



# Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Action Plan 2025/26

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# EDI Strategic Action Plan

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# Introduction

This Report offers an overview of United College Group's (UCG) key achievements in respect of the Strategic EDI Action Plan 2024-25 and an insight of the EDI Strategic objectives (the EDI Action Plan) for the academic year, 2025-26.

As a reminder, UCG introduced the first set of Strategic EDI objectives in September 2021. These were designed to support the stated aim expressed in the 2020-24 Strategic Plan of "Embracing Diversity & Inclusion".

The Strategic EDI Action Plan for 2025-26 retains the same format of the Action Plans from the previous academic years and continues the ambition to help UCG work towards being an exemplar organisation in the approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion for students and staff.

The introduction of an initial Strategic EDI Action Plan and the subsequent annual revisions serve to:

- Support the continued commitment to develop a fully inclusive environment that enhances the experience for all staff and students
- Encourage through our practices, systems and culture, our stakeholders to improve their support and approach to EDI



## EDI Strategic Action Plan 2025-26

The Strategic Action Plan ([Appendix 1](#)), for the current year is informed by the following sources:

- The remaining 9 objectives (out of 10) from the previous academic year that included new and reshaped objectives
- Feedback from the Strategic Lead for EDI and the appointed Leads for each objective.
- Reflections from the National Centre for Diversity (NCD)
- Actions agreed with the Black Leadership Group
- In year feedback from the EDI Staff Forum, staff and students.

For this year, the Strategic EDI Objectives have been mapped against the appropriate UCG values and underpinning principles ([Appendix 2](#)). This realignment serves to maintain the connection between the objectives and how these support the stated strategic purpose of UCG to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The objectives are still paired with one or more destination ([Appendix 3](#)) that provide the framework for nationally respected and highly valued Investors in Diversity Award, of which UCG successfully achieved the Gold (Leaders) Award in May 2025, helping the College to be move up to 30 (from 53) in the NCD 100 Most Inclusive Employer. The only London College to achieve this accolade.

The established monitoring schedule ([Appendix 4](#)) continues to provide quality assurance for the Strategic Action Plan and other key elements of UCG's work devoted to advancing EDI.

Within the EDI Structure, ([Appendix 5](#)) the Strategic Action Plan remains subject to the continuous review and scrutiny of the Strategic EDI Group, and the Staff EDI Forum on which sits the important role of EDI Champions.

## Our EDI Achievements 2024-25

Reframed against UCG's values and principles a sample of key EDI achievements during the previous academic year is available ([Appendix 6](#)).

# Appendix 1 - UCG Strategic EDI Action Plan & Objectives 2025-26

## 1. Always Improving (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 3)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)/Team	Target Date
1	Review Quality Assurance systems/ processes to assess how well this support and improve EDI within the curriculum and service areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support developed to help staff better understand how to interpret data sources that focus on EDI and to improve the EDI actions at the curriculum and service level to further narrow achievement gaps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved identification and implementation of EDI Actions at the curriculum and service level, monitored via the SAR/Process.</li> </ul>	Director of Innovation Enterprise & Quality Assurance	July 2026
2	Support the advancement of equality and the reduction of discrimination using Equality Impact Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree the Strategic Lead for the Cross College, implementation and monitoring of the EIA process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SMT Lead agreed</li> </ul>	Principal  Director of Governance  Director of Business Intelligence, MIS & People  EDI Team	July 2026
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the current policies and procedures, which should be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and create a plan to ensure EIAs are undertaken.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a clear process for the use of EIAs covering policies, procedures, and Management reports.</li> </ul>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide appropriate forms of support for staff on how to complete EIAs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of support mechanism in place to help staff understand and carry out EIAs.</li> </ul>		



