



Together
we are different

Equality and Diversity Strategy



Equality and Diversity Strategy

Executive Summary

Goldsmiths has the potential to be a leader in Equality and Diversity in the Higher Education sector. This strategy has been written to outline the ways in which we can work towards achieving this aim and foster a culture that embeds Equality and Diversity in everything we do.

In the last three years Goldsmiths has undergone a number of significant changes that have had an impact on Equality and Diversity including (but not limited to):

- A renewed focus on the student experience
- An improved Human Resources Team
- A review of Equality and Diversity Manager role resulting in the appointment of a new Equality and Diversity Advisor
- An effectiveness review of the Equality and Diversity Committee resulting in the approval of a new governance model
- An ongoing improvement to the Estate with increased Disabled Access





Goldsmiths wants to be a leading Higher Education Institute (HEI) in Equality and Diversity – with our professional practice reflecting the values, expertise and academic achievements of our staff in the area.

The strategy to progress towards our aims has been focussed around five strands:

- Governance
- Identity & Awareness
- Celebrating Achievements
- Learning, Development, and Research
- Access & Inclusion





We will progress initiatives that feed into these strands to ensure that we take a strategic and planned approach to Equality and Diversity.

Recommendations include:

- A renewed governance model for Equality and Diversity
- A renewed focus on improving data related to Equality and Diversity
- Creating a central 'hub' for Equality and Diversity
- Celebrating our achievements
- Introducing Equality and Diversity Learning and Development opportunities.

Following approval by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Council at Goldsmiths of the renewed strategy, next steps have included:

1. The development of an Equality and Diversity Action and Implementation Plan to aid the implementation of the strategy
2. Messages related to the communication of the strategy have been developed
3. The strategy has been shared with key stakeholders across Goldsmiths to aid collaboration



Introduction

Our intention is to embed Equality and Diversity across Goldsmiths and make it a part of everything that we do. We have an opportunity for Goldsmiths to lead the way in Equality and Diversity practice by championing innovation and valuing individuality to truly reflect our values.

Background

Goldsmiths is a vibrant, creative place to work and study and it has a diverse student body. Since 2011 a renewed focus has been taken on the Student Experience. There is a dedicated Student Services Team to support students throughout their time at Goldsmiths, including a Disability Team to specifically support disabled students. There is also a dedicated Student Outreach Team driving forward initiatives related to widening participation at Goldsmiths.

The Human Resources Team has undergone significant improvement in the last two years, employing a number of new staff. Human Resources are transforming the way that they work to provide an improved service which has Equality and Diversity at its core.







The governance structure for Equality and Diversity at Goldsmiths was based on a model which tasked a single Equality and Diversity Committee with overseeing Equality Objectives. The makeup of this committee was formal and static, made up of members of Council, SMT, Trade Union Representatives, and staff that were asked to join historically. The effectiveness of this committee was reviewed at the end of 2014 and it was agreed for a revised model of governance to be implemented.

As many teams across Goldsmiths are working in areas with an impact on Equality and Diversity, a joined up approach will be beneficial in working towards our strategic aims in a holistic way. There is an opportunity to build a culture of collaboration across the Goldsmiths community, including working in partnership with the Student Union.



What do we want to be?

- A leading Higher Education Institution in relation to Equality and Diversity
- To foster an inclusive environment for everyone
- To be engaged with our staff and students to understand their unique needs
- To value the wealth of knowledge, passion and expertise at Goldsmiths
- To ensure that Everyone champions Equality and Diversity at Goldsmiths and for it to be at the centre of everything that we do
- To reinforce SMTs leadership role in this area

In order to work towards this approach, this strategy has been created to outline the initial phases to help facilitate change in the area. Having a clear phased plan will help to move Goldsmiths from a reactive, compliance based approach to an embedded approach to Equality and Diversity.

This strategy is designed to complement work that is already underway at Goldsmiths and works alongside existing Strategies in place across the College. In line with our aim to work towards and embedded approach, work should be undertaken with stakeholders to help build Equality and Diversity into the development of any new Strategies as required.



Equality and Diversity at Goldsmiths

The strategy for Equality and Diversity at Goldsmiths is focussed around five overarching strands.

These areas are interlinked with each strand supporting and contributing to the other. A renewed focus on work in these areas will start to create a culture which embeds Equality and Diversity across Goldsmiths.

