UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER⌗

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGY
2025-2030

VISION FOR
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

At the University of Westminster, we envision an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to achieve their full potential. By embracing our diversity, we create a culture of understanding and belonging, where systemic barriers are removed, and everyone is heard, supported and recognised for their unique talents and contributions. Together our students, colleagues, governors and alumni will drive impactful change, ensuring we, as an institution, make a positive impact on communities locally as well as around the world.

Mission Statement from Being Westminster

To help students and colleagues from different backgrounds fulfil their potential and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable, and healthier society.

OUR VALUES

Progressive

We look forwards, anticipate what's changing, tackle challenges, and embrace the new with energy and imagination.

Compassionate

We are thoughtful and sensitive, supportive and encouraging, making time to talk and listen, including when the pressure is on. We are inclusive and united, careful to consider what enables each and every one of us to play our part.

Responsible

Individually and collectively, we take responsibility for our actions, work to the highest ethical standards and help each other to do the right thing always.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
IN CONTEXT

Challenging prejudices, celebrating diversities have long been in our DNA. We are one of the UK's first polytechnic institutions, established almost 200 years ago to educate the working people of London and known for the many ways in which we help our students and colleagues realise their full potential. We are now a 'global university with London energy'. Social mobility is our strength. We are an institution that does not hesitate in recognising social and global inequities that affect our own diverse community, and we are determined to mitigate them. Through our education, global engagement, research and knowledge exchange, as well as employability work, we intervene every day in addressing inequities and exclusions, fostering a different culture of belonging and fairness that delivers more pluralistic and inclusive outcomes. The work of "EDI" has never been easy; it goes beyond legal and social demands. It is connected to our vision of making a difference. In a world marked by contestations and divisions, we champion a progressive, compassionate and inclusive institution that allows everyone to breathe, to live, to flourish, and to go out and make a positive difference to their communities - all with fresh hope and renewed dignity.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

Our Working Definitions

Equality

As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure, as well as to advance equality of opportunity and further social inclusion and mobility, within and beyond our university. We will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster an inclusive institutional culture.

Equity

As a progressive institution, we recognise that our students and colleagues have different circumstances and needs. We are committed to providing resources and opportunities tailored to their needs.

Diversity

As a progressive institution, we see difference and plurality of ideas as well as identities as our strength. We pledge to continue to respect, value and champion diversity within and beyond our communities of students, colleagues and stakeholders.

Inclusion

As a compassionate institution, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive culture that respects and values the authentic selves of our students and colleagues, ensuring they feel a strong sense of belonging. We are committed to academic freedom and to treating everyone with fairness and respect, creating an environment where individuals feel safe expressing themselves within the law and empowered to realise their full potential.

Our EDI work is grounded in the Equality Act 2010 and our duties as a public body as well as driven by our commitment to supporting academic freedom, tackling social inequities and making the world a better place.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Champion and Advance Equality and Equity

Objective: Deliver equitable access to opportunities and resources for all colleagues and students by eliminating structural inequities and barriers, fostering an inclusive and fair environment, respecting academic freedom and embedding diversity, equity and inclusion in our culture, decision-making and partnerships.

- Embed equity, mental health equity, diversity and inclusion throughout institutional decision-making, utilising our Equality Impact Assessment process.
- Pursue recognised external accreditation frameworks aligned to our strategic priorities and resources.
- Ensure the collection, compilation, and accessibility of appropriately disaggregated diversity data to guide institutional and local action planning and prioritisation.
- Integrate equality, equity, diversity and inclusion topics into leadership and management development and initiatives.
- Bring together our collective energies as a community to play our part in addressing the climate crisis and inequalities to enable a more sustainable and just world.
- Support colleagues and students to enhance their knowledge, awareness, and competence to enact inclusivity within their own practice.
- Work to close outcome and experience gaps between different groups of students through our Access and Participation Plan.

- Recognise and respond to the different needs of our students through inclusive teaching practices and assessments, and policies designed to support them.
- Secure equity for our students by embedding opportunities for employability and enterprise skill development within the curriculum.
- Invest in the further development of a culture of evidence-informed continuous improvement, drawing on research, data analysis and lived experience.
- Investigate, challenge and drive change through our research and knowledge exchange work.
- Ensure that the physical and digital environments are designed, developed and adapted to be accessible for all colleagues, students and visitors.
- Integrate objectives that address inequity and inclusivity within the conversations that are part of the annual Professional Development Review (PDR) process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Value, Celebrate, and Enhance the Diversity of our Community

Objective: Embrace and celebrate the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of students, colleagues, governors and stakeholders, making diversity a core strength of the university.

