Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Oirdheiscirt
South East Technological University

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) ANNUAL REPORT 2025

South East Technological University

setu.ie

ECONOMICS
PSYCHOLOGY

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1 WELCOME ADDRESS FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

It is my privilege to present South East Technological University's first Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report. This report reflects SETU's ongoing commitment to embedding equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity and respect across all aspects of our university and is an important step in our continuing EDI journey at the University.

The publication of this annual report is a key commitment within SETU's EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029. It provides an opportunity to reflect on progress made, to be transparent about challenges, and to identify priority actions for the year ahead. It also demonstrates how EDI is being embedded into our strategic planning, governance and day-to-day practices, in line with our obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

During the reporting year, SETU continued to build on important foundations established in recent years, including work on inclusive gender equality, access and participation, race equality, University of Sanctuary (UoS) initiatives, and tackling sexual violence and harassment. Progress has been driven by the commitment and collaboration of staff, students, networks, committees and external partners across our campuses.

While meaningful progress has been made, this report also highlights areas where further work is required. Advancing equality, diversity and inclusion is an ongoing journey, one that requires sustained commitment, reflection and action. As a university, we remain committed to listening, learning and working collaboratively to remove barriers, address inequalities and foster a culture of belonging where all members of our community can thrive.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to EDI initiatives, data collection, consultation and reporting during the year. I look forward to continuing this collective work as we implement the next phase of SETU's EDI Strategic Plan.

Dr Allison Kenneally
Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

2 SETU'S EDI VISION, MISSION, AND EQUALITY STATEMENT

2.1 EDI VISION

"To create a sense of belonging for each and every member of SETU where the culture and values of EDI, dignity and respect for all are truly felt in our interactions, embedded in our practices, and supported by our infrastructure, and where each one of us can thrive and be valued for our unique perspectives and contributions."

This vision reflects SETU's commitment to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of university life and to fostering a culture where all staff and students feel welcome, supported and empowered.

2.2 EDI MISSION

SETU's mission for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is to embed EDI principles into the policies, practices, decision-making processes and culture of the university. Through this approach, SETU aims to ensure that equality of opportunity, dignity and respect are experienced consistently across teaching, research, employment, governance and engagement with the wider community.

2.3 EQUALITY STATEMENT

SETU is committed to protecting and promoting the human, constitutional and legislative rights to equality of all staff, students and service users. SETU recognises its obligations under Irish equality legislation and is committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and treatment, and protecting the human rights of those who work, study and engage with the university.

SETU is committed to advancing equality across all equality grounds, including gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age, race/ethnicity, membership of the Traveller community and socio-economic status. This commitment is reflected in SETU's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and in the integration of EDI across institutional strategies and operational practices.

3 SETU'S EDI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (2024–2029)

SETU's EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029 identifies six priority areas that span the full breadth of the university's activities.

These priorities guide institutional action and resource allocation and provide a framework for monitoring progress.

PRIORITY AREA **1**

People, Values and Culture

OBJECTIVE

To actively mainstream EDI across our university, where all, including staff, students, and the communities we serve, live and experience the values of equality, diversity and inclusion in our interactions, our learning and working relationships, and in the way we lead and manage; this ensures that all individuals in the University can reach their full potential in a welcoming, positive, safe and supportive environment.

PRIORITY AREA **2**

EDI in Teaching, Learning and Student Experience

OBJECTIVE

To embrace EDI in how we teach, assess and co-create learning and in how we support student access, learning and the student experience.

PRIORITY AREA **3**

EDI in our Research and Innovation

OBJECTIVE

To embed and advance EDI in our research and innovation activities, including the production of knowledge, equitable access to funding opportunities, and the equitable and inclusive participation of all individuals in the research ecosystem. EDI will become mainstreamed and become a hallmark of our research and knowledge exchange environment and activities.

PRIORITY AREA **4**

EDI in our Engagement and Collaborations

OBJECTIVE

To position SETU as a leader in EDI, and through our engagement and collaborations uphold our values of EDI and seize every opportunity to lead and deliver on EDI with our partners across industry, community and society. SETU to become a partner of choice for EDI collaborations for industry, community, sectoral partners and other HEIs.

PRIORITY AREA 5

EDI in our Physical and Digital Environment

OBJECTIVE

To ensure that our university's physical and digital environment ensures accessibility, equality and inclusion for all members of the SETU community. Accessibility and inclusion become a key consideration in the development of SETU's physical and digital infrastructure.

PRIORITY AREA 6

Measuring Impact and Success

OBJECTIVE

To ensure that anonymised EDI data is collated, reported and circulated widely across our university and to our stakeholders in line with GDPR and other legal requirements. This will demonstrate the impact and success of EDI initiatives, inform policy and decision making, and inspire confidence to the communities we serve.

4 KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

This section presents key equality, diversity and inclusion data for SETU for the reporting year. Data collection and reporting are aligned with SETU's commitment under the EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029 to strengthen evidence-based decision-making and transparency.

Where possible, data are presented in line with nationally recognised reporting frameworks, including the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Institutional Staff Profiles by Sex and Gender, and statutory gender pay gap reporting requirements, and disability monitoring obligations.

4.1 STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS (SETU)

Staff demographic data are presented using gender-disaggregated profiles aligned with HEA reporting categories, as of 31 December of the reporting year.

Core indicators include:

- Staff headcount and Whole Time Equivalents (WTE) by gender and category of post.

