Race Equality Framework and Action Plan 2024–2027

Office of the Director of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Contents

Foreword

Professor Shane Kilcommins, Acting President, University of Limerick

I am proud to present University of Limerick's Race Equality Action Plan 2024–2027, a crucial document that reinforces our dedication to fostering an equitable, diverse, inclusive and anti-racist campus. This plan builds on national and institutional initiatives to address and combat racial inequality within higher education across Ireland.

UL has long been committed to advancing race equality. In alignment with this, we established the HREDI Office in 2021 and launched the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) in December of that year to ensure the voices of those impacted by any form of discrimination or racism are heard and integrated into our decision-making processes. We recognise our statutory obligations under the Equal Status Acts and Employment Equality Acts as well as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, all of which are aimed at eliminating discrimination and fostering an equitable and inclusive work and study environment. Moreover, we are dedicated to our HREDI Strategy 2023–2027, which embodies our core values of social justice, empowerment, inclusivity, agency and respect – values that underpin our commitment to equality and human rights.

We recognise the ongoing racial inequalities within higher education as highlighted in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Race Equality Implementation Plan 2022–2024 and the Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions, and we are committed to addressing these challenges. Our comprehensive action plan includes 95 actions across key areas such as Leadership, Data Collection, Awareness Training and Student Recruitment, all of which

we are dedicated to implementing over the next three years. The Race Equality Action Plan 2024–2027 is a significant step towards breaking down structural barriers, fostering supportive environments, and promoting greater awareness of race equality. At UL, we uphold a zero-tolerance policy for racial discrimination, thereby ensuring that all community members are treated with respect and dignity.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the HREDI team, especially Dr Marie Connolly, Director HREDI and Dr Niloufar Omidi, EDI Policy Development & Projects Officer. I would also like to thank Dr George Barreto, chair of the EDF Action Planning Working Group, our former colleague Dr Aoife Neary and all members of the EDF for their leadership in developing this action plan. Their expertise and dedication will guide us in our mission to make University of Limerick a model of equality and achieve our goal of becoming an egalitarian institution by 2030 – a leader in race equality, where every individual feels valued and respected.

Professor Shane Kilcommins
Acting President, University of Limerick

Foreword

Dr Marie Connolly, Director of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

I am honoured to join Acting President Professor Shane Kilcommins in presenting University of Limerick's Race Equality Action Plan 2024–2027. This document demonstrates UL's commitment and dedication to advancing racial equity and driving lasting change across our community. Aligned with the HEA Anti-Racism Principles, which UL endorsed in 2023, this action plan outlines a clear strategy for tackling racial inequalities and fostering a more inclusive environment for all staff, job applicants, students and service users.

The Race Equality Action Plan plays a pivotal role in UL's ambition to become a truly inclusive and egalitarian university by 2030. By addressing both institutional and interpersonal racism and ensuring equitable outcomes in rights, representation and resources, we are working towards achieving this vision for current and future generations.

Our commitments align with Irish equality legislation, including the Equal Status Acts (2000–2021); the Employment Equality Acts (1998–2023); and the Irish Human Rights and Equality (IHREC) Acts 2014, Section 42, Public Sector Duty, which requires public bodies to assess, address and report on progress related to equality and human rights within their organisations.

Building on **UL's Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (HREDI) Strategy**, this action plan focuses on dismantling the organisational barriers that perpetuate racial discrimination. Grounded in the values of social justice, empowerment, inclusivity, agency and respect, it reflects our vision for a campus where race equality is actively championed and racial biases are confronted and eliminated. We are

committed to fostering a learning and working environment where diverse voices are respected and where all students and staff can thrive free from discrimination.

In developing this action plan, we prioritised the voices of our diverse community. The plan puts race equality at the heart of every decision and action, ensuring that the lived experiences of our ethnic minority groups shape our approach to equity and inclusion. Guided by the establishment of the HREDI Office and the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) in 2021, this collaborative effort was instrumental in completing the plan. The diverse insights and contributions from EDF members were crucial in shaping the plan and enabled us to develop targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by racially minoritised groups.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the members of the EDF, particularly Dr Niloufar Omidi, Dr George Barreto and Dr Aoife Neary, and to all colleagues across various departments whose feedback was invaluable in developing this plan.

Together, we are building the foundation for a more just and equitable future at University of Limerick.

Marie Connolly

Dr Marie Connolly
Director of Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, University of Limerick

1. Introduction

The results of the 2021 **HEA survey on race equality in Irish higher education** (HEA, 2021) served as a stark warning of the presence of racism within higher education institutions (HEIs). It is imperative for each HEI to confront racism and dismantle racial inequalities at individual, institutional and structural levels.

University of Limerick (UL) is committed to embedding a zero-tolerance stance against racism and advancing race equality in all aspects of its operations. Along with its associated initiatives, this Race Equality Framework and Action Plan 2024–2027 aims to foster cultural and institutional change to achieve race equality. Every member of

the UL community shares a responsibility to actively combat racism and create an inclusive environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds can contribute their perspectives, approaches and insights, thereby enriching teaching, research and the overall university experience.

The action plan given in section 8 below is informed by policy and legal instruments at national, European and international levels. Furthermore, the action plan was developed based on the aspirations of ethnic minorities and reflects their voices. It will be regularly updated through consultations with affected groups to ensure it remains dynamic and responsive in varying circumstances.

2. Key Concepts

Race: Race is a social construct used to categorise groups of people, usually based on perceived physical characteristics or shared ancestry. Scientific evidence demonstrates that so-called human races as biologically distinct groups do not exist. Theories that the human species is composed of distinct 'races' have also been widely rejected. European Commission against Racism and Intolerance recalls in this respect that all human beings belong to humankind and are equal in dignity and rights.[1] The European Union rejects theories which attempt to determine the existence of separate human races.[2] The use of the term 'racial origin' in this Action Plan does not imply an acceptance of such theories.

Racialisation: Racialisation relates to the social and ideological processes that develop the stereotyping and reductive understanding of diverse human identities in racial terms as an exercise of power. From this perspective, human populations (identified by, for example, phenotype or cultural identifiers) are ascribed – through a process of racialisation – certain characteristics and attributes that are presented as being innate to all members of each group concerned. Regardless of where one is from and of personal circumstances, once identified or perceived as a member of a group, one is deemed as embodying characteristics based on, for instance, skin colour, ethnic or national origin or religion inherent to all members of that group. This process is therefore described as turning a diverse set of people into an allegedly homogeneous group, whose members are presented as 'Other'.[3] The visible effects of processes of racialisation are the racial inequalities embedded within social structures and systems.

Race equality: Race equality can be defined as equal representation, equal experiences and equal outcomes of staff and students from minority ethnic groups.

Racialised groups: Race inequality can be defined as unequal representation, unequal experiences and unequal outcomes of staff and students from minority ethnic groups.

Social inclusion: Social inclusion can be defined as a process that ensures the provision of opportunities and resources needed by individuals to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and wellbeing that is considered normal in the society in which they live (Council of European Union, 2004).

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[1] ECRI's opinion on the concept of 'racialisation' (adopted at ECRI's 87th plenary meeting on 8 December 2021) https://rm.coe.int/ecri-opinion-on-the-concept-of-racialisation/1680a4dcc2

[2] Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, eur-lex.europa.eu/legal- content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32000L0043

[3] Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, eur-lex.europa.eu/legal- content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32000L0043

Racial discrimination: Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD, 1969) defines the term racial discrimination as "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life."

Intersectionality: According to Advance HE, intersectionality means "recognising that people's identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives. These factors include, among others, sexuality, gender, race, disability, age and religion."[4]

According to the **Submission on the Review of the Equality Acts** (IHREC, 2023), it is noteworthy that:

"*intersectional discrimination in this context is not intended to be synonymous with 'multiple' or 'compound' discrimination, which describe discrimination on multiple grounds which are then examined independently. Intersectional discrimination describes the unique disadvantage experienced by a person as a result of a combination of grounds which can only be understood by examining them together, rather than apart.*"

Above: *UL Anti-Racism Campaign 2024 Launch, featuring Dr James Carr, Donnah S Vuma (Doras), Dr Marie Connolly. Photo Credit: Alan Place.*

[4] Athena SWAN Ireland FAQs: Intersectionality

3. Scope

The action plan reflects an acknowledgement by UL of the diversity within racialised groups and a recognition of two main categories of racialised groups at the University: domestic ethnic minorities and international ethnic minorities. Domestic ethnic minorities include Irish Travellers and Roma as well as Irish citizens and long-term residents who have an ethnic minority background. International ethnic minorities encompass international protection applicants, refugees, Subsidiary Protection holders, Permission to Remain holders, and international students or staff. The action plan outlines appropriate actions with respect to each sub-category based on unique situations.

