

Annual Report on Equality Objectives December 2025

1. Introduction

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) places a statutory obligation on public bodies to consider how their functions affect individuals with different protected characteristics, and to monitor the impact of their activities accordingly. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. In addition, there is a specific duty to publish one or more Equality Objectives (EOs) at least every four years, and to provide annual information demonstrating compliance with the general duty.

This report outlines progress made against our Equality Objectives during the 2024–25 academic year, identifies areas requiring further action, and sets out proposed next steps. The current Equality Objectives were established and approved in 2021, with annual progress reports published each December. Separate EOs are in place for staff and students, each structured around three key strands. Since 2021, progress has been achieved across all objectives and at each reporting stage, the objectives have been reviewed and refined to more effectively address specific groups and emerging issues.

Student data in this report is benchmarked internally, comparing outcomes between different student groups within the college rather than against national datasets. This approach reflects our commitment to ensuring that all students experience equitable outcomes from their education, irrespective of wider sector performance. Consequently, the report primarily highlights ‘gaps’ in outcomes between student groups, rather than absolute figures. It is important to recognise that this work represents a continuing journey: the positive and sustained changes we seek will develop gradually over time through consistent and purposeful action.

2. Our college in the local context

Collecting accurate demographic data for the local community presents a number of challenges. Our student population encompasses a wide range of age groups, with many individuals travelling considerable distances to access courses or studying at sites outside their immediate locality. As a result, direct comparisons between the college’s demographic profile and that of the surrounding community are not always meaningful.

In addition, data relating to certain areas of interest—particularly the Protected Characteristics categories—is not consistently gathered for young people at other educational stages, making external benchmarking difficult. Despite these limitations, the college remains committed to ensuring that both our staff and student bodies reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. The data presented below provides an overview of the local context and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to promoting equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for all, regardless of Protected Characteristics.

In terms of ethnicity, the most recent data for Oxfordshire (2021) indicates that in the districts of Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire 15% and 19% of secondary school aged pupils are from ethnic minorities, although some other districts, notably the city centre and Cherwell, have much higher rates at 55% and 29% respectively. Over the last five years the proportion of study programme students identifying from an ethnic minority background has increased by 5.8pp to 18.9%. Data for all college students in 2024-25 shows that around 40.6% (a 7.2pp increase on the

previous year) are from ethnic minorities - given that our adult provision has a naturally wider geographical spread and a strong focus on ESOL and basic skills, this seems more in line with the wider demographic. Appendix A includes student the student data set.

The census data indicates that across the whole county 18% of the population (all ages) is from an ethnic minority (an increase of 1.4pp since 2011), and more widely the Southeast region is slightly higher at 21.2%. At the end of the 2024-25 academic year the staff body was made up of around 17.6% of people who defined their ethnicity as something other than White British, this is an increase of around 2% on the preceding year.

In terms of wider disadvantage, whilst not a recognised protected characteristic with the Equality Act, we also use the equality objectives to drive success for students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. Data provided by Oxfordshire County Council suggests that within Abingdon there is significant disparity between household incomes for example in Abingdon Caldecott ward it is estimated that 24% of children live in low-income households, whereas in some other wards the deprivation rate is as low as 2.6%. Likewise in the Witney area financial deprivation is relatively low, however there are pockets of higher deprivation – Witney Central has up to 16% of children living in low-income families, whereas elsewhere in the town the rate is 5.4%. This means it is somewhat difficult to understand whether the population of students in the college is reflective of the local community – in 2024-25 around 12% of full time 16–18-year-old students applied for and qualified for financial support from us. For adult learners this becomes even more difficult because they are more likely to travel from further afield. (source: [Oxfordshire Insight |](#))

In relation to other protected characteristics, it is not possible to find suitable data to demonstrate the local context in the same way as this data is simply not recorded or made available currently. However, the 2021 census did include an optional question on sexual orientation for those over 16 and this suggests that around 3.25% of the adult population identify with an LGBT+ orientation. College data shows 4.51% of college staff identifying in this category and this has been growing steadily over time. Census data around disabilities indicates 17.8% of people identify with a disability in the UK – this compares with 8% of college staff, although it is not known what proportion of disabled people in the country are able to work, so this is not a direct comparison.

UK Census data about religion (an optional census question which around 94% of residents answered) shows that around 46% of the population identify as 'Christian' - this year 38% of college staff identify in this category, around a 6pp decrease from the previous 2 years, however we still have much lower rates than nationally for other religions such as Muslim, Hindu, Sikhism. Furthermore, around one quarter of staff have not shared their religion data with us.

Appendix B shows the current data held for all staff based on declared data of Protected Characteristics.

3. Our Equality Objectives

The current Equality Objectives for students are:

Strand 1: That all students achieve equally, regardless of ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Study Programme students of minority ethnic heritage are supported to remain and achieve at college - increase retention and achievement across all minority heritage groups, but particularly WB Caribbean, Irish and Gypsy/Irish Traveller to within 3pp of overall college average for their age group and learning aim. • Ensure that all adult learners (including subcontracted) of minority ethnic heritage achieve in line with the college average for their age group and learning aim, increasing retention and achievement to within 3pp of overall.
Strand 2: That all students achieve equally, regardless of disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Study Programme students with dyslexia and dyscalculia are supported to achieve qualifications in maths and English to ensure their future progression in education and employment - increase achievement to within 3pp of the average for their age group and learning aim • Ensure that students with Autism are supported to re-engage with their education post pandemic, attend college and achieve their qualifications at the same rate as their peers. • Ensure that adult learners with Mental Health needs are supported to remain and achieve on their course, increasing achievement to within 3pp of the college average for their age group and learning aim.
Strand 3: That students from other disadvantaged Groups achieve at least as well as their peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Study Programme students who are Looked After Children, Young Adult Carers or are receiving Free Meals are supported to achieve as well as their peers - improve retention and achievement to within 3pp of college average for age group and learning aim.

