



**Education Workforce Council**

# **Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28**

Refreshed April 2026

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg hefyd

## Introduction

This plan, covering the period 2024–28, sets out the Education Workforce Council’s (EWC) commitment to equality and diversity. It explains how we will work to promote these principles, both inside our organisation and, within our remit, across the wider education workforce in Wales. This plan seeks to build upon progress achieved since the publication of our previous SEP in 2020, and is closely aligned with the vision and objectives outlined within our Strategic Plan.

Reflecting our commitment to playing our part in the creation of a fairer Wales, this plan establishes a series of ambitious strategic equality objectives. These objectives will be supported by a detailed action plan which will outline the actions and measures we will use to track progress.

The plan embraces our important role in reviewing and highlighting wider equality issues within the education workforce, and details our intention to work in close partnership with Welsh Government and other stakeholders to resolve these matters. It also reflects the goals set out within the Welsh Government’s Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP), updated in 2024, and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales, in which Welsh Government state that they want to make Wales an anti-racist nation by 2030 and the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.

In line with Welsh Government’s objective of driving forward anti-racist leadership (set out within the ARWAP) the Chief Executive and all other Senior Management Team members all have measurable objectives relating to the delivery of the action plan within their annual objectives, reflecting our organisational values and commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism.

We believe that the objectives set out within this plan are ambitious and reflect our distinct (and precisely defined) role and remit. However, where there are opportunities to do so, we will seek to surpass our stated equality objectives, proactively seeking opportunities to exceed expectations in order to contribute to the creation of a fairer and more equitable Wales.

## About us

The EWC is the independent, professional regulator for the education workforce in Wales. We regulate education practitioners across schools, further education, youth work, and adult/work-based learning. We were established by the Education (Wales) Act 2014, and came into being on 1 April 2015.

Our principal aims under the Act are summarised below and detailed further in secondary legislation.

## Regulate

Our core function is to regulate in the public interest. To do this, we first maintain a [Register of Education Practitioners](#) (the Register), eligible to practise in schools, further education, youth work, and adult/work-based learning. Secondly, we publish a [Code of Professional Conduct and Practice](#) (the Code) which sets out the standards expected of those we register. Thirdly, we investigate and hear allegations of unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, or relevant criminal offences. We also have a statutory responsibility to [accredit programmes of Initial Teacher Education](#) (ITE), and monitor their compliance with national criteria.

## Support

We support our registrants to fulfil their role as regulated professionals and to uphold the six key principles of the Code by providing useful information, resources, and services designed to offer guidance and direction.

## Promote

We have a statutory function to promote careers within the education professions in Wales. This includes advocacy activity designed to position the education profession as a valued, respected, and rewarding career choice for individuals from all backgrounds, with the aim of increasing workforce diversity. In addition, we receive Welsh Government grant funding to deliver [the Educators Wales brand](#) and platform, which supports recruitment, retention, and career progression across the sector.

## Influence

We seek out opportunities to shape and influence education policy in Wales for the benefit of our registrants. Our statutory responsibility to provide independent advice, research analysis, and intelligence means that we can support workforce planning across Wales.

## The legal context

We have a statutory duty to publish a strategic equality plan that outlines our commitment to tackling discrimination. This stems from the Equality Act 2010 which establishes a public sector equality duty covering the following protected characteristics:

- age
- gender reassignment
- sex
- race (including ethnic or national origin, colour, or nationality)
- disability
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- marriage and civil partnership

The EWC is also bound by the general duty to carry out our public functions in such a way as to contribute to the development of fairness through:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic, and those who do not
- fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 set out further specific duties with which the EWC must comply, relating to:

- objectives
- strategic equality plans
- engagement
- assessing impact
- equality information
- employment information
- pay differences
- staff training
- procurement
- annual reporting
- publishing
- Welsh Ministers' reporting
- review
- accessibility

## Our evidence base

To ensure this plan is effective and aligned with the diverse needs of our employees, registrants, and stakeholders, we have considered a wide range of evidence in developing our equality objectives.

Our approach to engagement involves a rolling programme of meetings with key stakeholders and interest groups, where equalities issues appropriate to our remit are amongst the matters that are discussed.

The development of this plan has therefore been informed by insights from a wide range of groups and individuals.

## Internal engagement

- Council and staff planning sessions.
- Employee forum.
- All-staff meetings.
- Stress risk assessment.
- Performance and Development Review/Council members' review process.

## Registrant engagement

- Accessibility survey.
- Workforce surveys.

## Stakeholder engagement

- Using our programme of regular meetings (for example, with trade unions representing our registrants, ITE partnerships (as part of the accreditation process), and Welsh Government officials)
- Talking to representative groups such as DARPL (Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning) and the Black Leadership Group
- Evidence gathered by our promotion of careers team through their advocacy work to promote careers within the education workforce to individuals from diverse communities.