The action plan is designed to eliminate racism that is manifested in various forms, including antisemitism; anti-Muslim racism; and racism affecting people of African descent, Asians, Irish Travellers, Roma, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

4. Methodology

This action plan was designed in accordance with the requirements outlined in the **HEA Race Equality Implementation Action Plan 2022-2024** (HEA 2022). When developing the action plan, the authors took a bottom-up approach, reflecting the voices of those most affected by the implementation of the plan – minority and racialised students and staff in UL. To ensure it is contextually accurate, the action plan was informed by the **UL Human Rights EDI Strategy 2023-2027**, by the results of the UL Athena Swan Ethnic Minority and Intersectionality Surveys Reports (2022) and by consultation with the minority and racialised community at UL.

Along with the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF), the HREDI Office played a key consultative role in developing this plan from an early stage. As a sub-group of the UL HREDI (Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Steering Committee, the EDF spearheads UL's ongoing initiatives to promote inclusion on the campus, particularly in the realm of ethnic equality, diversity and inclusion.

Comprising representatives from different groups in the UL community, including racialised and minority groups that have firsthand experience of racial discrimination, the EDF plays a consultative role in developing policies and action plans. The EDF comprises three working groups: EDF Policy, Research and Survey Design Working Group; EDF Action Planning Working Group; and Events and Social Media Working Group, the first two of which were involved in crafting this plan.

The authors of the plan consulted scholarly materials on racism in HEIs as well as existing official reports on racism in Ireland provided by civil society organisations. The action plan incorporates best practice in tackling racism in HEIs at national and international levels, including those adopted by Russell Group universities in the UK.

The diagram to follow summarises the step involved in developing this Race Equality Framework and Action Plan.
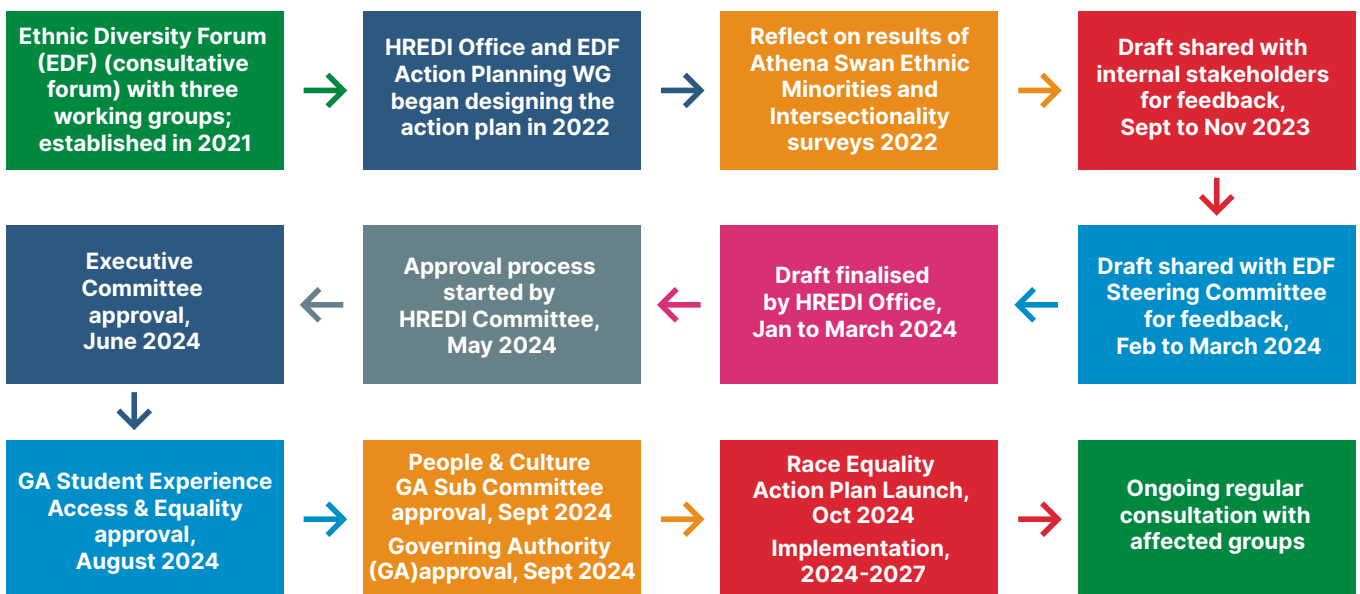

Figure 1: Race Equality Framework and Action Plan development process

5. Monitoring Mechanism

The HREDI Office will lead the implementation of the Race Equality Action Plan in collaboration with the HREDI Committee members. Quarterly updates will be provided to the HREDI Committee, highlighting any specific areas of concern.

The Executive Committee will review annual reports on the progress of the action plan addressing any race equality issues highlighted. The action plan will be a regular agenda item, with discussions informed by progress reports. A formal annual progress report will be presented to the Executive Committee, Governing Authority Subcommittees, and the Governing Authority. Familiarisation sessions on the duty and the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the plan (section 8) will be facilitated for the responsible bodies.

The HREDI Committee will monitor and update, as required, the Race Equality Action Plan in cooperation and consultation with the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF). The committee

will consider at its meetings ongoing reports on progress made under the plan. In doing so, the committee will ensure that the approach UL takes to protecting race equality across all strategies, policies, plans and programmes, including this action plan, is coherent. The HREDI Committee will keep under review the implementation of the action plan by those responsible for the main and enabling actions.

The extent to which the actions have been successful will be reported annually to the HREDI Committee for consideration when preparing the annual report on implementing the action plan. Failure to implement the action plan will be included and tracked in the UL risk register.

The diagram to follow shows the organisational structure for the process of overseeing and supporting the implementation and monitoring of UL HREDI actions, including those in this Race Equality Action Plan, and depicts how the structure integrates with senior leadership roles.
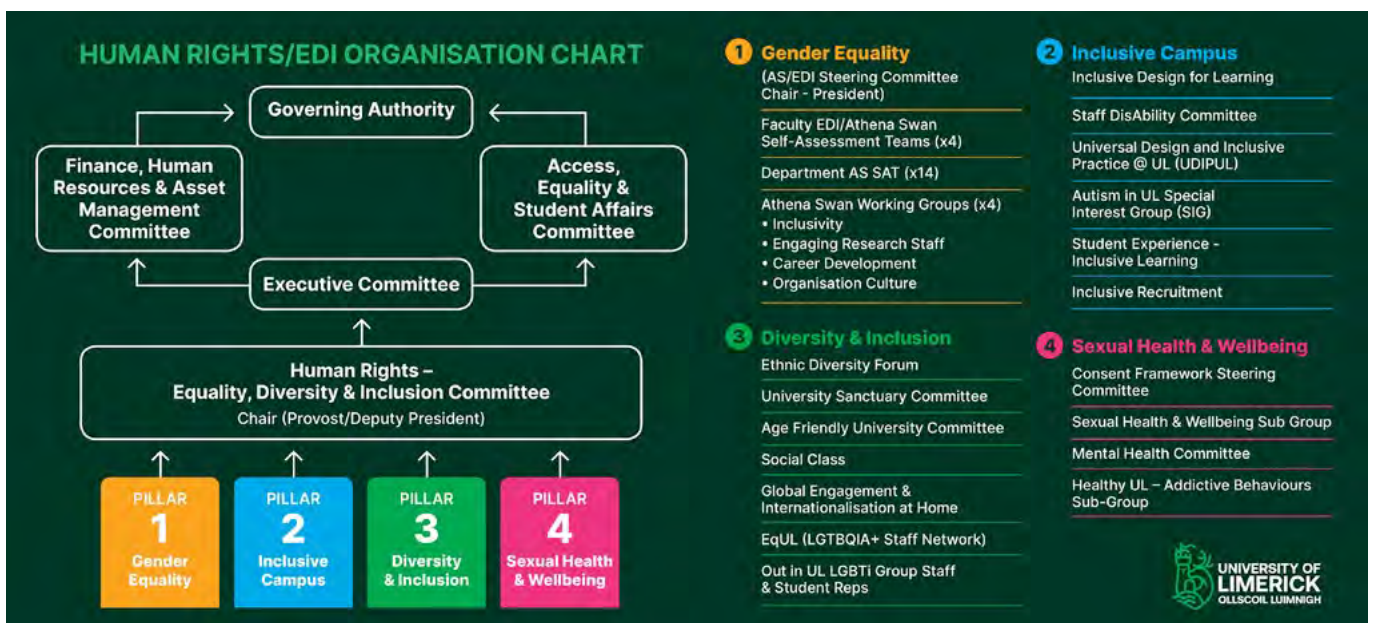

Figure 2: UL HREDI organisation chart

6. Statutory Context

As a HEI, UL has a statutory responsibility to advance equality of opportunity and support diversity and inclusion, including race equality. In addition, the prohibition of racial discrimination is a fundamental obligation in accordance with statutory equality and human rights duties, as specified below:

- The Equal Status Acts 2000-2023 prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education on the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller Community.

