





## Foreword

At the University of Roehampton, we recognise that talent should be nurtured, and opportunities provided to all, regardless of socio-economic background, gender, ethnic background, sexuality, and other factors. Advancing equality and diversity is what we stand for as a university, but we also acknowledge as individuals and as a community, that there is a lot of work to be done.

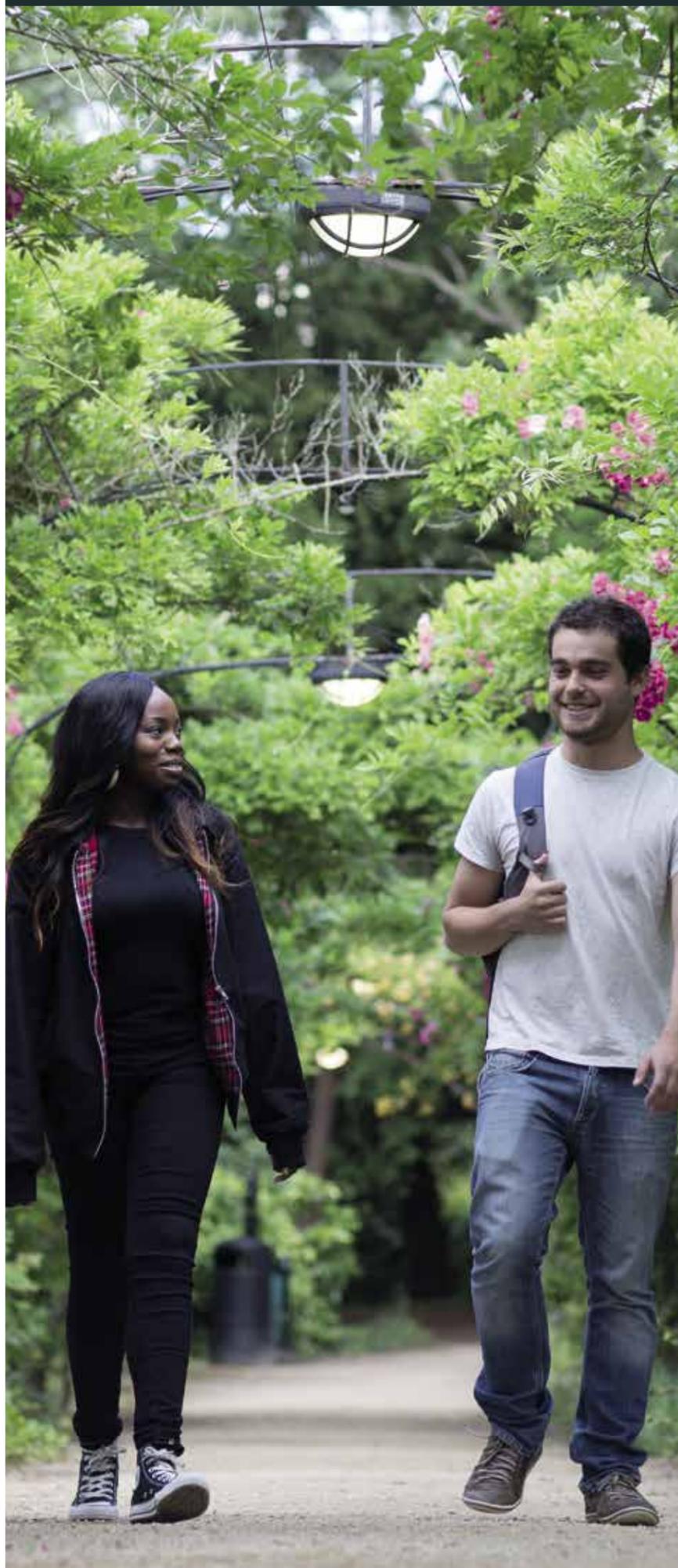
This plan is an important step towards creating a more inclusive community and levelling the playing field for our students and staff. It is not only the right thing to do, but promoting diversity and inclusion also has immediate benefits for our institution and for employers who work with us. Diverse and inclusive teams make better decisions, innovate more, and their members are happier at work.

Our plan sets out objectives and a framework for achieving Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, based on ongoing monitoring and evaluation. It is designed to help us identify opportunities for improvement within our university community and achieve real progress for our students and staff.

