Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Action Plan 2023/24

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LEAD RESPONSIBILITY:

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DATE OF UPDATE:

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EDI Strategic Action Plan colour guide 2023-24

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Introduction

This document provides an overview of UCG's key achievements in respect of the Strategic EDI Action Plan 2022-23 and offers a preview of the EDI Strategic objectives contained in the EDI Action Plan for the academic year, 2023-24.

The first set of Strategic EDI objectives were introduced 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 2023-24 retains the same format of the Action Plans from the previous academic years and continues the ambition to help UCG work towards the key outcome of 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 revisions to create the current plan support the continued commitment to develop a fully inclusive environment that enhances the experience of all students and staff, as well as to encourage through our practices, systems and culture other organisations and our stakeholders to improve their support and approach to EDI.

OUR EDI ACHIEVEMENTS 2022-23

The actions for 2022-23 were compiled and updated from prior versions of the EDI Action Plan, staff and student feedback, inputs from the various Leads, and policy updates.

Using UCG's 8 strategic themes, a sample of key EDI achievements during the previous academic year is available **(Appendix 1).**

EDI ACTION PLAN 2023-24

The Strategic Action Plan **(Appendix 2)**, for the current year is informed by the following sources:

- the remaining actions from the previous academic year (27 out of 54)

- feedback from the National Centre for Diversity (NCD)

- Actions agreed with the Black Leadership Group

- Ofsted

- In year feedback from the EDI Staff Forum, staff and students.

The format of the plan is designed against UCG's Strategic themes paired with one or more "destinations" **(Appendix 3)** that underpin the respected and highly valued **Investors in Diversity charter mark**

which UCG successfully achieved in May 2022 and were reaccredited with in June 2023.

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 will remain subject to the continuous review and scrutiny of the Strategic EDI Group, and the newly formed Staff EDI Forum on which sits the new role of EDI Champions.

APPENDIX 1 - UCG EDI STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS 2022-23

Strategic Theme 1: Leadership & Management:

Take steps to advance EDI as a core element of the culture of UCG and create a working environment where staff and students feel valued, safe, supported, and can be their authentic selves. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 3).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- Review of the SAR Academic template completed for 2022-23, the new template included an EDI section which has been made a requirement of the SAR for Support Services. This development is supported by a structured monitoring process where EDI actions are fed into QIPs and reviewed twice in a year at KPI Reviews (January and May) and then again in next year's SAR.

- Report to Governors on Achievement highlights the outcomes by student diversity profile and contains a plan on the detailed interventions to provide support to identified students.

- In areas where there are clear indicators of achievement gaps between different groups of students, Career Clusters have individual action plans to address these, which include reviewing classroom materials.

- Improved Quality Assurance systems/processes are in place at an organisational level to assess how well EDI is supported and improved within the curriculum and support service areas.

Strategic Theme 2: Staff, including Governors:

Improve the employee life cycle with reference to the recruitment and promotional opportunities for those groups who are underrepresented. Improve staff confidence to disclose their protected characteristics. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 2, 6, 7 & 8).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- As an inner London college, UCG is proud of its diverse and multi-skilled workforce. In terms of gender the figure is 59% in favour of females, disability at 7% and in regard to ethnicity, 50% of UCG teaching staff and 53% of support staff are from an ethnically diverse background. Most noticeably, in the past two years UCG have moved from having 16% ethnically diverse staff at management level to 34% – which meets the KPI agreed with the Finance and Resources Committee.

- Against the KPI of 50%, 45% of Board members are female (up from 38%) and 45% from an ethnically diverse background (from 50%).

- Board agreement that all governors complete a diversity monitoring form which is used to inform the recruitment process and is used for monitoring the composition of the Board.

- The Diversity Profile of the Board has been profiled in the Governors Newsletter (March 2023).

- The Staff Diversity profile is shared via the Annual EDI Report and has been added separately to the HR platform on the Staff Intranet.

Strategic Theme: 3. Students:

Embed EDI into the student experience and use information systems to monitor, analyse, and raise the participation, progress, and achievement rates for student groups. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 2).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- Further work was carried out to ensure EDI diversity infomation is available and accessible for the following areas: Lesson Observations; Applications; Internal Progression; in-year UCAS applications; Intended Destinations; Predicted Achievement (CAD); Value Added; Student Union (election and attendance); WEX/Skills Engagement.

- EDI analysis of achievement for 2022-23 will be published on the website by December 2023-24. Currently information is made available to TLS, the EDI Strategic Group and the EDI Staff Forum.