The current Equality Objectives for staff are:

Strand 1 - That the workforce is reflective of the community and the student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that staff data is as complete as is possible and that staff feel comfortable to disclose their Protected Characteristics before comparisons are made to community and student profiles. • Aim to reduce the number of staff who have not completed their PC data by 10pp by 2023. • Aim to decrease the number of staff who have selected 'Prefer Not To Say' by 3pp by 2023 across all PCs, with particular emphasis on religion/belief and sexual orientation as these are the largest areas where staff select this option.
Strand 2 - That all staff have equality of opportunity to fulfil their potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the College attracts and appoints a diverse workforce and that staff are able to fulfil their potential by removing barriers to productivity and ensure this is monitored and reported on. Increase the number of applications from men, those with a disability and those from minority ethnic backgrounds by 3pp. • Increase appointments of those from Asian, Black, Mixed and 'other' ethnic backgrounds to be proportionally in line with those from 'White' backgrounds compared to applications..
Strand 3 - That all staff have job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report annually on the Staff Satisfaction survey by each of the Protected Characteristics to gauge satisfaction levels and identify trends. • Increase completion of staff survey to at least 50% of all staff • Increase the satisfaction of staff in minority groups to within 3pp of all other staff across at least 75% of questions. • Increase satisfaction levels of male staff to within 3pp of all other staff on the subjects of feeling valued and staff development.

4. Progress against Equality Objectives - Students

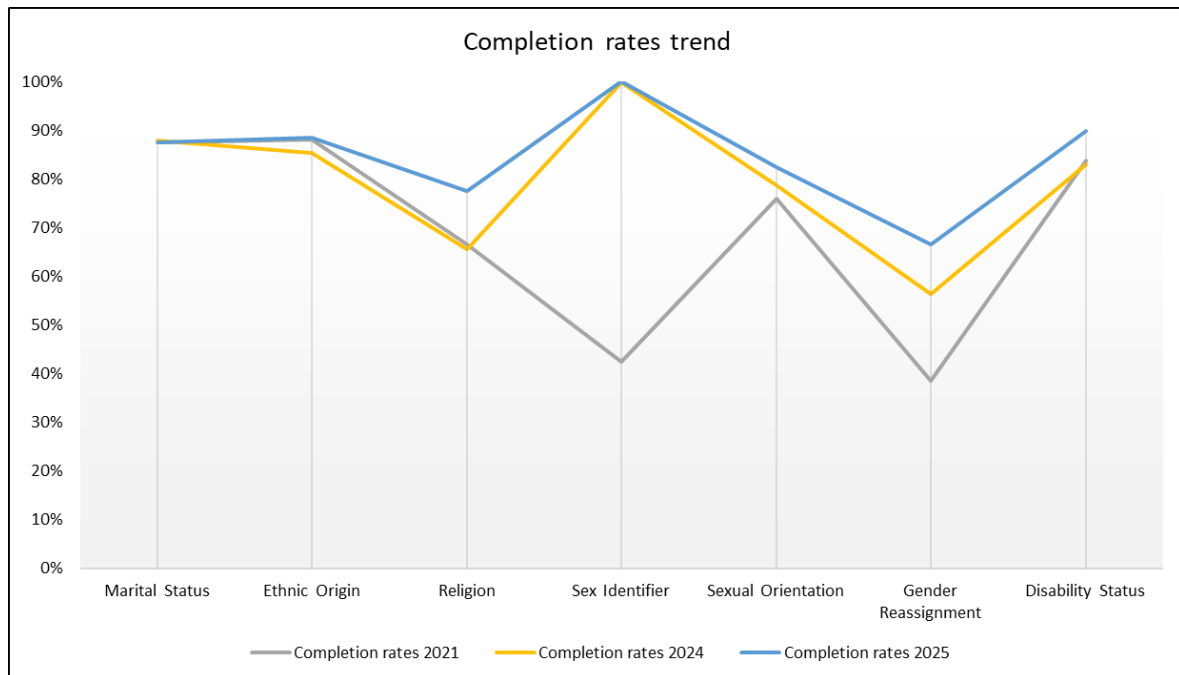
	Objective	Where were we? (2020)	Where are we now? (2025)	Comments
Strand 1: That all students achieve equally, regardless of ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Study Programme students of minority ethnic heritage are supported to remain and achieve at college - increase retention and achievement across all minority heritage groups, but particularly WB Caribbean, Irish and Gypsy/Irish Traveller to within 3pp of overall college average for their age group and learning aim. 	<p>WB Caribbean 20.5pp below (40 enrolments)</p> <p>Added for 2023:</p> <p>Gypsy/Irish Traveller 8pp below in 2022 (16 enrolments)</p>	<p>WB Caribbean (78 enrolments) achievement is 12.2pp below (was 2.7pp above in 2024); retention was 9.6pp below.</p> <p>Gypsy/Irish Traveller achievement (15 learners) was 10.9pp below their peer group (in 2024 it was 11.3 pp above). Retention was 100%.</p>	Overall in Study Programmes students of minority ethnic backgrounds have achieved better than their peers, except at level 3 and there are some differences between curriculum areas.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all adult learners (including subcontracted) of minority ethnic heritage achieve in line with the college average for their age group and learning aim, increasing retention and achievement to within 3pp. 	<p>19+ ESOL 5.5pp below</p> <p>19+ Basic Skills 18.5pp below</p>	<p>19+ ESOL achievement was 90.3%, just 0.3pp below the peer group and retention was 97.6% compared to 96.1% for the whole provision type. (in 2024 it was 88.9%, 0.7pp below peers).</p> <p>In 19+ basic skills English achievement for students of a minority ethnic background was 73.3%, 3.6pp below the rest of the cohort, and retention was in line with the wider group. In</p>	

			basic skills maths achievements for those from minority ethnic backgrounds was 69.7%, 0.3pp higher than the rest of the cohort and retention was 75.8%, 1.4pp below the rest of the group.	
Strand 2: That all students achieve equally, regardless of disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Study Programme students with dyslexia and dyscalculia are supported to achieve qualifications in maths and English to ensure their future progression in education and employment - increase achievement to within 3pp of the average for their age group and learning aim. 	<p>GCSE and Functional Skills 16-18s: Dyslexia 14.4pp below</p> <p>Dyscalculia 32.4pp below (2020)</p>	<p>Across the 16-18 cohort students with dyslexia achieved 2.2pp below their peer group.</p> <p>There were just 16 enrolments in the category of dyscalculia, however retention and achievement for this cohort was 100%.</p> <p>Objective Achieved</p>	Overall study programme students with additional needs achieve at a slightly higher rate than their peers, there are some differences between types of need and areas of the college.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that students with Autism are supported to re-engage with their education post pandemic, attend college and achieve their qualifications to within 2pp of their peers 	16-18 Autism 2.9pp decline on previous year and 1.8pp below college average (328 enrolments)	<p>Study Programme students with autism achieved 2.7pp better than their peer group and had higher retention on their programme.</p> <p>Objective Achieved</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that adult learners with Mental Health needs are supported to remain and achieve on their course, increasing achievement to within 3pp of the college average for their age group and learning aim. 	19+ all learning aims - 6.7pp below	19+ learners across all aims 2.6 pp below peers, which is an improvement of 9pp from last year. Retention for this cohort was lower at 92% which accounts for some of the non	