We will continue to increase our understanding of the challenges faced by our students and staff, supporting them in their success and celebrating the diversity of people, culture, and thought in our community.

I welcome this plan and look forward to working with everyone at the University to achieve our goals.

**Jean-Noël**  
Professor Jean-Noël Ezingard  
Vice-Chancellor



## Introduction

The University of Roehampton is committed to advancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Various initiatives support advancing EDI. We work closely with our trade unions, Students' Union and Staff Networks.

We live in a world in which talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. Privilege benefits some and the lack of it holds others back; yet talent and potential are not predicated by background, identity or characteristic. We must reach further and take proactive steps to 'level the playing field' to support the talent and potential that already exists within our University community.

At the core of our EDI plan, is a commitment that Roehampton celebrates diversity and is a place where anyone can thrive. Our equality objectives and corresponding delivery plan have been designed to help us all see where the disadvantage occurs within our own University community and sets out how we aspire to achieve real and lasting progress for our students and staff.

EDI are tangible things; they are outcomes, measurable and critical to our success as a university. However, EDI can also be viewed as an ambiguous concept. This plan therefore sets a clearly defined approach and framework for pursuing EDI based on the following definitions:

**Equality** is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally in relation to their needs.

**Diversity** is acknowledging the range of difference within our community between individuals, cultural, social and intellectual contribution and seek to utilise the talents and experiences that each one can bring to Roehampton.

**Inclusion** is being attentive to the impact of social identities and putting the most disadvantaged members of our community at the centre of design and planning. Inclusion values 'difference' as an asset but understands that it can require more thought, time and resources to meaningfully accommodate it.

We will continue to increase our understanding of EDI and the challenges that our students and staff may face, supporting and enabling them to succeed. We will do this whilst also celebrating the diversity of people, culture and thought that exists in the University community.

Every individual has a role in supporting the advancement of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

## Governance and responsibility

The responsibility for this plan and its delivery rests with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the University Executive Board. This work will be led with input from the Students' Union, Staff Networks, Race Equality action group and the recognised Trade Unions.

Whilst this is a strategic institutional plan, equality, diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone at the University of Roehampton. We commit to ensure that all members of our community are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities and legal duties, in relation to equality and diversity. We require all staff to complete relevant training, offering a comprehensive programme of awareness-raising activities.

Proactively advancing equality, diversity and inclusion can be demonstrated through:

**Institutional level:** Senior leaders are exemplars and proactively advance equality diversity and inclusion. Systems, cultures and processes that contribute to inequality and exclusion are actively challenged.

**School / Department / Team level:** Having a willingness to emulate and engage with good equality and inclusion practice from other parts of the University of Roehampton. Ensuring those marginalised backgrounds have a voice and sense of belonging. Valuing and celebrating EDI contributions and activity.

**Individual level:** Developing one's knowledge of inequality, inclusion and social injustice. Ensuring education provision and interaction follow inclusive best practice.

Every individual has a role in supporting the advancement of equality, diversity, and inclusion.



## EDI in Action

Celebrating achievements and the ways we are already advancing EDI with staff and students to create change:

### Gender Equality

The University's commitment to gender equality has been long recognised and we have held an Athena Swan bronze award since 2018, in recognition of our aspirations towards gender equality in Higher Education.

We are proud of what we have achieved to date with a greater proportion of women in senior leadership roles and reducing the gender pay gap. We recognise, however, that as an institution we have many more steps to take to fully realise our ambitions.

### LGBTQ+ Equality

We are proud to have been in the 2022 Stonewall's Top 100 employers List and we continue to support and celebrate our LGBTQ+ community of staff and students.

### Race Equality

We are in the process of implementing a number of race equality initiatives, including the appointment of Challenge Consultancy to deliver a mandatory race awareness programme for staff.

### Disability Inclusion

Roehampton is a member of Disability Confident, which is a scheme designed to help recruit and retain staff with disabilities for their skills and talent. Students access specialist support services through the University's Disability Services team.

### Report and Support

The Report and Support tool was launched in summer 2021, enabling students and staff to report harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct either anonymously or with contact details. Additionally, the tool contains resources on internal and external support available to staff and students. Details about the tool can be found [here](#).

### Staff Networks

We currently have the following Staff Networks: REASON, UR Pride LGBTQ+ and Women's Network.