Table 1: **Staff Headcount by Staff Category and Gender (2025)**

STAFF CATEGORY	FEMALE	MALE	OTHER	TOTAL
Academic staff	561 (48%)	600 (52%)	0	1161
PMSS and research staff	532 (62%)	333 (38%)	0	865
Total	**1093 (54%)**	**933 (46%)**	**0**	**2026**

Table 2: **Whole-Time Equivalent (WTE) Staff by Staff Category and Gender (2025)**

STAFF CATEGORY	FEMALE	MALE	OTHER	TOTAL
Academic staff	447 (47%)	499 (53%)	0	946
PMSS staff	465 (60%)	313 (40%)	0	778
Total	**912 (53%)**	**812 (47%)**	**0**	**1724**

Table 3: **Staff Headcount by Funding Source, Staff Category and Gender (Core and Non-Core Posts, 2025)**

	CORE FUNDED		NON-CORE FUNDED	
STAFF CATEGORY	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
Academic staff	481 (48%)	522 (52%)	80 (51%)	78 (49%)
PMSS staff	407 (64%)	227 (36%)	125 (54%)	106 (46%)
Total	**888 (54%)**	**749 (46%)**	**205 (53%)**	**184 (47%)**

Table 4: **Academic and Research Staff Headcount by Grade and Gender (Core and Non-Core Funded Posts, 2025)**

	FEMALE	MALE
Assistant Lecturer (AL)	165 (47%)	185 (53%)
Lecturer (L)	348 (49%)	366 (51%)
Senior Lecturer 1 Teaching (SLI T)	20 (54%)	17 (46%)
Senior Lecturer 2 (SLII)	17 (50%)	17 (50%)
Senior Lecturer 3 (SLIII)	6 (55%)	5 (45%)
Research Staff (RS)	76 (49%)	78 (51%)
Total	**632 (49%)**	**668 (51%)**

Table 5: **Academic Staff Headcount by Contract Type and Gender (Core and Non-Core Funded Posts, 2025)**

	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Permanent / CID	418 (49%)	433 (51%)	851
Fixed Term / Temporary	217 (65%)	116 (35%)	333
Hourly Paid	19 (39%)	30 (61%)	49
Total	**654 (53%)**	**579 (47%)**	**1,233**

Table 6: **Professional, Managerial and Support Staff (PMSS) Headcount by Salary Band and Gender (2025)**

	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
<€24,999	24 (71%)	10 (29%)	34
€25,000 - €45,999	132 (73%)	48 (27%)	180
€46,000 - €75,999	305 (62%)	184 (38%)	489
€76,000 - €105,999	44 (41%)	63 (59%)	107
>€106,000	27 (53%)	24 (47%)	51
Total	**532 (62%)**	**333 (38%)**	**865**

Table 7: **Professional, Managerial and Support Staff (PMSS) Headcount by Contract Type and Gender (2025)**

STAFF CATEGORY	TOTAL	FEMALE	FEMALE %	MALE	MALE %
Permanent / CID	532	315	59%	217	41%
Fixed Term / Temporary	333	217	65%	116	35%
Total	**865**	**532**	**62%**	**333**	**38%**

4.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Student profile data provide an overview of the diversity of SETU's student population and support monitoring of access, participation and progression.

STUDENT OVERVIEW (TOTAL ENROLMENTS: 18,350)

Gender

- Male: **10,160** (56%)
- Female: **8,143** (44%)
- Non-binary / Prefer not to say: **47** (0.3%)

Level of Study

- Undergraduate: **15,079** (82.2%)
- Postgraduate: **2,263** (12.3%)
- Apprentices / Trades: **1,008** (5.5%)

Nationality of Students

- Ireland (incl. Northern Ireland): **13,483** (73.5%)
- China[1]: **1,714** (9.3%)
- Poland: **415** (2.3%)
- India: **373** (2.0%)
- Ukraine: **215** (1.2%)
- Spain: **166** (0.9%)
- Great Britain (excl. NI): **153** (0.8%)
- France: **144** (0.8%)
- Nigeria: **119** (0.6%)
- Italy: **109** (0.6%)
- **All other nationalities (100+ countries): 1,459 (8.0%)**

Domicile Country of Students

- Ireland (incl. Northern Ireland): **15,408** (84.0%)
- China[1]: **1,703** (9.3%)
- India: **274** (1.5%)
- France: **131** (0.7%)
- Spain: **111** (0.6%)
- Czech Republic: **61** (0.3%)
- Great Britain (excl. NI): **48** (0.3%)
- Germany: **44** (0.2%)
- Italy: **39** (0.2%)
- United States: **38** (0.2%)
- **All other domiciles (90+ countries): 493 (2.7%)**

[1] Of students recorded as Chinese by nationality or domicile, 1,612 are overseas-based students located in China.

4.3 DISABILITY AND NATIONAL ACCESS PLAN (NAP) KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)

Disability and National Access Plan (NAP) Key Performance Indicators (KPIS) are monitored annually under the SETU Strategic Plan 2023–2028 and reported to the Executive Management Team (EMT) and Governing Body (GB). In 2024/2025, 13.1% of part-time enrolments were from NAP target groups, defined as students with a disability and/or those from Irish Traveller or Roma backgrounds, based on the Equal Access Survey. Students with disabilities represented 8.9% of full-time enrolments, as reported through the Fund for Students with Disabilities return. In addition, 16 full-time students identified as Irish Traveller or Roma, based on Equal Access Survey data.

4.4 GENDER PAY GAP

SETU publishes gender pay gap information in line with the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 and associated regulations. The data presented below are drawn from SETU's Gender Pay Gap Report 2025, based on the statutory snapshot date of 30 June 2025.

As of 30 June 2025, SETU employed **2,178 staff**, comprising **1,194 women** (55%) and **979 men** (45%).

Overall gender pay gap (all staff)

- **Mean gender pay gap (compares the average hourly pay of men and women): 13.1%**, indicating that, on average, this has widened slightly since 2024, when the mean pay gap was 12%.
- **Median gender pay gap (compares the midpoint of hourly pay of men and women): 22.9%**, representing a very modest improvement of 1.5% compared to June 2024.

While the median gap has narrowed, the mean gap widened slightly compared to the previous year, reflecting the continued impact of occupational segregation and the distribution of men and women across different roles and grades.

Pay quartiles

Analysis of pay quartiles shows that women remain over-represented in lower-paid roles and under-represented in some higher-paid categories:

- Women account for 65% of staff in the lower quartile and 58% in the lower-middle quartile.
- In the upper pay quartile, women now represent 55%, an improvement on the previous year.
- Men remain more prevalent in the upper-middle quartile (59% male), which typically includes higher-paid specialist and senior roles.

This distribution continues to be a key structural driver of the overall gender pay gap.

