBTQ+ disclosure rates have continued to rise, supported by inclusive events, targeted campaigns, and visible representation across the student community.
- Enhanced wellbeing and inclusion support have been delivered through the Student Life restructure and Solve Digital Front Door, improving access to services and continuity of care.
- Engagement with Wellbeing and Safeguarding services continues to rise among traditionally underrepresented groups, including male students (46.4%) and students from Black and Asian backgrounds (over 6%).
- Targeted financial and pastoral initiatives, including the Student Success Fund, have improved equity of support for students from disadvantaged or protected groups.

Continuing focus of action

- While progress is strong, the University remains committed to deepening inclusion and equity within the student experience. Priorities for 2025/26 include:
- Sustaining progress towards the KPI of 29% ethnic minority representation and continuing to diversify the student population across all Schools and subject areas.
- Maintaining high disclosure rates for disability, ethnicity, and sexuality, and further reducing "unknown/refused" data to below 2% across all protected characteristics.
- Enhancing targeted interventions to address attainment and progression disparities, particularly for Black and Disabled students.
- Continuing to improve accessibility and digital inclusivity through the Solve platform and Student Life services.
- Expanding peer and community engagement opportunities to strengthen student belonging, wellbeing, and employability.

THEME 4 – INVOLVING OUR STAFF, STUDENTS AND OUR COMMUNITIES

Involving Our Staff and Students– Inclusion Group

In 2025, University of Staffordshire reaffirmed its commitment to embedding inclusion into the heart of its culture by strengthening the Inclusion Group. This group was refreshed to ensure it remains fit for purpose considering the wider organisational changes brought about by the Target Operating Model (TOM).

The Inclusion Group adopted new Terms of Reference (TOR) in 2025, which clarified its role as the primary advisory and scrutiny body for EDI. The TOR ensures that the group:

- Provides direct oversight of the University's EDI Framework and associated delivery plans.
- Acts as a voice for staff, students, and communities, championing inclusion in decision-making.

- Holds Schools and Directorates accountable for meeting their agreed KPIs and EDI action plans.

The Schedule of Business was revised to align with the University's planning cycle. This enables systematic monitoring of progress against KPIs, with quarterly reviews of staff/student demographic data, recruitment outcomes, and progression trends.

As part of the TOM realignment, the membership of the Inclusion Group was reviewed and refreshed. It now reflects the new University structure, with representatives drawn from the consolidated Schools of Digital, Technology, Innovation and Business (DTIB) and Health, Education, Policing and Sciences (HEPS), alongside Professional Services.

Membership continues to include senior staff, student representatives, chaplaincy, and trade unions, ensuring diverse perspectives and experiences inform discussions.

The group remains chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and is supported by the Director of EDI, providing clear accountability and leadership at the highest level.

Our Commitment

- To coach and support Inclusion Group members as ambassadors of consciously inclusive behaviours, ensuring inclusion principles are modelled across the University.
- To ensure the group remains an open and safe space where honest feedback can be shared, challenging the University to go further in embedding equity and inclusion.
- To use the revised TOR, Schedule of Business, and refreshed membership to create a stronger foundation for delivering measurable change in recruitment, progression, and organisational culture.

Awareness Campaigns and Cultural Engagement

In 2024/25, a major focus of the Inclusion Group was to agree, oversee, and support the delivery of awareness campaigns and cultural celebrations. These initiatives were developed and led by our Chaplaincy, Student Life and Communications Team, with support from Inclusion Group members to ensure visibility, collaboration, and wide participation across the University.

Examples of campaigns and events have included:

- **Diwali Celebration (October 2024)** – An on-campus cultural showcase featuring traditional food, music, and storytelling.
- **Christmas Celebration (December 2024)** – Festive gathering with mince pies and hot chocolate, accompanied by carol singing led by University Chaplain, Revd. Mick Williams.

- **LGBTQ+ History Month (February 2025)** – A digital campaign amplifying student and staff voices and experiences.
- **International Women's Day (March 2025)** – Celebrating and highlighting women in leadership roles.
- **Eid Celebrations (2025)** – On-campus cultural showcase with food, music, and storytelling.
- **Easter Celebration (2025)** – Exploring the significance of Lent, Good Friday, and Easter Monday through digital storytelling.
- **Pride Month (June 2025)** – In partnership with the Students' Union, the University joined the Stoke-on-Trent Pride celebrations at Hanley Park, a vibrant day of performances, music, and community celebration.