- The College and 4C Associates discussed offering work placements in 2023-24 for students which they feel would be more beneficial than mentoring.

- As part of the annual teachers' review of their own resources and materials, information on EDI has now been included within the TLA Handbook for 2023-24.

Strategic Theme: 4. Communications:

Actively promote and raise awareness of EDI building on the feedback from staff, learners, employers and partners of UCG (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1, 2, 9 & 10).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- Opportunities through the work of HR Business Partners, HR Newsletter to promote/encourage staff to disclose their protected characteristics.

- Behavioural Standards are now incorporated into all PDR paperwork and provides a unified approach on the expectations of staff.

- More SLT road shows were scheduled to help improve the numbers of staff attending the Roadshows as well as more Coffee Conversations with staff and students.

- Staff EDI Focus Discussions feedback shared via Managers, delivering a presentation to staff for 2023.

- EDI newsletter used as one platform to gather feedback from staff and to provide information such as profiling the EDI Link Governor/Staff EDI Forum/Champions.

- Inaugural Staff EDI social event held to showcase the idea of a Staff EDI Forum and EDI Champions. An initial meeting of this group was held in January 2023 and has provided a further channel to inform, shape and develop EDI best practice and policies and initiatives in UCG.

- A new Learner Engagement Strategy was in place for the academic year 2022/23. Undepinning the strategy is an Engagement Plan with a range of iniatives designed to obtain feedback and the active promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion, such as students invited to give feedback on how they are taught at the Meet the Manager meetings.

Strategic Theme 5: External Partnerships:

Ensure that external opportunities promote EDI and that activities delivered by UCG incorporate EDI best practice. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destination 9).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- Through the collection and analysis of a wide range of focused evidence plus interviews with a number of staff and students and feedback from external partners, UCG was reaccredited with the **Investors In Diversity Award, June 2023.**

- Continued to engage with Educate and Celebrate to make sure that UCG is a place that is welcoming to and supportive of LGBTQ+ staff and learners. UCG awarded **Educate and Celebrate Bronze Award in January 2023.**

- Building upon Level 1 achievement of the previous year, UCG obtained **The Disability Confident Employer Award Level 2 in June 2023** in recognition the continued work and commitment to support those with a disabilty, seeking or employed in the organisation.

Strategic Theme 6: Training/CPD:

Develop further opportunities to increase the understanding and the celebration of equality, diversity, and inclusion. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 4 & 5).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- Staff CPD Day July 2023 organised to focus on the "Communities we serve", with themed workshops on gender identity, neurodiversity and race led by expert organisations.

- All staff CPD from Educate and Celebrate (our external LGBTQ+ partner) to specifically support the introduction of pronouns and awareness of LGBTQ+ developments.

- In year staff CPD which continues to systematically include a focus on EDI characteristics and achievement gaps, continuing with the February CPD on trauma informed learning. This has been embedded into curriculum planning to help better understand and meet the diverse needs of learners.

- Key staff undertook Mental Health Training funded by CITB and MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) to help support the apprentices they interact with.

- Specialist training for staff in areas such as Additional Learning Support to support students with a Disability or Learning Difficulty.

- Staff continue to access the suite of AOC course such as the Diversity in Leadership Programme and events such as the Conference on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Strategic Theme 7: Accessibility & Support:

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):

- In response to feedback from OFSTED, ALS paperwork was reviewed via a focus group of teachers to understand how SEND information can be best shared with them.

- ALS provided deaf awareness training for identified teaching staff in order to improve the inclusion of deaf learners. During the year, the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team offered training regarding supporting deaf learners to all Career Clusters. The English team worked with ALS to make the curriculum accessible for deaf learners and all lecturers made adjustments to their practices. The team also timetabled two out-of-classroom sessions to offer more targeted support, as a result of which, deaf learners made significant progress in their reading and writing abilities.

- ALS and Marketing worked together to produce the first signed promotional video targeted at prospective applicants with hearing impairment needs and in support of EDI and faith/ EDI celebrations a video for Happy Diwali video has been made with staff signing.

- The ALS hub has been opened at PGC and Willesden sites with some sessions also running at Wembley Park.

Strategic Theme 8: Supply Chain/Procurement:

Ensure activities delivered on behalf of UCG are fair and inclusive. (NCD Investors in Diversity Destination 9).

Key Achievements (Examples):

- EDI added as a standing agenda item to all partner reviews for the academic year.

- Review Of Due Diligences Process, SLA, and EDI policies annually for existing partners has been completed.