			achievement as the pass rate was in line with the whole cohort.	
Strand 3: That students from other disadvantaged Groups achieve at least as well as their peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Study Programme students who are Looked After Children or Young Adult Carers are supported to achieve as well as their peers - improve retention and achievement to within 3pp of college average for age group and learning aim. 	<p>LAC achievement 17pp below</p> <p>YAC 15.2pp below</p>	<p>Retention of LAC young people was 5pp higher than their peer group, however achievement was 7pp below.</p> <p>YAC was just 0.2pp below the peer group and achievement was 1.3pp above.</p>	In study programme provision most disadvantaged groups have achieved as well as their peers, however there are some pockets where this is not the case.

5. Staff Data

Staff completion rates have been a persistent challenge throughout the lifespan of these equality objectives and much of the focus of this work has been on finding ways to encourage staff to share their personal data with us, so that we are better informed about our workforce and can understand their needs. Across the last 4 year period there has been some success with this as shown in the graph below, however there are significant gaps in our knowledge about staff in some key areas.



6. Progress against Equality Objectives - Staff

		Where were we?	Where are we now? (2025)	New emerging concerns & comments																											
Strand 1 - That the workforce is reflective of the community and the student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that staff data is as complete as is possible and that staff feel comfortable to disclose their Protected Characteristics before comparisons are made to community and student profiles.	Significant gaps in completion of staff data which varies depending on the PC but was between 37% and 88% completion.	This has improved -there are still variations depending on the PC, but the range of completion is now between 66% and 100%.																												
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Aim to reduce the number of staff who have not completed their PC data by 10pp.	<table><tr><td>Marital Status</td><td>87.46%</td></tr><tr><td>Religion</td><td>66.45%</td></tr><tr><td>Ethnic Origin</td><td>88.11%</td></tr><tr><td>Sex Identifier</td><td>42.51%</td></tr><tr><td>Gender Reassignment</td><td>38.44%</td></tr><tr><td>Sexual Orientation</td><td>75.90%</td></tr><tr><td>Disabled</td><td>83.71%</td></tr></table>	Marital Status	87.46%	Religion	66.45%	Ethnic Origin	88.11%	Sex Identifier	42.51%	Gender Reassignment	38.44%	Sexual Orientation	75.90%	Disabled	83.71%	<table><tr><td>Marital Status</td><td>87.58%</td></tr><tr><td>Religion</td><td>77.44%</td></tr><tr><td>Ethnic Origin</td><td>88.57%</td></tr><tr><td>Sex Identifier</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Gender Reassignment</td><td>66.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Sexual Orientation</td><td>82.34%</td></tr><tr><td>Disabled</td><td>89.90%</td></tr></table>	Marital Status	87.58%	Religion	77.44%	Ethnic Origin	88.57%	Sex Identifier	100%	Gender Reassignment	66.5%	Sexual Orientation	82.34%	Disabled	89.90%
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to decrease the number of staff who have selected 'Prefer Not To Say' by 3pp by 2023 across all PCs, with particular emphasis on religion/belief and sexual orientation as these are the largest areas where staff select this option. 	<p>Marital Status 2.44%</p> <p>Religion 7.98%</p> <p>Ethnic Origin 3.09%</p> <p>Sex Identifier 1.14%</p> <p>Gender Reassignment 0.98%</p> <p>Sexual Orientation 4.72%</p> <p>Disabled 0.00%</p>	<p>Marital Status 3.18%</p> <p>Religion 11.14%</p> <p>Ethnic Origin 1.74%</p> <p>Sex Identifier 0%</p> <p>Gender Reassignment 1.3%</p> <p>Sexual Orientation 5.6%</p> <p>Disabled 0%</p>	
Strand 2 - That all staff have equality of opportunity to fulfil their potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the College attracts and appoints a diverse workforce and that staff are able to fulfil their potential by removing barriers to productivity and ensure this is monitored and reported on. Increase the number of applications from men, those with a disability and those from minority ethnic backgrounds by 3pp. 	<p>% applications from minority groups 19/20:</p> <p>Men 6%</p> <p>Disability 5%</p> <p>Minority Ethnic 19%</p>	<p>% applications from minority groups 24/25:</p> <p>Men 5.74% (increased by 2.5pp on the previous year)</p> <p>Disability 10.43% (4.9pp increase on the previous year)</p> <p>Minority Ethnic 23.17% - this is a significant reduction from the previous year however is an increase on the year before that and more in line with the expected trajectory.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase appointments of those from Asian, Black, Mixed and 'other' ethnic backgrounds to be proportionally in line with those 	<p>Appointments in 21-22:</p> <p>Asian 4.35%</p>	<p>Appointments in 2024-25:</p> <p>Asian 5.14%</p>	

	from 'white' backgrounds compared to applications.	Black 7.69% Mixed 4.76% Other 0%	Black 2.57% Mixed 2.57% Other 0.64% Appointments from a 'white' ethnic background represent around 85% of all appointments. As noted above local census data suggests between 15% and 20% of families in the communities around our main campuses are of ethnic minority heritage, therefore this is broadly in line with the local community, however quite different from the wider Oxford demographic.	
Strand 3 - That all staff have job satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase completion of staff survey to at least 50% of all staff 	2022 – 20% staff completed the survey	56% of staff completed the survey in 2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the satisfaction of staff in minority groups to within 3 pp of all other staff across at least 75% of questions 	<u>Data not available until 2023.</u> % staff survey questions where staff in minority group are as satisfied (within 3pp) as whole staff body: Disabled 45% BME 97%	% staff survey questions where staff in minority groups are as satisfied (within 3pp) as whole staff body: Disabled 30.3% BME 57.6% LGBTQ+ 45.5%	On-going difference in satisfaction amongst staff from minority groups that needs to be addressed.

