

UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER 

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# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

2021—2025







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**OUR MISSION**

TO HELP STUDENTS FROM  
DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS  
FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL

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## INTRODUCTION: BEING WESTMINSTER: OUR PURPOSE

We provide grounded, holistic education with wide horizons and opportunities so that people from every background can realise their true potential, contributing to a richer, happier society.

### OUR MISSION

To help students from different backgrounds fulfil their potential.

## OUR VALUES

### PROGRESSIVE

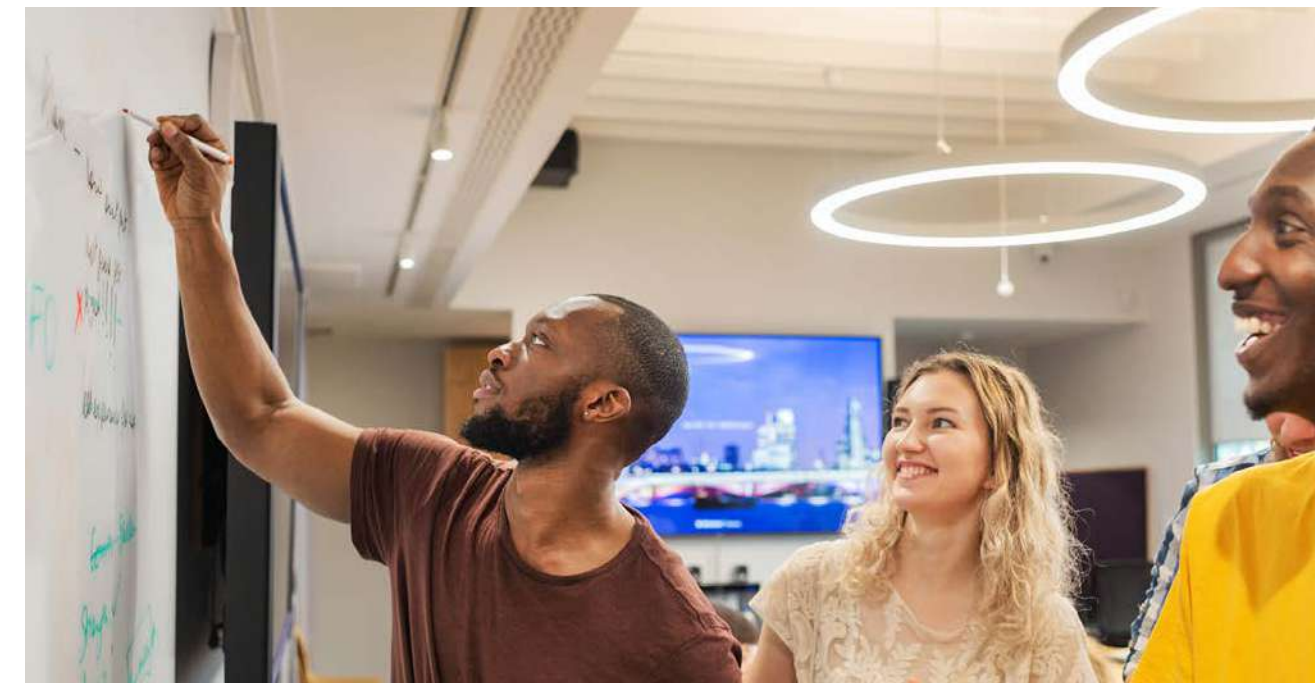
We look forwards, anticipate what's changing and embrace the new with energy and imagination.

### COMPASSIONATE

We are thoughtful and sensitive, supportive and encouraging, making time to talk, especially when the pressure is on. As a University community, 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 always do the right thing.





## BEING WESTMINSTER AND EDI: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN CONTEXT

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, regardless of their background.



Located at the heart of one of the world's most multicultural cities, home to diverse communities, we aspire to be an inclusive community of students and colleagues from different groups and cultures from across the globe.

As a University that is progressive, compassionate and responsible, EDI is a matter of more than mere compliance. EDI is in our DNA: part of our long history and culture. Diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity are at the core of how we engage with students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all other stakeholders. These principles pertain to every area of our

Being Westminster Strategy: our purpose, our vision, our mission, our values, our priorities, our objectives, our outcomes. Yet, we acknowledge that there may be inconsistencies between principles, policies and practices and the lived experiences of individual colleagues and students. This Strategy is a response to that and reflects our commitment to being and becoming better. We are fully committed to enabling a supportive and safe learning and working environment which is equitable, diverse and inclusive, based on mutual respect and trust, in which there is zero tolerance for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.



