

Reimagining our purpose for social justice

One year on

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The Centre for Equity and Inclusion has been described as the ideological driving force behind the institution, ensuring that our pedagogy, workplace culture and engagement with London's communities reflect our historic and continuing social mission.

The Centre seeks to draw out London Met's greatest features, building on existing strengths and celebrating practice that advances social justice. By working in partnership with students, staff and local partners, we are promoting evidence-based equity, diversity and inclusion practice, which centres lived experience in order to create conditions where students and staff can unlock their full potential. The goal is to build a compassionate community of changemakers united by the pursuit of social justice.



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Introduction

Professor Lynn Dobbs

Vice-Chancellor

Equity, justice and opportunity for all are among the core principles of London Met. I joined the University in 2018, and I have been struck by how deeply felt the commitment to social justice is among our staff. Across the University, we are motivated by the will to improve the lives and opportunities of our students, our community and those facing injustice all over the world.

Our path hasn't always been steady, and we know there are areas where we still need to improve. Our degree-awarding gap, whilst reducing, remains too stark and whilst our proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff is growing, there is a lack of representation in senior academic roles and non-academic leadership roles in the University.

We are committed to facing up to our shortcomings and interrogating our practices forensically – it's the only way we will be able to make the changes needed to embed social justice into the fibre of our institution.

That's why, one year ago, we established the Centre for Equity and Inclusion. By working in partnership with student and staff communities, through research and enquiry we are better able to understand the experiences and culture at the University. In turn, this means we can respond with robust, tangible plans to ensure that everybody is valued and able to thrive.

Our plans for the Centre for Equity and Inclusion are unapologetically ambitious and our standards for the University are high. It's so important to me, and to the Centre, that we do not just offer platitudes, but long-term investment focused on where it will be most effective.

We will not lose our commitment to this agenda. The Centre's staff are brimming with enthusiasm and ideas, and I am in awe of how quickly and effectively they put these into action. I am so proud of everything they have achieved in their first year.

Introduction to the report

Dr Zainab Khan

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

Director of the Centre for Equity and Inclusion

The pages that follow celebrate the story so far. The Centre represents a whole-institutional endeavour. Every school and department is working in partnership with the Centre to advance change within their teams and provision.

Our students continually teach us so much about grit, resilience and adaptability – inspiring us to be the best we can for them. In doing so, it is impossible to discuss inclusivity for students without reflecting on the culture we create for staff. Through programmes such as Education for Social Justice and Inclusive Behaviours, our staff community is finding renewed meaning and connection to the social purpose of higher education and their collective responsibility to create a positive and anti-oppressive culture.

The pandemic forced us to confront many complex global and social challenges – at London Met we saw a doubling down of efforts by staff reaffirming that our commitment to advancing inclusion is anything but seasonal. If we want things to change then we must be prepared to change.

Thank you to every member of staff and student who is working with the Centre to advance the University's ambition for equity.

Race Equity Strategic Plan

In addition to funding race-related research, student projects and staff development programmes, the University will invest £15 million over the next five years to ensure diversity in our academic pipeline. Future recruitment will focus on building a staff base that can evidence expertise in inclusivity and proximity to our students' lived experience.

We are translating our ambition, ensuring our educational provision reflects emancipatory and anti-oppressive pedagogy. Our lynchpin strategy, the Education for Social Justice Framework, the introduction of Black and Global Studies modules, Decolonising Met and Disrupt the Discourse programmes support our academics to enhance their practice.

Governance of universities' progress on equality has not kept up pace with the audit culture in other areas of higher education. Through the development and introduction of an equity dashboard and new assurance scheme launching in February 2022, we will hold ourselves accountable to ensure every department and school delivers the targets set out in the plan. We are already evaluating the efficacy of our interventions through the adoption of mixed methods review processes.

Systems and policies are only as effective as the agents overseeing them. To ensure we develop a consistently anti-racist practice in our professional behaviours and decision-making, the creation of formal and informal training spaces will ensure all staff are continuously engaged in developing racial literacy with a heightened expectation on managers to undertake additional training.

Our whole-institutional strategic plan has been hailed as comprehensive and ambitious by many across the sector.



Race Equity Strategic Plan

2020/21 – 2024/25

Centre for Equity
and Inclusion

To read the Race Equity Strategic Plan
in full, please visit:
londonmet.ac.uk/raceequityplan

Fair Outcomes:

A values-led approach to education and the student experience

Our teaching and learning strategies translate our aspiration into a set of pedagogic and curriculum frameworks, which are centred on an ethos of delivering fair outcomes for all students. As an institution, we are committed to eradicating disparities in student outcomes as well as inviting our students to be a part of positive change, supporting our local communities to tackle complex societal challenges through London Met Lab and the Empowering London module.

Alongside the Education for Social Justice Framework, the Transitions and Careers Education Frameworks provide a holistic and interconnected approach to improving success and progression indicators in the student lifecycle. These are areas of additional institutional focus under the auspices of the Access and Participation Plan. The Frameworks have been co-designed and implemented by interdisciplinary groups of academics, professional services and the Students' Union to ensure a cohesive approach to the holistic student experience.



So many London Met staff have chosen to work here because we feel deeply committed to the University's historic mission and we relish the diversity of our community.

“The Education for Social Justice Framework is a holistic approach to transformative education – it resonates profoundly with the values and educational philosophy we share around promoting inclusive and critical praxis to enable our students to build knowledge, skills and confidence to realise their talents and ambitions and become agents of progressive social change.

