

Bridgend College Annual Equality Report 2023

Relating to data from 2021 -2022
Academic Year



Foreword from the Principal

Our mission is simple - **be all that you can be.** Be you.

Bridgend College is a special place to learn and work. We want to create an **inclusive** environment which enables people to be **innovative** and **passionate** about what they do. We want to create **inspirational** opportunities which transform lives and celebrate the successes of every individual. We are committed to making decisions which are ethical and **people-centred**, for every person and in every interaction.

We know that the standards we walk past are the standards we accept, so by being a team player who is committed to our organisational values, we can ensure that everyone is **ready** to learn and work in an environment where they are **respected** and feel **safe**, to **be all that they can be.**



Simon Pirotte
Principal and CEO

About Bridgend College

Bridgend College is a Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) College supporting over 6,000 students and employing over 800 members of staff across its four campuses in Bridgend, Pencoed, Queens Road and Maesteg. We offer an extensive range of courses, from Entry through to Degree level, in over 20 vocational areas (including A Levels) and are particularly active in designing and promoting new courses to meet the changing needs of industry, the community and individuals. We provide a very welcoming and highly inclusive environment where students from all backgrounds feel safe and well supported.

The Law

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone. For further information on the Equality Act 2010, how public bodies are required to have due regard, and Bridgend College's specific duties under the Act, please see the following [link](#).

Data Collection

The College collects data from staff, students and surveys of both groups. Staff are encouraged bi-annually to complete their sensitive data on the HR information self-service system known as MyPage. We have a number of staff who have not declared their sensitive data. Recently, all staff were sent a reminder about the importance of collecting this data and how it will be used, in order to help us develop meaningful action plans, strategies and policies to ensure that everyone can be their best at Bridgend College. Having an accurate and full picture of the diversity characteristics at Bridgend College enables us to identify any existing inequalities and where new inequalities may be developing, and take action to tackle them.



Awards and Recognition

Over the last few years, we have won some prestigious awards and are so proud of everything we do here for our students and staff. Here is a list of awards and accolades we have been awarded over the past few years:

- Placed 22nd in the Best Companies top 25 'Best Large Companies to Work For in the UK', 8th in the 'Best Companies to Work for in Wales' category and 3rd in the UK within the 'Education and Training' category (2022)
- Deputy Principal, Viv Buckley - 'Outstanding Educator' Gold Award of Excellence - World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) (2022)
- Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Index Gold Award (3 years running)
- CMI Outstanding Training Provider of the Year (2022)
- Placed 45th in the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers (2021/22)
- Healthy Working Wales Award Winner for the Covid-19 Commendation Event in the category: Visionary Commendation for Sustainability (2021)
- Healthy Working Wales Runner-up for the Covid-19 Commendation Event in the category: Best Mental Health Initiative: Large Company (2021)
- AOC Beacon Award Winner - Mental Health and Wellbeing (2021)
- Shortlisted for Specialist Provider of the Year (Weston House) (2020)
- CIPD Award - Embedding a Culture of Workplace Wellbeing (2019)
- Disability Confident Leader (2 years running)
- 'FE College of the year' in the TES FE Awards (2019)

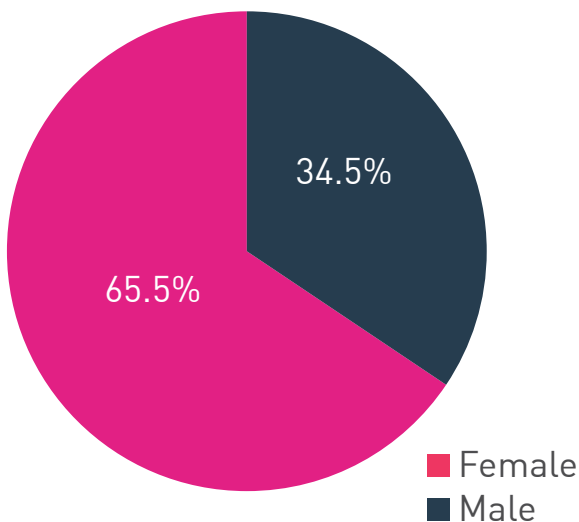
The bedrock of this success has been the positive culture of the College. Our mission is to 'Be All That You Can Be' – and we really mean it. We believe that every person has a chance to be the best they can be for themselves and the best they can be for others in an environment where diversity is celebrated.



Our staff

Gender

Number of staff by gender



There has been an increase (1.23%) in male staff from 33.26% to 34.49%. More information on gender is available in Bridgend College's [Pay Gap report](#).

We are actively focussing on closing the gender pay gap. From the academic year 2021-22 we started to track protected characteristics of staff moving into new and higher paid positions, so we can identify any gaps or barriers. For the academic year 21-22, 75% of progressions were female. We are continuing to monitor this so we can implement meaningful initiatives to support progression and we will continue to actively engage with staff to understand what barriers they perceive there are to moving into higher-paid roles (if any) and ensure all staff have access to CPD to support their progression.