The five strands cover several areas of focus which will be outlined below and will be further expanded on later in this paper:

Governance

- Leadership – senior diversity champions and seminar sponsors
- Institutional Ownership – Staff diversity networks, Equality and Diversity forum, and Committees
- Developing a culture where everyone has a responsibility for Equality and Diversity
- Using our internal experts' knowledge and passion
- Appropriate and relevant data that ensures we monitor, review and report (internally and externally)

Identity & Awareness

- Equality and Diversity having a prominent presence on 'Goldmine' and the website
- Forming a central 'hub' for Equality and Diversity
- Linking up internal expertise and events
- Community engagement and support
- Developing resources





Celebrating Achievements

- Celebrating the diverse and creative culture of Goldsmiths
- The 'Two Ticks Scheme'
- Promoting awards and charter marks, such as Athena SWAN (when achieved)
- Celebrating our academics
- Communication
- Raising our profile

Learning, Development, and Research

- 'Valuing Diversity' Programme
- Unconscious bias
- Focused bespoke training
- Equality and Diversity 'Tool kits'
- Utilising our 'experts'
- Undergoing the application process for awards and charter marks
- Learning and Teaching Enhancement

Access and Inclusion

- Foster an Inclusive Environment
- Proactive and Leading Edge
- Engaged with our staff and students
- Collaborative and partnership working
- Knowledge development

Feedback will be sought from the student community and the Student Union to provide a contribution to every strand.

The strands will also be underpinned by our development as a 'learning organisation' and commitment to enhancing the student and staff experience.

Governance

Leadership – Senior Diversity Champions and Seminar Sponsors

David Ruebain, CEO of the Equality Challenge Unit, states, “to make a real difference, we need committed and active champions leading the way. We need to ensure conversations about equality and diversity take place across institutions, at all levels”.

Meaningful change requires strong leadership and an understanding that equality is an integral part of a HEIs mission. To demonstrate Senior Management’s leadership in this area, there are a number of steps that should be taken.



Senior Diversity Champions and Senior Sponsors

Key members of SMT or other senior staff will become ‘Senior Sponsors’. Each Senior Sponsor would champion the aims of work related to a specific characteristic. For example disability, sexual orientation, or race equality.

In addition to this, if members of SMT publicly endorse specific activities related to Equality and Diversity, it will reinforce the commitment and value placed on work in this area.

The participation of senior staff will show that Equality and Diversity is an integral part of everyone’s responsibility. For example, by involving Senior Management in Learning and Development opportunities will make a big impact.

Institutional Ownership –
Staff diversity networks, Equality and Diversity Forum, and Committees

Following a benchmarking exercise against other HEIs and a review of Goldsmiths’ current approach, a renewed governance model with a focus on wider participation will be implemented which will tap into our internal expert’s knowledge and passion.

A recommended model would involve the initial development of 4/5 staff diversity networks or steering groups focused on specific areas of Equality and Diversity such as:

- Disability
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME*)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ)
- Gender
- Inter-faith

In addition to the network groups suggested above, at a later stage other options could be explored if staff and students feel this would be beneficial.

The networks would enable peer support and networking opportunities, but would also be tasked with developing ideas and creating practical solutions in the areas that could be improved. Networks could also be a platform for academic collaboration and sharing research. The remit of these networks would be clearly defined and monitored for their effectiveness incrementally.



*The term BME is used throughout this strategy and corresponding work to be consistent with terminology used by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) and other public bodies. We acknowledge the limitations associated with the use of language.



Equality and Diversity Forum

Following the creation of these networks, an overarching Equality and Diversity Forum will be set up to channel ideas from the individual networks and tie together the work being done by each group. A chair from each network will sit on this forum along with a member (or members) of SMT, the Equality and Diversity Advisor and the HR Director. This forum will be reviewed incrementally for its effectiveness. Other parties may be invited to attend the forum on an ad hoc basis. Ideas that might affect formal governance would be fed through from this forum into the formal committee structure as set out below.

Devolved Formal Governance

Formal governance of Equality and Diversity related matters will be devolved to the HR and Equality Committee, Student Experience Sub-Committee, and Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee, to aid the intention of working towards embedding Equality and Diversity across the College. A regular agenda item for Equality and Diversity will be set for each of these committees. Ideas, concerns and information will also be fed through to each committee from the Equality and Diversity forum, and inadvertently, the networks feeding into it.

Appropriate and Relevant Data

The current data at Goldsmiths brings a number of challenges at present including, the methods of collecting data, how data has been managed historically, and issues with the Information Management Systems being used.