		<p>LGBTQ+ 30%</p> <p>Men 39%</p>	<p>Male 57.6%</p> <p>(the number of respondents in some of these groups is very small. In the disabled and LGBTQ+ groups, 1 respondent is more than 3% of the total respondents; in the BME group, 2 respondents are 3% of the total)</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase satisfaction of male staff to within 3pp on 'feeling valued' and 'staff development' 		<p>85.4% of male staff completing the survey agreed that they felt valued, and 87.3% that they had access to sufficient professional development. 82.5% of all staff completing the survey felt valued, and 85.6% had sufficient access to development.</p>	

7. Conclusion

Many of the issues that our equalities work seeks to address are complex and require sustained, long-term commitment beyond the scope of a single reporting period. Nonetheless, it remains both valuable and necessary to review equality data regularly to ensure that our actions, interventions, training, and awareness-raising activities remain purposeful and effective.

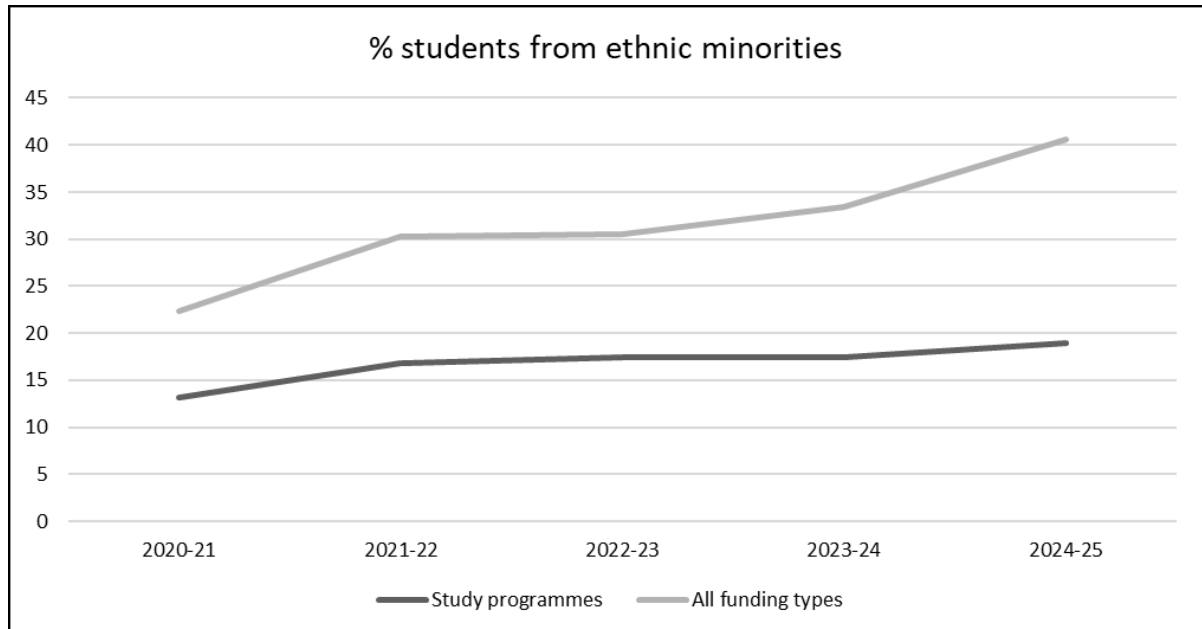
As both an education provider and an employer, we are steadfast in our commitment to fostering inclusion in all its forms. However, we also recognise that the Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to go beyond inclusivity — to actively advance equality and eliminate disadvantage wherever it exists.

As we conclude this four-year cycle of Equality Objectives and begin to shape our next set of priorities, this proactive approach will be central to our work. Our future objectives will continue to focus on meaningful, evidence-based actions that drive real and lasting progress toward equality for all.