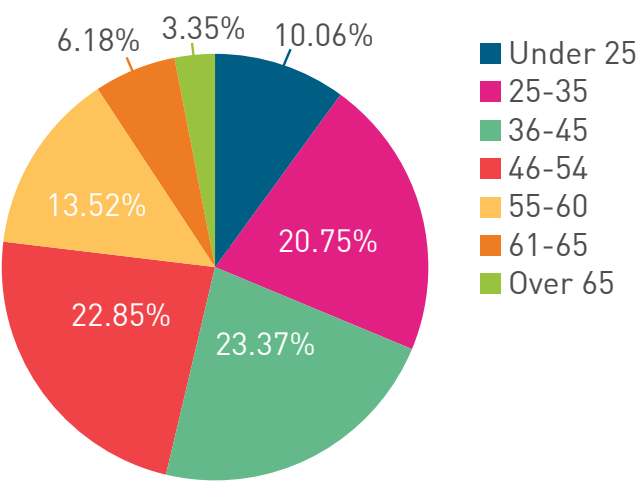
More care is also being taken when reviewing and compiling job descriptions and adverts before advertising, to eliminate any gender bias through the use of inclusive and gender-neutral language.

We will continue to implement best practice initiatives as suggested by the Government's Equality Office report and we are committed to nurturing an environment where everyone can reach their full potential.



Age

Breakdown of staff by age



From to 2020/21 to 2021/22, the age groups have changed in the following way:

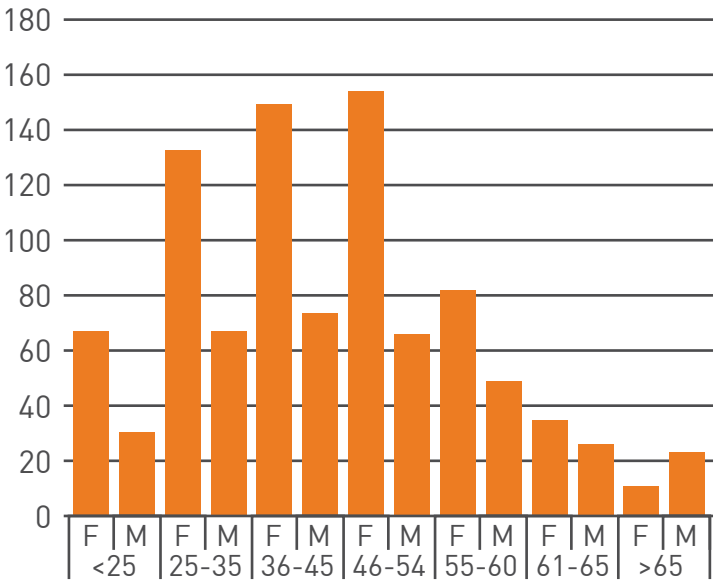
Age Group	2020/21	2021/22	Difference
Over 65	3.84%	3.35%	- 0.49%
61-65	6.16%	6.18%	+ 0.02%
55-60	13.26%	13.52%	+ 0.26%
46-54	23.95%	22.86%	- 1.09%
36-45	23.6%	23.27%	- 0.33%
26-35	19.42%	20.75%	+ 1.33%
Under 25	9.77%	10.06%	+ 0.29%

The number of staff who fall within categories 46 and over has decreased to 45.9% in comparison to previous years : 2017/18, 56% were over 46, 2018/19, 48.14% were over 46, 2019/20, 47.1% were over 46 and 2020/21, 47.21% were over 46.

This would indicate that as a College we are attracting younger candidates, which could be a result of engaging with the Kickstart scheme, offering more diverse apprenticeship employment routes, and job opportunities for students.