By embedding awareness campaigns into its Schedule of Business, the Inclusion Group ensures these initiatives are not ad-hoc but strategically planned and reviewed. This has created:

- Stronger alignment between staff/student needs and institutional action.
- Greater visibility of inclusion through proactive communications.
- A collaborative model where Chaplaincy, Student Life, and Communications lead, and Inclusion Group members provide accountability and support.

To summarise

The Inclusion Group, strengthened by new Terms of Reference, a refreshed Schedule of Business, and membership aligned with TOM, has positioned inclusion as a strategic priority in 2024/25.

Awareness campaigns and cultural celebrations, delivered collaboratively by Chaplaincy, Student Life, and Communications Team, have showcased our commitment to creating a culture of belonging.

Through leadership, accountability, and collaboration, the University continues to reinforce its values of fairness, inclusivity, and community, ensuring all staff and students feel recognised, represented, and empowered.

Involving and Supporting our Communities

Building for the Future – Social Value & EDI Case Study

The £100m Student Village will redefine life at University of Staffordshire, creating a modern, sustainable campus that puts students and community at its heart. Due for completion in 2026, the development will deliver 700 new student rooms, refurbish 300 rooms at Clarice Cliff Court, and introduce a net-zero Village Hub – setting a new standard for sustainable student living.

The University and Willmott Dixon have committed to embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Social Value into every stage of delivery. That means investing in local talent, opening doors for under-represented groups, building strong community partnerships, and leaving a legacy that reflects our values of being curious, ambitious, and inspirational.

Partner Commitments

- Employ 25% of workforce within 10 miles; 50% within 30 miles.
- Spend 25% of supply chain value within 10 miles; 50% within 30 miles.
- Deliver apprenticeships, internships, work experience and careers workshops.
- Partner with YMCA North Staffs, the Gingerbread Centre, and Beating Time.
- Embed EDI training for all staff and supply chain partners.
- Engage students, schools, and early years learners through outreach.

What Has Been Delivered (2024/25)

- 150 apprenticeships weeks delivered
- 14 work experience placements
- 2 paid internships (including 1 University of Staffordshire student)
- 11 ethnic minority individuals and 1 local female employed from within the local area (ST4 postcode)
- 33% of labour and 18% of spend sourced locally (within 40 miles)
- 85 staff volunteer hours £2,000+ donated to charities

Case Studies

YMCA North Staffordshire - provides housing, training, education, health and wellbeing services for young people (11–25) at risk of homelessness, helping them belong, contribute, and thrive.

What was delivered:

- Provided a week's work experience for Mikiele, a young man supported by YMCA
- Mikiele gained confidence, CV references, and practical skills.
- As a result, Mikiele secured a permanent construction role in Crewe.

"Mikiele has shown reliability and went over and above to embrace his first week working in the construction industry. He became a popular member of the onsite team." – Jon Malone, Logistics Manager, O'Neill & Brennan

The Gingerbread Centre - founded in 1977, Gingerbread provides supported accommodation and tailored support for families and single parents experiencing homelessness or crisis, helping them resettle and rebuild their lives.

What was delivered:

- Emergency redecoration and furnishing of a flat for a vulnerable family.
- Donation of a baby hamper for a young expectant mother.
- £400 raised through a charity car wash, plus pantry donations of food and essentials.
- Secured £6,000 of free CCTV upgrades from Magpie Security.

"The support we received was invaluable. Families in crisis were able to move into safe, welcoming accommodation thanks to Willmott Dixon's team." – Gingerbread Centre Staff Member'

Beating Time - works with people in prison through creativity, employability and entrepreneurship. Their goal is to ensure ex-offenders can reintegrate into society with skills, confidence, and access to sustainable work.

What was delivered:

- Workshops at HMP Stoke Heath for prison leavers due for release within 12 weeks.
- Sessions covered employability, CV building, and interview preparation.
- Created pathways to work, reducing risk of re-offending and supporting rehabilitation.

Awards & Recognition

The University of Staffordshire Student Village has already gained national recognition for its innovative approach and impact:

- Partnerships Awards 2025 – Winner: Best Social Infrastructure Project
- Property Week Student Accommodation Awards 2024 – Winner: Deal of the Year

These awards reflect the project's pioneering funding model, sustainable design, and commitment to social value. Judges highlighted how the Student Village combines net-zero construction principles with a comprehensive programme of community benefits, from apprenticeships and internships to partnerships with charities including YMCA North Staffs, the Gingerbread Centre, and Beating Time.