Table 8: **Gender Pay Gap Analysis by Staff Category (Statutory Snapshot Date: 30 June 2025)**

STAFF CATEGORY	MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP	KEY STRUCTURAL DRIVERS
All staff	13.1%	22.9%	Occupational segregation; distribution across grades and roles
Academic staff	0.3%	0.0%	National pay scales; balanced distribution across grades
Research staff	7.5%	15.0%	Fixed-term contracts; concentration of women in lower-middle quartiles
PMSS staff	13.6%	10.0%	Occupational segregation; concentration of women in lower-paid roles
Part-time staff	30.6%	58.7%	High female representation in lower-paid part-time roles
Temporary contracts	6.7%	4.8%	Narrowing gap due to more balanced pay distribution

Addressing the gender pay gap

SETU is committed to addressing the underlying drivers of the gender pay gap through sustained, evidence-based action. Key measures include the implementation of the **Gender Equality Action Plan 2025–2030**, continued engagement with the **Athena Swan Ireland** framework, targeted career development and progression supports for **PMSS and Research staff**, and ongoing monitoring through governance and reporting structures.

Key messages

- SETU's overall gender pay gap is driven primarily by Research and PMSS staff, rather than Academic staff.
- Academic pay outcomes are broadly equitable, with negligible mean and median gender pay gaps.
- Occupational segregation and contract patterns remain key structural drivers of the pay gap, particularly for PMSS and part-time roles.
- Progress is evident in some areas, including improved female representation in the upper pay quartile and a narrowing median gap year on year.
- SETU's response focuses on systemic change, including career progression, leadership development, workload transparency and inclusive recruitment, as set out in the Gender Equality Action Plan 2025–2030.

4.5 DISABILITY CENSUS

SETU is committed to promoting the employment and participation of persons with disabilities. An annual disability census supports monitoring of representation, identification of barriers and the development of reasonable accommodation and accessibility actions.

Comparative analysis of the SETU Staff Disability Census provides an important

overview of disability disclosure trends across the staff population. In 2023, 658 staff participated in the census, with 650 valid responses and 119 staff disclosing a disability, representing 9% of the total staff population (n=1,318). In 2024, 422 staff participated, with 417 valid responses and 161 staff disclosing a disability, representing 8.7% of total staff (n=1,842). While the number of staff disclosing a disability increased by 35% year on year, the overall proportion of staff disclosing remained broadly stable, reflecting increased staff numbers alongside reduced survey participation. The census continues to provide a valuable evidence base to inform institutional planning, monitor disclosure trends, and support the development of targeted actions that advance accessibility, inclusion, and equitable participation across SETU.

4.6 LEADERSHIP AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

SETU has a number of key governance and decision-making bodies – it's Academic Council (AC), Executive Management Team (EMT) and Governing Body (GB). The Table below provides a gender disaggregated breakdown of membership of these key groups, along with key academic and professional services management posts.

Table 9: **Gender Composition of Senior Leadership and Statutory Governance Bodies (2025)**

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE	FEMALE	MALE	CHAIR
Governing Body	10 (55.6%)	8 (44.4%)	M
Academic Council	29 (46.3%)	25 (53.7%)	F
Executive Management Team	13 (59.09%)	9 (40.91%)	F

In 2025, the University undertook Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Membership Surveys in 2025 across key governance and decision-making bodies, including the EMT, GB and AC. The purpose of these surveys was to support the duty requirement to assess equality and human rights issues relevant to SETU's functions and to inform proportionate, evidence-based action.

The surveys collected voluntary, self-declared information on disability, ethnicity and caring responsibilities. The findings below relate only to survey respondents and do not represent whole committee membership data. They are intended to establish initial evidence base and benchmark to support future monitoring, review and action.

Table 10: **Gender Composition of Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive Committees (2025)**

	FEMALE	MALE	CHAIR
Governing Body Committees			
Joint Quality Committee	5 (45%)	6 (55%)	F
Audit and Risk	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	M
Finance and Capital Investment	6 (67%)	3 (33%)	M
Equality Diversity and Inclusion	10 (67%)	5 (33%)	F
Nominations Committee	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	M
Policy Committee	4 (44%)	5 (56%)	M
Academic Council Committees			
Academic Council Committee	31 (54%)	26 (46%)	F
Research Committee	12 (50%)	12 (50%)	F
Student Experience Committee	14 (48%)	15 (52%)	M
Executive Management Team Committees			
Identity and Branding	10 (67%)	5 (33%)	F
Bord Na Gaeilge	13 (81%)	3 (19%)	M
HRS4R Monitoring Group	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	F
HRS4R Operational Group	19 (73%)	7 (27%)	F
Recruitment Committee	19 (86%)	3 (14%)	F
Other Committees			
Research Ethics Committee	12 (55%)	10 (46%)	M

Ongoing monitoring and action

SETU continues to monitor the composition of leadership and committee membership as part of its wider EDI data and reporting commitments. These data inform targeted actions within the **Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2025–2030** and support ongoing efforts to address under-representation, including through succession planning, leadership development, and inclusive recruitment and appointment processes.

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5 OUR COMMITTEES, GROUPS AND NETWORKS

There are several distinct thematic EDI Committees/Groups in place at SETU, including:

- EDI Committee of Governing Body
- Ending Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Committee (ESP)
- Race Equality Forum (REF)
- University of Sanctuary Working Group (UoS WG)
- Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team.

Membership of these groups is diverse and is drawn from across the university. These thematic groups are supported in their work by the EDI Office.

These committees report on activities and progress to SETU's EMT which is chaired by the President. SETU also has a Vice President for Equality Diversity and Inclusion (VPEDI), who sits on the EMT and reports to EMT on all EDI matters.

SETU also has an EDI Committee of GB. This group oversees and provides guidance and direction for the achievement of EDI objectives. The thematic EDI Committees report to it on progress, policy proposals, and future planning.