### Annual Equality Report

We publish annual equality reports to celebrate the full breadth of our EDI achievements and how we are supporting the advancement of EDI. Our annual equality reports also detail the most up-to-date equality data on factors such as ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation.

## Themes

This plan has been developed based on the following themes:

**Theme 1: Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into everything we do**

**Theme 2: Enhancing staff and student experience through the development of an accessible, diverse and inclusive environment**

**Theme 3: Supporting individual identity and a continual journey of learning, through a culture of increased awareness and understanding**

It is vital that EDI is embedded into all areas of our working and learning environments. To achieve this, we need to continually question the way we do things, build our strengths and improve where needed.

We will ensure that students and staff at all levels across the University are included and given the opportunity to contribute to EDI matters. We want to foster a culturally aware community where people have the confidence and skills to constructively challenge others when required, to have conversations on what may be complex EDI issues and have confidence that we have safe and non-judgemental settings where such discussions can take place.

Key activities in support of these themes include:

- An established and transparent governance structure
- Applying a local context to the recognised sector external awards and frameworks that supports demonstrable impact for staff and students
- Equality Impact Assessments: to encourage inclusion and help inform evidence – based decisions and significant changes to policy
- Working collaboratively with Staff Networks, the Roehampton Students' Union, and the campus trade unions



## Equality Objectives (2022–2026)

The Equality Act (2010) places all public bodies under an active duty to promote equality and requires them to set themselves at least one objective which they believe they should meet, in order to further any of the aims of the General Equality Duty.

### Strategic context

The objectives challenge the university to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in key areas and improve the experience of people from underrepresented groups. Priorities reflect the needs of staff and students and support the strategic plans of the University, as set out in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The objectives are based on evidence, and rendered measurable over time, to mitigate risk, map changes, and support action.

The objectives have been developed according to evidence drawn from ongoing equality, diversity, and inclusion work within the university, a review of key equality matters across UK higher education institutions and an analysis of Roehampton specific inequalities and contextual factors.

The objectives are based on evidence, and rendered measurable over time, to mitigate risk, map changes, and support action.

The University has agreed to the following suite of objectives reflecting Roehampton's strategic priorities in relation to sustainability, progression and equality of opportunity:

1. Continue to advance equality, diversity and inclusion at the University of Roehampton, in everything we do.
2. Equip our staff and students to challenge inequality, wherever they encounter it.
3. Ensure that EDI is considered in estates, IT planning, academic responsibilities and learning and teaching development to enable physical and virtual environments to be accessible for everyone.
4. To capture and store comprehensive and robust EDI data, to support the delivery of an inclusive and supportive environment for staff and students. This will be measured by a demonstrable improvement in the percentage of disclosures, where disclosure rates are currently low.
5. To make a consistent improvement in the recruitment, support and progression of academic professional staff who are of ethnic minority, through targeted response to identified barriers.
6. To ensure the support and inclusion of staff and students with disabilities.
7. Improve student awarding gap & progression.

# 1

## **Continue to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in everything that we do.**

We want every member of the University community to be actively engaged with our EDI strategy.

Guidance and consultation from the EDI team in conjunction with university groups will equip staff and students to support and understand our equality objectives. To achieve culture change, we must embed EDI in all teaching and learning, research, partnerships and professional services. We want to create a self-sustaining process that will support EDI in becoming innate for our community.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- Through the development of our EDI website and communications
- Broadening our collaboration and engagement in the development of EDI related activity from people at every level across the University, encouraging shared investment in this work.
- Encouraging recognition of EDI contribution in staff workload planning and appraisal.

# 2

## **Equip our staff and students to challenge inequality, wherever they encounter it.**

We want our staff and students to be actively involved in our EDI agenda. We want our zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, to be embraced by all members of the University community. This must be well communicated and have strong and appropriate mechanisms in place for reporting and responding to unacceptable behaviour.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- Reviewing and improving the awareness and effectiveness of reporting channels and procedures
- Implement a mandatory race awareness programme for staff.

# 3

## **Ensure that EDI is considered in estates, IT planning, academic responsibilities and learning and teaching development to enable physical and virtual environments to be accessible for everyone.**

We want to ensure that every member of our community is able to engage with our physical and virtual spaces without hindrance or restraint.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will carry out Equality Impact Assessments on a regular basis, whenever changes are made to the estate, IT planning and learning and teaching development.
- Regularly promote our campus access guides
- Seek ways in which feedback from staff and students can inform practice in relation to campus and virtual accessibility.