- The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2021 prohibit discrimination in employment on the same grounds.

- The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989 (now under review as part of the Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022) has provisions against racist hate speech.

- Under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, all public bodies in Ireland have a responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans.

- Article 40.1 of the Constitution provides that "all citizens shall, as human persons, be held equal before the law".

- Ireland is bound by the obligations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD, 1969). This legally binding international human rights treaty requires all parties to it to pursue active policies to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. CERD General Recommendation 30, made in 2004, underlines that the protections of the Convention apply to non-citizens.

- The Good Friday Agreement has concrete non-discrimination and human rights provisions North and South, including in the areas of policing and justice.

- European Union (EU) law, which applies in Ireland, also protects people from racism.

  - The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union enshrines in primary EU law a wide spectrum of fundamental rights enjoyed by EU citizens and residents, in particular Article 20: Equality before the law and Article 21: Non-discrimination.

  - The EU Racial Equality Directive (2000), which outlaws discrimination on the basis of a person's racial or ethnic origin in the areas of employment, education, social security, health care and access to goods and services. The Directive establishes a framework for combating discrimination and gives effect to the principle of equal treatment in EU member states. It operates alongside the Employment Equality Directive, which prohibits discrimination in employment on a number of grounds, including religion or belief. Both are given effect in Irish law by the Equality Acts outlined above.

- The Victims' Rights Directive, which provides for a number of supports to victims, and is given effect in Ireland through the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Act 2017.

- Council Framework Decision of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law, which requires member states to criminalise public incitement to violence or hatred on the grounds of race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin (including online).

The Irish government is developing and revising legislation to strengthen protections from hate crime and hate speech, including the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill and the Criminal Justice (Incitement to Violence or Hatred and Hate Offences) Bill 2022. In addition, the government is undertaking a review of existing equality legislation to consider if it is effective in protecting people against discrimination in employment, accommodation and access to goods and services.

This action plan is informed by national, European and international policy and legal instruments:

- **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: Concluding observations on the combined fifth to ninth reports of Ireland** (2020)
- **United Nations' Call for Global Action to Eliminate Racism**
- A Union of Equality: EU Anti-Racism Action Plan 2020-2025
- Ireland's National Action Plan Against Racism 2023 - 2027
- Higher Education Authority Act 2022
- **Speak Out Against Racism** (Irish Council for International Students)

While this action plan was developed to a large extent in accordance with the requirements outlined in the **HEA Race Equality Implementation Action Plan 2022-2024**, it was also informed by two other HEA race equality policies: **Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector** (2021) and **Race Equality Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions** (2023).

7. Anti-Racism Principles

Anti-racism principles for Irish HEIs include the following:

1. Race inequality is an issue in Irish higher education. Racism, although context specific, is a problem in Ireland, and racial inequalities are present on a daily basis in our HEIs.
2. HEIs that allow race inequality to exist cannot perform to their full potential.
3. Anti-racism policies and initiatives must focus on long-term culture change and on fixing the system, not fixing the individual.
4. Racism is not always overt and can manifest itself in everyday interactions, processes, behaviours, etc. (e.g. microaggressions).
5. Race inequalities are experienced differently by people from similar and different ethnic backgrounds.

The complex nature of the intersection of race inequality with other characteristics protected under Irish equality legislation must be taken into account when developing anti-racism actions and policies.

On Friday, 23 June 2023, the UL President publicly signed the HEA Anti-Racism Principles. The **HEA Race Equality Implementation Action Plan 2022-2024** is due to be implemented by HEIs by 2027. The UL Race Equality Action Plan integrates 95 actions across the following thematic areas of the HEA plan:

- Leadership
- Data collection
- Making race/equality policies and reporting mechanisms transparent
- Supporting diversity in staffing
- Fostering diversity in HEIs
- Supporting diversity in student recruitment
- Awareness and training

Figure 3: HEA Race Equality Action Plan thematic areas

Above: *UL Anti-Racism Campaign 2024 Launch, featuring Dr James Carr, Donnah S Vuma (Doras), Dr Niloufar Omidi, Dr Marie Connolly, Sgt. Rosaleen O'Connor (An Garda Síochána), Roger Dsliva (Postgraduate Student Union President). Photo Credit: Alan Place.*

The actions outlined in the UL plan under each thematic area will help UL to achieve the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:

While some actions in the plan below apply to more than one theme, they are given under one theme only.

8. The Action Plan

Theme 1: Leadership

Recognising the critical importance of leadership and management in addressing racial inequality and advancing race equality, UL's Race Equality Action Plan encompasses a series of interconnected initiatives within this theme. Through thorough consultation, gaps affecting both students and staff have been identified, including inadequate representation of minorities in senior positions, barriers to promotion and professional growth, and a lack of equity training and mutual understanding among senior positions. The actions specified below aim to progressively tackle these challenges.

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

- Highlighting the structural, institutional, and historical dimensions of racism which have informed past and current practice in HEIs and the societies in which they are situated
- Taking responsibility, accountability and ownership of race equality issues at HEIs
- Actively acknowledging that race inequality exists in HEIs
- Refuting the assertion of future progressive realisation of equality – Irish HEIs are not keeping pace with wider demographics and assertive action is required to catch up
- Acknowledging the power of HEIs to influence Irish society in general

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
1.1	Establish impactful training for leadership, including practical case studies, hands-on activities and real-world scenarios. Inclusive leadership in the newly developed Leadership Programme for senior academic and professional, managerial and support Services (PMSS) staff.	To proactively make institutional cultural changes from the top down by training governing bodies, making them aware of the real context to reduce the gap between policies and realities. Taking responsibility, accountability and ownership of race equality issues at HEIs (HEA).	HREDI Office; Human Resources (HR)	Q1 2025	Impact assessment based on feedback from employees and how they are particularly managed A diagram illustrating areas of progress and weakness Pilot programme rolled out
1.2	Establish a Race Equality managerial role.	The mainstreaming of an EDI Programme Manager for Race Equality role as a permanent position provides evidence of UL's long-term commitment to progressing race equality.	HREDI Office; HR	Ongoing	HEA funding secured for additional Race Equality managers throughout the sector
1.3	Monitor and oversee the implementation of the action plan and provide annual updates to Executive Committee and the Access, Equality & Student Affairs subcommittee of Governing Authority.	To ensure the action plan is thoroughly implemented in line with the HEA requirements.	Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) (sub-group of HREDI Committee) will report to the HREDI Committee	Ongoing	Regular and rigorous monitoring of progress on the implementation of the race equality action plan in accordance with specified timeline
1.4	Design a checklist to ensure that the principles of race equality and intersectionality are prioritised in the development/update of institutional procedures related to promotion to leadership positions (e.g., HEA indicator, criteria for senior managers, etc.)	To highlight the structural, institutional and historical dimensions of racism that have informed past and current practice in HEIs and the societies in which they are situated.	HR	Q4 2024	All senior posts contain the key competency of "evidence of leadership in implementing EDI" Checklist included as a key component for all recruitment and promotions processes
1.5	Ensure PDRS (Performance Development & Review System) includes the principle of race equality (e.g., behaviours with ethnic minorities) in line with HREDI mainstreaming of the Public Sector Duty.	Performance reviews, promotion assessment schemes and selection processes for staff need to take account of EDI activity and advancement.	HR Learning & Development	Q1 2025	PDRS (Performance Development & Review System) is updated based on the principle of race equality and is available
1.6	Develop a toolkit to monitor the representation of minority and racialised staff and students (with lived experiences) on policymaking and decision-making committees.	To ensure meaningful participation, which includes participation in policy and decision making. The toolkit will establish the baseline for membership representation. It will assess the total number of sub-groups of racialised groups and then determine the indicators of ideal participation. The toolkit is not a static tool; instead, it will be dynamically updated to reflect changing circumstances. (Focusing on the ground of race, this action will be taken alongside Athena Swan Action 2.1.5, which conducts audits leadership and committee membership across equality grounds.)	HREDI; EDI Assistant Deans in each faculty; UL Global; HR	Q4 2025	Visible and meaningful representation of minorities on policymaking and decision-making committees