5 OUR COMMITTEES, GROUPS AND NETWORKS

Governance Structure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at SETU (2025)

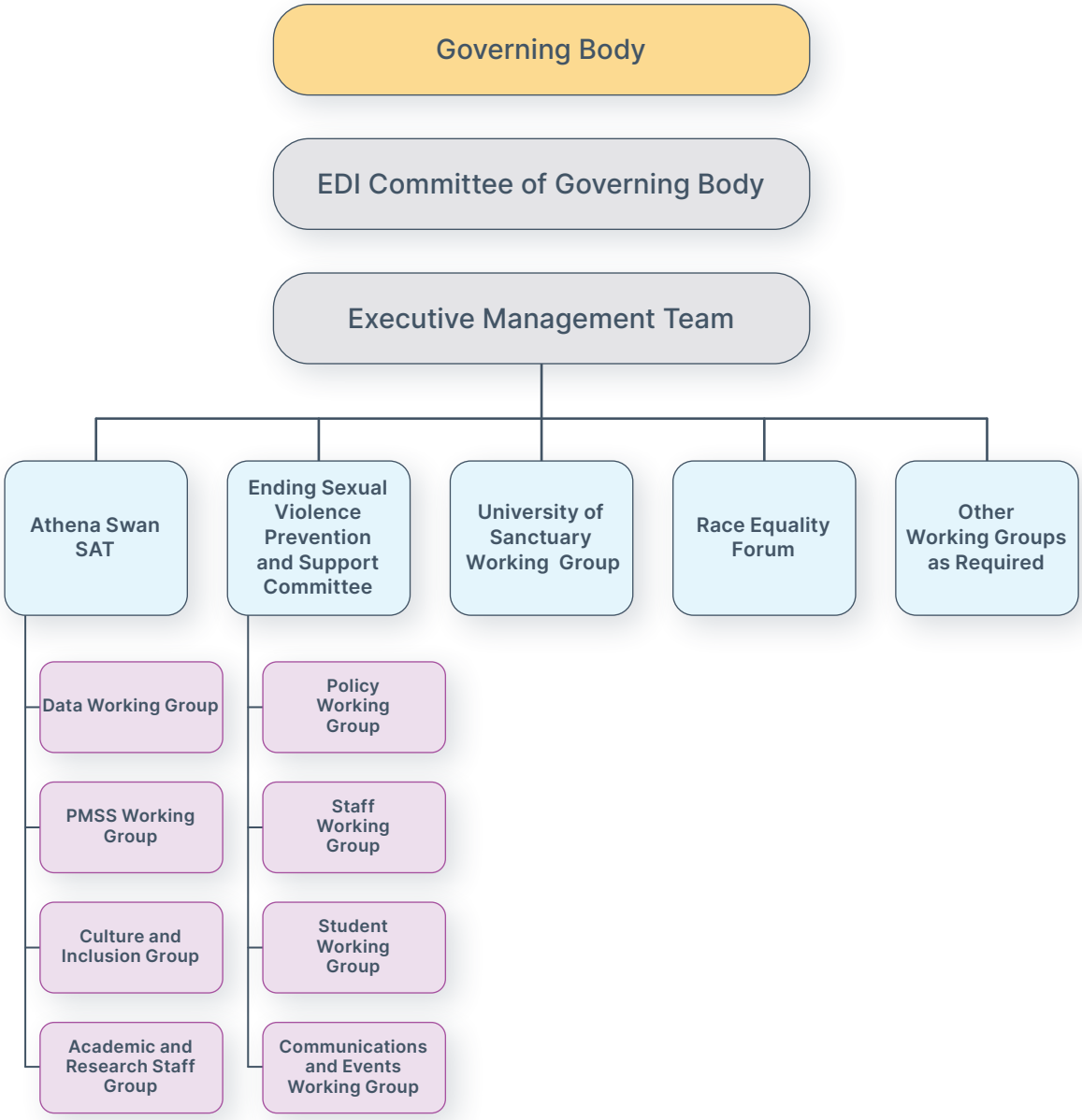

Figure 1: Governance Structure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at SETU (2025)

Table 11: **Gender Composition of EDI Committees and Working Groups (2025)**

	FEMALE	MALE	CHAIR
EDI Committee of Governing Body	10 (67%)	5 (33%)	F
Self-Assessment Team/EDI Champions Group	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)	F
Race Equality Forum	23 (85.2%)	4 (14.8%)	F
Ending Sexual Violence, Prevention and Support Committee	39 (69.6%)	17 (30.4%)	F
University of Sanctuary Working Group	16 (69.6%)	7 (30.4%)	F

EDI Staff and Student Networks

In addition to the formal structures above, SETU also has several staff led EDI networks, which are supported by the EDI Office.

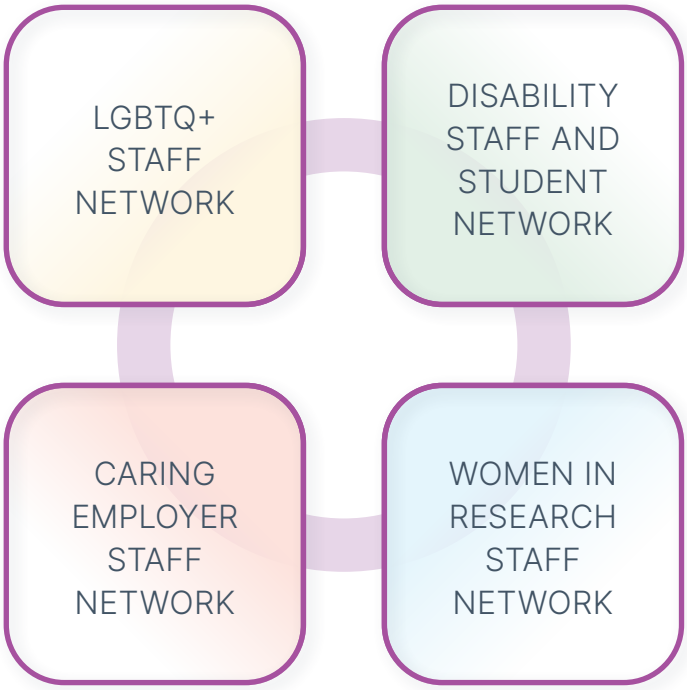

Figure 2: **Staff-Led Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Networks at SETU (2025)**

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6 EDI TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Building EDI capability across the university is a central pillar of SETU's EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029. Training and capacity building support staff and students to understand EDI principles, to apply them in practice, and to contribute to an inclusive and respectful university culture.