The recognition places the project at the forefront of UK higher education infrastructure, setting a new benchmark for how universities can deliver both world-class facilities and measurable social impact.

Future Work (2025/26)

- Continue apprenticeships, internships, and placements.
- Expand prison-leaver employability workshops with Beating Time.
- Extend collaboration with Woodlands Nursery & Forest School through orchard planting, play events, and donations.
- Launch the Clarice Cliff Court energy-saving competition.
- Grow supply chain engagement to boost local jobs and investment.

To summarise

The Student Village is more than a construction project — it is a social impact programme in action. Over 30 apprentices, students, and unemployed individuals supported in its first year. Local charities and community groups empowered through funding, donations, and skills. YMCA, the Gingerbread Centre, and Beating Time have each benefited from direct, measurable support. EDI embedded into site culture, ensuring inclusive opportunities for all.

By 2026, the Student Village will stand not only as a modern student residence but also as a symbol of the University's commitment to people, place, and purpose. The project's national award recognition further demonstrates that it is not only a landmark development for University of Staffordshire, but also an exemplar for the wider sector in delivering sustainable, inclusive, and socially impactful infrastructure.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & HONORARY DOCTORATE

University of Staffordshire is proud to celebrate the achievements of inspirational individuals from our region. By awarding honorary doctorates, we not only recognise their exceptional contributions but also highlight the importance of civic leadership, inclusion, and community impact.

Mohammed Ramzan –
Community Leadership
Mohammed was born abroad and raised in Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent and, became the first in his family to go to university. Mohammed studied Social Work and Social Studies at University of Staffordshire before continuing postgraduate studies at Manchester, Lancaster, and Oxford.

Key Achievements:
- Chair of the Shelton Community Partnership, representing over 250 businesses, residents, faith groups, and landlords.
- Vice Principal of St Helen's College, focusing on widening participation and access to higher education.
- Champion for social mobility, connecting communities to education, housing, and employment opportunities.

"No matter where you come from, which school you went to, or what your background may be, I stand here today as living proof that you can succeed."

Councillor Abi Brown OBE –
Civic Leadership
Councillor Abi Brown OBE is a longstanding Stoke-on-Trent City Councillor, Abi Brown served as Council Leader, representing the Meir Park ward.
Key Achievements:

- Oversaw major regeneration projects in the city, including housing, skills development, and digital infrastructure.
- Advocated for collaborations with University of Staffordshire to drive civic pride and innovation.
- Awarded an OBE in 2022 for services to local government.

"I have always believed that the future of Stoke-on-Trent lies in collaboration – working with partners like the University to bring new opportunities to our people."

Commander Nathan Gray –
Inspirational Leadership
Commander Nathan Gray is one of the UK's most decorated Royal Navy fighter pilots, originally from Staffordshire.

Key Achievements:
- Served with distinction in the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, including operational deployments overseas.
- First pilot to land the F-35B Lightning II on the UK's flagship aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.
- Involved in STEM outreach, mentoring young people in schools and community groups across Staffordshire.

"It is a privilege to inspire the next generation. If my journey encourages even one young person to follow their ambitions, then it has all been worthwhile."

Nathan Heaney –
Sporting Achievement and Advocacy
Nathan Heaney born and raised in Stoke-on-Trent, known as "The Hitman from Stoke." Nathan is a professional boxer competing at national and international levels.

Key Achievements:
- Won the British Middleweight Boxing Championship in 2023.
- Known for bringing thousands of fans from Stoke to his matches, promoting local pride.
- Advocate for mental health awareness, speaking publicly about wellbeing in sport and community resilience.

"Stoke has always been my home – every fight I win is for the city and its people."

To summarise
- By recognising these four figures, spanning community leadership, civic service, military inspiration, and sporting achievement, University of Staffordshire demonstrates its civic mission in action. Each honouree embodies values of inclusivity, resilience, ambition, and pride in Staffordshire. Their recognition not only honours individual achievement but also offers powerful role models for students, staff, and local communities alike.