We participate and/or engage with a range of equalities networks and groups, including:

- EHRC Equality and Human Rights Exchange
- BAMEed Network Wales
- DARPL
- Race Council Cymru
- Ethnic Minorities Youth Support Team (EYST) Wales
- Colegau Cymru Equality and Diversity group
- Welsh Islamic Cultural Association Swansea
- BAME Mental Health Service
- South Riverside Community Development Centre

We also maintain informal professional relationships, and identify opportunities to collaborate with a range of other organisations that promote equalities. These include the EHRC, Show Racism the Red Card, Diverse Cymru, and Stonewall. Such engagement helps to ensure that the EWC is aware of a range of issues and perspectives relating to equalities.

This Strategic Equality Plan and equality objectives have also been informed by a range of other sources of evidence including:

- internal data relating to the composition of our workforce, Council and panels
- HR data relating to recruitment
- data from our Register (covering registrant diversity)
- Welsh Government Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (refreshed 2024)
- Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales
- EWC research (undertaken on behalf of Welsh Government) on increasing diversity within the school workforce in Wales
- EWC fitness to practise (FtP) data
- census data
- Equality and Human Rights Monitor 2023: Is Wales Fairer?
- Education Support teacher wellbeing index

## Our strategic equality objectives

Our approach to equality and diversity will be guided by five strategic objectives. These are set out below.



# Objective 1: Build a diverse and inclusive EWC team

## What is our aim?

We want to work towards the goal of assembling a team<sup>1</sup> within the EWC that reflects the rich diversity of the population of Wales (across all the protected characteristics). We also want to ensure that all EWC employees are treated fairly and able to fulfil their potential within the organisation.

## Why is this important to the EWC?

Developing a diverse team, and nurturing their talents, will ensure that our organisation is able to benefit from a range of different skills and perspectives, enhancing decision-making processes and aligning with our commitment to fairness and equality.

Our actions will focus on:

- monitoring our employment practices to ensure that the EWC is well positioned to recruit and retain a diverse workforce
- gathering (and actively monitoring) comprehensive and meaningful equality data regarding our employees, Council and panel members
- encouraging greater disclosure rates (regarding protected characteristics) from staff and Council/panel members to gain a fuller understanding of the diversity of our workforce
- improving recruitment processes for staff, Council, and committee/panel members<sup>2</sup> to ensure fairness to all under-represented groups



1 Including our staff, Council, and committee/panel members

2 Including members of the FtP committee, ITE accreditation board, and our Quality Mark for Youth Work (QMYW) assessors

## Objective 2: Monitor the gender pay gap and identify opportunities to reduce it

### What is our aim?

We aim to minimise the gender pay gap by ensuring the continued fair and equitable application of policies relating to pay and progression, providing equal opportunities for all.

### Why is this important to the EWC?

As a small organisation, the extent to which we are able to influence our overall gender pay gap is limited, with individual recruitment outcomes sometimes having significant impacts on the pay gap. However, we want to ensure that our employees are treated equally and fairly with respect to pay and conditions, regardless of their gender. It is therefore important that we closely monitor and understand the gender pay gap within the EWC, and take action to minimise it.

Our actions will focus on:

- monitoring and publishing information relating to our gender pay gap
- improving our understanding of any links between gender and pay within the EWC
- ensuring that all staff have equal opportunities to progress within the EWC when opportunities arise, regardless of their gender



## Objective 3: An inclusive workplace where diversity is celebrated

### What is our aim?

We want the EWC to be an inclusive organisation where employees feel safe, respected, and are supported to perform to the best of their ability, irrespective of any protected characteristic they may have.

### Why is this important to the EWC?

Through ensuring that all employees feel valued and are treated fairly, we want to nurture a culture where staff can flourish and fulfil their potential. This, in turn, could assist in allowing us to attract and retain a more diverse workforce (in line with objective one).

Our actions will focus on:

- ensuring our offices are welcoming and accessible
- continuing to develop and promote anti-racist practices as part of our organisational culture
- organising events that celebrate and raise awareness of different groups and issues relevant to the protected characteristics, to reinforce the importance of embracing diversity
- delivering an engaging and accessible programme of training on equality and diversity matters for all employees
- producing regular equalities newsletters to share information, encourage engagement, and celebrate diversity
- implementing a varied wellbeing programme and seeking to increase engagement with these activities by identifying any barriers to engagement
- providing opportunities for employees to provide feedback and empowering them to speak out in relation to any issues or concerns relating to equality and diversity



## Objective 4: Deliver accessible services for registrants and stakeholders

### What is our aim?

We want to ensure that all of our services are accessible for registrants and stakeholders, irrespective of their diverse needs and abilities. We will strive to continuously improve the accessibility of our services, aligning with best practice and legal requirements.