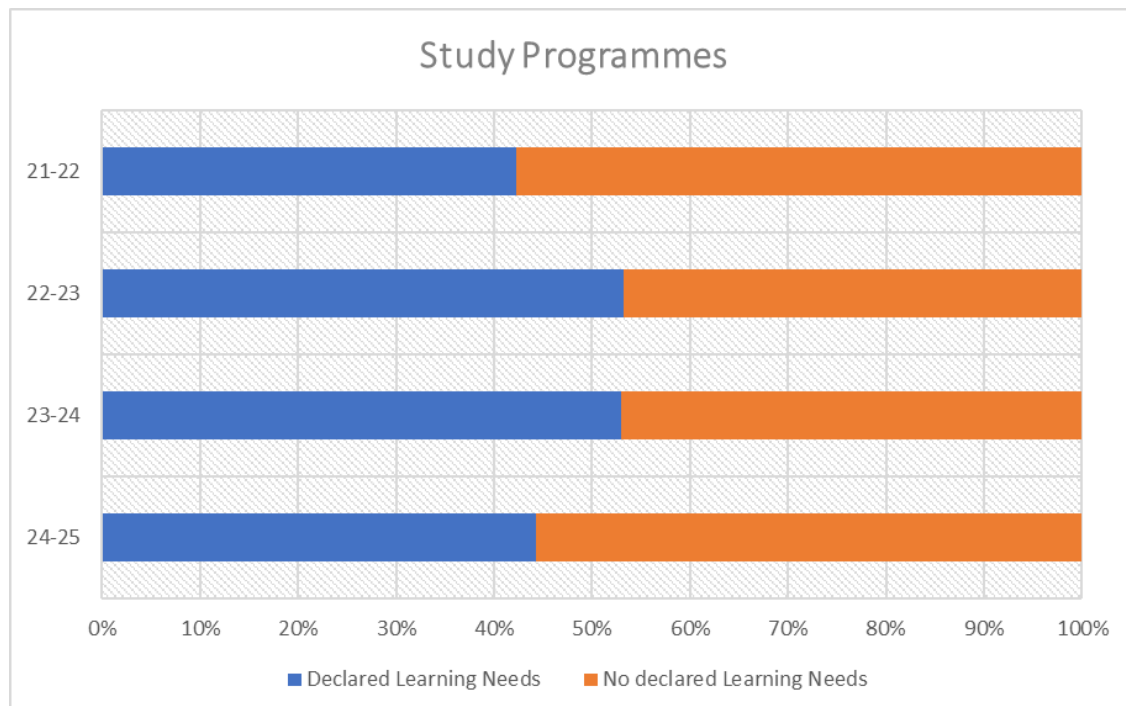
Appendix A – Student Data

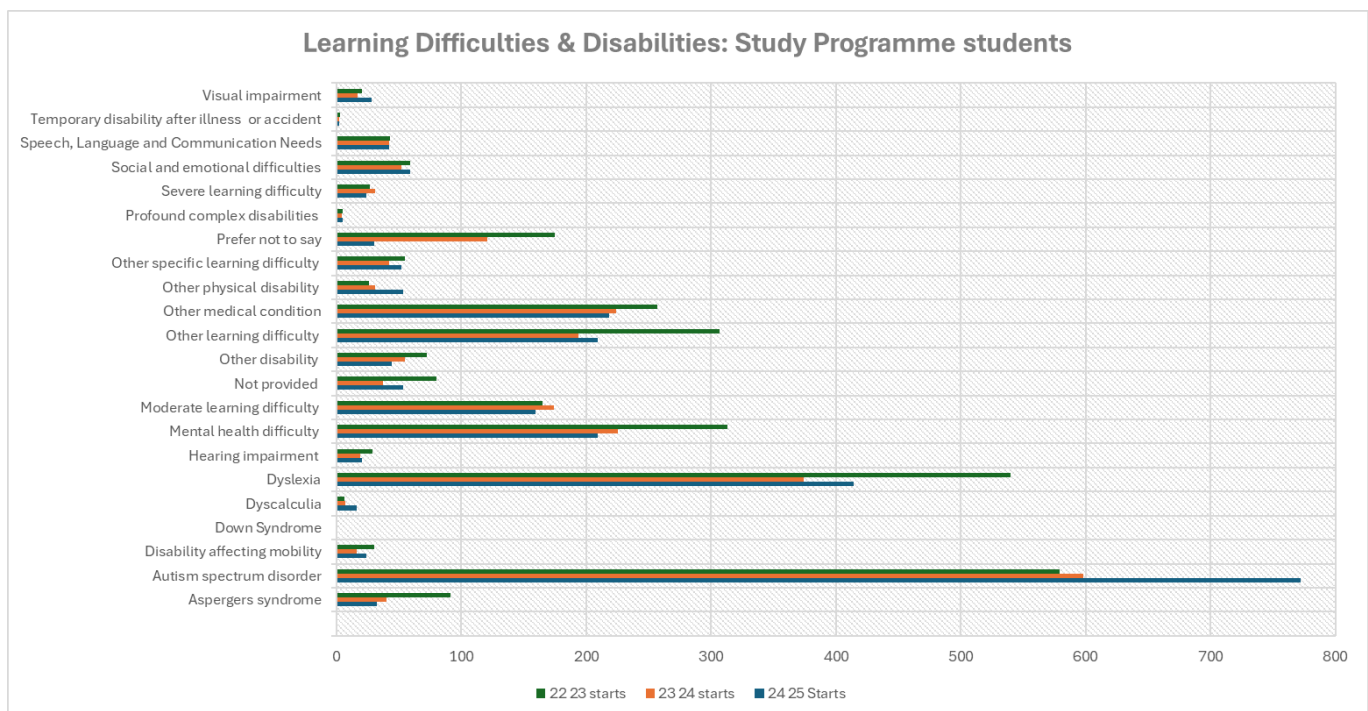
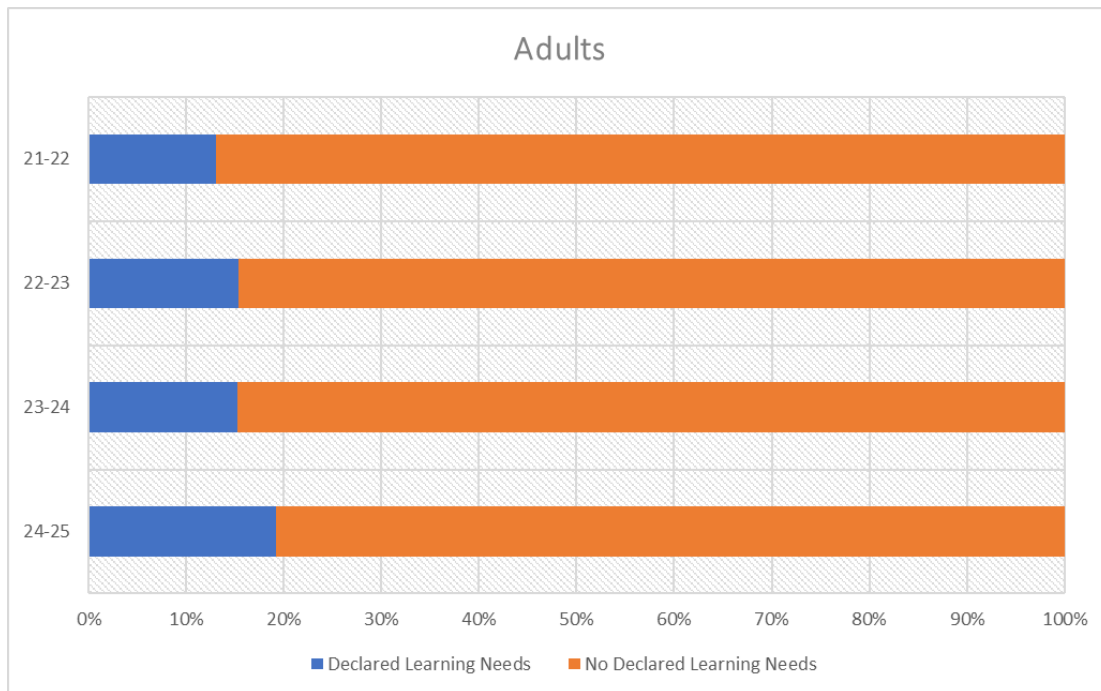
The Student Body in 2024-25