- Progress reviews with partners are currently being undertaken, with UCG gathering feedback on whether partners feel ready to reintroduce Annual Staff and Curriculum Development Day.

- Review of the student journey and outcomes and the development of an Action Plan is ongoing with the introduction of Power BI and its dashboard specifically for apprenticeships.

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is effectively embedded in all aspects of employer-led training within UCG.

- Apprenticeship enrolment process was fully updated for 2022-23, with all training agreements and reviews include references to EDI.

- Building upon the specific curriculum material to support the embedding of Prevent and British Values into Apprenticeships further collaboration took place to raise the profile of Safeguarding and Prevent for apprentices. These areas were identified by Ofsted as a concern. Facilitated by Brent Prevent Team, training on Prevent took place on-line so as to allow all parties to access the training regardless of their location. Employers were also be invited to attend the training.

1. Leadership & Management

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 3)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1.	1. Review Quality Assurance systems/ processes to assess how well these support and improve EDI within the curriculum and service areas.	• Examine the process for monitoring EDI improvements.	All SAR reports to include EDI data consultation process.	**Assistant Principal Performance Quality & Innovation** **SLT** **EDI Team**	December 2023

2. Staff, including Governors

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 2, 6, 7 & 8)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1.	1. To align as far as practicable the membership of the corporation structure to the diversity profile of the staff and student population.	• Increase the number of female governors. • To provide annual staff and governor profile data by ethnicity (and other characteristics), including actions to address any identified gaps.	Achieve 50% female and maintain 50% of membership from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Information published on the diversity profile of staff and Governors on the College intranet and other appropriate media platforms.	**Director of Governance** **Director of People & Communications**	October 2023

3. Students

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 2)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1.	1. To embed support networks for students with protected characteristics.	• Identify teachers or staff who can convene student groups.	Introduce student support groups based on protected characteristics.	**Enrichment Team** **Head of Student Support Services**	October 2023
2	2. To prepare students with protected characteristics for career pathways.	• Implement mentoring within existing work placement and apprenticeship networks. • Engage students with external employability programmes (i.e. Moving on Up, Making the Leap).	• Develop continuously updated calendar of programmes, workshops and other development opportunities for students with protected characteristics. • Monitor the level of take up of initiatives based on protected characteristics.	**Head of Student Support Services**	October 2023
3	3. To integrate EDI into learning and teaching experience.	• Evaluate curriculum for integration of EDI principles. • Evaluate current understanding of EDI policies, objectives, and principles among students to develop targeted initiatives that raise understanding. • 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. • Develop induction and CPD programming to embed privilege/bias awareness in the classroom and across UCG.	• Maintain a regular programme of EDI CPD with increased attendance. • Positive feedback on the quality of EDI CPD programming. • Develop KPIs on inclusive curriculum. • Perform annual portfolio review with EDI focus.	**Director of Student Services** **Project Consultant - Teaching Learning & Assessment** **AP Development & Innovation** **EDI Team**	April 2024

3. Students

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 2)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
4.	4.To improve the performance of learners with the continued identification and review of achievement gaps and the impact of the actions taken.	• Analyse student achievement rates by equality strands and address any success rates that are below College and national averages by identifying any targeted support needs. • Develop Group wide reports with identified EDI information e.g. socioeconomic factors, in an appropriate format and at times that meet the needs of Curriculum/key stakeholders in each College. • Annually publish student performance data by ethnicity (and other protected characteristics) including the actions to address any identified gaps. • Ensure all teaching and student-facing staff have access to the relevant achievement data to support learners.	• Develop an Achievement Action Plan with targets for prioritised groups and internal and external examples of best practice.	**AP Performance, Quality & Innovation** **MI Team**	December 2023

4. External Partnerships

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destination 9)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1	1. To achieve the next level of external accreditation that recognises the standard of the EDI work undertaken by UCG.	• Implement the action plan for the Educate & Celebrate award.	• Achieve the Silver Award.	**Director of People & Communications** **EDI Team**	November 2023