An ongoing focus on improving the quality of data should result in the ability to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the demographic profile at Goldsmiths. This will help us better support and understand the needs of our staff and students.



Policy

HR policies are undergoing incremental review and improvement to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose. As policies are developed, reviewed and improved, Equality Analysis will be undertaken to ensure that Equality and Diversity is embedded.

In addition, specific policies with strong links to Equality and Diversity, such as the Dignity and Work policy will have alignment to the strategy where appropriate.



Identity & Awareness

At present Equality and Diversity has a lack of presence at Goldsmiths. However, with the introduction of the new intranet – ‘Goldmine’, and new website, an opportunity for development of a renewed communications strategy in this area is feasible.

The Equality and Diversity Advisor will work in collaboration with the Communications Team to create a central ‘hub’ for Equality and Diversity. This will include a strong external web presence. The web pages would deliver key messages about our Equality and Diversity agenda and make Goldsmiths more attractive to prospective staff and students.

This website should link relevant existing resources and services that are currently provided at Goldsmiths, but are not linked up in a user-friendly way, such as the Disability Team web pages and mobility access pages.

We would also like to engage more with our community, including our Trade Union partners, UCU and Unison, to allow an active dialogue with ideas and feedback having an impact on Goldsmiths’ work in Equality and Diversity.

In addition to this, opportunities could be sought to enable Goldsmiths to engage more with the local community of South East London. We will also look to work more collaboratively with stakeholders at Goldsmiths who do outreach work, such as the Student Recruitment and Engagement team, and work with them to further promote the work they do in this area.

Finally, in line with our Public Sector Equality Duty we can clearly define how we are fostering an inclusive environment with work related to individual protected characteristics, providing transparency about our aims and objectives and displaying our monitoring information. Developing this area will both demonstrate our commitment to Equality and Diversity and adhere to our legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010).

Celebrating Achievements

Goldsmiths has achieved and continues to achieve a great deal in Equality and Diversity through the research of our academics, alumni, and in our professional practice. However, these achievements are not widely celebrated at an institutional level. Our approach to Equality and Diversity will put the active celebration of achievements firmly on the agenda to demonstrate how proud we are of the work that is being done at Goldsmiths.

Two Ticks Scheme

Goldsmiths is participating in the 'Two Ticks Scheme' – which is a recognition given by Jobcentre Plus to employers based in the UK who have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training, and career development of disabled employees. It is represented by the Two Ticks disability symbol that participating organisations are authorised to display. However, Goldsmiths does not currently widely display or promote the scheme.

Promoting schemes like this and ensuring managers know what their duties are under the scheme, will be crucial in developing an awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled staff and students.





Charter Marks

There are several charter marks and awards that are recognised across the HE sector and demonstrate a commitment to equality in relevant areas. Examples of well-known awards in the sector are:

- Athena SWAN – which is merging with the Gender Equality Mark for Women in Academia
- Stonewall Workplace Equality Index – for lesbian, gay and bisexual, and Trans (LGBT) staff
- The Race Equality Charter Mark
 - Improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education.

There are many benefits of striving for and achieving awards. The application processes allow HEIs to be self-reflective and proactive in making changes to support minority groups, whilst promotion of awards demonstrate an HEI's commitment to Equality and Diversity and give it a competitive edge.

At Goldsmiths there are many opportunities to develop in this area. Applying for an award can be resource intensive (in terms of time, funding, and staff) and in light of this a staggered approach should be taken to making applications. Focusing on applying for one award/ charter mark at a time with the collaboration of invested staff across Goldsmiths, with adequate funding, and by conducting initial appropriate foundational work, achieving an award will be feasible.

There is also an opportunity to collaborate with the Student Union on application projects which could benefit Goldsmiths as a whole. This would strengthen the relationship between the Student Union and the wider College, make resource intensive application processes more manageable, and give students relevant experience that may assist with their employability.

Our Academics

Celebrating the work and achievements of our academics with expertise relating to Equality and Diversity will position Goldsmiths as a leader across the sector. It will also demonstrate as an institution the pride that we have in the work that we do.

Through events, internal and external communications, and our website, Goldsmiths could fully utilise this opportunity. It would also encourage inter-departmental collaboration and communication.

Communication

In order to achieve our aims, a close collaboration with our internal Communications Team will be important. Our strategy and aims will be communicated to key contacts within this team on an ongoing basis to strengthen this link and ensure ongoing achievement and progress in Equality and Diversity is publicised.

