



**Ollscoil na hÉireann**  
National University of Ireland

## **The Public Sector Duty: NUI's Action Plan**

MAY 2025

## 1 CONTEXT

NUI has a legal obligation, the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, and protect the human rights of its staff and service users. The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 prohibit discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment in employment. The nine protected grounds under these Acts are gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, age, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

Implementation of the Public Sector Duty (PSD) consists of three main stages:

1. **Assess:** A public body is required to set out in its strategic/corporate plan an assessment of the equality and human rights issues relevant to its purpose and functions, in a manner that is accessible to the public. NUI has published an assessment report: [NUI PSD Assessment Report.pdf](#).
2. **Address:** A public body is required to set out in its strategic/corporate plan the policies, plans and actions to address issues raised in the equality and human rights assessment, in a manner that is accessible to the public. This document constitutes our plan to address human rights and equality matters in NUI identified during the assessment stage.
3. **Report:** A public body is required to report annually on developments and achievements in regard to the equality and human rights issues and actions, in a manner accessible to the public, in its annual report. NUI will incorporate PSD reporting into *Inside NUI* (triennial report) and will publish an annual update on PSD actions on the NUI website.

## 2 ACTION PLAN

NUI Identified a number of actions, outlined in the [Assessment Report](#). These actions will be implemented during the remainder of the NUI strategic plan term (2025-2027). They are divided into two main categories: (a) actions for service users and stakeholders and (b) actions for staff.

Please note that this is a living document – some details for actions in 2027 are still to be confirmed.

## 2.1 Actions for Service Users/Stakeholders

A. ACTIONS FOR SERVICE USERS & STAKEHOLDERS			
Action	Description	Who	Due
A1	<b>Improve website accessibility to comply with European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020</b>	ICT, RO	TBC
A2	<b>Identify (and advertise) NUI's Access Officer</b>	SMT, ICT	Q1 2025
	A2.1 Nominate Access Officer	SMT	Q1 2025
	A2.2 Clearly identify Access Office and contact information on NUI website and relevant documentation	ICT, AO	Q4 2025
A3	<b>Continue to expand NUI inclusion-based awards (scholarships, grants and prizes) with particular attention to the groups that are under-represented in higher education: persons with disabilities, members of the Traveller Community, carers, lone parents, socio-economic disadvantaged persons. This is also a strategic priority for NUI.</b>	ASR, F&A, RO	2026
	A3.1 ASR Team to liaise with Registrar and Finance & Administration regarding funding of such an award.	ASR	ongoing
	A3.2 Consult with relevant stakeholders (NUI Student Council, Access Offices, Senate?)	ASR	funding dependent
A4	<b>Introduce inclusive interviewing process for competitive awards</b>	ASR	2027

A5	<b>Audit application forms for plain language</b>	RO & ASR	2026
	A6.1 Develop schedule (prioritise Matric, Doc Services, Awards, etc)	PSD WG	Q1 2026
	A6.2 Communicate plan to staff	PSD WG	Q1 2026
	A6.3 Undertake audits one area at a time in accordance with <a href="#">Plain English</a> principles	PSD WG	2026
A6/ B9	<b>Access audit for the NUI offices at 49 Merrion Square</b>	F&A	2026
A7	<b>Inclusion audit / toolkit for NUI events</b>	RO & AO	Q3 2026
	A7.1 Research best practice	PSD WG	Q4 2025
	A7.2 Develop NUI resource	RO & AO	Q2 2026
	A7.3 Promote internally and share externally	RO	Q3 2026

## 2.2 Actions for Staff

B. ACTIONS FOR STAFF			
Action	Description	Who	Due
B1	<b>Appoint independent HR professional and produce staff handbook with a complete set of HR and human rights and equality (HRE) policies.</b>	F&A	Q4 2025
	B1.1 Appoint independent HR professional	F&A	Q4 2024
	B1.2 Update template handbook (provided by The HR Dept) for NUI purposes	F&A with AO	Q4 2025
	B1.3 Formalise inclusive recruitment process (introduced Q4 2024) and support documentation.	AO	Q2 2025
B2	<b>Provide single point of access to all HR and HRE policies for all staff</b>	F&A/AO	Q4 2025
B3	<b>Further research needed on experience of staff in relation to two protected characteristics: family status and age</b>	PSD WG	Q2 2025
	B3.1 Consult with staff about best approach for data gathering (online survey, confidential point-person, via line managers or via PSD WG members)	PSD WG	Q1 2025
	B3.2 Collect data using agreed method(s)	PSD WG	Q2 2025
	B3.3 Analyse the data	PSD WG rep & AO	Q2 2025