“Over the past year it has been exciting to see the passionate embrace of the Framework during the pilot phase by engaged members

of participating course teams, professional support allies and student partners, in the process of critical review and redesign of our curricula and pedagogy. This is evidenced in accounts of course changes around embedding critical pedagogy, diversifying or decolonising content and materials, and developing inclusive assessment, with direct student input into course design and delivery. Instrumental to this progress has been the Value Added data and Inclusive Behaviours training, together with the Education for Social Justice pedagogy training, as part of a whole-institution approach towards delivering fair outcomes for all our students.”

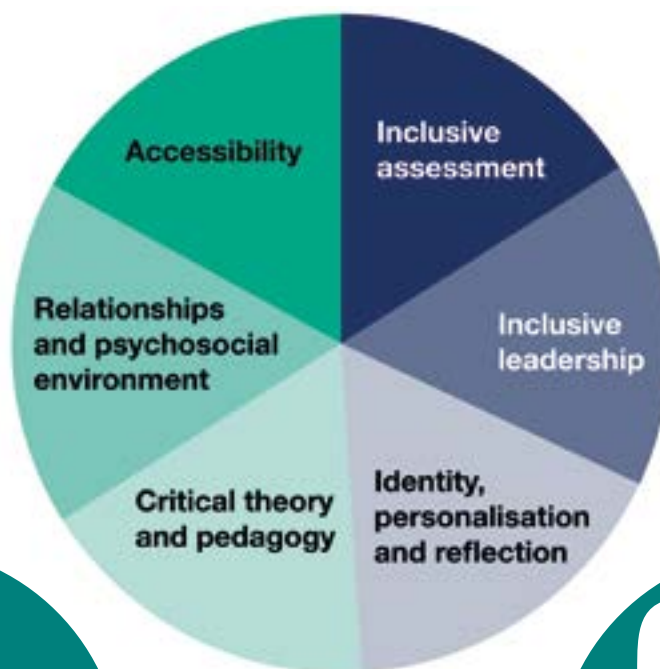
Professor Digby Warren

Senior Professor and Head of the Centre for Professional and Educational Development

Education for Social Justice Framework

The Education for Social Justice Framework is a reimagining of education as a vehicle for social change.

The process of crafting a framework was a truly collective institutional endeavour – from its inception, design and implementation we have been intentional to maximise participative decision making, bringing together staff, students and the Students’ Union to reimagine a strategy that articulates what it means to be part of the London Met community. Concern for social challenges are converted into a set of actionable commitments to ensure that our graduates will be agents of positive social change and inclusive leaders with a deep appreciation of social inequalities facing London.



4th

in London for overall student satisfaction
National Student Survey 2021

6th

in the UK for teaching quality
The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2022

Education for Social Justice Framework (contd.)

The Framework is supported by an ambitious staff development plan and systems change in key academic and student services.

Whilst most of the sector experienced a decline in student satisfaction during the pandemic, London Met saw success in the National Student Survey (NSS). We now rank sixth nationally for teaching quality (*The Times* and *Sunday Times* Good University Guide). The pandemic accelerated the implementation of our plans for accessible, inclusive learning, which our academic schools suggest has made an impact on our NSS scores.

The philosophy of the Education for Social Justice Framework is fast becoming the golden thread of our institution.

We want to be a sector-leading institution for inclusive practice. The level of resource investment to ensure this becomes a reality is unprecedented, including investment in the Inclusive Behaviours development programme, which has already been completed by all student-facing staff; all professional services will complete it by July 2022. This is to ensure that students experience a truly holistic inclusive experience, as well as ensuring that workplace practices for staff are equitable and inclusive, thereby supporting diversification of our pipeline, leadership and services.



Black and Global Studies modules

Launching later this academic year are innovative modules that seek to restore visibility and celebrate Black history and traditions. The modules are an opportunity for students from across the University to explore the local socio-political, historical and contemporary experiences of Black London communities.

Resistance, Creativity and Joy in the Capital and Decolonisation and Dismantling Institutional Racism will enable students to experience innovative pedagogies, with an emphasis on learning for social change rather than learning for purely academic purposes. The modules will feature special guest lecturers from different industries, including authors, journalists, grassroots activists, producers and academics.

The Global Studies module, developed by the University's Global Diversities and Inequalities Research Centre, explores diasporic experience, providing students with an opportunity to explore the social and cultural impact of Britain's migrant communities.

Disrupt the Discourse

Inspired by the philosophy of Paulo Freire, Disrupt the Discourse is an online multimedia resource designed to support our praxis. Critical pedagogy is a philosophy of education and social movement that applies critical theory concepts and traditions to the field of education and the study of culture. It insists that issues of social justice and democracy are not distinct from acts of teaching and learning. The project intends to help lecturers to find creative ways to collaborate

with students and unlock their capacity to question the status quo and be agents of positive social change.

A resource of critical digital content

The resource will take the form of an online space of digital content and multimedia exploring themes of critical race theory, intersectionality, decolonising, feminism and queer theory to name a few. The resource will consist of podcast interviews, articles, webinars as well as live-streamed intimate conversations with some of our leading academics, community partners and activists. This resource will provoke, challenge and stimulate debate about the world we live in and our role within it.