Ethnicity



Learning Difficulties and Disabilities





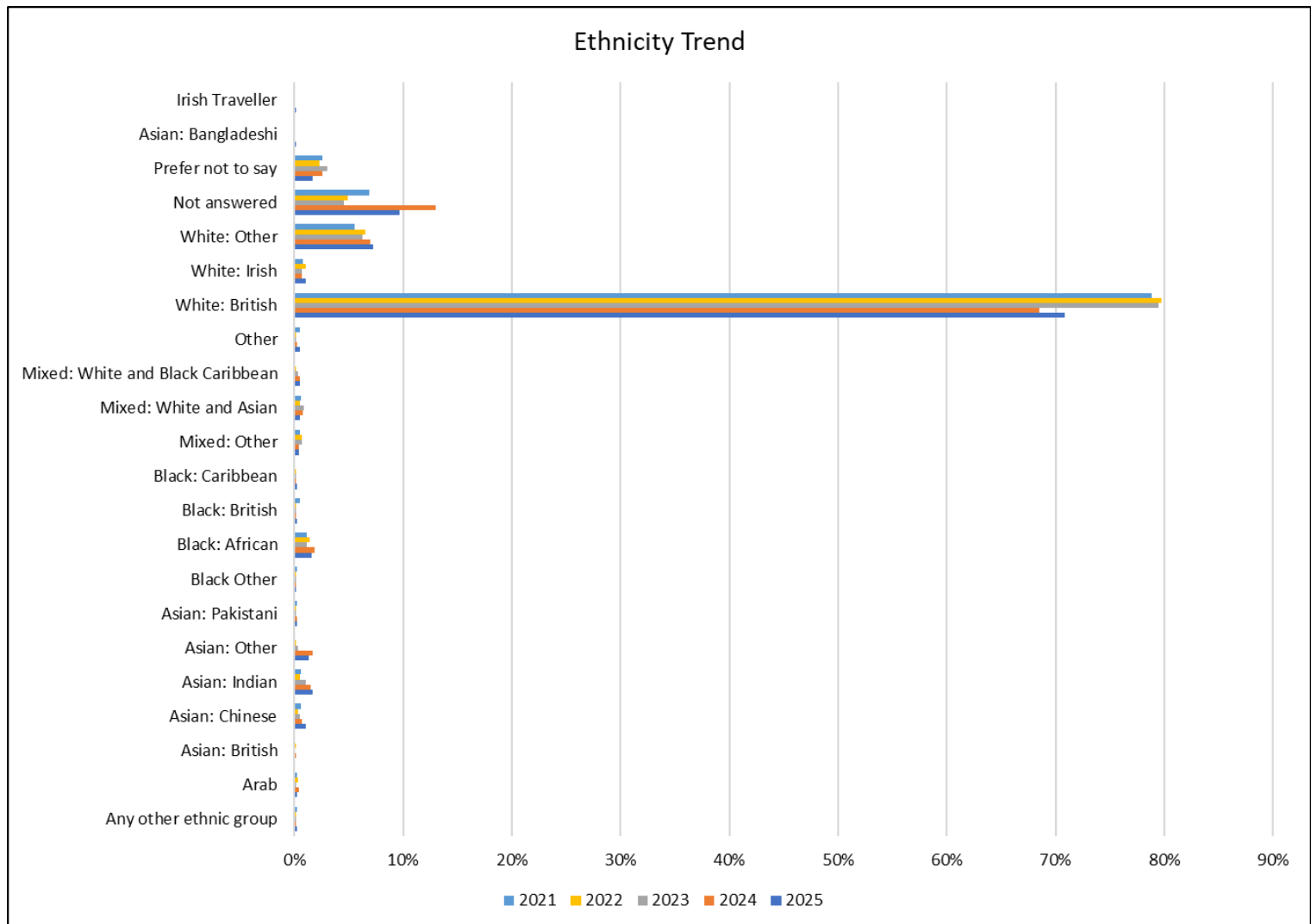
Student Achievement

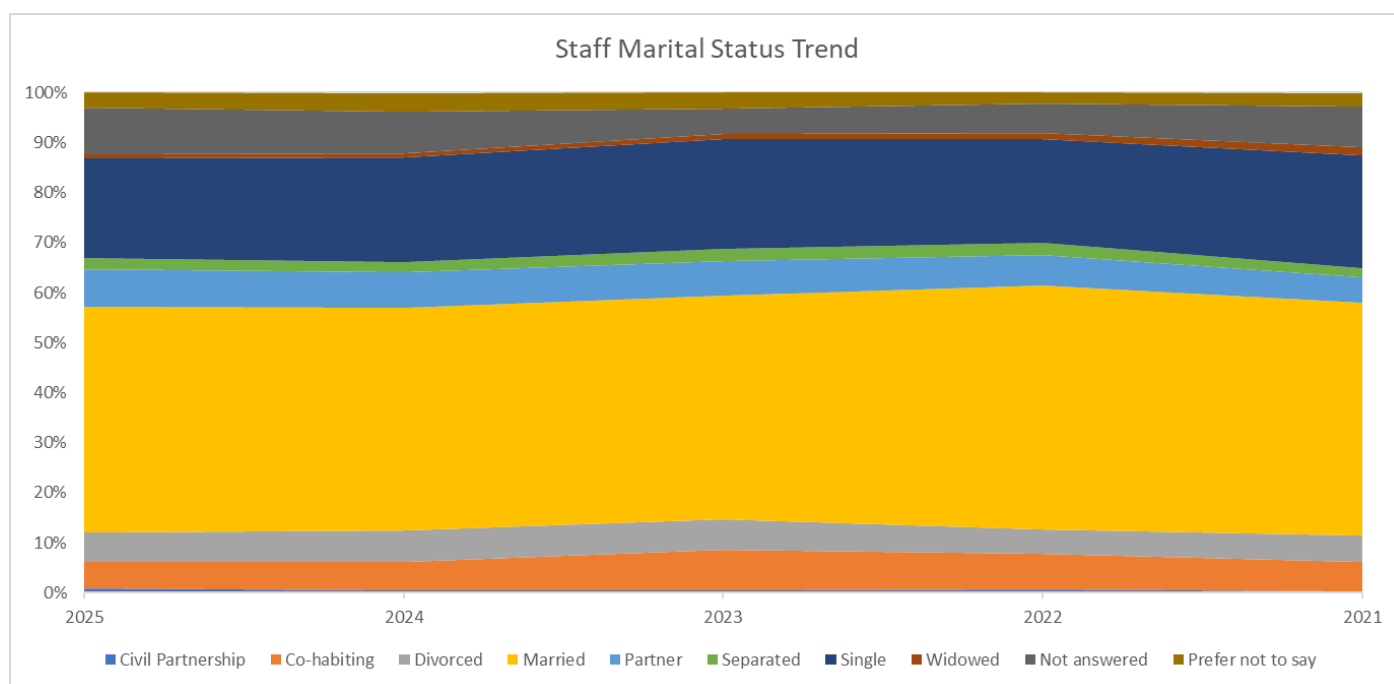
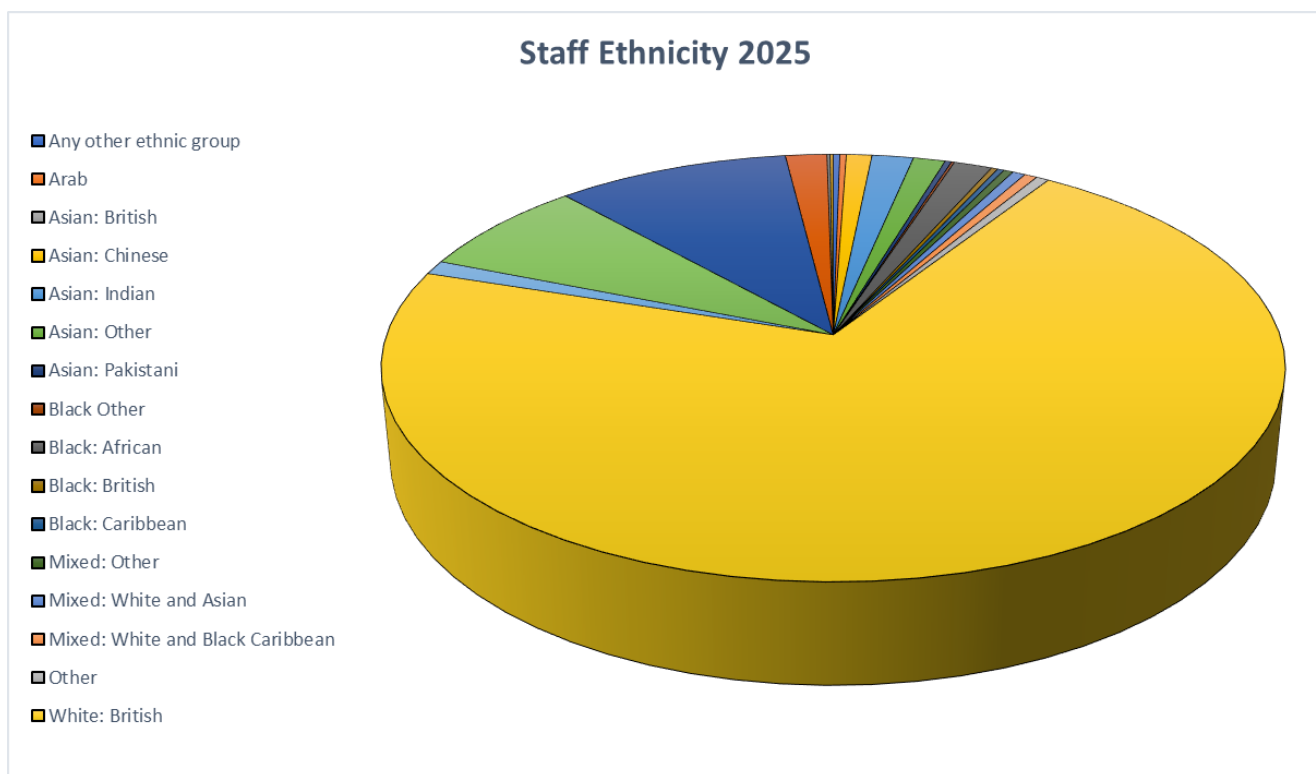
FACULTY	Ethnicity	Gender	LDD	EHCP	FSM (Free School Meals)	HNS (High Needs Students)	LAC (Looked After Children)	YAC (Young Adult Carer)
⊕ Access to Learning	Significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap
⊕ Construction Faculty	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap
⊕ Creative Industries	No significant gap	Significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap