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
1.7	Develop leadership opportunities for minority and racialised groups, drawing on their unique first hand experiences.	To reflect diversity of backgrounds and thoughts at key levels of responsibilities including leadership. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.1.5 – campaign to rollout wider participation in leadership committees. but focused on the ground of race.	All departments in cooperation with HREDI Office HR	Q3 2025	Visible representation of minorities in leadership positions, and reflection of their lived experiences in outcomes in each sector.
1.8	Introduce an award to nominate exemplary leadership role models within each school who have taken the initiative in implementing race equality.	To encourage the leaders and managers to take initiative to eliminate racial inequalities. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 1.2.3 – Establish an annual President's EDI award to staff – but focuses on the ground of race.	President's Office; Provost's Office	Q1 2025	Visible positive change resulting from the initiatives by leaders of each sector, reflected in their annual report.
1.9	Set up regular annual consultation meetings (such as Town Halls) between the Executive Committee and racialised groups with lived experiences.	To provide an open and safe platform that ensures all voices are heard.	President's Office; Executive Committee	Q2 2025	The consultation meeting is held midway through each academic year.
1.10	Engage and lobby national and local authorities to support racialised groups, including international staff and students and Travellers.	To acknowledge the ability of HEIs to influence Irish society in general (HEA). This practice has already been initiated by the Provost in engaging with the Garda Immigration Office to support international staff and students regarding visa issues. Currently, the HREDI Office and HR are advocating for changes in migrant access to work in collaboration with the Irish Universities Association (IUA).	Provost's Office; UL Global; HR; HREDI Office	Ongoing	Visible positive changes in supporting racialised groups at national level.
1.11	Establishing a reverse mentorship system where racialised individuals with lived experiences, despite occupying junior positions, peer with senior staff to help them understand racial inequalities and experiences.	To promote mutual understanding of the experiences of racialised groups at all levels, including those in leadership positions. This action involves equipping individuals with knowledge of the lived experiences of others. This system allows individuals from racialised groups, who possess invaluable lived experiences, to mentor staff in higher positions. This not only fosters greater understanding and empathy but also promotes diversity and inclusion within the organisation. By tapping into the unique perspectives and insights of these mentors, leaders and managers can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by racialised groups and develop more effective strategies for creating an inclusive work environment. This approach ultimately leads to greater collaboration, innovation, and mutual respect among all members of the institution.	HREDI Office; HR; EDI Assistant Deans in each faculty	Q2 2024	Received positive feedback, in regular consultations with racialised groups, for the effective functioning of leaders and managers, along with a heightened awareness of the daily challenges faced by racialised groups Robust mutual understanding reflected in productivity and feedback Rate of volunteers to contribute and participate in this programme

Theme 2: Data Collection

In line with the Public Sector Duty (IHREC Section 42), the UL HREDI strategic plan and the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan, UL is committed to assessing, addressing and reporting inequalities. As the implementation period for the action plan begins, it is essential to enhance data collection, reporting and monitoring mechanisms to better understand and measure racial inequality and race equality within the University. The consultation process identified significant shortcomings in our ethnic equality monitoring, ethnicity data collection and use, and reporting of racial and intersectional inequalities. The actions outlined under this theme will enable UL to actively address, measure and embed a zero-tolerance approach to racism while advancing and supporting race equality across all aspects of the institution.

HEA implementation plan recommendation:

- Systematic collection of data which will provide the necessary evidence base regarding staff and student representation, access and outcome by ethnicity, and benchmarking of this data against Census data

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
2.1	Run a voluntary disclosure education and awareness-raising campaign to encourage existing staff to disclose their ethnicity via the HR Core portal.	In accordance with the HEA's National Data Strategy, to encourage staff to volunteer equality data to improve data collection with a view to accessing reliable and accurate data to address gaps and unequal opportunities. This action will contribute to Athena Swan Action 1.2.6 work with HR to implement a self- declaration option on the Core portal and encourage awareness-raising and disclosure by staff in the ethnicity field for EDI analysis and equality of opportunities.	HREDI Office; EDF; HR	Q3 2024	Campaign rollout Significant increase in ethnicity disclosure on Core
2.2	Provide new employees option to volunteer ethnicity data when their records are being set up on Core while complying with GDPR and data protection.	Helps assess the ethnicity pay gap and other gaps in outcomes.	HR, HREDI Office	Q3 2024	All new staff have the facility to disclose ethnicity
2.3	Record staff data, including research staff data, disaggregated by ethnicity.	To inform our strategic priorities and policies and to monitor retention and career outcomes for staff from minority ethnic groups, including Irish Travellers.	HR, HREDI Office, ITD	Q3 2024	Staff data disaggregated by ethnicity recorded
2.4	Devise and implement a plan for gathering student ethnicity data in collaboration with the HEA on current and incoming undergraduate and taught postgraduate students.	To submit a business case to the UL Digital Governance Steering Committee (DGSC) for resourcing to update the enrolment process for all students to facilitate EDI data collection and updating for undergraduate students. Recording student data, disaggregated by ethnicity, would enable us to assess the implementation of our strategic priorities and policies and to monitor retention and outcomes for students from minority ethnic groups.	HREDI Office; Academic Registry; Student Engagement; Student Life; ITD & Data Protection Unit; UL Global; Student Life; Graduate & Professional Studies (GPS); Institutional Research Officer IRO[5]; Postgraduate Students' Union (PSU), ITD	Q2 2025	A plan approved by the Digital Governance Steering Committee (DGSC) for Q2 2025 Implementation by Q3 2026
2.5	Devise and implement a plan for gathering current and incoming research postgraduate student ethnicity data.	Currently, research students do not use online enrolment, and use a "paper" form. In line with this action, it is advised to digitise their enrolement. To submit a business case to the UL Digital Governance Steering Committee (DGSC) for resourcing to update the enrolment process for all students to facilitate EDI data collection and updating for postgraduate students. Recording student data, disaggregated by ethnicity, would enable us to assess the implementation of our strategic priorities and policies and to monitor retention and outcomes for students from minority ethnic groups.	HREDI Office; Academic Registry; Student Engagement; PSU; ITD & Data Protection Office; Institutional Research Officer IRO; GPS; UL Global; ITD; Doctoral College	Q2 2025	A plan approved by the DGSC for Q2 2025- Implementation by Q3 2026

[5] Institutional Research Officer (IRO) have a critical role to play in this action as they are the data stewards for the existing HEA Access Survey. The responsible bodies in the action (Action 2.4] need to work out the intermingling between the two for this project to work.

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
2.6	Access UL anonymised responses to the National Race Equality Survey and compile a summary report.	As part of transparent reporting on status quo and identifying gaps.	HREDI Office	Q4 2023	Summary report compiled to inform future work
2.7	Compile a report that outlines the experiences of minority ethnicity staff from data gathered via the staff survey conducted for UL's 2022 Silver Athena Swan application.	To identify gaps to inform the direction of future research.	HREDI Office	Q4 2023	Discrete report to inform future equity work regarding the experiences of minority ethnicity staff
2.8	Conduct further research with minority staff and students to elaborate on both the findings of the 2022 UL Athena Swan survey and existing research already conducted with students in other Irish universities.	To ensure this action plan meets all needs in changing circumstances.	HREDI Office	Q1 2024	Research reports on the experiences of staff and students in UL to inform future equity work regarding the experiences of minority ethnicity staff and students
2.9	Establish a baseline for the representation of ethnic minority students, reflecting their population in Ireland, such as refugees and international protection applicants as well as the domestic racialised groups, including the Traveller Community and other Irish citizens and long-term residents from diverse ethnic backgrounds.	To set targets for the reasonable representations of minorities and racialised groups within UL student and staff cohorts.	HREDI Office; Academic Registry; Access Campus; University of Sanctuary, ITD	Q2 2027	Annual data analysis of enrolments and graduations rate.

