THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART
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THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021-2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 This paper presents the agreed Equality Outcomes for Glasgow School of Art for the period 2021-2025. This is the third set of Equality Outcomes set by Glasgow School of Art since 2013, as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty supported by specific duties detailed in the Equality Act 2010. The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard for three specific needs:

- The need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.

- The need to advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, considering the need to:

  1. Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  2. Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.
  3. Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

- The need to foster good relations between people from different groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

1.2 In advance of setting new outcomes, significant consideration was given to the progress made in relation to the 2017-2021 Equality Outcomes taking into account all other legislative requirements including the publication of:

- Equality Outcomes Final Progress Report 2017-2021
- Student Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2020
- Staff Equality Monitoring Report 2019-2020
- Equality Monitoring GSA Board of Governors
- Equal Pay Report 2020

Further detail can be accessed via https://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/key-information/equality/

1.3 Relevant internal and external evidence was taken into account as part of the process.

1.4 Reasonable steps; under the current restrictions were taken to involve people with relevant protected characteristics.

1.5 Reasonable steps; under the current restrictions were taken to consult with students, staff and stakeholders.

1.6 It should be noted that the Glasgow School of Art has managed a number of significant major incidents in the reporting period, with a second devastating fire in a period of 5 years occurring in 2018 and the current global pandemic beginning in early 2020; continuing to profoundly impact upon the delivery of our core educational activities. There is no doubt this has delayed progress of some specific equality outcomes however; mainstreaming equality has continued to be a key priority. The effective transition to fully online, remote delivery of our academic programmes in 2020/21 and the requisite upskilling of staff has itself accelerated aspects of our equalities work.

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2.   Assessment of The Glasgow School of Art's Equality Outcomes 2017-2021

2.1   There is government recognition that the focus and structure of new outcomes and action plans need to reflect how we will measure impact and difference made to specific protected characteristics.

2.2   The Glasgow School of Art's 2017-2021 Equality Outcomes were assessed in terms of progress and future position i.e. embedded into mainstreaming, carried forward with future actions or amended to reflect current institutional priorities pertaining to inequalities.

2.3   Advice and guidance from the Scottish Funding Council and The Equality and Human Right Commission was used to inform discussion.

2.4   Several of GSA's 2017 – 2021 Equality Outcomes were noted to be too general in nature with the broad aim 'to achieve equality for all'. There was some evidence of ineffective monitoring and reporting such as activity related to processes, policy and practice. It was noted there was a reliance on descriptions of actions and outputs and generic commentary on the potential impact of activity.

2.5   There was evidence of statements suggesting improvement had occurred with no indication of how this has been measured and not necessarily correlated with tangible improvements for people with protected characteristics.

2.6   **Outcome 1 - An organisational culture in which respect for self and others is understood and practiced; where identity-based ignorance or prejudice is challenged and confidence promoted.**

It is recognised that there is further development to be achieved to progress this outcome with a particular focus being considered for Race, Gender, Disability and LGBTQI+ as suggested by both internal and external research.

2.7   **Outcome 2 – An inclusive and accessible environment in which the diverse needs of students are systematically anticipated and provided for.**

This outcome was assessed as too general in nature and will be replaced in the 2021 – 2025 outcomes.

2.8   **Outcome 3 – An increase in the number of students from currently under-represented groups and achieving successful outcomes.**

This outcome was assessed as viable with consideration being given to which underrepresented groups the Glasgow School of Art will focus on, with SMART targets set to ensure progress can be effectively measured.

2.9   **Outcome 4 – A fair pay and career progression framework which underpins equality of opportunity for all, actively works towards reducing the gender pay gap and addresses occupational segregation.**

The Glasgow School of Art is committed to fair pay and career progression however, progress will be reported via mainstreaming activity, the Gender Pay Gap Report and the Equal Pay Statement therefore this outcome will not be reflected in the 2021 – 2025 outcomes.

2.10 **Outcome 5 - An increased number of people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds contributing to learning, teaching and research at GSA and engaging with diverse local communities**.