Age and Gender

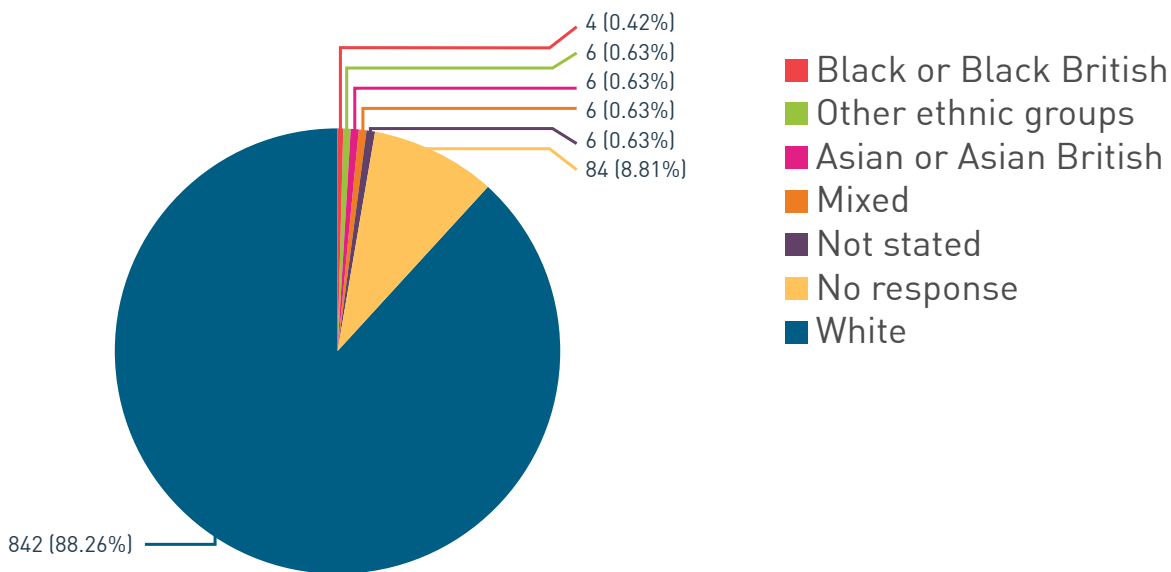
Number of people by age band and gender



A significant proportion of our workforce are females in the 36-60 age groups. We continue to uphold our Menopause Statement of Intent which was produced in 2021 and regularly hold menopause catch ups to provide an opportunity to staff to have a chat about menopause in a safe, supportive and confidential environment. Staff have the opportunity to come together and talk about how this experience affects them and what we could do as an organisation to support them. The sessions are staff-led, enabling them to drive the agenda, with open conversations allowing us to identify needs. We also continue to support staff to work more agilely, so a better work life balance can be maintained to support wellbeing and caring responsibilities.

Ethnicity

Number of people by ethnic grouping



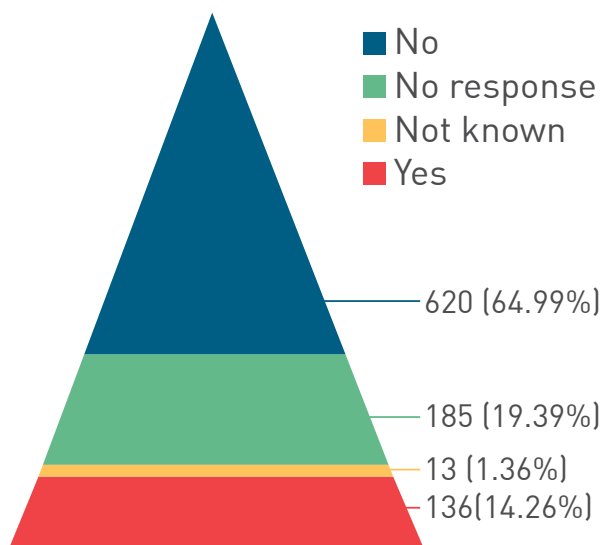
The number of staff identifying as Black, Asian, mixed and other ethnic groups has increased to 2.3%, which shows a slow but consistent improvement in developing a more diverse workforce (1.32% in 2019/20; 1.56% in 2018/19; 1.98% in 2020/21). However, 9.44% of the workforce has chosen to either record their ethnicity as not stated or not respond, an increase from 6.86% in 2020/21.

For context, 2.2% of the Bridgend population classify themselves as Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic, which suggests that we are becoming more representative of the community we serve ([Source: Stats Wales](#)). However, the College aims to be more representative due to the myriad of benefits in which a more diverse workforce brings, and this features in the 2022-2025 Strategic Equality Plan, namely to attract, retain and engage a diverse population of staff and learners, utilising expert advice and guidance.

Since signing the Zero Racism pledge in 2020, we have advanced our commitment to anti-racism by affiliating with the Black Leadership Group and developing a bespoke anti-racism action plan to build an anti-racist culture. The Government has clear expectations of the contribution FE Colleges will make to achieving an anti-racist education sector that enables all individuals to thrive and achieve their full potential - we are committed to playing our part in tackling systemic racism through a comprehensive, rigorous approach to anti-racist practice that leads to institutional and structural change. We will use our anti-racism action plan to develop specific objectives to advance anti-racism via the Black Leadership Group's 10 point plan.

Disability

Number of people with a disability



14.26% of our workforce has declared a disability which is a decrease of 0.62% in disability declarations since 2020/21.

[Labour Market Statistics](#) indicate that the employment rate for disabled people in Wales was 48.7% in the year ending September 2022, compared to a rate of 82.1% for non-disabled people, giving a disability employment gap of 33.4%, a slight increase from 32.9% in 2021.

Creating an environment where staff thrive is front and centre of our [strategic plan](#). There continues to be significant work undertaken in this area to support staff to both share their sensitive data and to be assured that they will be assisted with support and reasonable adjustments.

The increased understanding by staff has been enhanced by our Disability Confident Leader status and continued implementation of the Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

In 2022 we launched a Wellbeing at Work passport, which is being successfully implemented by individuals in various roles. The aim of the passport is to help support new and existing staff with their disability and/or health condition, identify reasonable adjustments and support with general wellbeing.