Our commitment to EDI makes us a stronger, more effective institution and community. We recognise that delivering that commitment entails continuing conversations, and ongoing and significant cultural challenge and change.

This EDI Strategy draws on and responds to the voices, passions, aspirations and ambitions of students, colleagues and other stakeholders. We all have our part to play in 'making it real'. In implementing the Strategy, we know that many challenges lie before us. However, we are inspired by our achievements to date and excited by the opportunities ahead.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

### • EQUALITY

As a responsible institution, we strive to ensure and to champion equality. We acknowledge the special role of higher education in promoting equality of opportunity and furthering social inclusion and mobility, within and beyond our University. We recognise that ensuring equality of opportunity is essential for our community, our culture, our performance and our success. We strive to challenge inequities, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster an inclusive institutional culture.

### • DIVERSITY

As a progressive institution, we take pride in the reality of our diversity. We see difference and plurality as our strength. We pledge to continue to respect, value and champion diversity within and beyond our communities of students, colleagues and stakeholders.

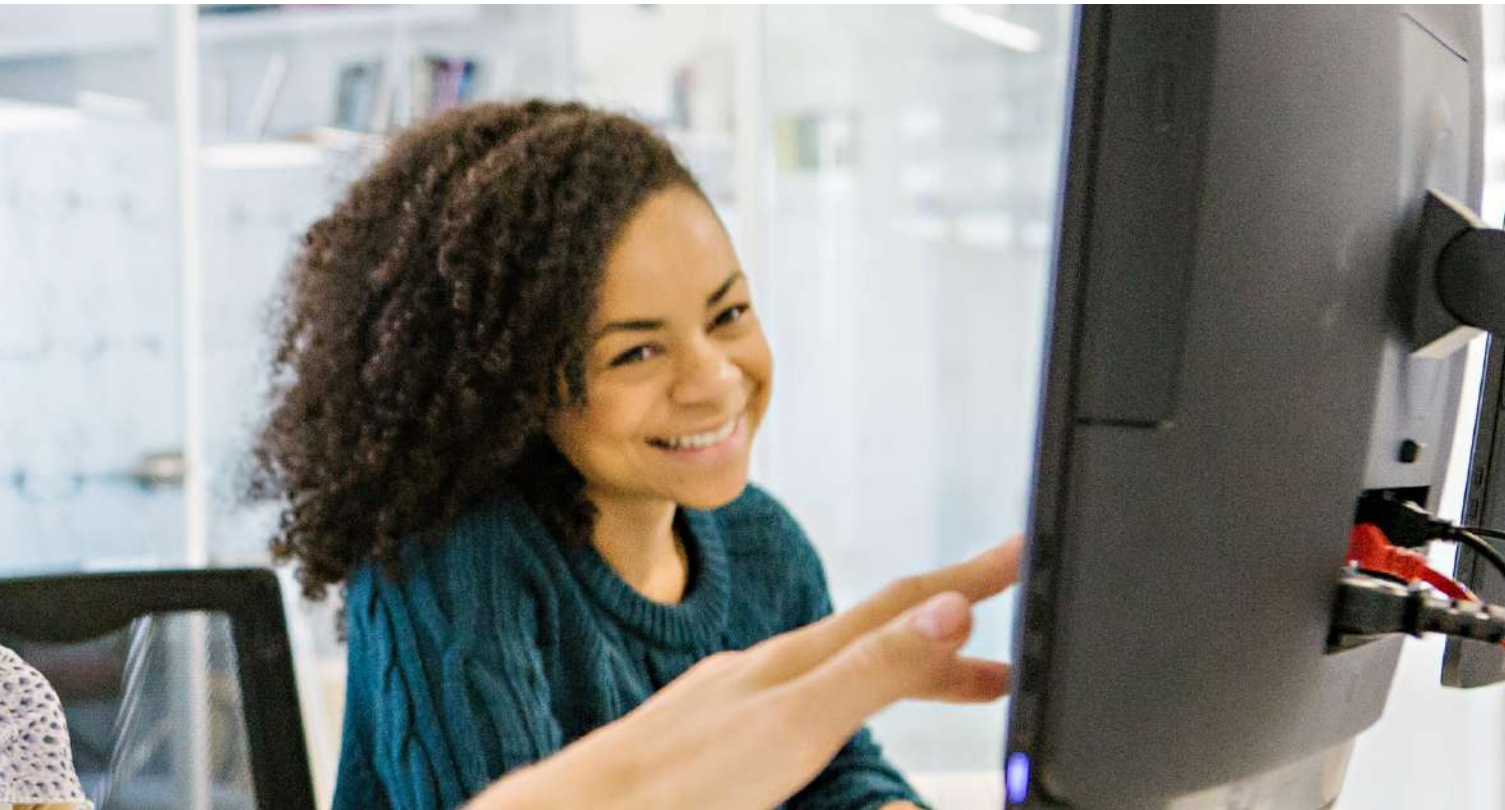
### • INCLUSION

As a compassionate institution, we commit to an inclusive culture that allows students and colleagues to reach their full potential, regardless of their age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity and paternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origins, family circumstances, nationality, political beliefs and affiliations, socio-economic background or other quality.

**We are guided in our work by the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty.**



## STRATEGIC AIMS



### CHAMPION AND ENSURE EQUALITY

- We will align our commitment to equality with the value we place on being responsible, putting EDI at the very heart of our strategies, policies, practices and the life of the University.
- We will ensure the implementation of this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, producing and monitoring annual EDI reports and Action Plans and keeping the Strategy's effectiveness under review.
- We will support the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its work, keeping the Committee's effectiveness under review.
- Recognising equity as a step change from equality, we will continuously and ambitiously improve our approach to valuing difference, deploying resource in order to enable all colleagues and students to realise their full potential.
- We will encourage equality, diversity and inclusion training for all colleagues, and ensure high quality development in EDI and cultural sensitivity for all in leadership positions.
- Rejecting all forms of bigotry and prejudice, we will demonstrate zero tolerance for unlawful discrimination and will foster good relations based on respect.