Raising our Profile

Opportunities should be sought to raise the profile of Goldsmiths in Equality and Diversity. Collaboration with other HEIs, external communications and publications, and nominations for external awards, such as the National Diversity Awards, could be examples of opportunities to raise Goldsmiths' profile in this area.







Learning, Development, and Research

Goldsmiths does not currently provide any Learning and Development opportunities for staff specifically related to Equality and Diversity. This is an area that we would like to develop.

'Valuing Diversity'

A programme of briefings and workshops will be developed and delivered under a 'Valuing Diversity' banner, this will provide a focus for Equality and Diversity Learning and Development at Goldsmiths.

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias affects every area of our lives – on an unconscious level, we tend to like people who look like us, think like us and come from backgrounds similar to ours. Research has shown that the beliefs and values gained from family, culture and a lifetime of experiences heavily influence how we view and evaluate both others and ourselves. This can cause us to make decisions that are not objective; and ultimately we miss opportunities.

As part of the 'Valuing Diversity' Programme, training in unconscious bias and how to mitigate its impact will be run. Our aim will be for as many staff at Goldsmiths to undertake the training, particularly staff who work directly with students. If members of SMT undertake the training, it will also reinforce SMTs leadership role in this area.

'Equality Essentials'

Short briefing sessions related to Equality and Diversity issues will be introduced to cover areas such as, our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010), the Two Ticks Scheme, and recruitment best practice. These briefings would also signpost staff to further information and resources.



Focussed bespoke training

A provision for focussed bespoke training will be explored to address more specific needs of Departments. This training would be designed to raise awareness of the needs of students or staff with a protected characteristic, work to address any concerns raised at Departmental level, encourage dialogue about difficult subjects, and help staff to build their knowledge and confidence.

Equality and Diversity 'Toolkits'

Online resources and toolkits will be developed to provide guidance and support for managers.

Using our Experts

As Equality and Diversity expertise is right at our doorstep, opportunities should be sought to tap into this wealth of knowledge. Also providing academics with a space where they can share their knowledge and research would be beneficial, particularly if it allows staff to communicate and collaborate across academic disciplines and departments. We should also look for ways in which research generated by academics can have an influence on our professional practice.

Learning and Teaching Enhancement

In line with the aims outlined in Goldsmiths' Learning, Teaching, and Assessment strategy, opportunities to embed Equality and Diversity and promote inclusion in learning and teaching should be utilised. This will be reinforced by Equality and Diversity being a permanent agenda item at the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee (LTEC). This will help facilitate discussion about opportunities for development in this area. An ongoing dialogue with students and Goldsmiths' Student Union will also support this.

Access & Inclusion

Employers are legally obliged to not discriminate on the grounds of sex, age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, and disability.

When we develop initiatives at Goldsmiths we would like to ensure that we do not discriminate or exclude anyone in our work. Opportunities will be sought to collaborate and partner with the Student Union, and other stakeholders on a number of Equality initiatives and events, particularly in relation to access and inclusion.

Initiatives developed in this area will be designed to complement and support any work already underway at Goldsmiths related to access and inclusion with the aim of having a joined up and strategic approach.

In our professional practice we will aim to:

- Foster an inclusive environment
- Be proactive in supporting people with protected characteristics and be leading edge in the Higher Education sector
- Be engaged with our staff and students
- Encourage collaborative and partnership working
- Be committed to knowledge development as part of our aims as a 'learning organisation'



Key Recommendations

In conclusion, please find a summary of the key recommendations outlined in this strategy below:

- To implement the development of a renewed governance model for Equality and Diversity using a staff network model and devolved formal governance to embed Equality and Diversity into strategic decision making
- To have a renewed focus on improving data related to Equality and Diversity
- To create a central Equality and Diversity 'hub' with a strong internal and external web presence
- To celebrate our achievements and explore the feasibility of applying for awards and charter marks, such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, Athena SWAN Award, and the Race Equality Charter Mark
- To introduce the 'Valuing Diversity' Programme for Equality and Diversity learning and development opportunities

Next Steps

- An Equality and Diversity Action and Implementation Plan has been developed to aid the implementation and programme of the Equality and Diversity strategy
- The Equality and Diversity strategy has been communicated to Goldsmiths
- The strategy has been shared with key stakeholders across Goldsmiths to ensure that a joined up approach is taken to Equality and Diversity