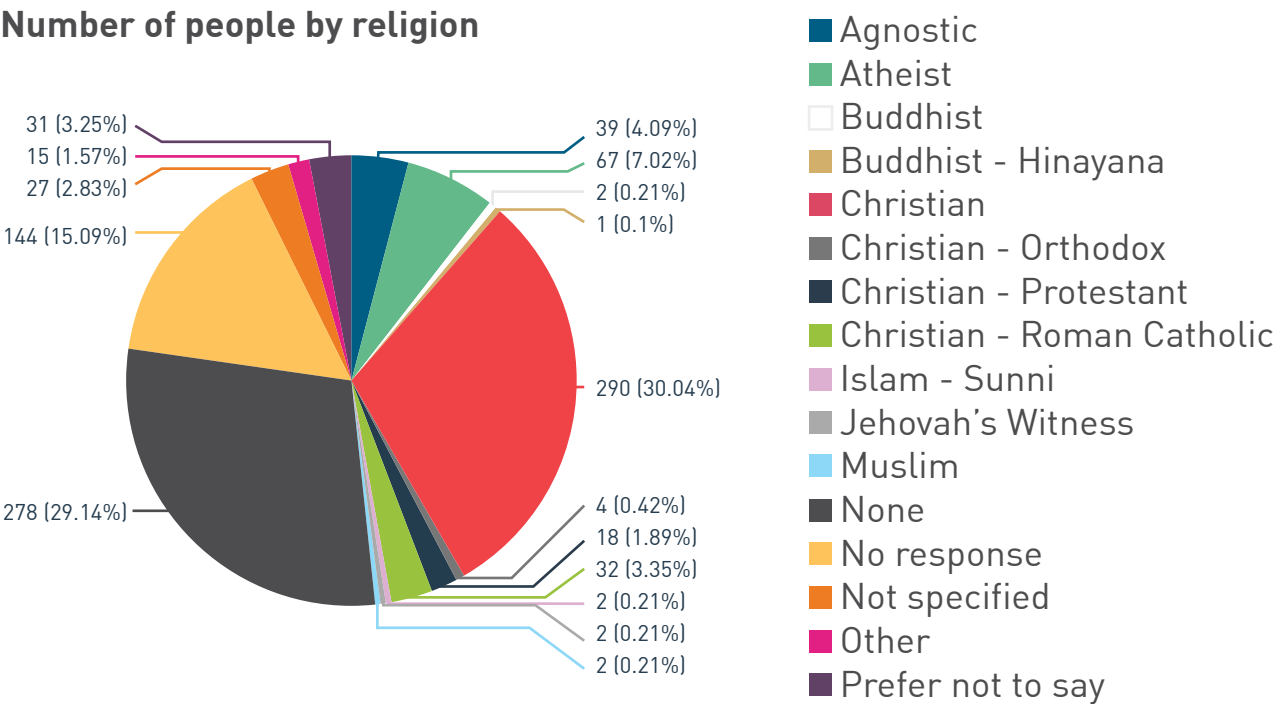
In 2022 we also introduced a Wellbeing and Inclusion newsletter, which is sent out monthly via email across College, providing regular updates on how physical and mental wellbeing initiatives can support our staff. The newsletter also serves as an opportunity to raise awareness and celebrate events aligned to our Inclusion Calendar.

In addition, we have 17 Wellbeing Advocates made up of colleagues in various roles across the College who have completed Mental Health First Aid training to support our staff to spot the symptoms of mental health issues and offer initial help and guide people towards support. In addition, five members of staff have completed training to be Mental Health First Aid Instructors.

We have also successfully embedded an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) staff support group, open to all staff who have ASD themselves, are on the journey to a diagnosis or who support a loved one who has ASD. The group will provide a safe space for colleagues to share their first hand experiences and support one another.

Religion

Number of people by religion



In 2017/18, 197 staff did not identify their religious status (39.96%). This decreased by 5.19% in 2018/19, 19.4% in 2019/2020, and 14.65% in 2020/21.