Overall Summary

What's gone well
- The Inclusion Group has been strengthened through revised Terms of Reference, a refreshed Schedule of Business, and membership aligned with TOM.
- Cultural campaigns (Diwali, Eid, Pride Month, International Women's Day) have reinforced belonging and visibility.

- Chaplaincy, Student Life, and Communications have collaborated with the Inclusion Group to ensure strategic alignment of events with community needs.
- The £100m Student Village project has embedded EDI and social value into delivery, with apprenticeships, local employment, charity partnerships, and national recognition.
- Honorary doctorates celebrated diverse civic leaders, reinforcing the University's mission and providing visible role models.

Continuing focus of action
- Maintain diversity within the Inclusion Group to reflect staff and student voices.
- Evaluate the long-term impact of awareness campaigns and cultural events.
- Expand community and charity partnerships, ensuring EDI remains central to major projects.
- Ensure Inclusion Group influence remains visible in everyday decision-making.
- Continue to promote civic leadership role models.

THEME 5 – RESPONSIVE SERVICE, ACCESS, AND IMPROVING SATISFACTION LEVELS

University of Staffordshire is committed to putting our staff, students, and communities at the heart of everything we do. Our ambition is to make their lives easier and ensure that the experiences we provide meet both their aspirations and ours. We are determined to deliver a fair, inclusive, and supportive higher education and employment environment that contributes positively to our region and beyond. Through our vision of delivering Next Generation Education and employment opportunities, we aim to reinforce that the University exists to help our people and communities thrive, achieve their ambitions, and realise their life goals.

NSS Results and Student Satisfaction

The National Student Survey (NSS) is an independent, UK-wide survey that collects the views of final-year undergraduate students about the quality of their courses. It is a key benchmark for higher education providers, covering areas such as teaching, learning opportunities, assessment, academic support, organisation, learning resources, and the student voice. The NSS results are widely used by universities to identify strengths, highlight areas for improvement, and measure performance against national peers.

For University of Staffordshire, the NSS is more than just a survey, it is a vital tool for ensuring services remain responsive, accessible, and student focused. The 2025 results mark a significant milestone, demonstrating measurable improvements across all key themes and reflecting the University's ambition to continually raise satisfaction levels.

Key Highlights from NSS 2025

- Overall student positivity increased by 4.0 percentage points, rising from 77.5% in 2024 to 81.5% in 2025.
- The University climbed 22 places in the national sector rankings, one of the strongest improvements across UK higher education.
- Student satisfaction improved across all seven NSS categories, with particularly strong gains in Student Voice (+4.7 points) and Organisation & Management (+4.3 points).

Performance Across Key NSS Themes

University of Staffordshire demonstrated consistent improvement across every NSS theme. These results reflect the impact of investments in academic support, teaching quality, learning resources, and the student voice.

Institutional Reflections

The 2025 results show that student feedback is not only listened to but acted upon. The 4.7-point rise in Student Voice indicates that students feel more engaged in shaping their learning experience, while improvements in academic support, learning opportunities, and assessment demonstrate a more inclusive and responsive approach to education.

Importantly, the significant climb in sector ranking confirms that the University's approach is recognised nationally. It illustrates how access, responsiveness, and inclusivity can drive measurable progress in student satisfaction.

To summarise

University of Staffordshire's NSS 2025 results reflect a transformation in student satisfaction, access, and responsiveness. With improvements across every theme, a major rise in national ranking, and powerful recognition from students themselves, the results confirm the University's commitment to inclusivity and continuous improvement. By embedding responsiveness at the heart of its services and investing in student experience, the University is strengthening its position as a sector leader in access and satisfaction, ensuring that all students are supported to succeed.

Using EDI and Staff Culture Survey Insights to Drive Change

The University-wide EDI and Staff Culture Survey was undertaken in 2023; its findings have continued to shape action throughout 2024/25. Schools and Directorates have been tasked with developing local action plans that respond to the survey data, with a particular emphasis on:

- Inclusive recruitment practices that ensure fairness and equity at every stage of the hiring process.
- Progression pathways that support career development for under-represented groups.
- Creating supportive environments where staff feel valued and able to succeed.

Supporting Change Through TOM and TED

The implementation of the Target Operating Model (TOM) in 2024/25 provided an opportunity to embed these priorities into the University's structures and processes. TOM has been underpinned by principles of transparency, fairness, and staff engagement, with the survey action plans serving as a foundation for decisions on workforce design and support.