## 2. Putting Our Students First - (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1&2)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)/Team	Target Date
1	To embed support networks for students with protected characteristics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify teachers or staff who can convene student groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce student support group based on protected characteristics</li> </ul>	Interim Assistant Principal (Student Experience) Enrichment Team	July 2026
2	To prepare students with protected characteristics for career pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement mentoring within existing work placement and apprenticeship networks.</li> <li>Engage students with external employability programmes (i.e. Moving on Up, Making the Leap).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop continuously updated calendar of programmes, workshops</li> <li>Other development opportunities for students with protected characteristics.</li> <li>Monitor the level of take-up of initiatives based on protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	Interim Assistant Principal (Student Experience) Support Services	July 2026
3	To integrate EDI into learning and teaching experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate curriculum for integration of EDI principles.</li> <li>Evaluate current understanding of EDI policies, objectives, and principles among students to develop targeted initiatives that raise understanding.</li> <li>A radical revision of FE curricula and qualifications to reflect contemporary values, incorporating the importance of colonial history and its influence on society, historically and now; the impact of racism on black and white communities; the contributions made by black people to society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a regular programme of EDI CPD with increased attendance.</li> <li>Positive feedback on the quality of EDI CPD programming.</li> <li>Develop KPIs on inclusive curriculum.</li> <li>Perform annual portfolio review with EDI focus.</li> </ul>	SLT EDI Lead Interim Vice Principal (Student Experience) Principal Director Of Innovation, Enterprise & Quality Assurance EDI Team	July 2026

### 3. Compassion & Empathy - (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 4 & 5)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)/ Team	Target Date
1	For all staff to feel comfortable using internal systems and software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement an annual self-assessment of IT skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Training matrix drawn up that considers the roles &amp; digital skills requirement</li></ul>	Director of Business Intelligence, MIS & People  Interim Head of HR  IT Strategy Group	July 2026
2	To provide staff with a range of EDI training options that support their role and understanding of both other staff and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify and develop specific activities using a variety of sources such as SARS, feedback from staff EDI focus groups and best practice to create a programme of EDI learning and supporting material which meet both general and specific service needs and includes, as a central component, forms of antiracism and the inclusion of anti-racist pedagogy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Development of an Induction &amp; CPD programme</li></ul>	SLT EDI Lead  Principal  Director of Innovation, Enterprise and Quality Assurance.  Interim Head of HR	July 2026





## 4. Inclusion & Belonging - (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 4)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)/Team	Target Date
1	To ensure that students and staff with dyslexia are supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise awareness of dyslexia through workshops and posters, including training for teaching staff on dyslexia-inclusive teaching strategies.</li><li>• Coordinate with Marketing to clearly communicate to students where to seek help with dyslexia</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quality attendance and positive feedback at workshops.</li><li>• Positive feedback in student focus groups regarding teaching strategies.</li></ul>	Head of ALS Marketing	July 2026
2	For students with a range of academic abilities to have the time, tools, and equipment they need to succeed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure students have the appropriate equipment to work on and off-site.</li><li>• ALS to provide deaf awareness training for identified teaching staff to improve inclusion of deaf learners in response to feedback from teaching staff and students.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Audit student equipment needs and identify a plan to resource.</li><li>• Identify staff who attend deaf awareness training to measure the effectiveness from the feedback from CSW's and improved</li><li>• Achievement of deaf learners.</li></ul>	Head of ALS Assistant Principals Marketing Curriculum Teams	July 2026





# OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES

## OUR PURPOSE

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Our college believes in:

Inclusion and belonging

Mutual trust and respect

Putting our students first

Always improving

Compassion and empathy

United Colleges Group

# OUR PRINCIPLES

We embrace diversity and take pro-active steps to be inclusive

Inclusion and belonging

We communicate openly and transparently and assume positive intent

Mutual trust and respect

We put students first in everything we do

Putting our students first

We embrace a mindset of perpetual growth, seeking constant improvements in processes, education, and personal development of peers and our students

Always improving

We care about each other, our wellbeing, our development and actively seek to understand and validate the feelings of others

Compassion and empathy

United Colleges Group



# Appendix 3: National Centre for Diversity Investors in Diversity Destinations

Destination
<p>1) Your organisation is effective in advancing FREDIE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fairness</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Equality</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Engagement</li> </ul>
2) Your culture makes people of any background feel safe, valued, and included
3) FREDIE is core to your organisation’s strategy or business plan.
4) Good mental health and wellbeing are regarded as important in your organisation.
5) Effective operational and line management of FREDIE.
6) You can demonstrate that your selection and recruitment practices are fair and seek to address underrepresentation of people with different protected characteristics in your workforce at all levels.
7) Retention, reward, and progression processes are fair and where appropriate, you are working towards eliminating any unfair pay gaps.
8) You are using your performance management systems to improve inclusion, engagement, and productivity.
9) Your organization has fair and inclusive procurement practices.
10) Effective FREDIE communications.