Decolonising Met

The Decolonising Met group formed around a virtual campfire during the pandemic, bringing together staff and students interested in exploring decolonial literature and concepts, and their potential application to our provision. The group distilled themes and areas of enquiry that have shaped and influenced an exciting programme of staff development activity underway this academic year. Each school has been invited to appoint an academic lead to work with a multidisciplinary team to develop subject-specific resources and workshops to assist their colleagues with adopting decolonial pedagogy. Our Academic Quality department is playing a vital role to ensure validation and review processes enable implementation at the course and modular level.

This process will be a journey for all of us at London Met and will require deep reflection on the social responsibility of institutions.

Student Curriculum Partners



This role has made me want to work in a university, particularly with a focus on indigenous populations. I feel we have worked in a very healthy environment.”



This role has helped me realise my potential and it has been very stimulating.”

The Student Curriculum Partner (SCP) programme was created to enhance student agency in the creation, delivery and evaluation of our academic offer whilst supporting our actions to improve continuation and degree outcomes. Our SCPs work in an equal partnership with academics to encourage reflection on their practice and to advise how course materials and activities can be made more engaging, inclusive and accessible.

The programme acts as a mechanism for positive and inclusive change within the institution, showing that co-creation has the capability to enrich the learning experience and outcomes for all students.



It has been great to work in an environment with like minded people. Especially through Covid, I have felt very supported.”



Academic misconduct and integrity

The Quality Assurance Agency has encouraged institutions to propose solutions to addressing academic misconduct as well as the overrepresentation of Black students subject to misconduct investigations. Student experience of academic misconduct processes impacts retention, outcomes and their overall sense of belonging. The overrepresentation of people of colour subject to misconduct proceedings is a historic pattern replicated in a number of fields including the Metropolitan Police, health and legal professions.

We have an ongoing project that involves analysing casework to understand trends across our five academic schools in order to

inform a systems-based response to eliminating discrimination as well as ensuring students develop better understanding of academic integrity. Our autumn 2021 campaign provides students with an accessible and no-jargon resource page encouraging academic integrity and seeking support when needed. Alongside this, the leadership team in the School of Social Sciences and Professions, our most ethnically diverse school, are leading the development of staff-facing interventions to challenge and disrupt the pattern of overreporting of students of colour. This work will catalyse support and initiatives that can be introduced University wide.

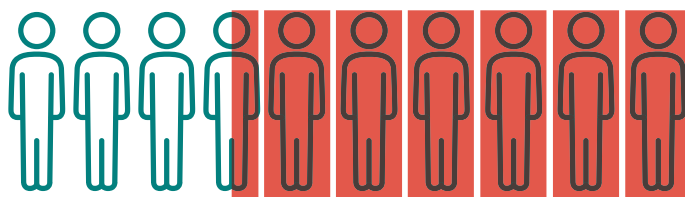
Our students

London Met is founded on a strong history of widening participation, and today 96% of our student population is from at least one underrepresented group. 60% of our students are BAME*, mature students make up 81% of our student body and 97% of our UK-domiciled young full-time undergraduate entrants are from state schools or colleges.



64%

of our students are female



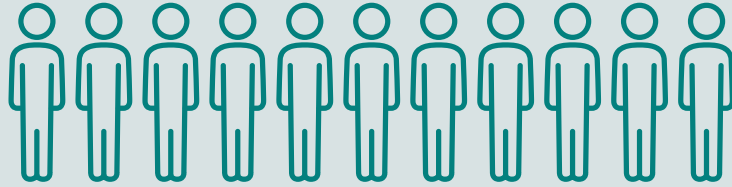
14%

of our students
have declared a disability

*BAME is used here for accuracy in external data reporting – as a University we are moving away from this term.

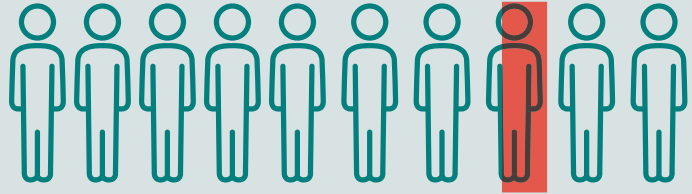
10,388

Total number of students in 2019/20



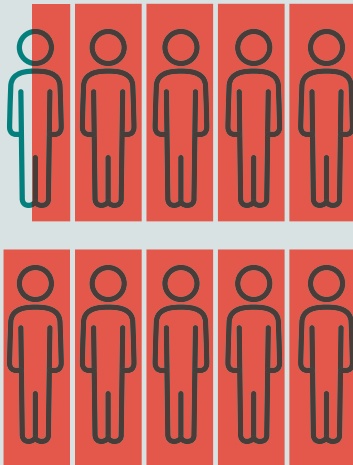
8%*

are from the
LGBTQ+ community



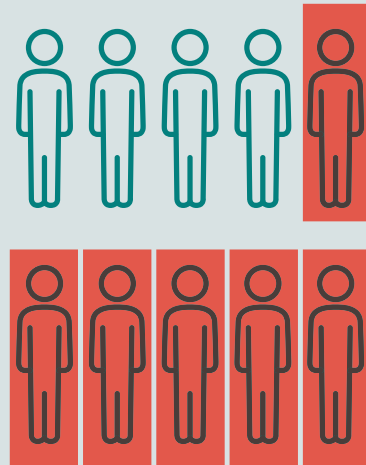
96%

of our students are from at
least one under-represented
background



60%

are from a Black, Asian or
Minority Ethnic background



The data here and on the following pages is HESA data for the 2019/20 academic year and includes students from our partnership with QAHE.

