THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of Mathematics

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2022
School of Mathematics

1: Introduction

With networks both here in our city and across the world, the School of Mathematics at the University of Edinburgh is proud to be an institution that attracts and welcomes a large, diverse range of staff and student communities.

The School of Mathematics recognises that the values of equality, diversity and inclusion are paramount for the equitable treatment and wellbeing of everyone within and associated with the School, and therefore aims to be an organisation that leads by example for all its staff and students to enable and provide a safe, inclusive place of education and employment for all. This means planning and committing to actions that promote an inclusive, fair, respectful, and welcoming culture in which all staff and students can flourish.

The School is pleased to present this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This Strategy will function alongside the University of Edinburgh's institutional EDI Strategy and the Equality Outcomes 2021-2025, thus remaining in line with the University's Strategy 2030 and reflecting the University-wide priorities regarding equality, diversity and inclusion.

The accompanying Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan is intended to communicate the primary aims identified, the specific aims that are in place to achieve these aims, and the targeted actions taken towards those aims, as well as the general parameters of success.

The School of Mathematics strives for all staff, students, and members of our community to feel welcomed and supported, and aims to create a diverse and inclusive environment where everyone can contribute to the School's life, growth, and community.

1.1: Definitions of E, D & I

The School of Mathematics recognises that the understandings and definitions of equality, diversity and inclusion are multi-faceted and can differ in varying contexts.

For the purposes of this Strategy, the following definitions will be used:

Diversity:	*The recognition, respect, and appreciation of differences between people, including backgrounds, personality, life experiences, beliefs, and characteristics or aspects that define an individual.*
Equality:	*Ensuring that every individual is treated with respect and dignity, has access to equal opportunities to flourish, and is not discriminated against based on their characteristics.*
Inclusion:	*The active promotion and encouragement of a culture in which every member of the School feels supported and valued, and the undertaking of organisational initiatives and projects to this end.*

This Strategy also makes reference to 'equity,' which in this case is defined to be the respectful and fair treatment of every individual that is specific to their needs. Individuals who suffer discrimination based on a protected characteristic may require more focussed or specialised support than an individual who does not, and equity ensures that opportunities which are offered 'equally' are in fact just and fair.

As an institution the School of Mathematics seeks to always be open-minded and willing to learn how best to support our diverse communities, and aims to maintain an open dialogue on the understanding of these principles and how they can best be applied for the benefit of all staff and students.

1.2: Commitment to Existing Legislation

The School of Mathematics is compliant with the current United Kingdom equality laws and scope of responsibilities, including but not limited to the nine protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act and the associated Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

This School also recognises other characteristics with which an individual could be considered disadvantaged, including but not limited to; socio-economic background, caring responsibilities or family circumstances, trade union membership, nationality, and migrant status. The School recognises that every individual should be given fair opportunities to reach their full potential and should be treated no less favourably due to any personal characteristic.

The School of Mathematics also recognises that where direct or indirect discrimination occurs within the School, it is both morally and legally unacceptable, and steps will be taken to rectify and learn from any incidences that occur (see forthcoming "Accountability and Reporting Procedures" section).

1.3 Recognition of Systematic Inequalities

The School of Mathematics understands that systematic inequalities and barriers exist that specifically affect an individual's access or experience of higher education. The School is also part of the University-wide commitment to Widening Participation and continues to review and expand the best ways to support students in their entrance, progression, and experience in higher education.

The School is furthermore aware of specific systematic inequalities that are of particular concern within the study of mathematics. For example, limited representation regarding certain genders and races. The

School is committed to identifying areas where support or initiatives would be most beneficial and tailoring such projects to the specific needs of those affected, working on principles of equity alongside equality, diversity, and inclusion.

1.4: Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the understanding that people can face multiple interacting oppressions and have varied experiences of discrimination based on many intersecting characteristics. The School of Mathematics recognises that identities work on multiple levels, resulting in unique opportunities and barriers for different individuals, and any discrimination faced often cannot be reduced to only one part of a person's identity. This recognition indicates the need for multi-faceted approaches to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and the School aims to keep intersectionality in mind when planning initiatives, in order to ensure that the outcomes will have long-term and effective impacts.

1.5: Alternative format options

If you require information about our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in alternative formats (for example, braille, large print, or audio), please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion co-directors.

2: Values and Principles

As indicated by an internal survey taken in June 2022, the values and ideas behind Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are sometimes considered less immediately relevant within mathematical academia and administration. It can be thought that human prejudices and beliefs have little to do with a discipline primarily explored through logic and reason. However, as a subject and pedagogy entirely constructed by people, mathematics is not exempt from the influences of human bias and it is thus important to recognise that equality, diversity and inclusion are no less important in the School of Mathematics than in any other discipline.