# Appendix 4: EDI Monitoring Schedule 2025-26

Activity	Date	Frequency	Lead (s)	Reported To
Strategic Objectives & Action Plan	Prior to EDI Strategic Group meetings	Termly	EDI Team	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
EDI Updates to the Finance & Resources (Governors) Committee	Prior to Committee Meeting	Termly	SLT EDI Lead Director of Governance	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
EDI Policy Review	End of Summer term	Bi-Annual	EDI Team	EDI Strategic Group  SLT
Annual EDI Report	31st January	Annually	EDI Team	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
Student Feedback (survey/ focus groups)		Termly (Focus Groups) Bi-Annual (Surveys such as QPD)	Director of Innovation, Enterprise and Quality Assurance.	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
Staff Feedback (survey/ focus groups)		Bi -annual (Focus Groups) Staff Surveys	Interim Head of HR	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
Analysis of EDI Achievement data	Autumn and Summer	Annually	Director of Innovation, Enterprise and Quality Assurance.	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT





## Appendix 5: EDI structure 2025-26



The EDI Team is led by Nadia El Atrash, Interim Head of HR, the newly appointed EDI and Well Being Coordinator, Robyn Johnston and EDI Consultant, Dennis Francis. The Team work in close partnership with the SLT EDI Lead, Bilal Bobat.

The EDI Team works with the EDI Strategic Group, whose purpose is to ensure Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is a strategic priority for UCG in line with the value of Inclusion and Belonging agreed by the Corporation (June 2024). The focus is to ensure that across UCG, diversity is embraced, and pro-active steps are taken to improve the outcomes and impact of EDI actions.

The EDI Strategic Group meets two times per term, and the current "Core" membership is as follows:

- Bilal Bobat, Vice Principal & SLT EDI lead
- Stephen Davis, Chief Executive Officer
- James Wilson, Principal
- Amanda Thorneycroft, Chief Financial Officer
- Nicola McLean, Vice Principal (Students)
- Paul Bradley, Director of Business Intelligence, MIS & People
- Diana Brown (Interim Assistant Principal for Student Experience)
- Tanya Rose, EDI Link Governor
- Nadia El Atrash, Interim Head of HR
- Robyn Johnston, EDI & Well Being Co-ordinator.

### EDI Staff Forum

Formed in 2023-24, the EDI Staff Forum - which comprises of staff representatives from areas across UCG - meets twice a term, two weeks before the meeting of the EDI Strategic Group. Their remit is to discuss collective staff EDI concerns, bring forward ideas/initiatives and to provide constructive feedback on EDI progress against the Strategic Action Plan. On rotation, members are invited to feedback to the EDI Strategic Group.

The Forum exists to provide a platform for staff to engage and support the work of the Strategic Group, and to ensure all protected characteristics are considered and reflected in UCG's EDI practices and initiatives. The forum provides a great opportunity for the direction and intention of EDI to be shaped through the staff "voice."

A key feature of the Forums is the role of EDI Champions - members of staff who are enthusiastic "advocates," of equality, diversity, and inclusion and who are willing to share their expertise and passion to collaborate with a community of like-minded individuals to support the responsibilities of the Strategic EDI Group.

If you are interested in joining this important platform, to be an agent of change who helps shape and drive the EDI agenda, please [click here](#) for further details.



Core Value: Always Improving

We embrace a mindset of perpetual growth, seeking constant improvement in processes, education and personal development for peers and our students (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 3).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- The 2024-25 SAR Process has been reviewed and will help to inform future EDI focused training.
- Improved analysis of EDI data from the ILR (Individual Learning Records) and the May 2025 Student Survey incorporated into the Self-Assessment Report training rolled out to career clusters during the admin weeks in July 2025.
- A video produced by Quality Data Package showed career clusters how more detailed EDI analysis can be made of their student survey data.
- The Quality Data Package Student survey data contains qualitative student comments as well as quantitative EDI data which can be analysed on a course by course.
- SLT Lead agreed (James Wilson) to support the advancement of equality through the reduction of discrimination using Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).
- Further steps identified on embedding the EIA process/support/approach into the policy decision making process.
- Phase 1 Training on EIA conducted for identified policy makers.
- The information on the EIA intranet site has been refreshed to support the completion of an EIA.
- To help influence and support the EDI practices of our stakeholders, Staff development sessions were held for our external partners who provided UCG's Apprenticeship Schemes. This included the roll out of the Colleges teaching learning and assessment strategy and implementation, targeted sessions on enrolment, including student eligibility and understanding the benefit and visa eligibility checks.