During the reporting year, SETU progressed work on the development of a structured, evidence-informed EDI training framework, resulting in the launch of the **SETU Equitas Training Programme**. Training was delivered through a mix of online learning, workshops and in-person sessions.

Training themes included:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion awareness
- Inclusive leadership in higher education
- Inclusive teaching and learning practices
- Unconscious bias training
- Consent, bystander intervention and tackling sexual violence and harassment
- Race equality training
- Disability awareness training
- Irish sign language training.

Participation levels and feedback are monitored to support continuous improvement. EDI training is increasingly embedded within leadership development, staff induction and student engagement activities, ensuring that learning translates into meaningful cultural and behavioural change.

7 TACKLING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT (TSVH)

SETU is committed to preventing and responding to sexual violence and harassment and to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive learning and working environment for all members of the university community.

7.1 POLICY AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

SETU's work in this area is guided by its Action Plan to Tackle Sexual Violence and Harassment (TSVH) 2023 – 2026 and aligned with national policy frameworks on consent and higher education. Tackling sexual violence and harassment is a core component of SETU's wider commitment to gender equality, dignity and respect.

The university remains firmly guided by its TSVH Action Plan led by the Vice President of EDI, Sexual Violence and Harassment Prevention and Response Manager, and Project Officer for the Consent Framework. Significant progress has been made, including the establishment of the university Ending Sexual Violence Prevention and Support (ESP) Committee with five working groups, strengthened links with specialist agencies for example Rape Crisis Centres, Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU), Community Policing and the expansion of supports and reporting options such as the SpeakOut tool. During 2025, the Student Sexual Misconduct policy and procedure was drafted following extensive collaboration with internal stakeholders, external legal advisors, and both student and staff unions. The policy is expected to be approved in 2026.

In May 2025, SETU in collaboration with Carlow County Council applied under the Department of Justice Community Safety Innovation Fund, to support the delivery of Bystander Intervention training to Transition Year students in the Carlow area. The application was successful with €142,500 being awarded for the project. The recruitment process for a Bystander Intervention Project Co-ordinator will commence in 2026.

7.2 PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

During the reporting period, SETU continued to prioritise prevention through:

- Consent education initiatives for students.
- Tackling sexual violence and harassment training.
- Awareness-raising campaigns and events.

These initiatives aim to build a shared understanding of acceptable behaviour and empower individuals to challenge and prevent harmful conduct.

The university advanced its awareness and prevention work through campaigns such as Amber Women's Refuges LOVE Installation and Art Exhibition on campus, Go Purple Day

in collaboration with An Garda Síochána, and the 16 days of Activism, while also presenting at national and international conferences including Equitas, the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKiT) River Conference, and the European Conference on Domestic Violence.

The delivery of training for staff is ongoing and a bystander intervention module is available on moodle and blackboard. In 2025, the SVH Support Unit delivered bespoke TSVH training as part of new staff induction with 27 new staff members attending training. This training is also offered throughout the academic year. In 2025, 12 staff participated in Disclosure training, delivered by Waterford Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre. SETU continues to embed Active*Consent training as a core element of the student orientation schedule, reinforcing the university's commitment to fostering a safe and respectful campus. In 2025, 1282 first year students participated in Active*Consent working during orientation.

The Consent Matters Project was awarded €150k through the Community Safety Fund (CSF) to deliver consent workshops to transition year students across Waterford City and County. A Consent Matters Project Officer was recruited and the project launched in September 2025 by Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Jim O'Callaghan.

During 2025 the workshop was delivered to more than 1300 students with 96% stating they would recommend the workshops to their peers. Detailed analysis of post workshop-surveys in ongoing, however the following advantages have been identified:

1. Increased knowledge and understanding of consent – students showed a significant improvement in their understanding of what consent means. Evaluations found that more students felt they had the skills needed to navigate consent appropriately after the workshop than before it.
2. More confidence and communication skills – students have reported feeling more confident talking about consent, boundaries and respectful relationships.
3. Positive attitude changes - feedback from participants shows a shift in attitudes toward what is acceptable behaviour in relationships and a stronger recognition of the importance of consent before any sexual activity. This includes changing social norms around consent and encouraging peer support for respectful behaviours.
4. Greater willingness to discuss consent and sexual health - School staff have seen students become more comfortable talking about consent and sexual health issues with their peers, teachers, and support services after the workshops. One school noticed students engaging more openly with health centre staff about related topics.
5. Benefits for staff and the school environment - Schools report the workshops help foster a more respectful, informed school culture where students are better prepared to make healthy relationship decisions. Across schools that ran the consent workshop, staff and students noted:
   - **Enhanced critical thinking** about peer pressure, alcohol, and social norms related to consent.
   - **Improved language skills** to articulate comfort levels and boundaries in relationships.
   - Many students describe the experience as both **educational and engaging**, with scenarios that resonate with real-life situations.

7.3 REPORTING, RESPONSE AND SUPPORTS

SETU provides clear reporting pathways and support mechanisms for those affected by sexual violence or harassment. The university is committed to trauma-informed, survivor-centred approaches and to ensuring confidentiality, fairness and procedural integrity.

7.4 MONITORING AND LEARNING

In line with data protection and safeguarding requirements, SETU monitors anonymised data on reports, training participation and themes arising. This information is used to inform ongoing improvement of policies, supports and preventative actions.

Speak Out is an online anonymous reporting tool which offers a space for all members of HEI communities to speak out about their experiences of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, hate crime, coercive behaviour/control, stalking, assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape. Speak Out is one option available to staff, students, and others who interact with the HEI community to safely speak out about their experiences of negative behaviours and abuse. Their collective voice provides insights into trends of reported behaviours which inform policy, communications, and training programmes within HEIs. A primary priority is protecting the safety and confidentiality of those who trust Speak Out by submitting an anonymous report. It is essential that we represent their experiences with accuracy, sensitivity, and a trauma informed approach to honour that trust.