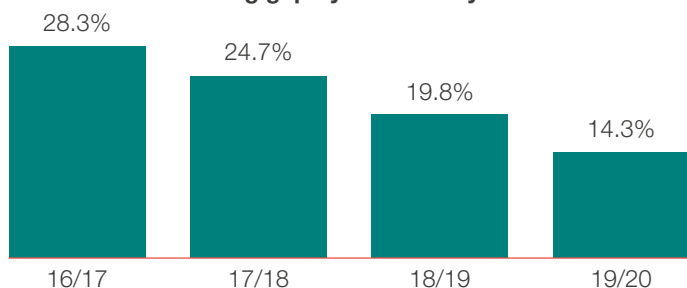
*This stat is based on SITS data.

Access and Participation Plan

London Met's strategy for the successful delivery of our Access and Participation Plan (APP) encourages focus on the development of holistic inclusive academic practice and the creation of enabling environments that support students to succeed.

We are aware we have unacceptable gaps for some groups in terms of continuation, completion and progression from London Met, each of which is strategically targeted within the APP by activities that are informed by disaggregated intersectional data, and supported by research and sector best practice. Our APP commits the University to challenge deficit-based interventions of the past and replace them with innovative, targeted pastoral and academic activities at pinch points across the student lifecycle. In 2020 we developed a new governance structure for reporting and oversight of our APP and streamlining of interventions mapped against the Theory of Change logic model.

London Met awarding gap by academic year



79.9% Overall attainment **75.1%** BAME attainment **89.4%** White attainment **72.8%** Black attainment

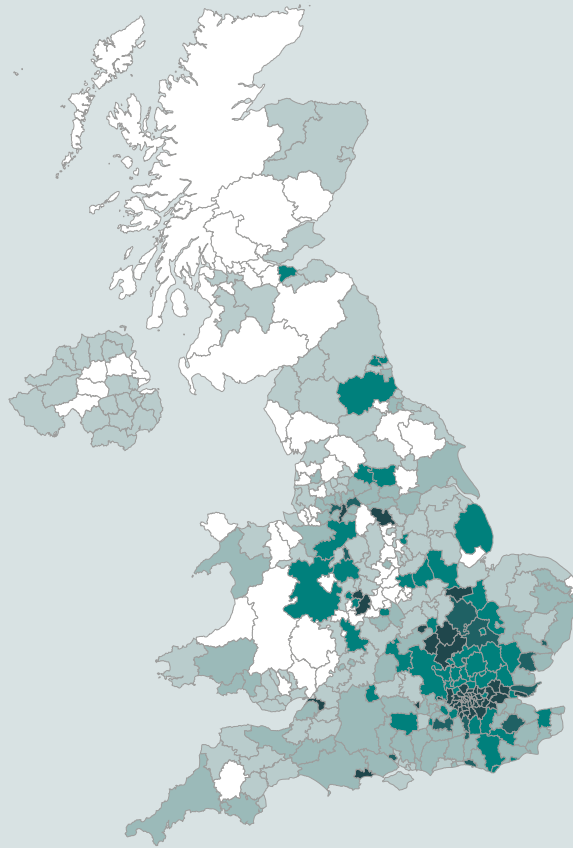
All of our APP activities are co-designed and co-delivered by students, while specialist support is delivered by experts within our professional service teams. Practitioners in Student Services, Careers and Employability, Work-Based Learning and our Library Services work in partnership with our academic schools to enhance our practices, so that our provision is embedded and aligned with the academic offer, and is anticipatory and inclusive by design rather than reactionary wherever possible.

Continuation and completion:

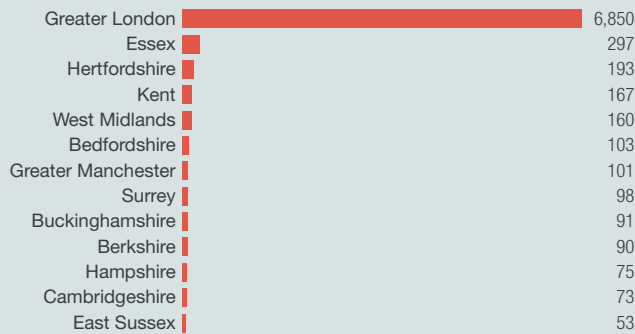
- 17 specialist student support programmes targeting students that identify as BAME, Disabled, Mature, IMD1&2, LGBTQIA+, Care Leavers, Estranged and Refugee
- Four programmes co-created and led by students replicated across all academic schools providing enhanced academic skills, information and guidance, peer mentoring and affirmative action from student feedback
- An enhanced engagement and monitoring policy and system to ensure at risk students are identified early and matched with relevant support

Progression:

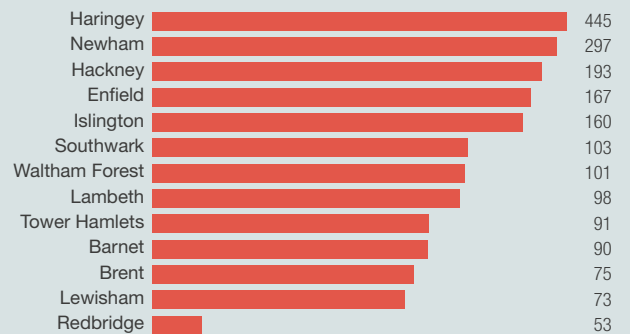
- Alongside the introduction of the Careers Education Framework, six new employability-focused programmes creating opportunities for students from underrepresented groups to develop the skills, confidence, networks and insights into potential career pathways across numerous sectors