Alongside TOM, the Team Engagement and Development (TED) tool has played a crucial role in helping teams translate survey feedback into meaningful action. By facilitating open conversations, TED has enabled staff to co-create solutions, strengthen cohesion, and ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion remain central to team culture.

Overall Summary

What's gone well
- NSS positivity increased by 4 points to 81.5%, with a 22-place rise in national rankings.
- Improvements recorded across all categories, with strongest gains in Student Voice and Organisation & Management.
- Student services streamlined with improved wellbeing, financial support, and transition initiatives.
- TOM and TED embedded inclusive leadership and fairness into service design.
- Staff culture surveys shaped local action plans across Schools and Directorates.

Continuing focus of action
- Sustain momentum in student satisfaction, retention, and attainment, with particular focus on underrepresented cohorts.
- Embed NSS gains through continued investment in teaching quality and student engagement.
- Refine wellbeing and financial support services for accessibility and inclusivity.
- Ensure accountability for acting on staff survey findings.
- Evaluate TOM and TED for long-term impact on organisational culture.

University of Staffordshire – NSS Results 2024 vs 2025

Legend: 2024 (red), 2025 (purple)

NSS Theme	2024	2025
Academic Support	82.5%	85.2%
Student Voice	71.9%	76.6%
Organisation and Management	65.9%	70.2%
Assessment and Feedback	78.9%	82.8%
Teaching on My Course	81.3%	84.4%
Learning Opportunities	78.9%	82.8%
Learning Resources	81.4%	84.7%

Y-axis: Positivity (%) — 60 to 90
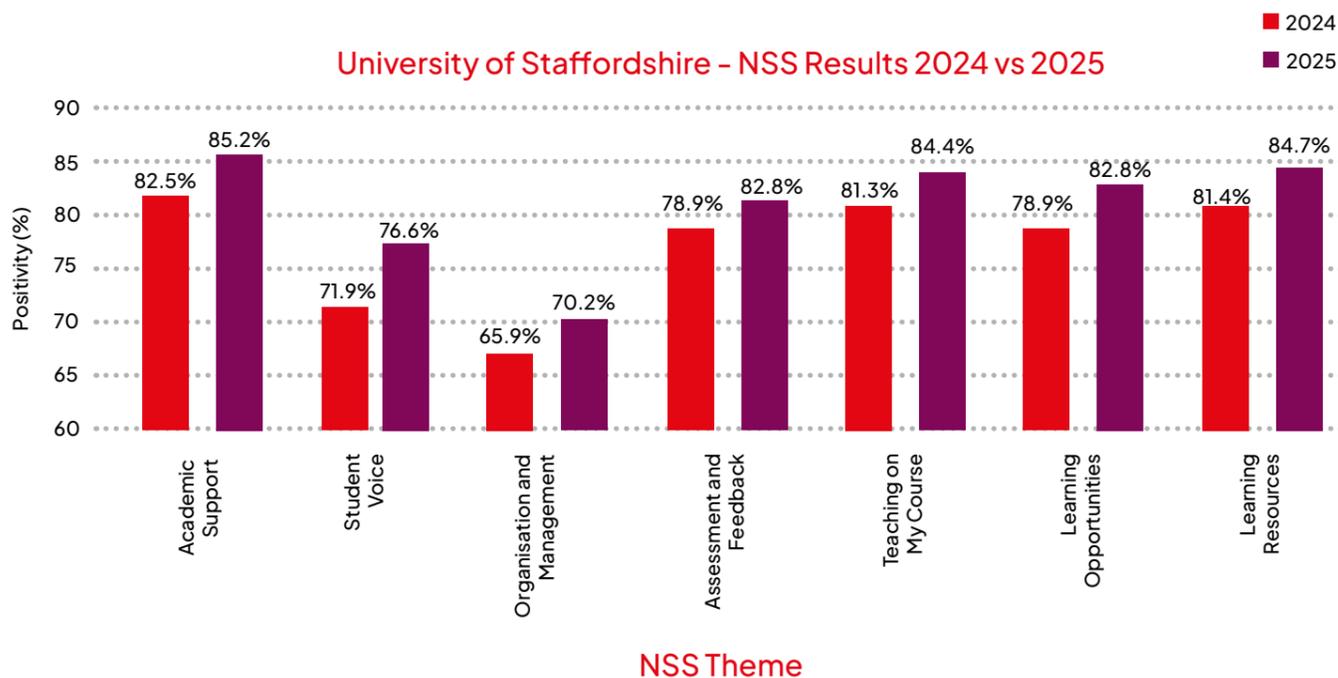
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION PRIORITIES FOR 2025/2026