⊕ Land Based Industries	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap
⊕ Public & Professional Industries	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap
⊕ Technology Faculty	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap
Total	No significant gap	No significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap	Significant gap	Significant gap	No significant gap

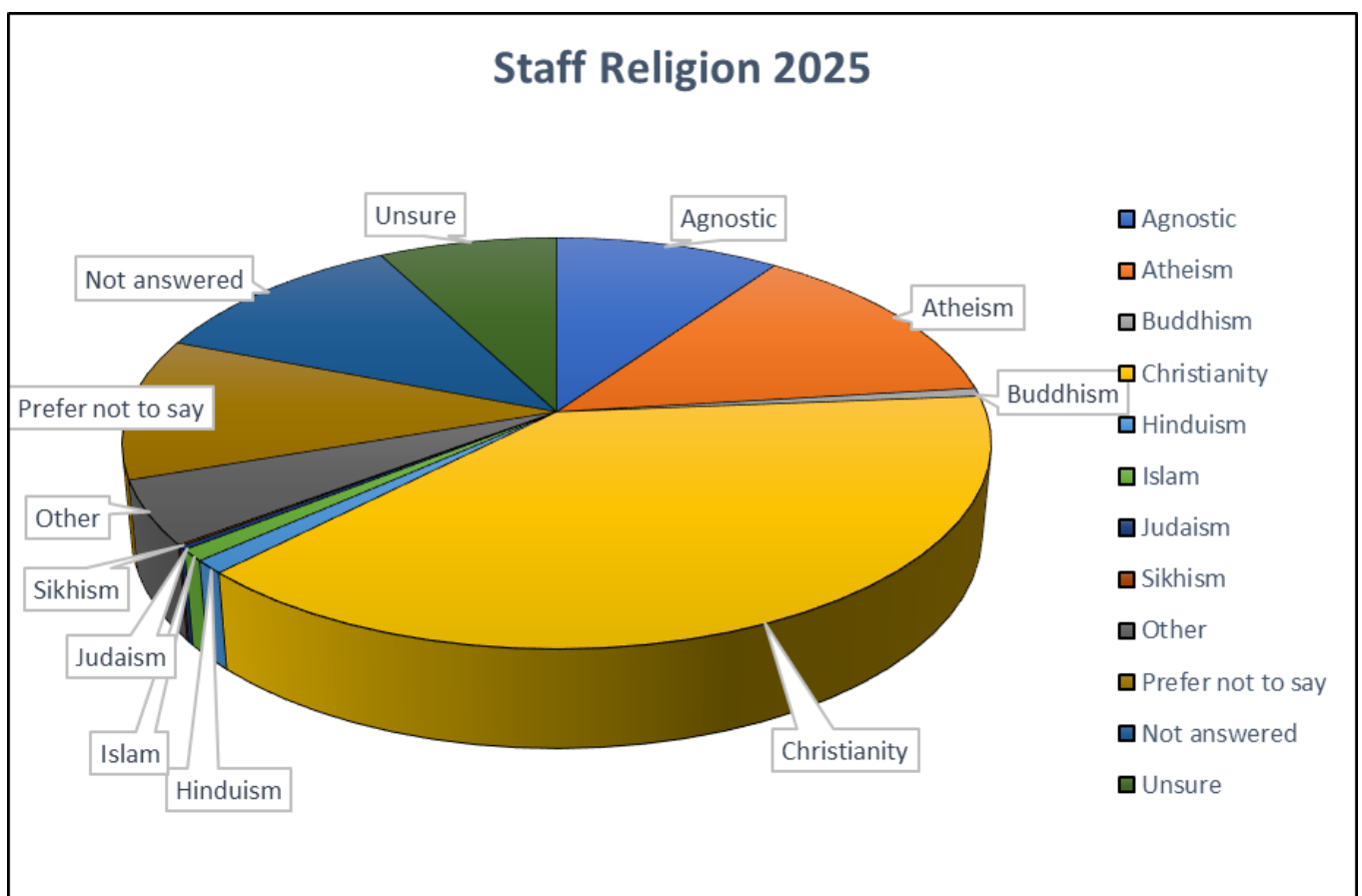
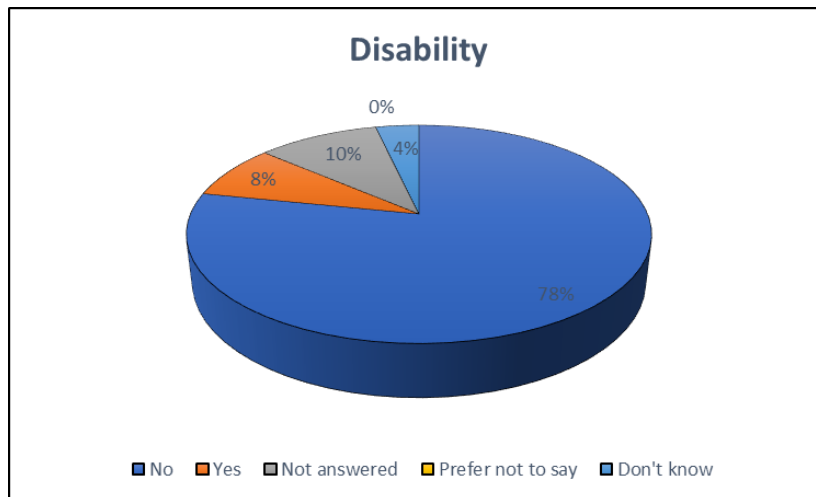
Achievement rates of disadvantaged Study Programme students compared to whole cohort by faculty.