The measure of success for this action is dependent on actions 2.4 and 2.5 (concerning ethnicity data collection) being implemented |
2.10	Establish a baseline for measuring academic and career progress for staff, considering the principles of race equality and intersectionality.	The baseline established will serve as a tool to systematically assess how effectively staff are advancing in their academic and professional endeavours. This could involve metrics or indicators that highlight progress in promotions, professional development opportunities, research accomplishments, teaching evaluations, and other relevant career milestones.	HR; HREDI Data Manager	Q2 2025	The rate of promotion among staff from minorities
2.11	Establish a baseline for measuring students' academic progress, considering the principles of race equality and intersectionality.	To end the invisibility of the hard work and talent of this category of student.	Academic Registry; University of Sanctuary; GPS, UL Global; Doctoral College	Q4 2024	Improvement in the rate of academic progress and successful graduation for racialised students
2.12	Change the method of submitting a complaint from email to an online, user-friendly form and put in place a system to track complaints, including results and consequences.	To ensure quality assurance in access to justice.	Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit; ITD	Q3 2024	Faster response, Enhanced transparency in tracking outcomes and ensuring accountability, Positive feedback on the simplicity and effectiveness of the process.
2.13	Establish a system to gather EDI-related feedback from staff who leave UL.	To identify and address gaps in the system.	HR; ITD	Q1 2025	Shortfalls identified

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
2.14	Establish a baseline to match the demographic representation among staff, especially those in direct service or public-facing positions, with that of the diverse student body.

This action is contingent upon the completion of actions 2.4 and 2.5. | To ensure adequate representation and create a comfortable environment for ethnic minorities when using the services, it is important for them to encounter individuals from similar backgrounds.

Additionally, to ensure mutual understanding in interactions between frontline staff and students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. | HR; Academic Registry; UL Global; GPS; Doctoral College | Q4 2025 | Better representation of minoritised groups among PMSS staff, especially in frontline roles. |
| 2.15 | Establish a baseline of the ethnicity profile of UL senior management roles. | To ensure that:
(i) Promotion opportunities are available for all employees
(ii) Minorities are equitably represented in leadership positions
(iii) Role models for ethnic minorities are visible

This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.1.5: Conduct an audit of leadership and committee membership across additional equality grounds. | HR; ITD; HREDI Office | Q1 2026 | Better representation of minoritised groups among senior positions |
| 2.16 | Consult annually with international staff and students to identify gaps in the support for international staff and students, as concerning issues may vary depending on different time contexts. | To identify gaps and needs to adjust the training of HR and UL Global staff to support incoming international staff and students based on needs.

This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.4.3: Undertake focus groups with staff from ethnic backgrounds to gather information on their experiences and to identify gaps in policies. | HR, UL Global, Be Well @ UL | Q2 2025 | Focus groups and surveys for international staff and students are set up and rolled on at the end of each academic year. |
| 2.17 | Consult with internal and external stakeholders (e.g., civil society organisations, local authorities, etc.) to identify gaps in reasonable accommodations at UL for minority and racialised groups. | To ensure equitable access for minority and racialised groups to all available services and to contribute to embedding HREDI Strategic Plan 2023- 2027 across UL functions. | HREDI Office | Q2 2025 | Interviews with internal and external stakeholders are set out and rolled out at the end of each academic year. |
| 2.18 | As part of community engagement, establish regular consultations (survey/focus groups, etc.) with minority and racialised groups to assess campus safety annually. | To ensure that available support services for safety and security remain responsive to changing environments and dynamic shifts. | HREDI Office; Buildings and Estate; Be Well @UL | Q2 2025 | Focus groups and surveys on campus safety are set up, and rolled on at the end each academic year |
| 2.19 | Establish an assessment toolkit to collect feedback from individuals departing UL, specifically designed to evaluate their experiences and observations of their manager's adherence to the principles of race equality and intersectionality. | This action was adopted from best practices in the Russell Group universities.

This initiative will help UL identify gaps and deficiencies in the management system, which can also be utilised for Athena Swan activities. | HR; HREDI Office | Q2 2025 | The feedback form is rolled out |

Theme 3: Making Race Equality Policies and Reporting Mechanisms Transparent

Aligned with the Public Sector Duty (IHREC Section 42), the UL HREDI strategic plan and the HEA Race Equality Implementation Plan, UL underscores its commitment to fostering transparency in its race equality policies and reporting mechanisms. By promoting openness and accountability, we aim to enhance trust and ensure equitable outcomes for all members of our community. This focus on transparency serves as a cornerstone in our efforts to promote inclusivity and combat racial discrimination within the university setting. The following actions will be taken to ensure transparency in race equality policies and reporting mechanisms at UL.

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

- Clear signposting to existing policies relating to race equality
- Clear signposting of disciplinary and reporting procedures in relation to race equality on campus

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
3.1	Establish clear signposting to existing policies and procedures relating to 'race' equality from HREDI website and alert staff via departments, schools and unit heads.	To make sure that all students and staff have easy access to support services and relevant information.	HREDI Office; deans	Q2 2024 and ongoing	Clear signposting complete
3.2	Develop a text-based web page, accessible via the HREDI website, that clearly indicates the pathways to relevant policies and for reporting racism and xenophobia (complaint mechanism flowchart).	To ensure that all policies and procedures are accessible and understandable for all staff and students in line with Irish equality law.	UL Web Team; graphic designers; HREDI	Q2 2024	Web pages completed
3.3	Embed any advancements in Irish equality law and hate crime legislation into policies and procedures.	To highlight the structural, institutional and historical dimensions of racism that have informed past and current practice in HEIs and the societies in which they are situated.	GA Corporate Secretary; Executive Committee	Q2 2024 Ongoing	Informed policies by the last updated Irish Equality Law
3.4	Design a system to ensure that the principles of race equality intersectionality are prioritised in the development and update of institutional policies and strategies. This can be done through gap analysis by EDF working groups (Action Planning Working Group and Policy, Research and Survey Design Working Group).	To ensure that policies are responsive to the needs of racialised groups and have the capacity to address them.	HREDI Office; Culture & Engagement Working Group; HR EDF working groups (Action Planning Working Group and Policy, Research and Survey Design Working Group); departments relating to each policy	Q2 2024 Ongoing	All relevant policies amended, and new policies published and clearly signposted.

For example, following a gap analysis completed by an EDF Working Group, the Student Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures were amended to include anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies in line with anti-racism principles. |
| 3.5 | Establish a Race Equality subgroup of each faculty EDI committee to take responsibility for identifying and implementing race/ethnicity equity initiatives within and across each faculty, including student representation. | To ensure that, in addition to centralised actions, each faculty actively participates in the implementation of this action plan, tailoring its actions to the faculty's specific context and requirements. | HREDI Office; EDF; Assistant Deans EDI (ADEDIs); Assistant Deans International (ADIs) | Q4 2024 | Working group established and work plan folded into faculty EDI committees |
| 3.6 | Work with faculties to draw up faculty-level race equality action plans that dovetail with this UL action plan and align with Athena Swan work. | To identify common areas to address collectively and consistently.

To identify differences and exchange ideas to achieve optimum outcomes. | ADEDIs, Faculty EDI Committee working groups and available support services | Q4 2024 monitored annually | Action plan of priority projects developed ready for the beginning of Q2 2024 |
| 3.7 | Establish a systematic and sustainable anti-racism taskforce with representation from faculty EDI committees. | To ensure structural and systematic change in line with the requirements of the HREDI strategy. | HREDI Office; EDF; ADEDIs, ADIs, Student communities | Q1 2025 | Taskforce established and implementing activities |
| 3.8 | In the case of racial discrimination and racial harassment, amend the complaint form and appeal form to be user-friendly, inclusive and accessible, tailored to each group of complainants and available online through an MS form, by emailing back a form or in hard copy, if required. | To ensure complaint forms are user-friendly and accessible for staff and students with a disability (considering intersectionality).

To ensure the redesigned forms include feedback from users and those who are involved in implementing policies. | HR EDI Office; HR; Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit (CDVU) | Q2 2024 ongoing | Redesigned forms available

Ongoing positive feedback received from users and notably fewer queries from students looking for help completing the forms |

Theme 4: Supporting Diversity in Staffing

Our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive academic environment extends to ensuring representation and equity in our staffing. Under Theme 4 of this action plan, we focus on implementing the HEA recommendations to enhance diversity in our workforce. By supporting diverse hiring practices, providing equitable opportunities for career advancement, and promoting an inclusive workplace culture, we aim to reflect the rich diversity of our student body and broader community within our staff through the actions specified below.