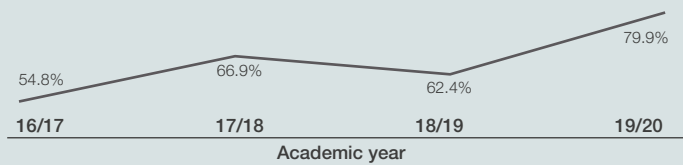
Headcount by county



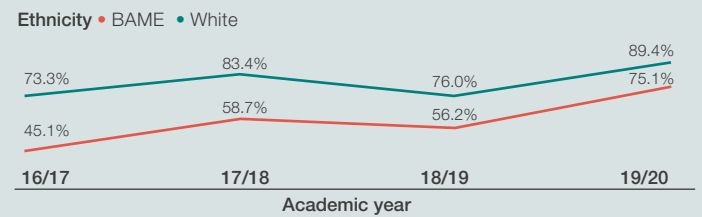
Headcount by London borough



Overall attainment by academic year



BAME/White attainment by academic year



Reflections on a year in practice



Owen Beacock

Associate Director of the Centre and
Head of Fair Outcomes

The catalyst that shapes and drives the Centre's work is the bringing together of London Met's diverse communities' lived experiences alongside the collective knowledge, expertise and passion of our academic and professional staff. Our work, across all streams, is one of collaboration, engaging with all stakeholders to ensure their voices are heard, respected and reflected in our programmes and interventions.

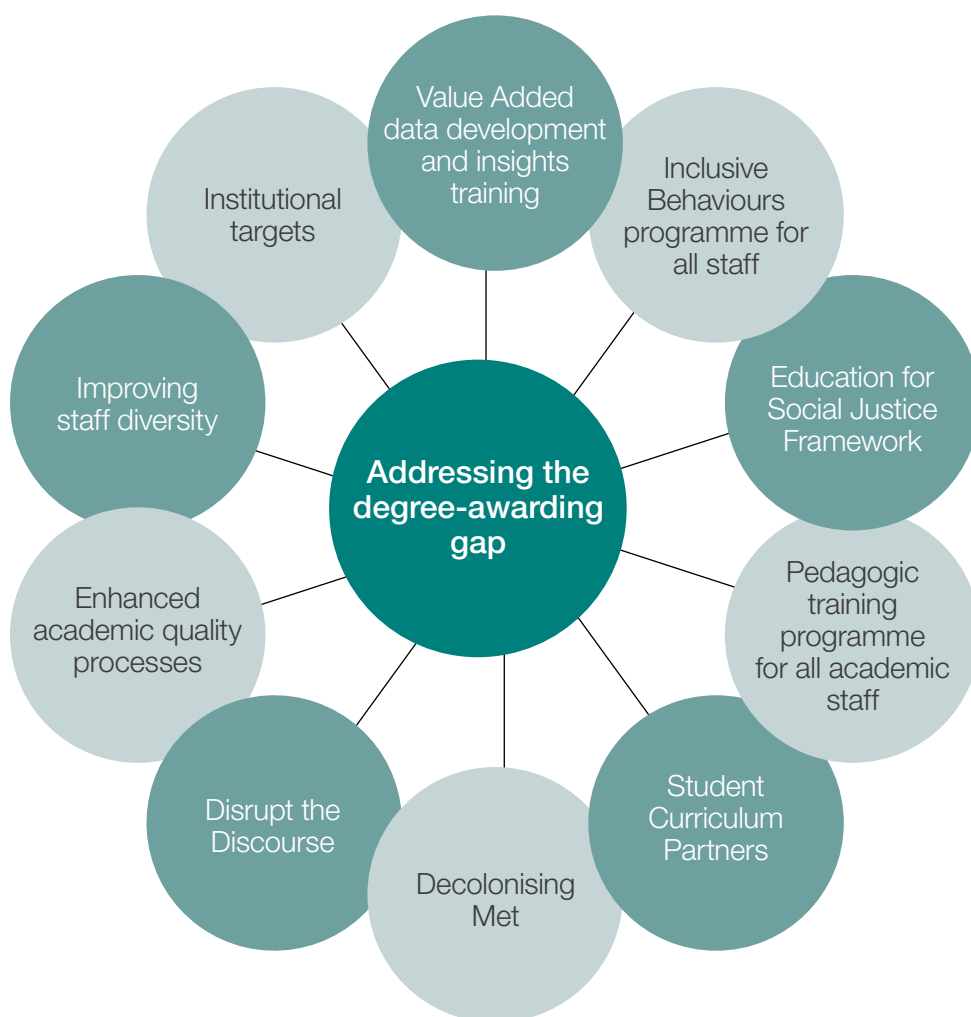
“Although only a year in, and with much more to follow, the sheer volume of work reflected in this report is testament to the success of this University-wide approach. No change programme is easy to facilitate, but we have been humbled by the positive engagement received from students, the Students' Union, our academic schools, professional departments, local partnerships, the senior leadership team and the Board. Collectively we have taken on the mantle of eradicating social injustice through education. We have mandated ourselves to go beyond the stale processes of equality and diversity to create an educational environment of equity, inclusion and belonging, where all stakeholders from all backgrounds feel part of a thriving community. It's an exciting time to be part of London Met!”