Building on the progress made during 2024/25, University of Staffordshire will continue to strengthen its position as a fair and inclusive employer, education provider, and civic partner. Our priorities for 2025/26 focus on embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of university life, ensuring that:

- Leadership is accountable and representative.
- Data is robust, comprehensive, and intelligence led.
- Staff and student communities reflect regional and sector norms.
- Services are responsive to the needs of all.

1. Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment

- Continue to diversify the Board of Governors by increasing female and non-binary representation, while sustaining strong levels of ethnic minority and disability disclosure.
- Embed inclusive leadership training and accountability through local EDI action plans, ensuring leaders at all levels are equipped to model and deliver inclusive practice.
- Strengthen civic and regional partnerships that address inequalities in higher education, employment, and social mobility.
- Maintain a transparent approach to data collection, ensuring governance remains reflective of wider society and sector best practice.

2. Knowing Our Staff, Students and Communities

- Extend the Data Integrity Project to achieve near-100% disclosure across ethnicity, disability, religion, and sexuality.
- Use intelligence-led data to identify disparities in progression, retention, and satisfaction, directing interventions to reduce gaps.
- Continue benchmarking against HESA and ONS data to ensure staff and student profiles are aligned with both regional demographics and sector averages.
- Build confidence in disclosure through ongoing engagement, communications, and assurance of confidentiality.

3. A Diverse, Skilled and Committed Staff and Student Cohort

- Achieve the KPI of 17% ethnic minority staff representation by 2026/27, with a specific focus on leadership and academic roles.
- Support under-represented groups through inclusive recruitment practices, leadership development programmes, and transparent progression pathways.
- Sustain progress in narrowing gender, ethnicity, disability and sexuality pay gaps, with clear accountability for year-on-year improvement.
- Enhance employability and career pathways for students, with a focus on apprenticeships, placements, entrepreneurship, and civic leadership opportunities.
- Ensure disclosure rates for disability and LGBTQ+ staff are matched by consistent support and career development opportunities.

4. Involving Our Staff, Students and Communities

- Strengthen the role of the Inclusion Group, ensuring representation across all Schools and Services, and embedding local EDI action plans that drive visible change.
- Deliver an expanded programme of cultural awareness events, staff/student campaigns, and civic engagement initiatives that celebrate diversity and promote inclusion.
- Evaluate and evidence the impact of awareness campaigns and community engagement activities to ensure long-term influence on organisational culture.
- Embed social value commitments into major projects, including the Student Village, to deliver inclusive recruitment, apprenticeships, local partnerships, and measurable community benefit.
- Continue to celebrate civic, community, and sector leadership role models to inspire staff, students, and the wider region.

5. Responsive Services, Access and Improving Satisfaction Levels

- Continue improving on the National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes
- Reduce awarding gaps to below 10%, with targeted actions for Black students and other underrepresented cohorts.
- Strengthen student wellbeing, disability, and financial support provision, ensuring improved continuation, retention, and progression rates.
- Implement actions arising from the Staff Culture and EDI Surveys, ensuring all Schools and Services deliver positive engagement outcomes.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of TOM and TED to ensure sustained cultural change and inclusive service design.

These priorities are aligned with the Local Government Equality Framework and provide a clear roadmap for achieving the University's long-term KPIs by 2026/27. Together, they ensure that Staffordshire University continues to act as a Catalyst for Change, transforming lives, communities and opportunities across the region and beyond.