- We will ensure that we do not discriminate unfairly in the recruitment, retention, promotion and development of colleagues, including Part-Time Visiting Lecturers (PTVLs), and that, from the perspective of EDI, we keep our practices of colleague recruitment, retention, promotion and career development under review.
- We will ensure that we do not discriminate unfairly in the selection, teaching, assessment, support and supervision of undergraduate, taught postgraduate and doctoral research students.
- Recognising the role and relevance of intersectionality in practices of discrimination, we will ensure that we demonstrate zero tolerance for unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment, that we challenge such behaviours where they occur, and have in place and keep under review appropriate mechanisms to deal with them.

### CHERISH, CELEBRATE, AND ENHANCE DIVERSITY

- We will align our commitment to diversity with our progressive ethos, ensuring that diversity is supported, celebrated and championed in every area of University life.
- We will promote positive action in diversifying our colleague community in general, and middle and senior leadership in particular.
- Through outreach and collaborative activity and building on existing success, we will continue to welcome and encourage participation from all students, regardless of background.
- Welcoming students from diverse backgrounds and from across the world, we will treat equality, diversity and inclusion as integral to the education we offer.
- Using data related to student participation, attainment and success, we will develop, implement and keep under review priority areas and targeted activities that address outcomes gaps in marginalised and underrepresented student groups.
- We will continue to extend our work on decolonising and diversifying the curriculum and teaching practices, keeping both under ongoing review.
- We will assess and develop cultural sensitivity across all our student-facing activities and services.
- We will support and champion the colleague networks, ensuring that they are appropriately resourced.
- In our work in the areas of research and knowledge exchange, including through our Graduate School, we will ensure that issues of diversity, equality and inclusion are specifically addressed, monitored and acted upon, and that policies and practices are aligned with our EDI commitments.
- We will support and champion the work of our research community concerned with EDI, ensuring that it is appropriately resourced and is responsive to the priorities of researchers from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Through our events, initiatives, conferences and debates, we will open our doors not only to our students and colleagues but also to our diverse local communities and visitors from across the world, further embedding and celebrating our commitment to EDI.
- We will treat our diverse community of external partners and collaborators ethically and with dignity and respect.