### Why is this important to the EWC?

We are required to ensure that we identify, mitigate, and (where possible) remove any barriers that our registrants and other stakeholders (including learners and parents/guardians) might face when interacting with us, or using our services.

Our actions will focus on:

- listening to registrants to ensure our services meet their diverse needs
- identifying any barriers faced by registrants and stakeholders when interacting with the EWC and taking steps to remove these, as appropriate and proportionate
- identifying opportunities to broaden the accessibility of our services and making improvements, as appropriate and proportionate
- identifying opportunities to bring our work to the attention of a wide range of audiences with diverse needs and characteristics and taking steps to ensure equitable access to our services, as appropriate and proportionate



## Objective 5: Help develop an education workforce that is representative of the diverse population of Wales

### What is our aim?

We want to see an education workforce in Wales that reflects the diversity of the wider population of Wales.

### Why is this important to the EWC?

We believe that the education workforce should mirror the richness of society, encompassing diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. It is therefore essential to ensure fair and equitable career opportunities and to break down any barriers that may be preventing people from diverse backgrounds working within the registered education professions.

Our responsibilities include promoting careers in the education professions and advising Welsh Government on matters related to the education workforce, and teaching and learning. In addition, we are identified within Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan as a key partner/lead on increasing the ethnic diversity of the education workforce. We are also supportive of the aims of other key plans and strategies for promoting diversity, including the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales.

We believe that building a more diverse education workforce will play a key role in fostering social cohesion by enabling learners and young people to grow and develop in an environment where there are visible, diverse role models. A more diverse workforce will also allow learners and young people to be exposed to a wider range of perspectives, enriching their educational experience, and preparing them to be informed global citizens.

Our actions will focus on:

- using the unique data from our Register to monitor the diversity of registered education professionals in Wales
- ensuring the Register provides the fullest possible data regarding workforce ethnicity (as well as in relation to age, disability, and sex)
- using our platform to highlight issues relating to diversity within the workforce
- fulfilling our statutory function to promote careers in education – working with registrants and stakeholders to engage a diverse audience, with a particular emphasis on increasing ethnic diversity
- promoting the Educators Wales website and advisory service and engaging, face to face, with individuals from diverse communities across Wales
- investigate opportunities to glean insight into diverse groups and communities, to identify any barriers preventing them from exploring careers in education

# How will we know if we're making progress?

## Monitoring arrangements

Our five equality objectives will be subject to detailed monitoring and we will regularly report on our progress, principally through our Annual Equality Report, which will be published on our website. A range of qualitative and quantitative metrics will be used to evaluate our progress in achieving each objective, and progress will be subject to the scrutiny of the senior management team at monthly meetings. The Executive Committee and EWC Council will also provide oversight of our progress, and will receive quarterly reports on the implementation of the action plan.

## Publishing equality information

As well as the Annual Equality Report, we will publish a range of additional equality data on our website, including:

- annual education workforce statistics reports, providing important data on the composition of the education workforce in Wales, and other discrete analyses
- equality data on applicants for registration and registrants who have been subject to FtP procedures, as part of the FtP Annual Report
- a gender pay analysis, reporting EWC employee salary information by gender

## Staying on track

To underpin our commitment to equality and diversity, all relevant policies and processes (including those relating to procurement) will be kept up to date, taking account of any changes in law, reviews of national incentives/plans or, of internal or external circumstances. We will also periodically review our monitoring and reporting processes, and implement any necessary improvements.

## Equality impact assessments

As required by the Equality Act 2010, Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs), incorporating an equality impact assessment, will form an important part of the development and approval process for any new (or reviewed) policy. This will help to guide internal processes, ensuring that decision making is evidence-based and has specific regard to equalities.

Policies and procedures subject to these assessments will be continuously monitored for their impact on equalities. Any significant findings from this ongoing evaluation will be incorporated into the IIA, ensuring it reflects the most relevant and up-to-date information.

For new or amended HR policies, an IIA will be submitted (alongside the policy) to the employee forum as part of the whole-staff consultation process. The senior management team will also consider the assessment as part of the adoption process. A repository of completed IIAs is retained centrally.

In order to ensure that equality information is used meaningfully and appropriately to guide decision making, we will periodically review our IIA processes and guidance and make amendments, as necessary, to enhance effectiveness.

## Equality training and development

We will provide regular training for all EWC staff in relation to equality and diversity and our approach to anti-racism. This will include the provision of an overview of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty for all new members of staff as part of the induction process. This will be complemented by regular all-staff training sessions covering matters relating to the different protected characteristics.

Training on equalities related matters will also be provided for Council and committee/panel members<sup>3</sup>. This training will cover the equality duty and their respective roles in setting the strategic direction of the EWC, monitoring its performance, and ensuring that strong governance arrangements are in operation.



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<sup>3</sup> Including members of the FtP committee, ITE accreditation board, and our QMYW assessors.