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

• Reviewing how job specifications are compiled to follow good equality practice, ensuring recruitment criteria are inclusive, and reducing the number of 'desirables' in job adverts

• Targeting advertising towards ethnic minority groups

• Providing mandatory race equality training for all members of recruitment panels

• Providing immigration advice for non-EEA staff to reduce employment difficulties

• Institutional identification and targeted support for underrepresented groups

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
4.1	Implement Athena Swan Intersectionality Working Group guidance on recruitment, promotion and progression practices based on the related national implementation plan timeline.	To ensure the principle of intersectionality is considered in relevant decision-making.	HREDI Office	Q1 2025	Clear guidance in place
4.2	Ensure all department and school EDI committees conduct an analysis of their current recruitment advertising avenues with a view to targeting ethnic minority groups more pointedly.	To identify and mitigate existing gaps in recruitment processes. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.1.2: Put in place a best practice guide for recruiting candidates with disabilities.	Local department and school EDI committees; heads of department (HoDs) and heads of school (HoSs) reporting to faculty EDI committees	Q4 2025	Department and school reports Increase diversity in recruitment by the percentage determined by the established baseline set by this action plan (signpost to the related action)
4.3	In cooperation with civil society organisations that represent ethnic minorities, identify institutional- level recruitment channels that reach ethnic minority groups.				
4.4	Establish a dedicated programme of career progression and support for ethnic minority staff who wish to avail of it; specifically target funding, language supports, training, employment and immigration status.	For meaningful capacity building for underprivileged groups, it is crucial to mitigate the disparities among individuals stemming from their diverse backgrounds to ensure they have access to equitable opportunities.	UL Global; HR	Q2 2024	Satisfaction of international staff members reported in UL staff survey questions relating to induction and support
4.5	Prioritising the principle of race equality and intersectionality, take the steps below to connect the HR pipeline to the HREDI strategy: – Review how job specifications are compiled to follow good equality practice, ensuring recruitment criteria are inclusive and reducing the number of 'desirables' in job adverts. – Athena Swan Action 2.1.2: Put in place a best practice guide for recruiting candidates with disabilities. – Establish a mechanism/ toolkit to monitor the selection and promotions processes and progress pathways.	This action will contribute to HR's public sector duty to assess, address and report inequalities in line with the UL HREDI strategy.	HREDI Office; HR	Q3 2024	Positive feedback collected after job interviews from job applicants Positive feedback on the promotion process collected from current employees
4.6	Put in place initiatives (capacity building, mentorship, tailored training) to support staff from ethnic minority and racialised groups with precarious contracts and to facilitate their access to stable employment status.	To reduce precarity among minoritised groups and empower them to secure stable positions.	HR; EDI Assistant Deans in each faculty	Q1 2025	Better representation of minoritised groups in long-term and permanent positions.

Theme 5: Fostering Diversity in HEIs

At UL, we are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse academic environment. Aligning with the HEA Race Equality Action Plan recommendations, our action plan aims to foster diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all students and staff. Through the following targeted initiatives and strategic actions, we strive to build a community that values and respects the rich tapestry of backgrounds and perspectives that each individual brings to our institution.

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

- Organising intercultural activities for both staff and students so people can become more understanding and respectful of other cultures
- Developing university strategies to engage diverse views, such as decolonizing/diversifying the curriculum to move away from Euro-centric viewpoints

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
5.1	Create a structured and sustainable plan to develop and promote Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) activities rather than relying on ad hoc approaches in festivals, campaigns, etc.	To maximise the impact of events not only within UL but also in the broader community.	EDF; HREDI Office	Ongoing	Provision of annual report, including related feedback, on relevant events and campaigns
5.2	Develop a toolkit for assessing the representation of minority and racialised groups in physical spaces, images and artworks as well as in the names of buildings and lecture halls, including restaurants.	To support the inclusion of staff and students through enhancing inclusivity on campus. To foster inclusivity in all aspects of campus life.	Buildings and estates	Q4 2024	Annual report by Buildings and estates about changes
5.3	Ensure the principles of race equality and intersectionality are incorporated into the requirements for granting academic or professional research, teaching or training funding or scholarships. For example, consider the race equality dimension of the funding planning and structure.	To ensure equality of opportunities in line with the HREDI strategy.	Associate Vice President Student Engagement AVPSE, Academic Regulations Committee, Research Office, UL Foundation	Q2 2025	International protection applicants, refugees, vulnerable immigrant groups and Irish Travellers report positive feedback. University of Sanctuary designation is retained. Full uptake of University of Sanctuary scholarships annually and successful degree attainment of participating students.
5.4	Develop a protocol or set of guidelines for event planning, including the selection of guest speakers. Require guest speakers and invitees to sign the protocol in advance, thereby committing not to use any discriminatory language, such as racist, ablist or sexist language or disrespectful behaviours.	To ensure that all events are inclusive and welcoming in terms of receptions, speeches, etc. To support the inclusion of staff and students through enhancing inclusivity on campus.	HREDI Office	Q4 2024	Positive feedback after the events, and reflection in a central annual report Checklist: the diversity of attendees and speakers
5.5	Introduce a new policy or code of conduct for visitors to UL, setting out expected behaviours for engaging with UL staff, students and the local community, signifying a commitment to a zero-tolerance stance to racism within the UL community. This should be included in the visitors' agreement for visiting academics).	To ensure that nobody is discriminated against and disrespected in this university, not only by the UL community but also by visitors.	HREDI Office; Vice President Research (VPR)	Q4 2024	Positive feedback received after events and training involving external visitors Zero complaints regarding discrimination or disrespect
5.6	Include a requirement for canteens and catering management to offer a variety of culturally appropriate food and drink options on campus and during events while also increasing the visibility of these choices. For example, event organisers should be required to ensure that soft drinks and vegetarian food are available at event receptions.	To support the inclusion of staff and students through enhancing inclusivity on campus.	Healthy UL (and its work with contracted suppliers)	Q2 2024	Positive feedback from event service users and invitees

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
5.7	Open the campus at weekends for on-campus activities.	To create an inclusive and safe space for socialising, especially for those who live far from family. To support the inclusion of staff and students through enhancing inclusivity on campus.	Office of Associate Vice President Student Engagement; Buildings & Estates	Q4 2024	Positive feedback from students and staff
5.8	In situations where a dress code is implemented, such as in laboratories, ensure that it is adaptable to different cultures.	To support the inclusion of staff and students through enhancing inclusivity on campus.	ADEDIs and/or EDI chairperson in the four faculties	Q4 2024	Annual report of positive changes
5.9	Develop a toolkit to audit modules to address the decolonisation and diversification of curriculum and pedagogy and incorporate diverse perspectives into teaching materials to promote diversity of thought.	To value diversity of thought and ensure a safe space to express diverse opinions. This action aligns with Internationalisation at Home (TRIP[6]) projects and the HREDI strategy.	Curriculum Development in Centre for Transformative Learning CTL, EDI Assistant Deans; ADEDIs; HoDs and HoSs; course directors; module leaders; TRIP project working group	Q3 2025	Audit report and recommendations
5.10	Develop a toolkit to assess the involvement of research and teaching institutions from the Global South in UL projects.	To ensure UL engages effectively with partners in the Global South.	VP for Research; HREDI Office; Working Group on Internationalisation at Home IaH project	Q2 2025	Mapping and transforming curricula, showcasing research and developing institutional partnerships and research collaborations
5.11	Participate in projects in partnership with the partners from the Global South to develop inclusive pedagogy that is culturally and linguistically sensitive and that fosters diversity on campus.	To develop a comprehensive and multi- faceted decolonisation project through mapping and transforming curricula, showcasing research and developing institutional partnerships and research collaborations.	Erasmus+ Projects Office at UL; Working Group on Internationalisation at Home	Q2 2023 and ongoing	Internationalisation at Home Project completed, and toolkit mainstreamed UL increases its ranking for 'internationalisation of research and teaching' in the QS World University Rankings
5.12	Set up regular training (e.g. in the form of exhibitions, plays, music events, etc.) on Travellers' culture and history studies for students and staff.	To provide for the inclusion of Traveller culture and history in the curriculum in line with the requirements of the Traveller Culture and History in Education Bill 2018.	HREDI Office; Department of Sociology	Q3 2024	Visible improvement in the experiences of Traveller students and staff shown by survey and focus group findings
5.13	Develop a toolkit to regularly assess library resources in terms of the inclusion of the latest updated materials from non-Western thinkers, indigenous scholars and racialised scholars (i.e. open access as well as rare books and manuscripts).	Develop a comprehensive and multi- faceted decolonization project through mapping and transforming curricula, showcasing research and developing institutional partnerships and research collaborations.	Library Director; VPR; Internationalisation at Home	Q2 2025	Self-audit toolkit in the related sectors rolled out

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[6] Currently, UL is engaged in the TRIP project (Training and Realising Innovation in Internationalisation at Home Pedagogies), collaborating with five EU universities and two institutions from the Global South. The project is involved in creating a Certificate of Quality Assurance in Inclusive Internationalisation at Home and the development of a self-evaluation process and templates for HEIs.