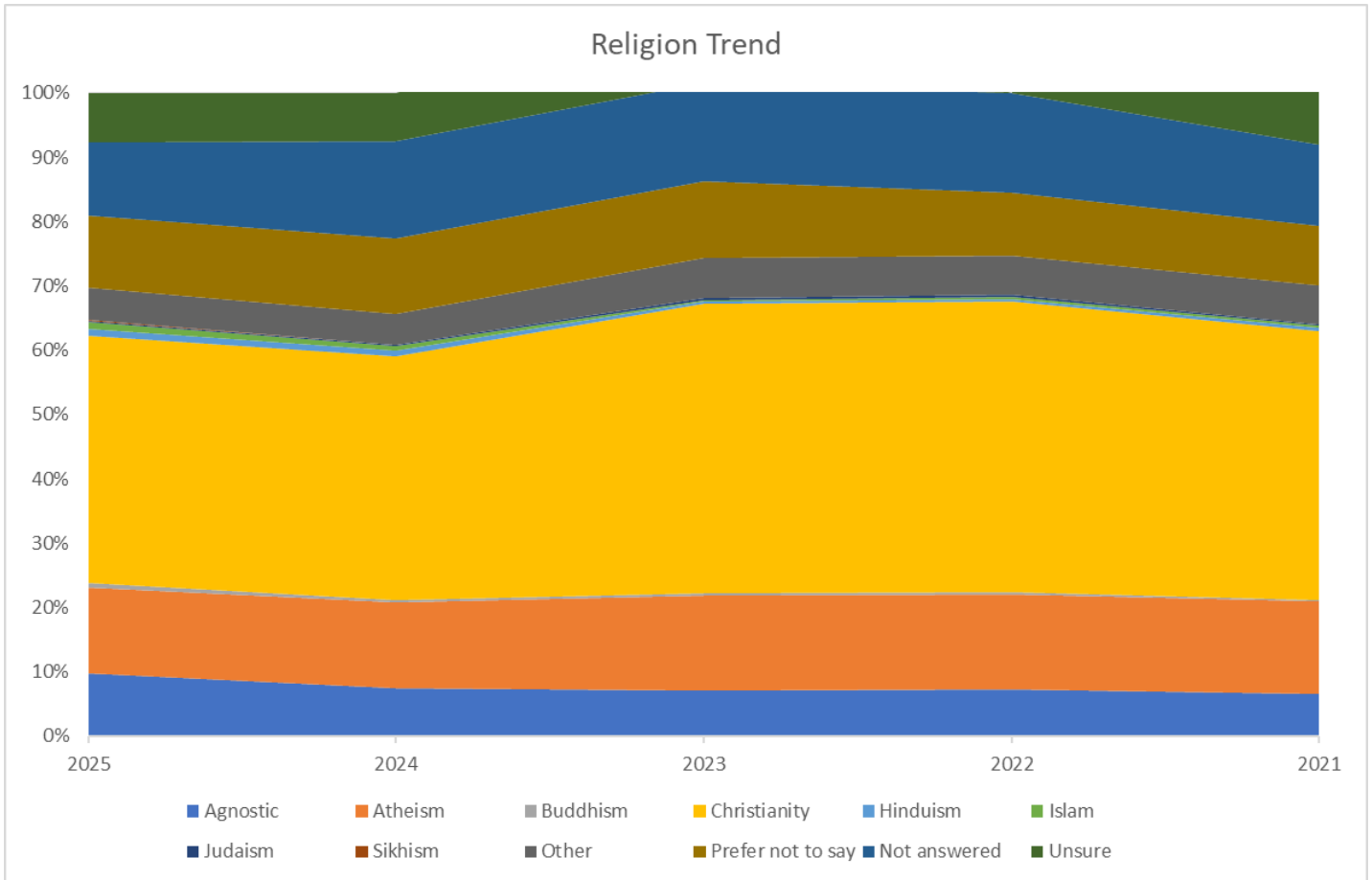
8. Appendix B – Staff Data

Staff Ethnicity









Gender, Sex Identifier & Sexuality