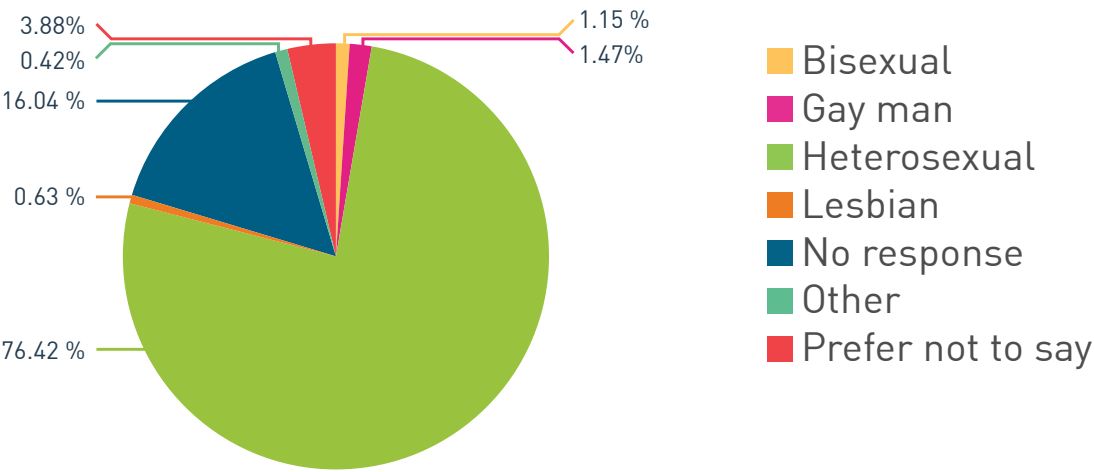
In 2021/22, 15.09% of staff did not declare their religion (a slight increase by 0.44%). However, we are providing consistent messaging to staff, namely that sensitive data will be treated appropriately and used to support them in the workplace.

We have also developed a multi-purpose quiet room to be used for prayer, mindfulness, breastfeeding and reflective space. This is also being taken into consideration during the planning stages for the development of our new town-centre campus.



Sexual Orientation

Number of people by sexual orientation



In 2021/22, non-declarations of sexual orientation increased slightly to 16% from 15.81% in 2020/21, however, responses to ‘prefer not say’ has decreased from 4.3% to 3.88%. Over a three year period (2019 - 2022), the number of staff choosing ‘prefer not to say’ has decreased by 31.02% (from 34.9% to 3.88%), which is indicative of both a culture that celebrates diversity and trust in the College as an employer. Having a much better picture and understanding of the workforce enables the College to support staff more effectively.

The increase in declarations has been in part to a number of initiatives such as taking part in the Pride Cymru annual parade, celebrating with our LGBTQ+ staff and allies. We want to be an inclusive place to learn and work, where people can be their authentic selves and can be all that they can be.



Welsh

During the year 2021/22, we had 70 Welsh-speaking staff across various roles in Curriculum and Business Support, self-assessed at being Level 4 and Level 5 (8.8% of workforce).

In the 2021 Annual Population Survey, 18.3% of the population of Bridgend declared that they speak Welsh, a slight increase to the 17.8% reported the previous year.

As a College, we are striving to promote the use of Welsh in the workplace and encourage staff to learn Welsh, in order to contribute to the goal of a million Welsh-speakers in Wales by 2050.

The following table illustrates staff Welsh language skills across the different levels as of September 2022. More detailed information can be found in the [College's Welsh Language Standards Compliance Report 2022](#).

Competency	0	1	2	3	4	5	Not completed	Grand total
No welsh skills completed							65	65
Welsh language - listening	381	307	75	33	20	62		878
Welsh language - reading	367	319	71	38	29	54		878
Welsh language - speaking	384	328	55	26	26	59		878
Welsh language - writing	471	253	55	26	28	45		878

Bridgend College is committed to the further development of the linguistic skills of all staff. All staff are encouraged to attend Welsh classes. Where possible, staff who are learning Welsh are placed to work alongside staff from Welsh-medium schools to further enhance their linguistic skills. College staff are targeted for development and enhancement of their Welsh language skills as follows:

- Teaching staff – staff are able to access tailored Welsh language provision through the 'Cymraeg Gwaith' ColegauCymru project and Collaborative Professional Learning Fund 2021/22
- Front of house staff and staff who deal with the public on a daily basis – a wide variety of Welsh for Adults courses and Say Something in Welsh courses are offered throughout the year, all fully subsidised

