

UCL LGBTQ+ action plan: 2023 – 2025

1. Communications and visibility							
No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
1.1	Audit LGBTQ+ Equality webpages on central EDI website as well as all departmental EDI webpages to ensure information for staff and students across the university is stored in one central place and is up-to-date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately communicating UCL's support resources ensures we can support as many LGBTQ+ staff and students as possible. • Up-to-date information increases feeling of belonging and demonstrates institutional commitment towards LGBTQ+ inclusion. Conversely, inconsistent and out-of-date information signals a lack of prioritisation regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small focus group (with trans and/or non-binary representation from LESG/LEIG) formed to flag outdated information and offer suggestions for improvement. • Establishing a centralised process for knowledge-sharing (EDI to departments) so departments are aware of changes and can update their websites accordingly. 	EDI Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent information across webpages with central EDI page acting as a central signposting space. • Process doc for sharing information and updating webpages successfully created. 	Sept 2023	Feb 2024
1.2	Ensure LGBTQ+ awareness days are communicated and celebrated on central UCL channels as well as on a local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness and visibility is an issue specifically for trans, lesbian, bisexual and pansexual people. • Wide-reaching, central comms demonstrates support openly and also signposts UCL staff/students towards relevant support resources to improve wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar developed with comms spotlighting LGBTQ+ projects at UCL. • Local LGBTQ+ events are amplified by EDI and VPEE. • Target set for social media engagement/reach. • Work collaboratively with VPEE on a best practice document for marking awareness days and inclusive communications generally (considering all strands of EDI holistically). 	EDI Operations Manager & VPEE (Head of Comms, Strategy and Planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement targets on social media met. • Positive feedback from staff and students regarding comms. • Best practice document for inclusive communications created and shared with VPEE and other comms leads. 	Ongoing	

<p>1.3</p>	<p>Establish and maintain central page of LGBTQ+ role models at UCL, with a focus on spotlighting senior members of staff as well as more junior ones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of visibility is an issue for both staff and students, specifically trans, nonbinary, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic members of the LGBTQ+ community. • UCL does not have a central page of role models; having a page like this would provide inspiration and a sense of belonging to other members of the LGBTQ+ community at UCL. • Case studies of role models build awareness and empathy towards minority groups, encouraging positive relations between the LGBTQ+ community and the wider community at UCL. • Visibility is a vital step towards inclusion and belonging. • Identifying role models can help the institution identify potential LGBTQ+ mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying a group of diverse, senior role models. • Researching (formally and informally) gaps in representation, considering intersections of gender, race, disability, religion etc., to ensure underrepresented groups have role models and communications that facilitate their sense of belonging. • Case studies created for each member, touching on: their careers, being out at work, and their commitment to supporting LGBTQ+ staff and students. • Developing a plan for keeping the Role Models page updated. 	<p>EDI Operations Manager & Head of Comms, Strategy and Planning (VPEE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies written and delivered. • Positive feedback received from both role models and readers. 	<p>Jan-24</p>	<p>Jun-24</p>
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2. Leadership and culture							
No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
2.1	Re-launch allyship statements from the UCL senior leadership team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former statements are outdated, with many members of staff having left since the publication of those statements. Allyship statements are best practice and help to increase marginalised staff and student sense of belonging. QUCL/LESG research has shown that LGBTQ+ staff appreciate statements of commitment and support from senior leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask leadership team to provide LGBTQ+ ally statements. Provide some guidance for answers to help leaders' statements to be meaningful and impactful. Scope the feasibility of producing a short video with allies where they detail why allyship is important to them. Establish a process for updating statements of allyship. 	EDI Operations Manager, Head of Comms, Strategy and Planning (VPEE) and Head of Internal Engagement (Provost's Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allyship statements are re-launched and promoted. 	Mar-24	Oct-24
2.2	Contribute to the 'disagreeing well' debates and projects, including the development of associated tools and guidance to mitigate the negative impact on UCL's LGBTQ+ students, staff and allies so they always feel safe at UCL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from the LGBTQ+ community, other marginalised groups, and their allies at UCL has demonstrated a lack of clarity surrounding terms such as 'academic freedom' and 'disagreeing well'. Staff and students feel that clearer definitions of these terms are needed so that LGBTQ+ people and other marginalised groups are protected from discrimination. Having further guidance on 'disagreeing well' would 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feed into key institutional conversations regarding the intersection of EDI and 'disagreeing well,' providing comments, papers, recommendations etc. Collaborate with other EDI managers to identify instances where EDI initiatives intersect with 'disagreeing well', ensuring a holistic approach for LGBTQ+ equality and all EDI strands in general. Support the creation of resources, toolkits, and 	Director of EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New resources created and existing ones updated to inform events, communications, debates etc. 	Oct-23	Aug-24