Staff demographic profile data comparison from 2024 to 2025

Age Distribution: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- 65+: 36 (2.14%) [2024], 31 (2.05%) [2025]
- 56–65: 289 (17.17%) [2024], 258 (17.09%) [2025]
- 46–55: 435 (25.85%) [2024], 385 (25.5%) [2025]
- 36–45: 464 (27.58%) [2024], 440 (29.14%) [2025]
- 26–35: 379 (22.25%) [2024], 336 (22.25%) [2025]
- 25 & under: 80 (4.75%) [2024], 60 (3.97%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Sex: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown/Other: 0 (0.0%) [2024], 0 (0.0%) [2025]
- Male: 746 (44.33%) [2024], 680 (45.03%) [2025]
- Female: 937 (55.67%) [2024], 830 (54.97%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Ethnicity: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unkown: 47 (2.79%) [2024], 40 (2.65%) [2025]
- BAME: 229 (13.61%) [2024], 227 (15.03%) [2025]
- White: 1407 (83.6%) [2024], 1243 (82.32%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Religion: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Not Known/Refused: 341 (20.26%) [2024], 257 (17.02%) [2025]
- No Religon: 605 (35.95%) [2024], 581 (38.48%) [2025]
- Muslim: 79 (4.69%) [2024], 77 (5.1%) [2025]
- Christian: 531 (31.55%) [2024], 478 (31.66%) [2025]
- Any other religion: 127 (7.55%) [2024], 117 (7.75%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Disability: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown/Refused: 42 (3.0%) [2024], 52 (3.44%) [2025]
- One or More Disabilities: 160 (9.51%) [2024], 193 (12.78%) [2025]
- No known Disability: 1481 (88.0%) [2024] / 1407 (83.6%), 1265 (83.77%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Sexual Orientation: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown/Refused: 313 (18.6%) [2024], 244 (16.16%) [2025]
- Other: 8 (0.48%) [2024], 11 (0.73%) [2025]
- Heterosexual: 1252 (74.39%) [2024], 1154 (76.42%) [2025]
- Gay Man or Lesbian: 59 (3.51%) [2024], 52 (3.44%) [2025]
- Bisexual: 51 (3.03%) [2024], 49 (3.25%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Student demographic profile data comparison from 2024 to 2025

Age Distribution: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- 36+: 4044 (20.12%) [2024], 3597 (20.75%) [2025]
- 26–35: 5390 (26.82%) [2024], 4124 (23.8%) [2025]
- 22–25: 3614 (17.98%) [2024], 2877 (16.6%) [2025]
- 19–21: 3890 (19.35%) [2024], 3566 (20.58%) [2025]
- 18 & under: 3161 (15.73%) [2024], 3167 (18.27%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Sex: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown/Other: 49 (0.24%) [2024], 101 (0.58%) [2025]
- Male: 10581 (52.65%) [2024], 8954 (51.66%) [2025]
- Female: 9467 (47.11%) [2024], 8276 (47.75%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Students

Ethnicity: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown: 528 (2.63%) [2024], 398 (2.3%) [2025]
- BAME: 6188 (30.79%) [2024], 5114 (29.51%) [2025]
- White: 13383 (66.59%) [2024], 11819 (68.2%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Staff

Religion: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unkown: 1046 (5.3%) [2024], 977 (5.64%) [2025]
- Spiritual: 253 (1.26%) [2024], 215 (1.24%) [2025]
- Sikh: 226 (1.12%) [2024], 148 (0.85%) [2025]
- No Religion: 10197 (50.74%) [2024], 9099 (52.5%) [2025]
- Muslim: 1751 (8.71%) [2024], 1264 (7.29%) [2025]
- Jewish: 14 (0.07%) [2024], 18 (0.1%) [2025]
- Hindu: 433 (2.15%) [2024], 310 (1.79%) [2025]
- Christian: 5708 (28.4%) [2024], 4922 (28.4%) [2025]
- Buddist: 192 (0.96%) [2024], 132 (0.76%) [2025]
- Other: 257 (1.28%) [2024], 246 (1.42%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Students

Disability: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Unknown Disability: 0 (0.0%) [2024], 0 (0.0%) [2025]
- Declared Disability: 4686 (23.31%) [2024], 3987 (23.01%) [2025]
- No Declared Disability: 15413 (76.69%) [2024], 13344 (76.99%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Students

Sexual Orientation: 2024 vs 2025
Legend: 2024, 2025

- Not Known/Refused: 1807 (8.99%) [2024], 1510 (8.71%) [2025]
- Other: 541 (2.69%) [2024], 453 (2.61%) [2025]
- Hetrosexual: 15883 (79.03%) [2024], 13706 (79.08%) [2025]
- Gay Women / Lesbian: 337 (1.68%) [2024], 296 (1.71%) [2025]
- Gay Man: 309 (1.54%) [2024], 276 (1.59%) [2025]
- Bisexual: 1220 (6.07%) [2024], 1090 (6.29%) [2025]

X-axis: Number of Students