Our students

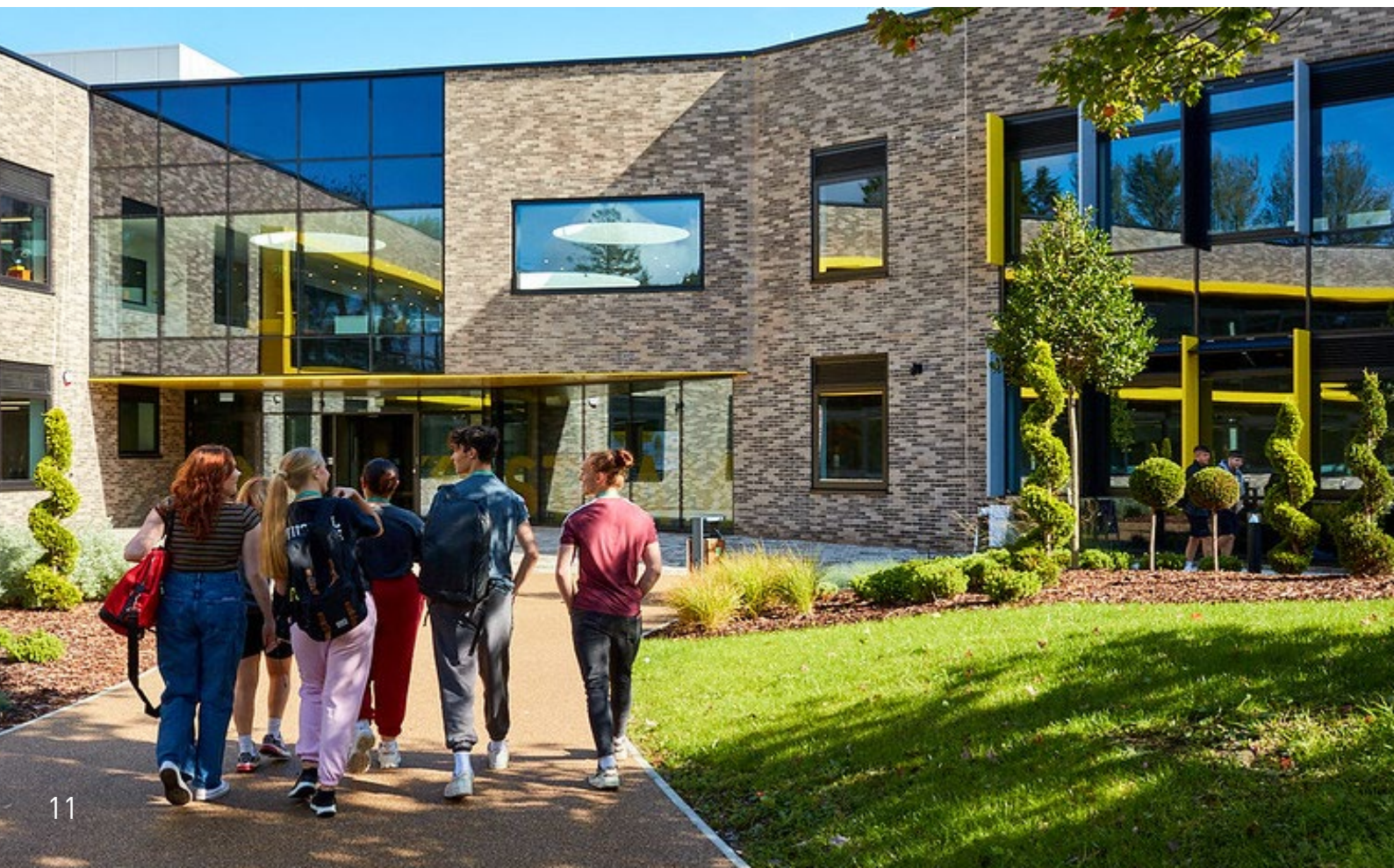
Gender

Group Success Rates	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Compared to College success rates 80%
Male	82%	85%	83%	78%	80%	=
Female	84%	88%	84%	83%	80%	=

For the first time in six years, male and female learners have achieved equally successful completion rates. This is in part due to a 2% increase in achievement rates in the male-dominated Engineering curriculum area, and a 3% increase in Sport and Public Services. Students continue to feel the impact of Covid-19-related restrictions to placement opportunities.

Four learners chose to select the Gender Neutral option this year, while one learner identified as 'other'.

To support students, our peer support group 'The Man Cave' continues to run, which provides males the chance to meet new people, connect, and build good relationships with fellow students. Our 'G.R.L Society' is also successfully embedded, which is an empowerment group where female learners can support and empower each other to be all that they can be.



Ethnicity

Group success Rates	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22			Compared to College success rate 80%
				Achievers	Total No.	No. Achievers	
Identify as white	87%	83%	81%	80%	1848	1471	-
Identify as non-white	82%	84%	82%	85%	87	74	+5%
Not known	83%	77%	40%	70%	9	7	n/a

In 2021-22, 4.5% of learners identified as other than white, increasing from 3.7% the previous year. Learners who identify as non-white have continued to outperform their peers who identify as white year-on-year since 2019-20, with the gap widening to 5% for 2021-22. The number of learners selecting 'not known' continues to decline, demonstrating effective data capture during the enrolment process.

Learners identifying as Mixed White and Asian, Arab, Other Asian Background, Roma, Black - Caribbean, and Mixed - White and Black African achieved 100% successful completion rates.

There continues to be significant activities both in person and online to raise awareness with students as part of wider national and international awareness days and weeks. Examples include Hate Crime Awareness Week, Refugee Week, Black History month, and Anti-Bullying week.

In addition, our Digital Citizenship buzz sessions have been adapted to include updated and relevant resources to support the BAME community, particularly looking at racial hate crime in response to the pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement.



Age

Welsh Government consistent performance measures categorise students as 16 or 17+.