## STRATEGIC AIMS CONTINUED



### NURTURE AND PROMOTE INCLUSION

- We will align our commitment to inclusion with the value we place on compassion, ensuring that attention to inclusion characterises everything that we do at Westminster.
- We will continue to implement, and to review the implementation of the Commitments Plan published in June 2020, intended to ensure that we are and remain an inclusive and safe, anti-racist institution.
- We will foster a responsive and inclusive culture and environment where students and colleagues from all backgrounds can speak out, express themselves, be heard and be counted.
- We will seek to attract, employ and engage the most talented people from across the globe, so that we are a truly inclusive, forward-looking University.
- We will seek to create a representative team of leaders and managers, across all Colleges and Professional Services.
- We will embed our commitment to inclusive teaching and research, and to digital accessibility.
- We will work on inclusion in partnership with our student body, through the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU).
- We will treat students, colleagues, applicants, visitors and all our stakeholders with courtesy, respect and dignity, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment.
- We will ensure an inclusive and transparent culture that allows colleagues and students to be themselves, speak up against unfair behaviours and feel safe and comfortable bringing their whole selves to work and study at the University.

## ENABLERS

### IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC AIMS WE WILL:

- Analyse University data, within and outside our Access and Participation Plan and annual colleague EDI report, to identify and address inequalities.
- Work in partnership with our University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU), our colleague networks, our Trade Unions, our Academic Schools and our Professional Services Departments to ensure a collective approach to EDI.
- Ensure that EDI is a core component of and is fully supported by work enabled through the University's organisational structures and fora.
- Ensure that engagement with EDI is addressed through the Professional Development Review (PDR) process.
- Put EDI at the heart of the implementation of the Being Westminster Strategy and related strategies and action plans, articulating, promoting and encouraging across the University behaviours and attitudes consistent with EDI.
- Make EDI integral to the education we offer, including to the work of the Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI) and our Graduate School.
- Make EDI integral to our research activity, using sabbatical policy, funding provision and researcher development to raise awareness of and enhance support for groups recognised as underrepresented in research.
- Make EDI integral to our knowledge exchange activity, including through its business and public engagement strands.
- Make EDI integral to our work on employability, employer and recruiter engagement and global engagement.



- Make EDI integral to our work on people, culture and inclusion, ensuring that the University has comprehensive EDI-related colleague and leadership training and development in place, such that responsibility for championing EDI and driving change does not fall simply on those with lived experience of diversity.
- Ensure that the language of our institutional strategies, policies, materials and communications and our wider communications practice reflect and support our commitment to EDI.
- Work with external partners to enhance our EDI engagement and activity.



## INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

### WE WILL HAVE ACHIEVED OUR AIMS WHEN:

- EDI is recognised as a primary driver of the University's short and long-term strategies in all areas and at all levels (indicators: student and colleague satisfaction data; internal and external review data; EDI and APP report data).
- There is zero tolerance for all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (indicators: disclosure data; EDI and APP report data; student and colleague satisfaction data; case studies of lived and living experiences).
- Systemic barriers to recruitment, retention, progression and attainment in work and study that discriminate unfairly are permanently removed (indicators: EDI and APP report data; student and colleague satisfaction data; case studies of lived and living experiences).
- The range and depth of diversity across all levels and functions at the University is demonstrably aligned with our institutional commitment to EDI (indicators: EDI and APP report data; colleague and student satisfaction data).
- The University represents a welcoming and engaging space for all (indicators: student and colleague satisfaction data; EDI report data).
- We are recognised as a leader in progressive EDI thought and practice in the UK Higher Education (HE) sector and beyond (indicators: engagement with EDI through research papers, events, conferences; charter mark achievement; EDI report data).



In order to achieve the above, we will ensure that EDI is systematically and demonstrably embedded in all our strategies. We will regularly engage with our students, colleagues, key stakeholders and relevant professional and regulatory bodies to ensure that our work is informed by best practice and encompasses the broadest set of perspectives possible. We will continue to measure our progress through relevant charter marks and our contribution toward the Sustainable Development Goals. We will remain open to new ideas and developments relevant to EDI in Higher Education.

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

This Strategy is for five years. It is the first of its kind at the University of Westminster. It is imbued with and gives fresh impetus to the values of the University. It lays the foundations for long-term, critical work. Each and every member of the University has a stake in this work, and is responsible for furthering equity, diversity and inclusion through their words and actions.

The Strategy will be implemented through an annual Action EDI Plan and through other, specific workstreams, which will have their own action plans, timelines, teams and targets. Connectivity across the annual EDI Action Plan and these workstreams will be key.

The Strategy will be reviewed after its second year of implementation.

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