Addressing the degree-awarding gap

The sector has seen a period of increased dialogue and awareness of the wicked problem of the degree-awarding gap. In 2019 we began a process of developing a whole-institutional approach to respond and tackle this, drawing on the evidence of what works as well as listening to the voices of our staff as well as our students of colour.

Over the past two years the University has seen at least a 10 percentage point decrease in the

degree-awarding gap. Whilst some of this is due to the impact of no detriment policies introduced during the pandemic, an initial analysis of our data suggests that students of colour were underrepresented in the group of students who had recourse to no detriment policies. The improvement in outcomes for our students of colour is encouraging and reflects the dedication of our academic staff to engage with the change programme, even when also being challenged by the rigours of the pandemic.



Graduate outcomes:

Developing inclusive future leaders

London Met Lab: Empowering London supports our civic endeavour to work in partnership with local communities to help them to tackle major societal challenges. We've identified six major issues facing London – crime, poverty and deprivation, social wealth, discrimination, health improvement and the environment – and are bringing our academic and professional expertise from across the University to co-design solutions to these challenges that disproportionately affect the communities that we serve.

Our students are important partners in our external engagement. Through the Empowering London module, students undertake work-based learning within a grassroots setting and explore a progressive model of critical and transformative citizenship. Our aim is to unlock their capacity to be values-driven graduates who can make a positive difference to creating a fairer, inclusive society.

To support the needs of our local economies and civic organisations, in 2020 we launched new public-facing direct services in the form of clinics. Our current offering spans the fields of injury and rehabilitation, pro bono law, small business support, charities and social enterprise and community art projects. Further clinics offering support with domestic violence and health are planned in the near future.

Delivering on our commitments through insights and evaluation

Fostering a culture of excellence in data-led and evaluation practice

We are committed to the step change long overdue in the sector to see better transparency and accountability for resource allocation and activity that seeks to improve equity and inclusion.

An evaluative mindset is key to supporting evidence-based practice and informing decision-making. The Centre acts as a hub for staff and students engaged in Fair Outcomes and inclusion programme delivery, providing advice and guidance to ensure that all University equity and inclusion activity is robustly monitored and evaluated. Over time, the Centre will collate, share and disseminate information to all stakeholder groups at all levels about the effectiveness of activities and interventions as a process of continuous learning and a what works philosophy.

Our approach is characterised by the following key principles:

1.

Social justice and equity-oriented considerations – We ensure that the voice of those with lived experience feature throughout the lifecycle of our workstreams. Much of the Centre’s work is a response to the challenge of structural disadvantage. Historically marginalised groups have neither held decision-making roles or been invited to inform the shape of programme design – we follow the adage **“nothing about us, without us”**.

2.

Transparency – We aim to share progress reports and key outcomes to all stakeholders in order to facilitate ongoing collaboration.

3.

Learning and collaboration – We promote learning and knowledge sharing by staff across the institution to build confidence in evaluation practice, exchange ideas and showcase innovative practice.

4.

Students as partners – Students play a critical role in the design and delivery of evaluation activity. The student body is encouraged to contribute, share their insights and discuss methods of evaluation and practices. The Student Curriculum Partner scheme is just one example of this.

5.

Support and accountability – We support staff to build confidence in monitoring and evaluation, whilst developing a sense of ownership and greater accountability. This is reinforced by our Fair Outcomes governance processes, which oversee our APP obligations, ensuring that as an institution we are making ethical and defensible use of public funds.

6.

Business intelligence systems and data literacy – In 2019 the University established a new Planning and Insights department, which has led the creation of dashboards depicting the student and staff lifecycle metrics including the introduction of the Value Added score. These dashboards are a leading feature of our continuous enhancement and review processes across the University, ensuring progress against the corporate plan. The Centre is working with staff teams to build their familiarity and confidence in interpreting data to inform actions.

Creating an inclusive community



The Openspace

Openspace and Openspace Connect were created in response to the isolation experienced by students during the pandemic. The Centre worked with external social media influencers and activists to deliver a series of discussion events designed to maintain connection and community during the UK lockdowns. The workshops focused on topics concerned with social justice, such as inviting reflections on the global Black Lives Matter protests that were reignited in summer 2020. The workshops often overlapped with either artistic or academic interests. Openspace Connect focused specifically on coaching skills by bringing together a cohort of students with a specialist coaching professional, enabling them to build resilience and remain focused on their goals during uncertain times.

Special Guest Lecture Series

In June 2021, The Centre launched its first Annual Special Guest Lecture, presenting the award-winning author and journalist Angela Saini.

In this special lecture Angela Saini unpacked the roots and social construction of race in academia, uncovering its dark side and its intimate relationship with the pseudo-science of eugenics.

Spotlight on The Big Watch

Inspired by Kingston University's "The Big Read", The Big Watch programme was created to encourage new and returning students to participate in University-wide activities, make connections with fellow students and staff and to have an early introduction to the University's inclusive values – creating an early sense of belonging within a progressive community.

Centred around a preselected film that addresses topics aligned with the equity and inclusion agenda, academic teams deliver in-course activities to facilitate dialogue and explore the themes that the film presents. This is followed by a University-wide welcome week event in association with the Students' Union. The Big Watch enables students to have an early insight into the inclusive ethos of London Met while also making important social connections with their peers.