The School of Mathematics has identified key values which underpin this Strategy and the community within the School:

- Ensure the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded within all levels of the School's activities, including leadership, research, teaching and assessment strategies, curriculum planning, student and staff recruitment, workload allocation, etc.
- Demonstrate visible leadership, communication, learning, and engagement on equality, diversity and inclusion matters.
- Ensure everyone within the School understands both the institutional and personal responsibility to promote equality and inclusive practice, and challenge unfair and discriminatory barriers.
- Regularly engage and involve staff and students, and their networks such as University of Edinburgh's Students' Association (EUSA), University Liberation Officers, Staff Pride Network, and wider relevant organisations to develop and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.

- Ensure that the School's aims and initiatives are led by a consistent understanding of the benefits of good equality, diversity, and inclusion practice, and a commitment to uphold these principles.

These values are contingent on the fundamental understanding that equality, diversity and inclusive practice enhances the School's culture and ensures a better place of work and education for all. The importance of good equality, diversity and inclusion practice within the School is recognised in the following case.

2.1: The Case for EDI

The case for equality, diversity and inclusion in the School of Mathematics is compelling. There are over 1600 people who work or study in the School, and it is imperative that each of these individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Equitable and equal opportunity to develop, progress and be rewarded and recognised within the School must be offered to every individual who works and studies here. The obligation for every institution, the School of Mathematics included, to champion the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion is well-founded, because a well-functioning society can only exist through the interpersonal cooperation of the people in it, each of the 1600 individuals included. This is simply the 'right thing to do.'

Further aspects of the case for EDI concentrate on the tangible benefits of diversity regarding institutional performance and the academic excellence of the School. This is built on the largely accepted belief that equality, diversity and inclusion provide positive performance outcomes for organisations. The relationship between diversity and performance is complex, and the benefits of institutional diversity can be conditional on many factors, such as staff and student EDI training. Furthermore, research thus far demonstrates an associative relationship between diversity and outcomes, rather than a proven causal relationship. This aside, there is still a consensus of the variety of benefits an inclusive and diverse work and study place brings, both anecdotal and quantitative. The School of Mathematics operates both as an employer and as an institute for higher education. Benefits typically associated with traditional corporations can be thus applied to education also, as many of the gains of good EDI practice are applicable to both staff and student experience and satisfaction, with the School as both a work and study place.

External benefits arise when the School better represents the external environment it exists in. The University of Edinburgh, and the School of Mathematics within it, is a top-ranking institution, which attracts attention from a diverse range of people from all over the world. The School must reflect and value this diversity, or risk losing out in important recruitment markets of students and staff.
Internal benefits arise from improvement in internal operations. Research has shown institutions with more diverse workforces (and student populations) have a larger capacity for creativity and problem-solving, resulting from a wider range of perspectives. This is of particular importance to mathematics, as the rich history of the subject demonstrates the importance of a variety of contributions from all cultures and peoples.

There are also wider professional benefits of a workplace free from discrimination. Discrimination, unconscious or not, impacts negatively on the working lives of those who experience it. Unfair treatment and behaviour can cause high labour turnover, loss of talented employees, employment

tribunals, all of which lead to bad publicity. This also applies to students, with increased discrimination causing higher drop-out rates and lower student satisfaction levels in national student surveys. This all contributes to lower staff and student satisfaction within the School, which has the potential to influence School and University rankings.

Overall, the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion must be championed from a perspective of shared values, where the focus on performance is combined a focus on the general benefits of EDI for the 1600 individuals within the School, and the wider society the School impacts and engages with.

3: Aims

The following aims were developed from responses to an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion survey, sent to staff and students in June 2022. The survey reviewed opinions on a variety of EDI-related matters, and both this Strategy and the Action Plan aim to meet the needs which were made evident through the responses.

The initiatives referenced in this section are non-exhaustive, and the School is currently undergoing both reviews and planning stages for further projects. Many of them are also multi-faceted in purpose and will thus overlap between aims. Please see the full Action Plan 2022 for more details.

Aim 1

Foster a respectful and inclusive environment within the School.

The School of Mathematics strives to be an institution that leads by example and fosters an environment of inclusivity and respect so that no member of the community feels unwelcome or mistreated. By reviewing institutional culture and practices, and promoting zero tolerance for discriminatory treatment, the School will improve its position as a place of study or work where every individual can flourish and achieve their success with the assurance they will be respected and supported however needed.