Age group 16	2018-19 Success rate (main quals)	2019-20 Success rate (main quals)	2020-21	2021-22	Increase/Decrease
Level 3	84%	89%	86%	82%	-4%
Level 2	87%	76%	68%	81%	+13%
Level 1	80%	81%	84%	79%	-5%
Entry/Pre-entry Level	85%	93%	84%	87%	+3%

Age group 17+	2018-19 Success rate (main quals)	2019-20 Success rate (main quals)	2020-21	2020-21	Increase/Decrease
Level 3	84%	90%	80%	78%	-2%
Level 2	83%	76%	78%	80%	+2%
Level 1	78%	76%	83%	79%	-4%
Entry/Pre-entry Level	89%	87%	86%	82%	-4%

Level 2 success rates have recovered this year as workplace restrictions in key vocational areas such as Hair and Beauty and Construction have been lifted, and are now in line with the College average.



Additional Learning Needs

Group Success Rates	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Compared to College success rate 80
ALN	90%	90%	86%	84%	83%	+3%

In 2021-22, 89 students (46%) declared and were categorised as having additional learning needs, a significant increase on the previous year's proportion of 29%. Learners with additional learning needs (ALN) continue to achieve at rates above the College average, with 83.2% of learners with an ALN successfully achieving their qualification, compared to 77.3% without.

This maintained success is related to the increased support for learners with ALN in terms of Learning Support Assistants and specific, targeted support for particular ALN. The biggest groups of ALN learners are those with dyslexia (174); these learners continue to perform significantly above the College average (86%). Learners with identified behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (161) now outnumber those with autism/Asperger's syndrome (140). Learners with autism/Asperger's syndrome, hearing difficulties, physical disability and/or medical difficulties, and speech, language and communication difficulties all achieved at rates above the College average. Students with moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, and dyscalculia all achieved successful completion rates above 90%.

An improvement in achievement was seen for those students with ADHD, 78% of whom successfully achieved their qualification, an increase from 75% in the previous year.

Our ALN Support Team provides support for students with learning difficulties or disabilities who may require specific provision, in addition to the universal support provided to all students.

We use a person-centred approach to work with students and their families to identify individual needs. We plan and implement a package of support which is personal to each student and is reviewed at least annually and shared with key staff involved in supporting the student, including course tutors.

We are ambitious for our students and dedicated to supporting them to 'be all that they can be.' This includes supporting our students to become more independent, achieve excellent outcomes and develop skills to live fulfilled adult lives within the communities in which they live.

Deprivation

Group Success Rates	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Compared to College success rate 80%
EMA	83%	86%	83%	81%	79%	-1%

35% of post-56 day students were in receipt of EMA in 2021-22, a similar percentage to 2020-21 (36%). When viewed at a granular level, a nominal (0.4%) underperformance compared to the College average was reported.

Our initiatives to support those in the most deprived areas continue via collaboration with local Welsh businesses, Silly Panda and Wings Cymru, using sustainable eco-friendly sanitary products to help prevent period poverty. Multiple staff across our campuses are Wings Ambassadors.

Also, our free breakfast initiative has continued for all students at our Bridgend, Pencoed and Queen's Road campuses; along with free fruit every Wednesday and a new food bank initiative providing food parcels that can be given to any students identified as needing support.



Welsh

A sustained increase in the achievement of students speaking Welsh is evident with 2020/21 achievement rates again equalling the overall College success rate. The number of fluent Welsh speakers has increased to 182 which is an improvement in comparison to 145 students in 2019/20 and 138 students in 2018/19. This number is still a large decrease from 307 fluent Welsh speakers in 2017/18 and 460 in 2016/17, however it is promising to see the number rising again.

Welsh speaking students in the priority areas of Childcare, Health and Social Care, Public Services and Land Based receive additional help and support to enable them to use the Welsh language at the appropriate level for them. Welsh Language Support Officers have been appointed to these departments, under the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol development plan. This provision will be extended during 2022-23 to our Services to People and Creative Arts curriculum areas.

At enrolment, Welsh-speaking students are issued with ID cards and lanyards which incorporate the orange 'Cymraeg Gwaith' logo on them. This allows students who are Welsh-speaking to be identified before they start their journey at the College. This also helps them to identify other Welsh-speaking students and staff so that they can communicate with them in their language of choice.

Students are issued with a bilingual handbook about college life which includes a section on opportunities to use Welsh. The handbook also includes the 10 most relevant language rights highlighted in the Welsh Language Commissioner's 'Mae Gen i Hawl' (I have the right) campaign. As part of the student induction programme, a welcome video highlighting key student services was created and shown to all students. Content included both Welsh and English spoken language and information on using the Welsh language at Bridgend College.

In addition, 'Clwb Cymraeg' continues to run, which is a place for Welsh-speaking students to meet and socialise with other Welsh-speaking students (fluent or learning) from across the College. Students who attend Clwb Cymraeg are also given the opportunity to work alongside student Welsh Ambassadors to help plan and organise Welsh events for the College.

As well as offering a range of cross-college activities on a weekly basis allowing both Welsh-speaking students and Welsh learners to use their Welsh language skills in an informal setting, we also ensure that we raise awareness of the Welsh language through various key calendar events, such as Welsh Language Rights Day and Welsh Week.