- Demonstrate the strength in our university's identity as a global university with London energy through collaboration with stakeholders.
- Design recruitment and selection processes for colleagues and students that are free from bias, attracting applicants from the widest pool by implementing efficient, inclusive approaches and targeted Positive Action initiatives.
- Develop learning environments that are inclusive, welcoming and which positively embrace the diversity of our communities, recognising and building upon the knowledge that students bring to the curriculum.
- Support and champion our student societies, colleague networks and any group or committee that supports the implementation of our EDI Strategy, ensuring they have the resources they need to thrive.
- Welcome our students, colleagues, vibrant local communities and visitors from around the world to our events, conferences and initiatives.
- Assess and enhance mental health and wellbeing training and services for colleagues and students to be culturally appropriate, trauma-informed, and responsive to the diverse needs of our community.

- Build better, stronger, frank conversations in the University about all forms of discrimination, ensuring discrimination is challenged and we are an inclusive and accessible institution.
- Foster, maintain and champion a diverse and inclusive research culture where researchers at every stage of their career can thrive and succeed, including through equitable access to researcher development opportunities.
- Ensure that the research culture, research topics, researchers, outputs and impact consider diversity and inclusion as the norm.
- Work to realise a 'research is for everyone' aspiration through recognition of diverse research activities across the institution.
- Monitor and take positive action in all schools to increase the number of Postgraduate Researchers from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in research and knowledge exchange.
- Build sustainable relationships with diverse suppliers and collaborate with those who share the university's commitment to equality, equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Foster a Culture of Inclusion and Belonging

Objective: Create an inclusive culture where all members of the university community feel valued, respected, motivated and able to contribute fully.

- Strengthen safe, supportive, and inclusive environments where students and colleagues feel they belong and are encouraged to bring their authentic selves to work and study.
- Offer personalised and authentic education underpinned by an inclusive curriculum, giving all students the opportunity of transformative learning, helping them to succeed in their studies and professional lives.
- Champion a culture where students and colleagues can raise concerns through robust and effective reporting and supportive procedures.
- Prioritise inclusive and accessible environments – physical and digital – which put students and colleagues' experience at the heart of design, delivery and investment decisions.
- Promote a culture of openness, inclusivity, and continuous improvement in mental health strategy and service provision.
- Initiate opportunities and upskill colleagues for constructive and, on occasion, difficult conversations and ways to build understanding and empathy.
- Create clear, inclusive, and accessible career paths with transparent promotion processes, offering leadership development opportunities, including those targeted to help underrepresented groups advance into senior roles.

- Design, deliver and evaluate relevant interventions and deliver impact at School and Professional Service department level.
- Work in partnership with our student body through the University of Westminster's Students' Union (UWSU) to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and represented.
- Broaden peer-support networks and student-led mental health initiatives, ensuring they are adequately resourced and supported.
- Expand our bespoke empowerment programmes for at-risk student groups identified by the Westminster Equality of Opportunity Risk Register.
- Design and deliver services that meet the needs of home and international students to nurture a sense of belonging for all.

MAKING IT HAPPEN: THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This Strategy will be accompanied by an implementation plan outlining the actions we will take with robust performance indicators that will be monitored and evaluated annually. Recognising the interlinked nature of many areas of this work, the plan will be developed in conjunction with other strategies and plans, ensuring that initiatives are mutually reinforcing, avoiding duplication.

Every member of the University has a stake in this work and will be supported to take responsibility for furthering equity, diversity and inclusion through their behaviours and words.

Primary Measures of Success

Delivery of our Access and Participation Plan and associated targets.

High participation of students from all backgrounds in everyday activities of the University, for example in the student societies.

90% of colleagues respond positively to survey questions about feeling safe and being able to bring their whole self to work.

Colleague diversity and feeling a sense of belonging at all levels within the University.

Increased colleague disclosure relating to protected characteristics, particularly disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

Established reputation for our work in equality, diversity and inclusion.

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