The reports made to Speak Out are anonymous, and as such, none of the information provided can be verified. The number of reports submitted via Speak Out is not a direct reflection of the prevalence of these behaviours. Multiple reports of the same incident of abuse may exist within the data.

In line with the HEA recommendation and the Central Statistics Office (CSO) Guidelines on Microdata Statistical Disclosure Control, no numbers with a value of less than 10 (<10) are provided.

Secondary suppression of data may have to be applied in some cases where disclosure of the primary number may lead to the disclosure of a secondary number which is less than 10.

Table 12: **Summary of Speak Out Reports to SETU – Academic Year 2025**

	2025
Reports made via Speak Out to SETU in the academic year in question	
Total	19
Reports from students, reports from staff, reports from other	
Staff	<10
Students	14
Other	<10
The total number of reports to Speak Out where the reporter stated they made a formal report to their HEI	
Staff	<10
Students	<10
Other	<10
Behaviours reported	
Bullying	✓
Bullying, Coercive Behaviour/Control	✓
Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment, Cyberbullying	✓
Bullying, Harassment	✓
Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination	✓
Bullying, Sexual Harassment, Assault, Stalking, Coercive Behaviour/Control, Discrimination, Harassment	✓
Discrimination	✓
Harassment	✓
Harassment, Discrimination, Assault	✓
Hate Crime	✓
Other	✓
Rape	✓
Sexual Assault, Coercive Behaviour/Control	✓
Sexual Harassment, Stalking, Harassment	✓
Stalking, Harassment	✓

European Conference on Domestic Violence, Barcelona, Spain

L-R: Stephanie O'Keeffe (CEO of Cuan), Róisín Shanahan, Dr Méabh Savage, Ciara Byrne (SETU) and Sarah Benson, CEO of Women's Aid

Launch of the Consent Matters Project, Waterford

Minister for Justice, Home Affairs and Migration Jim O Callaghan launching the Consent Matters Project with Staff from SETU and University of Galway

Delivery of a Consent Matters workshop

Anne Murphy and Róisín Shanahan (SETU) delivering a consent workshop to students at the Abbey Secondary School, Waterford

SETU Staff attending the Foundations for Investigating Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education training in University of Galway facilitated by Clarissa Joy DiSantis

RiVeR Project DKiT Conference, Dundalk

Róisín Shanahan and Ciara Byrne (SETU) delivering at a conference along with Stephanie O'Keeffe (CEO Cuan) and other University SVH Managers

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8 PROGRESS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

In the Table below, measurable progress and key outcomes are framed against the University's key EDI Strategic Priority Areas.

Table 13: **Progress Against EDI Strategic Priorities: Key Actions and Outcomes (2025)**

Priority area	Progress 2025
1 People, Values and Culture	• Values in Action Working Group Established. • Developed and Launched SETU Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2025–2030. • Developed and Launched SETU Race Equality Action Plan (REAP) 2025–2029 (Q2 2025). • SETU's Equitas EDI Training Programme launched for staff across SETU. • Successfully Achieved an Athena Swan Ireland Institutional Bronze Award, acknowledging a self-assessment of and progress on gender equality at SETU. • Launched the Pilot SETU 100 Initiative: rebranded as Perspecta – Launch Q4 2025, showcasing inclusive innovation and strategic leadership. Captured and amplified the full diversity of student voices to strengthen inclusion in student engagement and feedback. • Continued implementation of the Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment and University of Sanctuary (UoS) Action Plan. • 8 new Sanctuary at SETU Scholarships awarded, along with Emergency Global Response Scholarships for an additional 3 students from Gaza as part of the Gazan Scholarship Initiative for Displaced Students.
2 EDI in Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience	• EDIT/Inclusive Curriculum Training rolled out, including online training options and in-person faculty specific offerings. • SETU 100 Initiative – a group of intentionally diverse students who will act as co-creators of SETU policy, curriculum, quality and research - piloted as SETU Perspecta. • First year of SETU's flagship Certificate in Personal Development for students with Intellectual Disabilities was completed at the Waterford Campus, with programme rollout expanded to the SETU Carlow Campus.

Table 13: **Progress Against EDI Strategic Priorities: Key Actions and Outcomes (2025)**

Priority area	Progress 2025
3 **EDI in our Research and Innovation**	• New SETU Gender Equality Action Plan 2025–2030 published, mapped to Horizon Europe Funding Gender Equality Plan requirements and recommendations. • EDI in research training rolled out. • New EDI in research information handbook published in Q4 2024. • SETU HR Strategy for Researchers Action Plan prepared and Award Application.
4 **EDI in our Research and Innovation**	• SETU became a member of the EU Gender Equality Champions Network. • SETU EDI Office received funding from EU CONEXUS to work with Frederick University in Cyprus on an innovative gender equality project - ESTEEM Project. • SETU officially launched and rolled out the 'Consent Matters' collaborative project, funded by the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration, in partnership with Waterford Local Community Safety Partnership and Waterford City & County Council. • SETU received funding from the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migrations to roll out a Bystander Intervention Project in collaboration with Carlow County Council. • Three new national EDI Enhancement Fund projects secured with SETU as a partner. • SETU named as winner of Education Awards Excellence in EDI Award in 2025 in recognition of its excellence and leadership in EDI. • SETU shortlisted for Education Awards Best International Collaboration Award for its sector leading work with the Gazan Displaced Scholarship initiative for Displaced Students. • SETU shortlisted for Excellence in EDI Award at Wexford Business Awards. • Inaugural South East Regional Race Equality Event Held on campus.
5 **EDI in our Digital and Physical Environment**	• Period Dignity Initiative rolled out across SETU campuses. • Continued roll out of Universal Design for Learning Badge across SETU. • Accessibility audit of SETU's website completed – fully compliant. • New SETU website named as winner of the 'Best in Universal Design Award' at the 28th annual Spider Awards – a significant moment for inclusive web design in the higher education sector.
6 **Measuring Impact and Success**	• First 'Speak Out' Report with data on anonymous reports of bulling, harassment and sexual misconduct at SETU. • Work underway to roll out a Staff Voluntary Disclosure Campaign in 2026.