Core Value: Putting Our Students First

We put our students first in everything that we do (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 2).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- A staff member now supports the LGBTQ+ network, advising the Student Union and working with staff and students to plan LGBTQ+ events from September 2025.
- 2 EDI SU Offices have been appointed and as part of their support the EDI Co-ordinator acted as a Mentor.
- The college's first Cultural Month celebrated diversity through activities such as Planet Earth games, the Great British Tea Party, and Culture Day. Student-run stalls showcased traditional food, crafts, and customs, alongside music, performances, and a Cultural Fashion Show highlighting staff and students' heritage.
- Through its partnership with Citizens UK, UCG worked with the Westminster Chapter on local community projects. The Student Union led the Listening Campaign, with four members continuing after the November meeting and attending partner meetings. UCG students and staff also took part in the final July Youth Assembly.
- To help the curriculum to reflect contemporary history an initial guidance document on decolonising the curriculum and set of resources, including examples from other colleges, were created and shared with teams across the college.
- APs/Curriculum Managers were tasked with embedding the resources into CPD for practical implementation, and the ETF Cultural Competence webinar on curriculum decolonisation was shared with managers and then more widely with staff.
- End-of-year event to review, compare, and share departmental progress on decolonising the curriculum, raising awareness and identifying next steps.
- Submissions to the National Centre for Diversity Accreditation showed that students explored decolonising the curriculum through English and Maths learning materials, A-Level and Creative Industries reading selections, Performing Arts projects, the 'Good Person of Stockwell' Music piece, and the end-of-year Creative and Digital showcase.



## Core Value: Compassion and Empathy

We care about people, each other, our wellbeing, our development and actively seek to understand and validate the feelings of others (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 4 & 5).

### Key Achievements (Examples):

- As part of the Digital Transformation Strategy, an IT skills audit proposal was developed with Development and Innovation for SLT approval, including consideration of an external provider for a digital skills review and CPD for 30–40 staff.
- The Induction Working Group focused on improving induction and CPD for new staff, embedding UCG values of inclusion and belonging, a more centralised CPD approach for 2025–26, and expanding EDI activities for all staff.
- Unconscious Bias training was delivered in July 2024; Career Clusters completed CPD on decolonising the curriculum.
- An inclusive talent strategy aligned with the Mayor’s Growth Plan and an Inclusion Strategy were approved, alongside a new Learning and Development Strategy to embed inclusive, continuous learning.
- CPD Day (July 2025) covered Autism Awareness, Sexual Harassment, Unconscious Bias, and Professional Standards to ensure full staff compliance.
- Equality Impact Assessment training was delivered for managers, with inclusive leadership further embedded.
- Specialist training was delivered for staff supporting Deaf learners, Dyslexia, and SEND, including group-wide CPD sessions and manager training on workplace adjustments.
- CPD which continued to systematically include a focus on EDI characteristics and achievement gaps.

## Core Value: Inclusion and Belonging

Ensure buildings and services are accessible to and support the health and wellbeing of learners and staff. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 4).

### Key Achievements (Examples):

- Students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) took part in workshops through the TRILS project, funded by King’s College London. The project enabled students with disabilities and their carers to design research exploring how racism affects learning disability services and how it can be addressed.
- Strong links continued with Brent, Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Teachers of the Deaf services. The specialist English workshop for deaf learners remained in place and continued to enrich their college experience.
- Learning Support Assistants from Supported Learning and Additional Learning Support completed ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) training, strengthening support for learners with SEMH and aligning with UCG’s trauma informed approach.
- Highly effective collaboration between Speech and Language Therapy teams, teachers and Learning Support Assistants embedded the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication tools including Eye Gaze and Clicker, improving communication, independence and engagement.
- Partnerships with external organisations enriched the curriculum through inclusive activities such as Step Change Studio dance sessions, the SEN Marathon, the Dance Westminster Competition and Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver awards.
- Employability students continued work-based learning with London Zoo and the Petite Miracles upcycling project, developing travel training and gaining valuable workplace experience.
- Learning for Work and Skills for Work students ran an Autism Awareness stall with support from Speech and Language Therapists and college staff, raising funds for the National Autistic Society through the sale of cakes, bookmarks and badges.
- A new initiative to support learners with emotional and mental health difficulties was launched in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Councils, with Learning Support Assistants receiving training from Educational Psychologists from the RBKC Psychology Service.
- The Additional Learning Support and Supported Learning teams underwent a process review by an Ofsted Inspector in a consultancy capacity. Recommendations, including clarifying exam access arrangements, have been implemented to improve effectiveness.



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