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
5.14	Embed the principles of race equality and intersectionality within the Research Ethics Policy.	To ensure that all research team members are aware and obligated to consider the principles of race equality, not only in terms of participation of all groups but also in terms of favourable treatment of all participants with different backgrounds.	VPR; HREDI Office	Q1 2025	Positive feedback from participants in research projects
5.15	Provide practical English language and Irish language training (e.g workshops, one-to-one English academic writing, etc.) for non-native English speakers (students and staff), using international best practice.	To ensure equal opportunity, regardless of different starting points.	UL Global; Centre for Transformative Learning; Internationalisation at Home Committee in relation to its project on English language summer school to support students	On going	The visible positive impact on learning outcomes and a better success rate
5.16	Develop a checklist to make sure that the elements of race equality and intersectionality are considered in policies and activities related to sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, ensure any progress on achieving the SDGs aligns with the principle of race equality.	To align with UL's commitments to achieving SDGs, as indicated in the HREDI strategy.	Chief Finance & Performance Officer (CFPO); Executive Committee (which has overall responsibility for sustainability at UL)	Q2 2025	Audit the presence of race equality in SDG achievements (for example, in relation to equality, education, work, etc.)

Theme 6: Supporting Diversity in Student Recruitment

Supporting diversity in student recruitment is a key component of the University of Limerick's Race Equality Action Plan. Guided by the HEA implementation plan recommendations, our goal is to foster an inclusive environment that reflects the rich diversity of our society. By actively seeking and supporting students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, we aim to create a vibrant, dynamic campus where every student has the equal opportunity to thrive. This commitment to diversity, which enriches the educational experience, is reflected through the following actions:

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

- Targeted support programmes to improve up take of, and experience of ethnic minority students in regards to applying for scholarship and funding

- Targeted support programmes to facilitate ethnic minority students' access to placement and training opportunities

- Targeted career advice for marginalised groups, and first generation third level students

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
6.1	Develop a centralised, structured and sustained outreach programme to facilitate access to higher education (HE) for: (i) students from direct provision centres (e.g., open days, etc.) (ii) students from DEIS schools (which have an overrepresentation of racialised groups) (iii) students who are the first generation in their family to go to college (iv) students who live in Traveller Community sites	To raise the HE participation levels of these specified groups.	Access & Widening Participation (Student Affairs); University of Sanctuary; NGOs representing racialised groups; direct provision centres	Q3 2024	UL delegations sent to DEIS schools, direct provision centres and Traveller sites to invite students to open days Increase in the rate of enrolment and graduation of students from these groups
6.2	Design and allocate a sport-specific scholarship for underprivileged racialised groups, such as asylum seekers and Travellers.	To mitigate gaps through positive action. In line with HEA indicator targeted support programmes, to increase the uptake of scholarships by ethnic minority students and to improve their experience of the application process.	UL Sport; University of Sanctuary	Q2-2025	Increase in the rate of students from underprivileged backgrounds on scholarships
6.3	Compile a list of student recruitment advertising avenues and identify broader avenues to pointedly target the recruitment and retention of ethnic minority students.	To offer equal opportunity, regardless of background.	Student Affairs; Student Recruitment Strategy Group (or Committee); Student Life; PSU; Access Office	Q4 2025	Additional recruitment channels identified An increase in the ethnic minority student population by the percentage determined by the established baseline set by this action plan (signpost to the related action)
6.4	Establish and monitor a dedicated programme of career progression and support for ethnic minority students who wish to avail of it; ensure the programme specifically targets the funding, placement and training needs of such students.	To dismantle privileges through capacity building.	UL Careers; UL Global, Global-MINDS master's programme; Student Affairs	Q2 2024	Programme established and monitored
6.5	Appoint an EDI student ambassador in each faculty to act as an EDI contact person for students, liaise with ADEDIs and sit on EDI committees.	To ensure a consistent approach in dealing with and engaging students in EDI issues.	Students' Clubs and Societies, including Student Life and PSU; Assistant EDI Deans; HoDs and HoSs; ADEDIs	Q4 2024	Student ambassadors appointed in all faculties

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
6.6	Appoint a Student Support and Engagement officer per faculty, who will sit on the faculty EDI committee.	To ensure a consistent approach in dealing with and engaging students in EDI issues.	HREDI Office; Student Affairs	Q3 2024	Appointed officers become active members of faculty EDI committees
6.7	Work with ITD to establish a diversity calendar.	To foster a culture of inclusivity.	Students' Clubs and Societies, including Student Life and PSU; HREDI Office	Q1 2024	Publication of annual plan of campaigns aimed at making students, students' associations and clubs more aware of specific events and celebrations throughout the year
6.8	Establish a mechanism to monitor the participation and engagement of minority and racialised groups in extracurricular activities.	To foster a sense of belonging in extracurricular activities, including clubs and societies and training and mentorship programmes. To prevent predominantly White-dominated spaces where minorities do not feel a sense of belonging.	Student Life and PSU	Q4 2025	Increase in the rate of participation in extracurricular activities
6.9	Put in place a dedicated team to oversee the development and maintenance of a system that directs students to available support services.	To offer equal opportunity to all.	Student Life and PSU; UL Global	Ongoing	An increase in the rate of service usage as measured by the number of service users, and more positive feedback received from users
6.10	Clearly signpost the supports that are available through the Student Information & Support Coordinator and Student Personal Advisor Support System (PASS).	To make available supports more visible. To raise students' awareness of the role played by the Student Information & Support Coordinator and the PASS in supporting students in cases of harassment and discrimination.	Student Life and PSU; UL Global	Q3 2024	An increase in the rate of access to services
6.11	Establish a schedule for regularly updating the HREDI and related webpages and social media platforms.	To ensure that updates are consistently made on all relevant websites.	HREDI Office; Policy Hub manager	Q3 2024	The rate of access to services Feedback after using the services
6.12	Departmental websites regularly update listings of scholars' research specialisms and indicate whether they are open to approaches from potential PhD students. Each department also provides a pre-application form for applicants to streamline the admission process.	To prevent ad hoc procedures and eliminate informal gatekeeping practices during informal 'pre-application doctoral communications' that disproportionately exclude potential PhD students with ethnic minority backgrounds from entering the PhD programmes.	UL Global, Doctoral College, all schools	Q1 2025	The rate of PhD students from ethnic minority backgrounds in PhD programmes

Theme 7: Awareness and Training

Theme 7 of our action plan focuses on enhancing awareness and training. This theme is pivotal to fostering an inclusive environment by educating staff and students on race equality issues. It aims to provide comprehensive training programmes that address unconscious bias, cultural competency and anti-racism practices. By increasing awareness and equipping the UL community with the necessary skills and knowledge, UL strives to create a more equitable and inclusive campus for everyone. The following actions will be implemented to achieve these goals.