It Ends Here:

Tackling harassment and sexual violence

Consent workshops

From January 2022, every first-year student will complete a consent workshop. The workshops are the result of an extended consultation exercise with student participants, which enable us to communicate a clear zero-tolerance stance towards sexual misconduct while also empowering students to make informed decisions. The workshops are designed to challenge the culture of impunity and silence around sexual violence while enabling open communication about issues pertaining to sexual misconduct. Going beyond the basic notion of consent, where “yes” means “yes” and “no” means “no”, the workshops explore power dynamics in the context of consent covering topics such as: respecting sexualities and gender identities, racialised sexism, digital consent and fostering a consent culture at university. The overarching objective is to develop collective ownership of the need to change attitudes and to establish common values around consent and respect.

Survivor-specific workshops

Our strategies for preventing and responding to sexual violence need to be appropriately adapted to our students' lived experience. A significant number of our students are mature. While we build on our prevention strategies (consent workshops), we are cognisant of our institutional responsibility of supporting victim-survivors who have experienced sexual abuse before joining the University.

The Survivor Support Group is for student survivors of sexual abuse to come together and gain support from each other under the supervision and guidance of our trauma-informed therapist. Research has shown that students who have experienced sexual abuse are at risk of dropping out of university. When students are offered appropriate support, they are more likely to progress with their studies. As this work progresses, it is important that our curricula does too. Given the sensitive nature of specific subject areas, it is crucial for teaching staff to have the knowledge on how to deliver learning of sensitive topics. By developing a trauma-informed way of delivering sensitive (but necessary) content, we can minimise harm and improve engagement within our learning environments.



Equity and inclusion for staff

Accreditations

Accreditation activities have played a significant role in encouraging universities to take whole-institutional approaches to their equalities work, inviting parallel action on curriculum, as well as the student and staff experience. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of the University's Self-Assessment Team and HR department, the University was awarded Bronze by Athena Swan in recognition of our ongoing commitment to the advancement of gender equality. We are now implementing our action plan, which will be enacted over a four-year period. We have more work to do, including advancing women's careers, as well as providing better support for maternity leave returners.

We have submitted our second application to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and we recognise there is much more for us to do to ensure psychological safe and inclusive environments, particularly for trans students, and also ensuring workplace culture is consistently aligned with our values, regardless of department or team. We have recently submitted our intention to apply for the Race Equality Charter and have started the process of forming a Self-Assessment Team to guide the University's submission over the next two years.

Centre Research

A number of staff within the Centre are developing their practice as applied researchers. Current research activities include an examination of the career pipeline of staff of colour as well as the experience of our LGBTQ+ communities at London Met. This internal-facing research assists in the development of targeted interventions as well as assessing longitudinal culture change at the University.

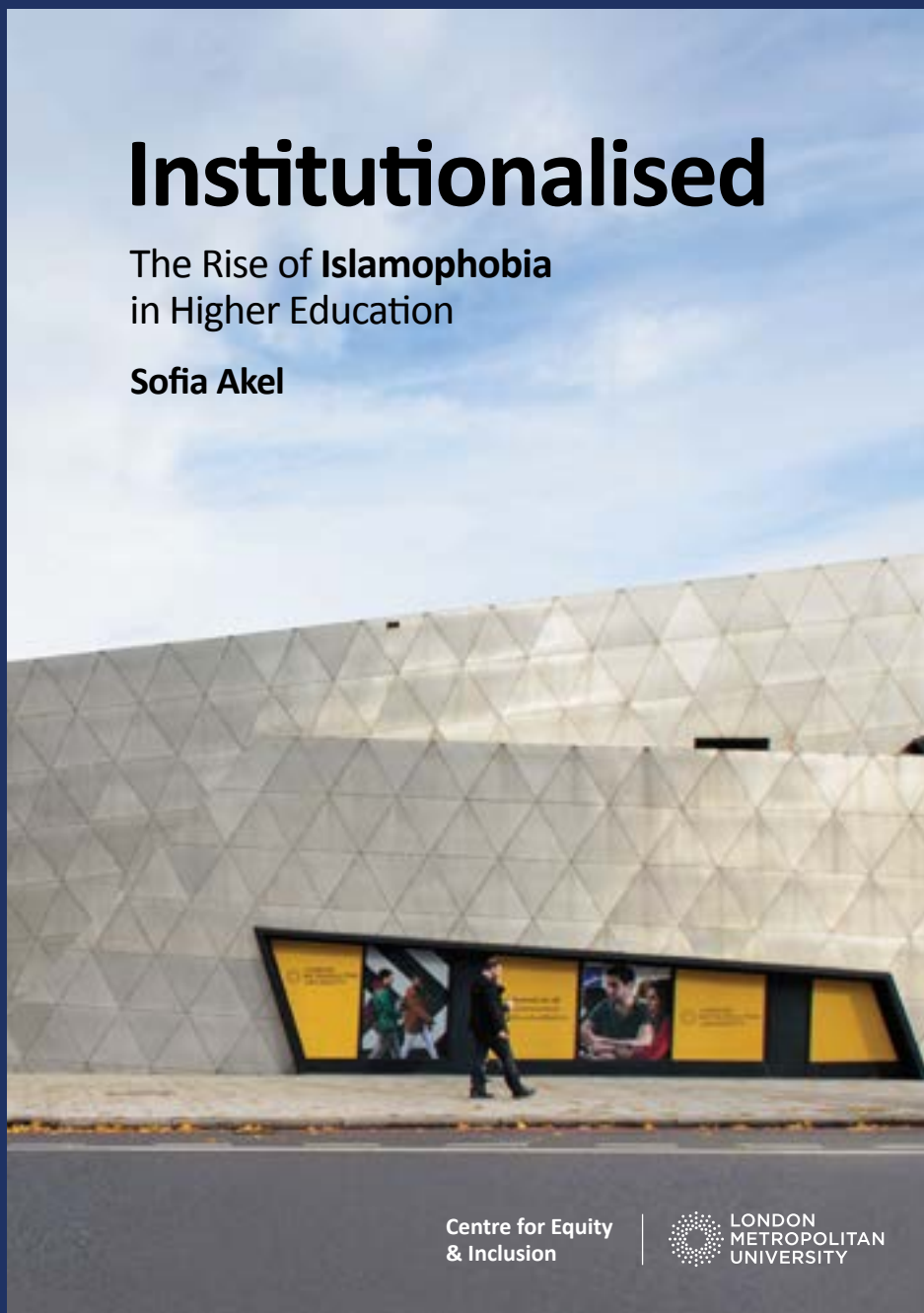
Muslim students make up increasing numbers of student populations and yet the experience of Muslims within UK higher education has not been subject to much commentary or attention. More than 30% of our students at London Met are Muslim.