Case Study

GAZAN SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

In response to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the associated disruption of access to higher education, SETU undertook practical measures consistent with its core values of equality, dignity, human rights, and global solidarity.

SETU established the Gazan Scholarship Initiative for Displaced Students, creating a targeted scholarship and support framework to facilitate access to higher education in Ireland for displaced students. The initiative was implemented through cross-university collaboration and integrated into SETU's University of Sanctuary (UoS) framework.

In 2025, SETU awarded eight Sanctuary at SETU Scholarships and three Emergency Global Response Scholarships to students from Gaza. Support extended beyond fee waivers to encompass academic, pastoral, and practical assistance, delivered using trauma-informed and culturally responsive methods.

The initiative established immediate educational pathways for displaced students and enhanced SETU's institutional capacity to address humanitarian crises. It also reinforced a culture of inclusion and global responsibility within the university community.

SETU's leadership in this domain received national recognition, including shortlisting for Best International Collaboration at the Education Awards. Key lessons highlight the significance of cross-departmental collaboration, adaptable support models, and alignment of humanitarian responses with institutional equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) strategy.

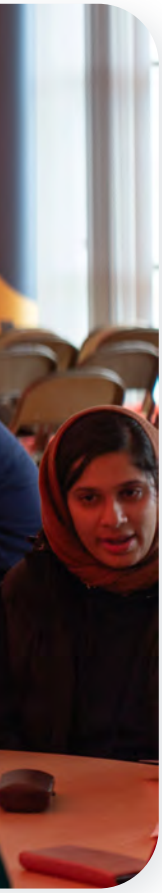
Case Study

PERSPECTA - STUDENT CO-CREATION FOR INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING

SETU acknowledges that inclusive decision-making necessitates deliberate mechanisms to ensure that diverse student perspectives are actively incorporated into policy, curriculum, and institutional culture.

Perspecta (formerly SETU 100) is a structured student co-creation model developed to represent the diversity of the SETU student body. Through this model, students collaborate with staff to inform policy development, curriculum design, quality assurance processes, and research activities.

Perspecta has increased student engagement by elevating underrepresented voices and establishing co-creation as a central institutional practice rather than a singular consultation. Additionally, it has improved staff awareness of student experiences and obstacles to belonging. Key findings emphasise the importance of intentional diversity, structured support, and closing the feedback loop to demonstrate impact.



Athena Swan Ireland
South East Technological University
received the Athena Swan Ireland Bronze Award
November 2024
Alistair Jarvis CBE
AdvanceHE

The Education Awards 2025
The Education Awards 2025
Excellence in Diversity, Inclusivity & Equality
SRTU

9 EDI AWARDS AND ACCREDITATIONS

Recognition through national and sectoral awards provides an important indicator of progress in advancing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). In 2025, SETU received significant external recognition for its institutional leadership, strategic commitment and individual contribution to EDI across higher education.

9.1 ATHENA SWAN IRELAND INSTITUTIONAL BRONZE AWARD

In April 2025, SETU was awarded the Athena Swan Ireland Institutional Bronze Award, marking a major milestone in the University's work to advance inclusive gender equality. The award recognises SETU's commitment to embedding gender equality across institutional policy, culture, leadership and governance, and acknowledges the progress made since the establishment of the University.

The Athena Swan Bronze Award reflects a rigorous self-assessment process informed by data, consultation and evidence, and the development of a comprehensive Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2025–2030. The award provides a strong foundation for continued institutional change and supports SETU's broader EDI ambitions under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

9.2 EDUCATION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

In 2025, SETU was honoured with the national Education Award for Excellence in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, recognising the University's strategic, integrated and impact-driven approach to EDI. The award reflects SETU's leadership in embedding EDI across teaching, research, student engagement and institutional governance.

This recognition highlights the collective efforts of staff and students across the University and affirms SETU's position as a sector leader in advancing inclusive practice, social justice and human rights in higher education.

The university was also honoured to be shortlisted for Best International Collaboration at the Education Awards in recognition of its work with the Gazan Scholarship Initiative for Displaced Students.

9.3 VICKY PHELAN EDI AWARD – DR. SARAH SARTORI

In 2025, Dr Sarah Sartori, Chair of SETU's UoS Committee, received the Vicky Phelan Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to advancing EDI within SETU and the wider higher education community. This award celebrates leadership, advocacy and impact in promoting equality, dignity and inclusion.

Dr Sartori's work exemplifies SETU's values and commitment to embedding EDI in practice. Her recognition reflects the importance of individual leadership and innovation in driving institutional and cultural change, and highlights the role of staff in advancing SETU's EDI vision.

Diversity in Business Awards – Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Leader

At the July 2025 Diversity in Business Awards, Dr. Allison Kenneally, Vice President for EDI at SETU, received the inaugural individual award for Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Leader, recognised for championing inclusive cultures in higher education.

DIVERSITY
IN BUSINESS
AWARDS 2025
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion
Leader
Winner
South East Technological University
Dr Allison Kenneally

10 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS DUTY

SETU actively upholds its obligations under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, as set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. The Duty requires public bodies, in carrying out their functions, to have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff, students and service users.
- Protect and advance the human rights of all who engage with the organisation.

SETU's approach to implementing the Duty is embedded within its institutional governance and strategic planning framework and is articulated through its Strategic Plan – Connecting for Impact (2023–2028), the EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029, and a suite of complementary equality action plans.

10.1 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty informs SETU's strategic enablers and institutional priorities. EDI and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are recognised as key drivers of institutional transformation, supporting SETU's ambition to provide an inclusive, sustainable and globally responsible learning and working environment.

SETU's commitment to the Duty is operationalised through a number of interlinked plans, including:

- Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) (2025–2030).
- Race Equality Action Plan (REAP) (2025–2029).
- Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment Plan (TSVHP) (2023–2026).
- University of Sanctuary Plan (UoSP) (2024).

Together, these plans provide a coherent framework for advancing equality and human rights across all areas of university activity.

10.2 ASSESS: EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

As part of its Duty obligations, SETU undertakes ongoing assessment of equality and human rights issues relevant to its functions. Key issues identified include:

- Equitable access to education, particularly for learners from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, minority ethnic communities, and those with disabilities or learning differences.
- Staff and student inclusion, including gender balance and minority representation in leadership, governance and decision-making.
- Accessibility and universal design, encompassing physical, digital and pedagogical environments.