# 4

## **To capture and store comprehensive and robust EDI data, to support the delivery of an inclusive and supportive environment for staff and students. This will be measured by a demonstrable improvement in the percentage of disclosures, where disclosure rates are low.**

It is vital that we have the correct data in order to best serve the various groups and identities that make up our university community. We want to ensure that our data fully captures our staff and student population.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- We will launch an equality data improvement initiative to provide:
  - a wider range of options to select for sexual orientation and gender identity disclosure e.g. non-binary and transgender
  - more options on the disclosure of ethnicity.

# 5

## **To make a consistent improvement in the recruitment, support and progression of Black, Asian and minority ethnic academic, professional staff through targeted response to identified barriers.**

We understand that Black, Asian and minority ethnic academic staff are underrepresented in Higher Education. We want to increase the proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in academic positions at Roehampton.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- Through the launch of the Black, Asian and minority ethnic Positive Action Fellowship.

# 6

## **To ensure the support and inclusion of disabled staff and Students.**

We understand that data collection and monitoring can be a sensitive issue, particularly in the case of disclosing a disability. We want to increase confidence in our disabled staff and students, demonstrated by an increase in the rates of disability disclosure.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- Transparent communication about how the data is used
- Provide opportunities to disclose information on an ongoing basis
- Improve the staff experience for staff with disabilities such as process improvements when support is being implemented.

# 7

## **Improve the student awarding gap and progression**

While the University's Schools and Colleges Engagement team plays an outstanding role in broadening the reach of higher education opportunities to people from more diverse backgrounds, we must also focus on the experience and outcomes for students once they are at Roehampton.

Inequalities manifest themselves in our degree-awarding gaps. Addressing these differential experiences and outcomes across student groups is essential to provide an equitable education for all students and a goal to which we are particularly committed.

### **How will we achieve this?**

- Implementing EDI action plan points that focus on teaching, learning and culture change (within the Access and Participation Plan 2021-2024)
- Improving student training and awareness.

## Delivery Plan

Area	Objective	Target(s)	Aligns with Equality Objective No.
Governance and accountability	Improve staff equality data collection through the launch of equality data improvement initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality data improvement initiative to provide a wider range of options to select for gender sexual orientation and gender identity disclosure e.g. non-binary and transgender</li> <li>Equality data improvement initiative to provide more options on the disclosure of ethnicity</li> <li>Equality data improvement initiative to be launched in Autumn 2023.</li> </ul>	1 & 4
	Implement mandatory race awareness programme for staff.	University-wide roll out to be completed by end of 2023.	1,2 & 5
Staff Representation	Ensure that EDI is considered in estates, IT planning, academic responsibilities and learning and teaching development to enable physical and virtual environments to be accessible for everyone.	Equality Impact Assessments to be carried out whenever there are significant changes to the estate, IT planning, learning and development and policy.	1,3 & 6
	Aim to increase proportion of BAME staff in academic positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in academic positions from approximately 17% to 20% by end of 2024/25 academic year.</li> </ul>	1 & 5
Education & Students	Reduce the degree-outcome gap for our under-represented students. Close the gap to highly skilled employment for our target groups of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed and operationalise the delivery of the Access and Participation Plan 2021–2024.</li> </ul> <p>N.B. EDI activity relating to education and student experience is delivered through the Access and Participation Plan (2021–2024)</p>	1,7 & 8
Staff Disability Inclusion	Ensuring efficient and supportive reasonable adjustments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the staff experience and process of supporting the implementation of reasonable adjustments by summer 2023.</li> <li>Implement assistive software project completed by summer 2023.</li> </ul>	1,2,3 & 6
	Increasing confidence in our disabled staff that they can trust us.	Increase in disclosure rates of disability from 91.64% to 95% (% of total staff disclosure).	
Evaluation & Recognition	Develop a local gender equality programme of work.	Launch of local gender equality programme of work by end of 2023.	1,2,3 & 4
	Undertake biennial, anonymous surveys for the LGBTQ+ community – seeking their views on a wide-range of matters.	Launch survey biennially.	1,3 & 4
	Progress the local race equality action programme of work.	Progress in line with targets set in local action plan, dependent on review.	1,2,3,4 & 5