Combining a review of existing literature and primary research with our students and staff, the Centre's first report *Institutionalised* explored the rise of Islamophobia in higher education. The research presented findings of the holistic student experience in and outside of the classroom, workplace culture and inclusion as well as pipeline trends that have cast new light on dynamics within our University setting that need attention. The report has fed into improvements to the students' complaints procedure, developments with our estate and further work is underway to enable students to access Shariah compliant banking and finance guidance. The findings have also informed staff development activity.

Institutionalised

The Rise of Islamophobia
in Higher Education

Sofia Akel



Centre for Equity
& Inclusion

 LONDON
METROPOLITAN
UNIVERSITY

Institutionalised

londonmet.ac.uk/institutionalised

Spotlight on Critical Conversation Cafes and staff networks

The University is incredibly proud of its staff networks: Women's Network, Staff Disabilities Network, LGBTQ+ Network, and BAME Voices Network. Established in 2019, the networks are driven by staff dedicated to creating a vibrant, safe and supportive community through a rolling programme of increasingly intersectional events and socials, as well as acting as an advocacy and consultative body.

Critical Conversation Cafes

Critical Conversation Cafes offer an open and informal space to facilitate brave conversations for our student and staff community. The cafes open with a provocation or stimulus for discussion – an image, story, poem, personal experience, quote or news report – and have proved to be an invaluable space for participants to come together to share ideas, seek greater understanding and ask questions in the midst of a global pandemic, the Black Lives Matter protests and other equity matters such as the role of compassion within the curriculum, gender dysphoria and Whiteness. These sessions have been hosted by staff, the Students' Union and even the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The cafes have fostered better connectivity between academic areas and services and strengthened belonging within our community during the pandemic.

North London Leadership Programme

More than 27% of all English university students are from an ethnic minority background (Advance HE 2020), and yet people of colour remain significantly underrepresented in higher education leadership roles, even in London where the ethnic minority working age population is 55% (Census 2011). In addition to taking action to address institutional disadvantage and discriminatory practices, we are looking at ways in which we can support our staff of colour through an asset-based approach (as opposed to deficit-based). In 2021 we partnered with City, University of London, to pilot a positive action mentoring scheme to enable 27 participants from our institutions to benefit from a mentoring relationship from our management and leadership teams. We are currently producing an evaluation report – initial feedback indicated that both mentees and mentors greatly benefitted from the process. We are exploring expanding the scheme to other London higher education institutions.

Inclusive Behaviours Programme

Working with experts at MAED Training Consultancy, the Centre for Professional and Educational Development has introduced a comprehensive and mandatory training programme to advance literacy and practice in equity. The programme is considered to be one of the largest programmes in scale, speed and investment by a UK university with all staff undertaking this deep process of education and reflection by summer 2022.

Workshops include the following:

- equality essentials
- bullying and harassment
- cultural awareness
- bias, discrimination and racism
- privilege
- anti-oppression and anti-racism

All student-facing staff and the senior management team will complete the Inclusive Behaviours programme by the end of 2021. All remaining professional service staff will complete a similar version of the programme by summer 2022. All new staff will complete the training within six months of joining London Met. We are building our internal capacity to deliver the programme in-house for future cohorts of new staff. There are also plans to expand the topics covered within the workshops reflecting the recommendations from research conducted into topics such as Islamophobia and the career pipeline. The long-term aim of the training is to impact upon the culture of the University, developing into a more compassionate, well-informed environment.

Equity Assurance Scheme

Underpinning all of our activities are strong monitoring mechanisms designed to deliver results. The Equity Assurance Scheme is London Met's new governance system to encourage the creation and maintenance of a more equitable and ethical organisation.

The process is supported by our new equity dashboard, developed by our Planning and Insights department, which provides a single source of truth revealing the ecosystem of our University departments – illustrating staff pipeline, pay gaps and precariat characteristics alongside student metrics. The dashboard will also assist with external accreditation processes such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charter.

The Centre will work with our departments to analyse local internal quantitative and qualitative data in order to inform the development of local action plans to address disparities. Management teams will periodically present their action plans to the senior leadership team to outline progress and share what works.





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