It is recognised that there is further development to be achieved to progress this outcome. Consideration will be given to the use of baseline data to monitor progress of targeted actions.

3. Setting the Glasgow School of Art Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025

3.1 The setting of new Equality Outcomes centred around a review of progress, gathering evidence, identifying priority issues, consultation and gaining approval.

3.2 The first stage was a review of current outcomes including assessment of progress made. As noted in section one, all data sets and reports available internally were interrogated to gauge distance travelled and identify gaps in provision and inequality. During this exercise, it was identified that further development of data sets was required to allow GSA to effectively measure progress and inform action. This has been reflected within the new Equality Outcomes.

3.3 The data collated was considered and compared with internal and external evidence gathered from a variety of sources including but not limited to staff and student surveys; the Student Voice mechanism; feedback from students, staff and stakeholders; national and sectoral equality and diversity priorities and challenges.

3.4 A variety of external equalities evidence was considered to help inform the process:

The EHRC tackling racial harassment - universities challenged report tells us that racial harassment:

- Is a common experience for a wide range of students and staff at universities
- Can have a profound impact on someone's mental health, educational outcomes and career
- Is not fully understood and university staff lack confidence in dealing with race issues
- Is most often not reported or recorded and this restricts the ability to take action
- Is not being handled well through existing complaints' procedures

Is Scotland Fairer report tells us:

- Not everyone is equally likely to achieve a degree level qualification
- Disabled people are less likely to have a degree level qualification
- People from deprived communities and men were under-represented at university
- Ethnic minority students receive lower final grades for their degrees compared to white students
- Most victims of sexual violence and rape do not report it to the police
- Women age 16-20 are most at risk, and often the offender is their partner
- Women and disabled people are more likely to experience domestic abuse

The IBF Report - How coronavirus has affected equality and human rights tell us that during the pandemic:

- The economic impact has been unequal, entrenching existing inequalities and widening others.
- The groups most likely to be affected by the expected rise in poverty include young people, ethnic minorities and disabled people, who are already closest to the poverty line.
- Differences in support for remote learning threaten to widen inequalities for those who already perform less well than their peers.
- There has been a rise in reported domestic abuse and there are concerns about the ability of survivors to access justice.

The Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Committee Report, **Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress** notes that the Scottish Specific Public Sector Equality Duty should, as a minimum, voluntarily record and publish their ethnicity pay gap and produce an action plan to deliver identified outcomes. Good practice would include undertaking an assessment of GSA's understanding of racism and the structural barriers that may exist and integrate ambitions into the strategic plan underpinned by specific outcomes and supported by timely monitoring.

3.5 Internal equalities feedback was gathered from variety of sources including but not limited to staff and student surveys; the Student Voice mechanism; feedback from students; student societies; staff and stakeholders, the National Student Survey and the Glasgow School of Art Student Experience Survey.

3.6 The Black Lives Matter movement has brought a new and much-needed focus to the endemic racism which persists in society and is under-reported. Students and staff have reported evidence of racism and unconscious bias through both formal and informal processes. Only 5.9% of the Glasgow School of Art staff are BAME and there is evidence of a lack of confidence and understanding when dealing with race. Student feedback indicates they would like to see a more diverse student and staff cohort and further diversification of the curriculum and associated reading lists. The number of applicants from BAME UK domiciled backgrounds has risen marginally over the past five years increasing approximately 1% each year from 7.8% in 2015/2016 to 10% of applicants in 2019/2020.

3.7 Students and staff report mental health as a significant area of concern with anxiety, depression, severe isolation and lack of socialisation as key factors. The number of students disclosing a disabling mental health condition (HESA Code 55) has continued to increase in line with the sector and has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. There is a growing trend of the presenting severity of need. 39% of students were assessed with a severity rating level 5 or above i.e. spectrum between severe anxiety and distress affecting all areas of functioning to not coping; out of control; despair and hopelessness; emotionally overwhelmed; suicidal thoughts/intent. Staff report a significant increase in students suffering from poor and often severe mental health; with growing concern for resource implications and confidence when supporting mental health and pastoral care. Similarly, the overall number of staff seeking to access mental health support has also seen an increase during the pandemic period.