Since the initial launch of the Welsh Language Standards in April 2018, Bridgend College has taken a proactive approach in the promotion of the Welsh Language Standards. The Head of Welsh has overall responsibility for the development of Welsh and the implementation and monitoring of the Welsh Language Standards at the College.

Consultation

We recognise that the involvement and engagement of appropriate stakeholders is critical to the success of our Strategic Equality Plan.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group, Steering Group and Steering Committee continue to meet to discuss developments and are responsible for ensuring progressions are made with implementation of the plan through procedures and practices, and use a variety of methods to evaluate progress and achievements.

Feedback is regularly sought via our Inclusive Allies group, who are staff members committed to improving and embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the College. Our Inclusion Allies meet termly and support with embedding inclusion into every part of Bridgend College; they are role models for inclusion and will be key to growing a truly inclusive culture where everyone feels like they belong.

Governance

The College believes that diverse Boards are better Boards and has ensured that the Governing Body better reflects the community it serves. A target of 50/50 gender balance was set and achieved. In 2021, the Board comprised of nine males, 11 females; one of Indian ethnicity, one of Asian ethnicity, one of Black Caribbean ethnicity, one Welsh speaker and one member of the LGBTQ+ community.

We have also appointed Jeff Greenidge as Chair of our Governing Body. With a track record of delivery performance, Jeff has been providing focussed consultancy and coaching to organisations with a drive for inclusion and diversity. More information about Jeff and his appointment can be found in this [article](#).

The Governing Body takes an active role in monitoring the progress of EDI goals and requests updates termly.



Professional learning development

We are committed to ensuring that our staff continue to develop and, in doing so, have a broad understanding of equality, diversity and human rights which may affect them or our students personally, and improve their competency on a professional level.

We will continue to support staff through regular and focussed Continuing Professional Development. We will continue to bring staff together for training, learning and development across different strands of equality, diversity and inclusion. In February 2022 we held a cross-college EDI Professional Learning Day dedicated to workshops on the themes of EDI in FE, anti-racism in education, LGBTQ+ awareness, and conscious inclusion. Feedback was collected from the attendees (up to 400 staff attended) in relation to their learning requirements with this agenda to ensure we respond appropriately with further training.

Workshops and learning events will also continue for Time to Talk days, Time to Change Wales Champion talks, Walk in my Shoes events (seeing different people's perspectives), autism awareness, safe space talks and active bystander training. This list is not exhaustive, and we also follow a calendar to align with national initiatives and tie in training for both staff and students in this way.

Learner engagement

Varied opportunities have been enhanced and will be further developed, to enable students to connect with peers, build confidence and engage in new activities, groups and societies. During the pandemic, much of the engagement activity happened remotely online, however face to face activities are now fully embedded again in light of the easing of Covid-19 restrictions.

Additionally, all of our Level 1, 2 and 3 full-time students undertake a series of eLearning modules that focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The eLearning modules are: A Diverse Wales, EDI, Welsh Identity, and Rule of Law. There are also weekly features through e-tutorials that highlight celebratory and awareness calendar events such as Women's History Month and Pride Month.

What's next?

- Embedding and moving forward with the Equality Plan 2022-2025 to achieve key objectives, to increase knowledge and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion across the College, including the Welsh Government Anti Racism plan and the Black Leadership Group's 10 point plan;
- To create and sustain a culture that celebrates diversity and is welcoming for all, where staff and students can be their true authentic selves and feel that they belong;
- To celebrate and promote equality, diversity and inclusion events, and implement initiatives;
- To ensure that all Bridgend College policies are fit for purpose and in line with our vision for equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging;
- To ensure that leaders and managers truly embed inclusion in their teams and curriculum business support areas;
- To be representative in all marketing and communications, and celebrate diversity and inclusion via internal and external communications, PR and social media;
- Utilising the Inclusive Allies to champion education.

Partnering with [Inclusive Companies](#) has enabled us to understand more about our practices and culture. The findings from the survey have been utilised as a key instrument in the pursuit of our equality and diversity strategy and road map for change, helping us to form a whole college approach to inclusion and inform a new equality strategic plan for 2022-2025.

Although we have a legal duty to make sure that we employ people and provide services in a safe and fair way, we endeavour to do more. Work is continuing to improve our employment information and business practices in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion.

We still have much to do to increase the diversity of our workforce, so we can draw on different perspectives and experiences. As such, in the same way that we publish our Gender Pay Gap annually, we have also committed to publishing this information by all other characteristics in an overall Pay Gap Report to ensure that if any other gaps exist, they also feature in our Equality Plan.

Finally, we must continue to firmly establish equality as part of our every day business and not something secondary, so that we consider it in everything we do.

If you would like further information, or would like to request this document in a different format, please contact us:
jobs@bridgend.ac.uk | 01656 302302 Ext 660