B4	<b>Management to explore process for addressing bullying and harassment, discrimination on basis of family status and discrimination on the basis of age with staff (subject to further information gathering on the latter two issues).</b>	SMT, ICT	Q1 2025
	Interim action: B4.1 Raise awareness of processes around informal and formal reporting	PSD WG & SMT	Q1 2025
	Interim action: B4.2 Consider supports and training for all staff (including management).	AO & Reg	
B5	<b>Develop formal disability policy and equality, diversity and inclusion statement</b>	AO, PSD WG	Q4 2025
	B5.1 Develop disability in the workplace policy, approve and publicise	AO	Q4 2025
	B5.2 Develop, approve and publicise EDI statement	Reg, AO	Q2 2025
B6	<b>Introduce regular EDI training, including specific disability awareness training, for all staff</b>	AO	At least once pa
	B6.1 Develop schedule for EDI training – identify providers, topics etc	AO, PSD WG	Q4 2025
	B6.2 Implement for 2026	AO	2026

B7	<b>Ongoing promotion of EDI values and policies, e.g. through standing item on staff meeting agenda, events and training</b>	RO & AO	
	B7.1 Add EDI standing item on staff meeting agenda	RO & AO	Q2 2025
	B7.2 Organise events on EDI matters	AO & PSD WG	ongoing
	B7.3 Arrange EDI Training (see also B6)	AO	
B8	<b>Improve inclusion of all staff in hybrid meetings</b>	RO & all NUI	Q3 2025
	B8.1 Improve technical equipment for meetings (e.g. introduce OWL or equivalent) in all meeting rooms	ICT	Q4 2025
	B8.2 Develop brief policy to support more inclusive hybrid meetings	AO	Q3 2025
B9/A4	<b>Accessibility audit of building</b>	F&A	2026
B10	<b>Accessibility audit of work practices</b>	NUI – lead TBC	2027
	Interim action: B10.1 Generate procedure documents for new processes and review for accessibility/inclusion	TBC	

	Interim action: B10.2 Develop process and plan for full implementation, including training or resource identification.	TBC	
B11	<b>Introduce health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events, workshops for staff</b>	WO	partially in progress
	Immediate action: B11.1 Raise awareness of currently available resources in this area (e.g. seminar from VHI on making the most of the EAP).	AO	Q1 2025
B12	<b>Explore disability support group for staff</b>	AO	Q1 2025
B13	<b>Athena SWAN preparations (during the strategic plan term 2023-2027).</b>	PSD WG	2027
	B13.1 Establish Self-Assessment Team, request support pack from Advance HE		
	B13.2 Identify key actions for preparing professional unit submissions		
	B13.3 Identify data collection required		

**Initialisms:**

AO: Access Officer

ASR: Academic Services & Registry

F&A: Finance & Administration

ICT: Information & Communications Technology

PSD WG: PSD Working Group

RO: Registrar's Office

Reg: Registrar

SMT: Senior Management Team

WO: Wellbeing Officer



## 2.3 Annual Breakdown

<b>2025</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Website Accessibility (A1)</li><li>2. Access Officer (A2)</li><li>3. Appoint Independent HR professional and complete staff handbook (B1)</li><li>4. Single Point of Access for HR and HRE policies (B2)</li><li>5. Research on Family Status/Age issues (B3)</li><li>6. Process for addressing Bullying &amp; Harassment (Age/Family Status) (B4)</li><li>7. Develop formal disability policy and EDI Statement (B5)</li><li>8. Improve inclusion of staff in hybrid meetings (B8)</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of EDI values (B7)</li><li>• Introduction of health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events and workshops (B11)</li></ul>
<b>2026</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Expand Inclusion-based Awards (A3)</li><li>2. Audit application forms for plain language (A5)</li><li>3. Access audit for 49 Merrion Sq (A6/B9)</li><li>4. Inclusion audit/toolkit for NUI Events (A7)</li><li>5. Introduce regular EDI training (B6)</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of EDI values (B7)</li><li>• Introduction of health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events and workshops (B11)</li></ul>
<b>2027</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introduce inclusive application/interviewing for competitive NUI Awards (A4)</li><li>2. Athena Swan Preparations (B13)</li><li>3. Accessibility Audit of Work Practices (B10)</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotion of EDI values (B7)</li><li>• Introduction of health, nutrition and wellbeing activities, events and workshops (B11)</li></ul>

## 3 FURTHER WORK

### 3.1 Surveys

Regular surveys of stakeholders and staff needs to be embedded (to assist in future external reviews, to support PSD work, to keep up-to-date with stakeholders in general). The first priority for further data collection is the two areas (age and family status) in which concerns were flagged but data

was insufficient for us to understand the issues properly. The most effective method of collecting data relating to these characteristics will be determined in consultation with staff.

### **3.2 Integration of PSD into Strategic Planning**

When the next strategic planning cycle begins (in 2027), the PSD process should be integrated and embedded in the next strategic plan documentation.

### **3.3 Reporting**

It is a requirement of the Public Sector Duty that implementation of actions arising from the assessment exercise are reported and published annually. NUI will make available a progress report in December each year noting developments, challenges and achievements.