3.8 Student feedback indicates they would like staff to have a deeper awareness of Trans and non-binary and the availability of gender neutral toilets is of particular concern to students. In 2019/2020 21% of students accessing counselling identified as BAME and 36% disclosed a disability demonstrating the impact of intersectionality on mental health. Sexual orientation statistics have remained fairly constant in comparison to the previous year, 13% identifying as bisexual and 6% identified as gay (male and female). In the most recent staff survey 87% of staff who responded indicated that they were satisfied with their level of understanding of diversity issues and over 90% stated that they felt GSA

respects people equally regardless of their sexual orientation and their gender identity. This highlights a disparity between student and staff perception which needs to be addressed.

3.9   Students and staff would like to see an Equalities group for each school or the development of Equality Champions. Many staff also suggested the consideration of student and staff forums focused on specific characteristics to promote awareness and safe spaces for discussion.

3.10 The Equal Pay Review for 2021 highlighted the continued imbalance of men and women in senior level posts at GSA, to which the existing gender pay gap can be largely attributed. The report further identified a pay gap between part-time staff (of which 60% are women) and full-time staff, as well as pay gaps in terms of both disability and ethnicity at GSA.

4   The Glasgow School of Art Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

4.1   The overarching themes of The Glasgow School of Art Equality Outcomes focus on:

- Culture and community
- Environment (digital and physical)
- Impact and value
- Evaluation

4.2   **EQUALITY OUTCOME 1: Actively foster and support an organisational culture in which dignity and respect for self and others is understood and practiced, where confidence is encouraged and promoted, and where ignorance, prejudice and bias is challenged.**

4.2.1 This outcome is a continuation from 2017-2021. All protected characteristics will be considered with a particular focus on Race, Gender, Disability, Trans and non-binary issues as suggested by both internal and external research. This outcome will support GSA to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in support of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.2.2 There will be clear institutional mechanisms for staff and students to challenge ignorance and prejudice. We will supplement numerical data with other forms of data, such as qualitative data gained through focus groups, student and staff surveys, complaint letters and feedback forms.

4.2.3 Outputs to support this outcome will include:

- Recognise that each person has different circumstances and allocate resources and opportunities needed to reach an equa**l** outcome therefore creating equity for all.
- Develop an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Recruitment of an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer
- Develop and deliver an additional suite of training for students and staff including Gender Based Violence, Disability, Race Equality and LGBTQI+. using anonymised feedback from students and staff to inform training
- Actively utilise the toolkits provided by the Scottish Race Equality Project supporting the declaration that: Racism exists on our campuses and in our society. Call it what it is and reject it in all its forms. We stand united against racism.
- Fund and implement a Report and Support tool to ensure clear reporting routes for all

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4.3	**EQUALITY OUTCOME 2: Continue to evaluate our physical and digital environment, aiming to optimise accessibility and inclusivity by acknowledging and providing for the needs of our students, staff and stakeholders.**

4.3.1 This outcome is a revised version from 2017-2021 with a more specific focus on measurable outputs that can demonstrate progress.

4.3.2 Physical accessibility is still a substantial challenge owing to the profile and age of some of GSA's buildings. GSA will complete an audit of the accessibility of our estate and digital provision and implement the findings, developing relevant action plans including a ten year estates plan with inclusion as a core value.

4.3.3 This outcome will support GSA to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in support of the Public Sector Equality Duty. All protected characteristics will be considered with Disability having an additional focus.

4.3.4 Outputs to support this outcome will include:

- Recognise that each person has different circumstances and allocate resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome therefore creating equity for all.
- Develop a 10 year Estates Strategy with an access and inclusion plan
- Produce a Design Policy for an Accessible and Inclusive Campus
- Audit and develop GSA's website with a focus on accessibility and legislative requirements
- Develop a dedicated section on the Intranet for Equalities
- Evaluate and extend the Digital Inclusion Project

4.4	**EQUALITY OUTCOME 3: Actively build and support a staff population which is more reflective of the Scottish population and encourage a diverse student body.**

4.4.1 This outcome is an amalgamation of two previous outcomes set in 2017-2021 with a more specific focus on measurable outputs that can demonstrate progress.