HEA implementation plan recommendations:

- Organising intercultural activities for both staff and students so people can become more understanding and respectful of other cultures

- Sustained anti-racist campaigns on campus and on online platforms

- Mandatory antiracism training for staff at all levels with an emphasis on intersectionality. This should include elements such as bystander intervention, unconscious bias, cultural intelligence, equitable practice and racial justice. These should also counter myths about positive discrimination

- Developing university strategies to engage diverse views, such as decolonising/diversifying the curriculum to move away from Euro-centric viewpoints

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
7.1	Ensure that all staff in all positions, including those in leadership roles, members of interview panels, members of postgraduate student admissions committees and staff on probation, complete the mandatory 'Let's Talk about Race' training programme, and send completion rates and analytics to each unit every month.	To ensure that all staff have a basic understanding of race equality, racism, anti-racism, unconscious bias, equality and human rights in the public service. To ensure fair treatment during the job application process and equitable access to jobs. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.4.7: Secure management approval to include Let's Talk about Race as a mandatory programme.	HR; HREDI Office; EDI Data Officer; line managers; HoDs and HoSs; deans; all staff in leadership positions	Q2 2024	Mandatory training in place for all interview panels and included as part of recruitment packs 100% completion rate for all staff including those in leadership positions Increase in diverse in PG student community
7.2	Establish a practice whereby staff provide evidence of mandatory training, including EDI training, within their PDRS and promotion processes.	To build awareness and understanding of race equality, racism, anti-racism, unconscious bias, equality and human rights in the public service. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.4.7 – Secure management approval to include Let's Talk about Race as a mandatory programme – and with Athena Swan Action 2.4.2, which includes a subtask to include a section in the PDRS on essential training.	HR; line managers	Q3 2024	90% staff completion rate
7.3	Revise the official staff UL induction programme to include clearer reference to the EDI policies and related available support services as well as report and complaint procedures in the case of those who experience racism and xenophobia.	Build awareness and understanding of race equality, racism, anti-racism, unconscious bias, equality and human rights in the public service. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.4.7.	HR; HREDI Office	Q3 2024	EDI induction includes clear and transparent reporting mechanisms and supports
7.4	Establish a centrally run intersectional EDI workshop at which academic and support units are required to attend collectively and for which records are kept by HR (like Dignity and Respect training).	To enhance staff skills in EDI in line with UL HREDI Strategy. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 3.2.1.	HREDI Office; HR	Q4 2024	Intersectional EDI workshops rolled out to all academic and support units 90% staff completion rate
7.5	Provide staff with a range of self-learning opportunities that include courses on anti- racism, anti-discrimination, intercultural competence training, bystander intervention, allyship[7] and gender identity recognition.	To make organisational culture change at different levels to achieve significant improvements within the system.	HR; HREDI Office; Students Affairs	Q2 2025	At the end of each year, 30% of staff and students completed training with evaluations illustrating greater knowledge and awareness. Future consultations on race equality demonstrate better outcomes and positive cultural change from the initial established baseline in the regular surveys and focus groups.

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[7] The quality or practice of supporting other people who are part of a group that is treated less favourably.

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
7.6	Develop and implement a mandatory (pass/fail), two-hour intersectional EDI programme for students. Tracked through Brightspace, the programme will address three essential pillars: Learn, Engage and Act.	To broaden students' knowledge of EDI.	HREDI Office	Q1 2025	Positive feedback received from student and graduate exit surveys. The exit surveys will be utilised to showcase people's experience of and engagement with race equality.
7.7	Establish a mandatory EDI champion workshop for all student leaders, including student communities staff, student EDI ambassadors, class representatives and orientation volunteers.	To raise awareness among service providers in a meaningful way and drive change at different levels.	Student communities; PSU HREDI Office	Q4 2024	Positive feedback received from student and graduate exit surveys; fewer reports of racial discrimination and harassment incidents
7.8	Run an annual internal and outward-facing anti-racism campaign that includes knowledge exchange, awareness raising and educative activities around racism and xenophobia.	To drive organisational culture change.	EDF Events; HREDI Office	Annually, starting in March	Student and staff survey results show greater awareness levels of racism and xenophobia
7.9	Develop an in-person, anti-racism pilot training programme for staff based on the Sustainable Alliances Against Anti-Muslim Hatred (SALAAM) model.	To provide staff with information on concepts such as race and racism(s); polices/laws such as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and the National Plan Against Racism; and practical guidance on how to report racism in UL and seek support.	HREDI Office; HR Learning & Development	Q4 2024	At least one pilot session rolled out each semester. Each pilot group will convey the message to the broader group, aiming to cover 10% of the staff by the end of each year.
7.10	Train a group of HR staff (designated contact point) to provide support for international staff, both pre- and post-arrival, including assistance with issues such as housing, children's schooling and childcare.	To ensure their proper settlement and integration into life in Ireland, and lesson barriers that can impact their life.	HREDI Office; HR; UL Global	Q4 2024 Regular actions	Feedback form sent to new arrivals six months after their arrival. Positive feedback received.
7.11	Provide practical training for principal investigators (PIs) and line managers on the immigration requirements that affect non-EU staff.	To provide a safe and supportive work environment for non-EU staff against potential barriers they may face due to their specific status in Ireland.	HREDI Office; HR; UL Global	Q4 2024 Regularly repeating	Positive feedback from non-EU staff
7.12	Provide training for HR staff on various types of visas and related stamps and statuses and Irish immigration law's requirements that affect both non-EU staff and non-EU job applicants.	To provide equal opportunity to access to work for racialised groups with different immigration status.	HREDI Office; HR; UL Global	Q4 2025 Regularly repeating	Rate of employment of non-EU employees across different sectors and different levels.
7.13	Incorporate into the induction process training sessions on Irish and European culture for students and staff from non-western backgrounds.	To prevent cultural shock and minority stress and facilitate smoother integration into life in Ireland.	HREDI Office; UL Global; Healthy UL	Q 1 2025	Optimal mental health rates among individuals from non-Western backgrounds. This can be tracked through the rate of using mental health services and regular feedback surveys.

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
7.14	Provide staff training on diverse cultures and their impact on students and colleagues, such as considering the fasting month of Ramadan during exam times or working hours.	To enhance mutual understanding between different groups and remove barriers to success in work and study for all, regardless of cultural backgrounds. This action aligns with Athena Swan Action 2.4.8: Develop an intercultural competence programme for all staff.	HREDI Office; HR	Q2-2025	A better rate of success in study at work among racialised groups (for example, exam records)
7.15	Provide specific training on the principle of race equality and intersectionality (including case studies) to the Student Information & Support Coordinator (SISC) and those involved in the PASS.	To ensure meaningful support is available for service users.	HREDI Office	Q4 2024	High level of understanding among service providers, which can be reflected in their services
7.16	Thoroughly revise HR's Dignity and Respect training to integrate principles of race equality and intersectionality and include practical HEI case studies informed by legal experts.	To adapt the training to the UL context. To maximise the efficiency of the training by offering it both in-person and online.	HREDI Office; HR	Q4 2024	New training programme incorporating all essential criteria rolled out
7.17	Thoroughly revise the Dignity and Respect training evaluation survey to include, for example, precise questions such as whether the training covered practical cases in HEI institutions.	To assess the practicality of the training.	HREDI Office; HR	Q3 2024	A comprehensive feedback survey provided at the end of each training session
7.18	Provide training to students on the Student Dignity & Respect Policy.	To ensure that students are aware of their duties and entitlements and available support services and remedies.	HREDI Office	Q2 2025	Greater student awareness of their rights and duties Improved outcomes from complaint mechanisms
7.19	Provide training on the conceptual-legal framework of race equality and intersectionality and aspects of racism in HEIs to the UL Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit (CDVU); University Advocates; investigation panels and complaint panels.	To ensure that those with responsibility for investigating cases of racial discrimination or harassment are fully informed on this complex aspect of law.	HREDI Office; HR; Complaints, Discipline & Vetting Unit (CDVU); Office of Advocates; School of Law (equality law)	Q1 2025	High level of knowledge among the investigator bodies and decision- making committees, which reflects in decisions on complaint cases.
7.20	Provide training on the conceptual-legal framework of racial discrimination, harassment and incitement to hatred to student support officers, SISC, the Chaplaincy and those involved in the PASS.	To keep the support service providers up to date with the complex issues covered by the framework as they might be involved in the complaint process.	HREDI Office; School of Law	Q1 2025	Positive feedback about the function of support service providers received at the end of each semester. Higher level of awareness among support service provides that is reflected in the level of satisfaction among service users.

Ref.	Specific action	Rational	Responsibility/Area	Timeline	Measure of success
7.21	Review and update accordingly the unconscious bias training to determine how to better address race equality topics.	To ensure the training is transformative in a meaningful way.	HREDI Office	Q3 2024	Training programme updated
7.22	Provide researchers with training on how to embed intersectionality in research through design.	To ensure research outcomes that address intersectional inequalities at different levels in society.	VPR	Q4 2025	The principle of intersectionality is embedded in research methodology, ethics and research aims and objectives as a requirement for funding, etc.
7.23	Adapt active consent programmes for multicultural and diverse students and staff.	To ensure ethnic minorities can benefit from these programmes and avoid cultural shock.	SVSH manager	Q4 2024	Different groups consulted about active consent programmes and their viewpoints reflected in such programmes.

Above: *Plassey House illuminated in red to show Racism the Red Card for one week, to mark the launch of the UL Anti-Racism Campaign 2024, starting on March 21st, in recognition of the Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.*

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