

10 years of the Race Equality Charter (2005-25)

Year	Milestone	Notes
2015	Race Equality Charter framework (REC) trialled with 30 institutions, of whom 8 gained Bronze awards.	The REC builds on the existing Athena SWAN Charter and provides a framework for institutions to self-reflect on and address institutional and cultural barriers related to race equality. Following on from the success of the Athena SWAN Charter and a growing appetite from the sector for a race-specific charter, in 2010 ECU began work evaluating initiatives that had the aim of systemic change in race equality in the sector. Throughout the next four years, with supportive feedback from sector stakeholders and continuous improvement, a framework for race equality was developed and piloted before its official launch in 2016. 30 institutions participated in the REC pilot, of which 21 applied for awards. Of these, eight institutions were awarded Bronze REC Awards on 13 August 2015: + Royal Holloway, University of London + University College London (incorporating the UCL Institute of Education) + University of Manchester + University of Hertfordshire + Staffordshire University + Kingston University + King's College London + De Montfort University.

¹ [Abertay achieves race equality charter mark](#)
² [Abertay University receives second Race Equality Charter award.](#)

	Professor Nicola Rollock completes Phase 1 of first REC review	Professor Nicola Rollock, ³ a prominent specialist in racial justice in Education, was appointed to lead Phase 1 of the independent review of the Race Equality Charter, completed in 2019. The review was designed to explore the factors that contribute to successful applications and to identify common areas for improvement. ⁴
2021	Phase 2 of REC review published evaluating Charter process and impacts	Phase 2 of the REC independent review, which was conducted by a team at Douglas Oloyede, evaluated the REC process and its impact on race equality within the membership. Key areas of impact identified were increased representation of ethnically minoritised staff and students, and a reduced degree awarding gap. Recommendations included enhancing senior leadership buy in to the Charter, strengthening support to members to maintain success rates, reducing workload and data burden, and aligning aspects of process with the Athena Swan Charter. ⁵
	REC Governance Committee established to oversee Charter development	Following the independent review of the UK REC, Advance HE established a Race Equality Charter Governance Committee (RECGC) with Pradeep Passi and Professor David Richardson as co-Chairs. The Committee's 12 members have a wide range of equality, diversity and inclusion skills and lived experience.⁶ The RECGC's role is to inform and oversee the development of the REC systems and processes, panels, materials, and support to ensure the Charter remains as effective and supportive as possible.

³ [Professor Nicola Rollock | Advance HE](#)

⁴ [Race Equality Charter Review: Phase 1 Summary | Advance HE](#)

⁵ [Race Equality Charter Review Phase 2 | Advance HE](#)

⁶ [Race Equality Charter Governance Committee | Advance HE](#)

2022	Welsh Government announces requirement that HE institutions achieve a REC award within three years, as a condition of funding.	The Welsh Government published its first, Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, which requires all HEIs to achieve a REC Award within three years, as a condition of Higher Education Council Fund-Wales (HECFW/Medr) funding. ⁷
2023	De Montfort University gains first REC Silver Award	De Montfort University (DMU) participated in the initial pilot of the REC and gained its first Bronze award in 2015, renewed in 2018. DMU's Silver submission highlighted key achievements including its Decolonising DMU programme, its review of staff recruitment policies and processes towards a more ethnically representative workforce and the work of Fair Outcome Champions on a range of initiatives including ethnicity awarding gaps. ⁸
	Updated REC launched	The Race Equality Charter was updated following recommendations from the Independent Review and consultation with the sector, with strategic oversight and advice from its Race Equality Charter Governance Committee. ⁹
	REC pilot for Small and Specialist Institutions and Research Institutes (SSI-RIs) launched	In response to member feedback, the pilot is adapting the updated REC framework to the specific contexts and needs of SSIs and RIs. Twelve institutions are participating and working towards submitting their first REC application in 2025, supported by Advance HE advice and guidance and peer learning opportunities. ¹⁰

⁷ [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan | GOV.WALES](#)

⁸ [De Montfort University is the first higher education institution recognised with a Race Equality Charter Silver Award | Advance HE; DMU becomes first university to be given silver Race Equality Charter award](#)

⁹ [Race Equality Charter Update | Advance HE](#)

¹⁰ [REC pilot for research institutes and small and specialist institutes update | Advance HE](#)

	University of Manchester gains second REC Silver award ¹¹ .	The University of Manchester has been part of REC since its inception in 2015 and previously held a Bronze award. ¹² The 2023 Silver award reflected progress in delivering on actions and related impact including on career progression and increasing representation of black and ethnically minoritised staff through embedding initiatives such as Inclusive Advocacy, StellarHE, Aurora and 100 Black Women Professors Now ¹³ .
2024	REC membership reaches 100 universities, with 60 awards. Keele University and University of East London gain REC Silver awards	By 2024 the REC had 100 full members who have signed principles and hold or are working towards awards; as well as 12 participants in the pilot for Small and Specialist Institutions and Research Institutes. The current list of members and awardees is available on the Advance HE website. ¹⁴ Keele obtained its Silver award in July 2024, having previously held a Bronze award since 2019. ¹⁵ Keele was commended for its strong engagement of senior leadership and work on representation and consideration of race in health research. University of East London gained its first Silver award in April 2024 ¹⁶ . Their submission showed progress in the development and representation of racially minoritised staff, diversity in committees, and student attainment ¹⁷ .

¹¹ [Second-only Silver REC awarded to The University of Manchester in mission to improve race equality in higher education | Advance HE](#)

¹² [Race Equality Charter | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | StaffNet | The University of Manchester](#)

¹³ [The University of Manchester: Systemic Change by Challenging Assumptions | Advance HE](#)

¹⁴ <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/race-equality-charter/members>

¹⁵ [Race Equality Charter - Keele University](#)

¹⁶ [Third Silver REC awarded to University of East London | Advance HE](#)

¹⁷ [UEL recognised for advancing race equality | University of East London](#)

2025	First Welsh institution receives REC	Cardiff University become the first Welsh institution to receive a REC Bronze award in February 2025.¹⁸ As of July, all eight Welsh universities (Aberystwyth University, Bangor University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, Swansea University, University of South Wales, University of Wales Trinity St David and Wrexham University) have been awarded REC Bronze award.
	Silver award for Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL)	RHUL became the 5th REC Silver award holder¹⁹. Their submission reported positive progress in representation of Black and Global Majority staff in senior grades and on changing the culture on disciplinary processes.
	REC 10-year anniversary	10th anniversary of when the first REC awards were made in August 2015.

¹⁸ <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/view/2895599-cardiff-receives-race-equality-charter-bronze-award>

¹⁹ [Royal Holloway achieves a Silver Award under Advance HE's Race Equality Charter](#)