4.4.2 This outcome will support GSA to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in support of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.4.3 All protected characteristics will be measured however there will be an additional emphasis on Race as suggested by both internal and external evidence.

4.4.4 Outputs to support this outcome will include:

- undertake an assessment of GSA's understanding of racism and the structural barriers that may exist
- Develop a GSA recruitment strategy with diversity targets focused on improving the representation of people from BAME groups using the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit
- Enhanced recruitment activity within schools/colleges/geographic areas with large numbers of home domiciled BAME
- Develop a GSA strategy for decolonising the curriculum

| 4.5 | **EQUALITY OUTCOME 4: Improve lifelong outcomes for students by identifying and supporting those groups facing persistent inequality throughout and beyond their student learning journey into positive destinations.** |

4.5.1 This is a new outcome developed to eliminate all inequality gaps in admissions, retention and awarding. This outcome will support GSA to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in support of the Public Sector Equality Duty. All protected characteristics will be measured.

4.5.2 GSA will develop robust data sets for each stage of the student journey including positive destinations. These will be used to identify inequality, set specific actions with progress monitored yearly.

4.5.3 Outputs to support this outcome will include:

- Develop and communicate clear baseline data to be used in conjunction with Equality Impact Assessments and Programme Monitoring Annual Reviews (PMAR)
- Baseline data will include applications, admissions, retention and attainment for all nine protected characteristics
- Ensure that students with protected characteristics equal the retention and continuation rates of GSA's average, progress measured yearly.
- Ensure that students with protected characteristics equal the awarding rates of GSA's average, progress measured yearly.

| 4.6 | **EQUALITY OUTCOME 5: Develop a comprehensive and robust equality and diversity data set which enables us to identify gaps, inform action, assess progress and measure impact for each Equality Outcome.** |

4.6.1 This is a new outcome developed to address identified gaps in the data sets, ensuring effective baselines to inform targeted actions and support measurement of impact. This outcome will support GSA to eliminate discrimination; promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations in support of the Public Sector Equality Duty and all protected characteristics will be measured.

4.6.2 Outputs to support this outcome will include:

- Develop and make easily accessible to all staff a comprehensive and robust equality and diversity data set which enables us to inform action, assess progress and measure impact
- Provide training to all staff in how to use the data to inform action
- Embed use of data in all reporting, evaluation and decision making including Equality Impact Assessments.

5   Consultation

5.1   The draft equality outcomes were formulated in partnership with the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee, informed by internal and external evidence as noted in section three.

5.2   The draft outcomes were shared with Lead Reps, all members of the Student Association and all Student Societies members, approximately forty students. Each group was invited to attend at least one consultation meeting to gather feedback and inform action.

5.3   Draft outcomes were shared with Heads of Schools and many Heads of Professional Services for discussion within individual teams. Several teams fed back directly, accounting for approximately one hundred staff members.

5.4   All staff were offered the opportunity to contribute to the consultation via a number of planned, open discussion sessions facilitated by the Equality Lead in partnership with HR. Twenty six members of staff attended the sessions.

5.5   Consultation also occurred with Trade Unions, the LGBTQ+ staff group and external agencies such as Outspoken Arts Scotland Ltd.

5.6   All feedback was taken into consideration and amendments and additions were made to the draft outcomes in response. This resulted in the creation of a new version of GSA's Equality Outcomes. Meaningful suggestions were also collated to inform the relevant action plans in the process of being developed.

Action Plans

6.1   A number of action plans are in the process of being developed giving due consideration to involvement and consultation.

6.2   There will be an action plan related to each Equality Outcome as well as an overarching mainstreaming action plan.

6.3   Implementation of GSA's equality outcomes will be the responsibility of the individual lead named in the action plan.

6.4   The draft action plans will undergo a similar consultation process as the equality outcomes.

6.5   Actions plans will be published in full once approved by the Board of Governors.