This includes:

- Ensuring all members of the School understand their responsibilities to promote a respectful and inclusive learning and working environment and are aware of relevant EDI polices, guidelines, and support services.
- Providing students and staff of minority genders equitable opportunities to achieve their potential, including the opportunity to network with others in mathematics and encourage ‘role models’ for younger staff and students.
- Advancing and widening support for neurodivergent students, including peer support and assessment criteria review.
- Improving awareness of potential unfair and/or discriminatory behaviour within the School and equip staff with the framework and skills to challenge this.

Aim 2

Raise engagement and awareness of EDI within the School.

Survey engagement with the School community has revealed a notable trend amongst both staff and students, demonstrating limited awareness of what equality, diversity, and inclusion mean to the School and what impacts they have. In order for these values to be tangible and thus have lasting effects within the institution, it is crucial that effort is increased into raising awareness around equality, diversity, and inclusion, and the work done by the EDI Committee and other individuals within the School. This can then encourage greater engagement with equality, diversity, and inclusion values and the fostering of a more equitable and welcoming School culture.

This includes:

- Advertising the diversity of mathematics and the contributions of people from backgrounds that are generally underrepresented in the School's academic community (e.g. gender, disability, minority ethnicity, socio-economically disadvantaged circumstances etc.).
- Providing updates surrounding the work the EDI Committee and wider team is doing to address EDI matters in the School.
- Public promotion of EDI-related materials within the School, including this Strategy and the associated Action Plan, EDI events, and advertising material from supporting relevant networks.

Aim 3

Promote EDI good practice, including inclusive and accessible teaching & learning practices.

The School of Mathematics consistently seeks to ensure a working and study environment that is inclusive and accessible to all level of needs and backgrounds. To ensure the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion are upheld, it is important that the School's curriculum and everyday teaching and learning practices are designed to foster a learning and working culture that is accessible, safe, and welcoming for all.

This includes:

- Increasing staff and student awareness of unconscious bias and how to effectively address it, in order to avoid unintentional unfair treatment.
- Promoting inclusive approaches to the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment, specifically regarding accessibility and discussions around decolonisation in mathematics.
- Providing and promoting self-learning resources and events to assist with the above.

Aim 4

Support the recruitment and progression of a diverse body of staff & students

The School gladly celebrates the diversity of its members and seeks to attract, retain, and develop a diverse community. The School aims to implement measures and initiatives that ensure everyone has

access to adequate support and opportunity to succeed. The School of Mathematics will continue with existing University practices to this end.

This includes:

- Monitoring existing EDI-related recruitment practices to ensure these are fulfilling their purpose(s) (e.g. Mathematics Access Scholarship, Unconscious Bias training for recruitment panels) and actively ensuring the School attracts and supports students and staff from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Re-evaluating existing scholarship programmes to combat the notable gender discrepancy and recruit more women, transgender, and non-binary people, offering sufficient encouragement and support regarding postgraduate study.
- Support early career researcher progression of people from backgrounds that are generally underrepresented in the School's academic community.

4: Accountability and Measuring Success

Organisational accountability is critical for genuine and lasting progress to be made towards an equal, diverse, and inclusive place of work and study. Furthermore, accountability establishes a firm commitment to continuous learning and progress, and builds trust and authenticity between the School and its members with the assurance that complaints will be taken seriously.

With regard to measuring success, it is important to remember that when it comes to equality, diversity, and inclusion there are few results that can be measured with quantitative methods, and the aims are ultimately intended to achieve institutional and cultural changes that will create an environment in which all members of the School feel included, represented, and welcomed.

With this in mind, measures of student satisfaction will be one of the key ways in which to monitor the success of the Strategy Aims. Whether this is via results from wider surveys such as the National Student Survey or more tailored ones such as the recommended EDI attitudes survey, it is important to utilise qualitative feedback as a means to measure the extent to which the EDI Aims are being fulfilled and whether projects need amending.

Other methods and regularity of measuring success will vary depending on the nature, timescale, and scope of the specific initiative; this could include monitoring attendance of EDI-related events and engagement with social media posts. More details for specific measures of success can be found on the Action Plan.

5: Strategy Review

It is advisable that this Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy undergoes a review when necessary or at regular intervals, such as on the appointment of a new EDI Committee/Director(s), or if significant changes are made to the corresponding Action Plan. This is in order to ensure it remains continuously in line with the values and direction of the School.

6: Acknowledgements

We would like to thank members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Grace Sansom and Charlotte Desvages (Co-Directors of EDI), Katie Grieve and Zoe Bagley (Summer 2022 EDI Interns), supporting School of Mathematics committees and forums, and all staff and students who have contributed to the development of the equality, diversity and inclusion strategy.