5. Training/CPD
(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 4 & 5)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1	1. To ensure staff have the resources to understand and incorporate EDI into lesson plans and classroom environment.	• Review how EDI is covered within the teacher training provided by academic partners.	• An EDI resource library for teaching and learning is accessible for all staff on the intranet.	**AP Performance Quality & Innovation** **EDI Team** **Director of People & Communications** **Project Co-ordinator – Teaching Learning & Assessment**	February 2024
2	2. For all staff to feel comfortable using internal systems and software.	• Implement a termly self-appraisal of IT skills. • Review the internal systems and IT processes to ensure all are serving their intended purpose.	• Induction checklist captures IT needs of new staff. • IT skills audit piloted for existing staff and developed further in line with feedback received.	**AP Development & Innovation** **MIS**	May 2024
3	3. To provide staff with a range of EDI training options that support their role and understanding of both other staff and students.	• 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 for the academic year for all staff, which meet both general and specific service needs. • All professional development and leadership programmes to include, as a central component, the consideration of anti-racism; and for teacher training, the inclusion of anti-racist pedagogy	• Central CPD Programme created and local EDI activities identified and provided throughout the year. • Positive feedback from staff (& students) on the content and relevance of the learning sessions/ supporting material provided.	**AP Performance Quality & Innovation** **Director of People & Communications** **Project Co-ordinator – Teaching Learning & Assessment**	February 2024

6. Accessibility & Support

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destinations 1 & 4)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1	1. To ensure that students and staff with dyslexia are supported.	• Raise awareness of dyslexia through workshops and posters, including training for teaching staff on dyslexia-inclusive teaching strategies. • Coordinate with Marketing to clearly communicate to students where to seek help with dyslexia	• Quality attendance and positive feedback at workshops. • Positive feedback in student focus groups regarding teaching strategies.	**ALS** **Marketing**	December 2023
2	2. For students with a range of academic abilities to have the time, tools, and equipment they need to succeed.	• Ensure students have the appropriate equipment to work on and off-site. • ALS to provide deaf awareness training for identified teaching staff in order to improve inclusion of deaf learners in response to feedback from teaching staff and students.	• Audit student equipment needs and identify a plan to resource. • Identify staff who attend deaf awareness training to measure the effectiveness from the feedback from CSW's and improved achievement of deaf learners.	**ALS** **Assistant Principals** **Marketing** **Curriculum Teams**	February 2024

7. Supply Chain/Procurement

(NCD Investors in Diversity Destination 9)

	Objectives	Key Actions	Measurements	Lead(s)	Target Date
1	1.Ensure supply chain and key contractors (subject to financial threshold) are continuously improving their EDI policies and processes.	• Reintroduce Annual Staff and Curriculum Development Day with partners. • Review student journey and outcomes and develop Action Plan as required.	• Positive feedback from users.	**Chief Financial Officer**	December 2023

APPENDIX 3: NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DIVERSITY INVESTORS IN DIVERSITY DESTINATIONS

DESTINATION
1) Your organisation is effective in advancing FREDIE: • Fairness • Respect • Equality • Diversity • Inclusion • Engagement
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 are able to 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 organisation has fair and inclusive procurement practices.
10) Effective FREDIE communications.

APPENDIX 4: EDI MONITORING SCHEDULE

NB: From September 2022 the EDI Steering Group became known as the EDI Strategic Group.

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	Director of People & Communications; 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)	Assistant Principal	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
Staff Feedback (survey/ focus groups)		Bi -annual (Focus Groups) Staff Surveys	Director of People & Communications	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT
Analysis of EDI Achievement data	Autumn and Summer	Annually	Assistant Principal Performance, Quality & Innovation.	EDI Strategic Group Governors SLT

APPENDIX 5: EDI STRUCTURE

The EDI Team is led by Claire Collins, Director of People & Communications. Claire is supported by the EDI Administrator and an EDI Consultant, Dennis Francis.

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 strategic theme of 'embracing Diversity' agreed by the Corporation, that robust actions are being implemented to improve UCG's overall approach to EDI and that these actions are having a positive impact.

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

Core Membership:

- Stephen Davis, Chief Executive Officer & Group Principal
- Claire Collins, Director of People & Communications
- James Wilson, Deputy Principal
- Angela Jackson, Deputy Principal
- Amanda Thorneycroft, Chief Financial Officer
- Elsie Ozua, EDI Co-ordinator

EDI Staff Forum
Throughout 2022-23, the newly formed EDI Staff Forum - which comprises of staff representatives from areas across UCG - met, 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. The EDI Link Governor, chaired the EDI Staff Forum meetings and members were invited to feedback to the EDI Strategic Group.

The Forum exist 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 Forum 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 work with a community of like-minded individuals to support the responsibilities of the Strategic EDI Group.

If you are interested in joining this important new platform, to be an agent of change who helps shape and drive the EDI agenda, **please click here** for further details, and send your name through to equality@ucg.ac.uk

Thank you for reading the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Action Plan 2023/24

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