- Embedding human rights and equality principles within curricula, research, sustainability initiatives and community engagement.
- Policy development and implementation, ensuring that institutional policies and procedures are equitable, transparent and consistently applied.

These assessments are informed by data analysis, consultation with staff and students, and engagement with internal and external stakeholders.

10.3 ADDRESS: ACTIONS AND MEASURES

SETU addresses identified equality and human rights issues through a combination of policy frameworks, programmes and targeted initiatives. Key measures include:

Policies and frameworks

- Implementation of the EDI Strategic Plan 2024–2029.
- Delivery of the Gender Equality Action Plan(GEAP) and Race Equality Action Plan (REAP).
- Ongoing implementation of the Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment Plan (TSVHP).
- Adoption of a University of Sanctuary (UoSP) framework.
- Use of the SETU Equality Impact Assessment Tool to assess the equality and human rights implications of policies, practices and decisions.

Programmes and initiatives

- Inclusive education and curriculum design, supported by the Inclusive Curriculum Framework and EDIT Toolkit.
- Review of recruitment, promotion and selection processes to support fair and inclusive representation.
- Delivery of EDI, dignity and respect, consent and bystander intervention training.
- Enhanced wellbeing, family-friendly and caregiving supports for staff and students.
- Progression of universal design and accessibility initiatives across physical and digital environments, supported by a Universal Design Steering Group.

10.4 REPORT, MONITOR AND REVIEW

SETU monitors progress on the implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty through its EDI governance structures, including reporting to the EMT and the EDI Committee of GB.

Key indicators used to assess progress include:

- Diversity and representation data, including gender-disaggregated staff profiles.
- Participation and outcomes for under-represented student groups.
- Uptake and impact of EDI training and awareness initiatives.
- Progress on the implementation of equality action plans.

This Annual EDI Report forms a central mechanism through which SETU reports publicly on its compliance with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, supporting transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

10.5 DUTY COMPLIANCE CROSS REFERENCE

Table 14: **Alignment of Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Requirements with Reported Actions (2025)**

PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY ELEMENT	WHERE ADDRESSED IN THIS REPORT
Assess equality and human rights issues	Section 4 – Key Facts and Figures Section 4.6 – Leadership and committee membership Section 7 – Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment Section 10 – Implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duty and Human Rights Duty
Address identified issues	Section 3 – SETU's EDI Strategic Priorities (2024 - 2029) Section 6 – EDI Training and Capacity Building Section 7 – Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment Section 11 – Looking Ahead: EDI Priorities for 2026
Report and monitor progress	Section 8 – Progress and Achievements in 2025 Section 10 – Implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duty and Human Rights Duty Section 11 – Looking Ahead: EDI Priorities for 2026

This cross reference demonstrates how SETU integrates its Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty across strategy, implementation and reporting, in line with IHREC guidance.

11 LOOKING AHEAD: EDI PRIORITIES FOR 2026

As outlined in the South East Technological University (SETU) EDI Strategic Plan (2024–2029) and associated thematic action plans, the key EDI priorities for 2026 are to consolidate progress, strengthen accountability, and embed sustainable structural and cultural change across the University. Priority actions include:

- **Advance implementation of the SETU EDI Strategic Plan (2024–2029)** by progressing Year One deliverables, embedding measurable actions across faculties and professional services, and strengthening alignment and reporting across all associated action plans.
- **Drive delivery of the Gender Equality, Race Equality, and University of Sanctuary Action Plans**, ensuring clear governance, data-informed monitoring, and tangible progress in representation, participation, and inclusive practice.
- **Progress the SETU RACE initiative and broader race equality commitments** through meaningful staff and student engagement, targeted capacity-building initiatives, and the development of evidence-based interventions that foster an inclusive and anti-racist campus culture.
- **Complete the final phase of the Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan (2023–2026)**, with a continued emphasis on prevention, awareness-raising, accessible reporting mechanisms, and enhanced survivor-centred supports.

12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

South East Technological University would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion during the reporting year and to the preparation of this Annual EDI Report.

In particular, SETU acknowledges the leadership and oversight provided by the Governing Body, the EDI Committee of Governing Body, and the Executive Management Team, whose commitment continues to ensure that EDI and human rights are embedded within the university's strategic direction and governance structures.

SETU extends its thanks to colleagues across the university who contributed to the development and implementation of EDI policies, action plans and initiatives, including staff in the EDI Office, Human Resources, Student Services, SETU's Unions, Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, Estates, IT, and other professional and academic units who supported this work.

The university also wishes to recognise the invaluable contribution of staff and student representative bodies, along with staff networks, working groups and committees, including those focused on gender equality, race equality, disability inclusion, LGBTQ+ inclusion, UoS initiatives, and tackling sexual violence and harassment. Their insight, advocacy and lived experience continue to inform and strengthen SETU's EDI work.

SETU is grateful to all staff and students who participated in consultations, training, surveys, data collection exercises and engagement activities throughout the year. Their willingness to share perspectives and experiences is essential to meaningful progress.

Finally, SETU acknowledges the contribution of external partners and stakeholders, including sectoral bodies, community organisations and regional, national and international partners, whose collaboration and expertise support the university in advancing equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights.

ACRONYM LIST

Acronym	Meaning
AC	Academic Council
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSF	Community Safety Fund
DKiT	Dundalk Institute of Technology
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIT Toolkit	Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum Toolkit
EMT	Executive Management Team
ESP	Ending Sexual Violence Prevention and Support
GB	Governing Board
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRS4R	Human Resources Strategy for Researchers
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NAP	National Access Plan
PMSS	Professional, Managerial and Support Staff
REAP	Race Equality Action Plan
SATU	Sexual Assault Treatment Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SETU	South East Technological University
SVH	Sexual Violence and Harassment
TSVH	Tackling Sexual Violence and Harassment
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UoS	University of Sanctuary
VPEDI	Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
WTE	Whole-Time Equivalent

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