		demonstrate that UCL is actively considering how to protect vulnerable groups, thus enhancing belonging among minoritised staff and students.	trainings that support staff facing difficult conversations (i.e. guidance on protecting wellbeing, building resilience, and recognising when debates cross a line).				
2.3	Establish a plan of visible engagement and tangible support for the UCL senior leadership team endorsing LGBTQ+ equality activity (i.e. public statements of support for milestone events, sponsorship etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QUCL/LESG research has also shown that staff would like senior leaders to endorse LGBTQ+ activity to increase their sense of belonging. • QUCL/LESG research identified a reported lack of visibility of LGBTQ+ networks at UCL as well as a lack of awareness of LGBTQ+ issues. Having endorsement from senior university leaders would therefore redress this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with LESG to establish a calendar of key events and activities that could benefit from support from leadership. • Draft a proposal and share with senior leadership team for their approval. 	EDI Manager, LESG, Head of Internal Engagement (Provost's Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning session held to gather feedback from LGBTQ+ community. • Feedback collated into a guidance document, with suggestions on how senior leadership can demonstrate authentic commitment to EDI in their roles. 	May-24	Feb-25

3. Awareness and education

No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
3.1	Develop and roll out a central, regular LGBTQ+ allyship training with specific focuses on transphobia, homophobia and biphobia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current allyship training is paused. Training is a vital resource to upskill the university community in inclusive behaviour. • LGBTQ+ resources and training are ad-hoc at UCL and often locally run, resulting in a duplication of work. There is therefore a need to develop a central LGBTQ+ education offering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training developed and piloted with small audience (EDI team, Dignity Advisors, Inclusion Leads, Wellbeing Champions). • Produce self-guided option(s). I.e. recording the training or creating bitesize summaries to improve the reach of the resources and remove the dependency upon 	EDI Manager, EDI Training Manager, and Digital Learning Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training being delivered to a certain % of UCL community. • Positive feedback from training. I.e. staff reporting feeling more empowered to support LGBTQ+ (and specifically trans) staff and students. 	Apr-23	Nov-24

			<p>a singular individual to deliver the training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration made as to how the central EDI team can progress this project once LEIG finishes in November 2023. Following conversations with OD, it is feasible to get to the 'alpha stage' of developing the training by November 2023 in partnership with the Digital Learning Manager (OD). However, there are 2 further stages of review and development that must be undertaken for this training can be finalised and uploaded onto UCL's central training systems. 				
3.2	<p>Embed LGBTQ+ inclusion (as well as other strands) into existing Learning & Development and People Development programmes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI should be viewed as a key part of everyone's roles, rather than a discrete and optional add-on. • For sustainability and effectiveness, it is best to feed into existing people development programmes (rather than creating new ones) to embed EDI in the long-term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with colleagues in Organisational Development (OD) to scope out programmes and areas where EDI input is relevant and makes the most impact. • Work with other EDI Managers to collate recommendations for OD's people development programmes. • Implement surveys or metrics to determine how much colleagues have learned about EDI and whether they feel empowered 	<p>Director of EDI, Director of OD, and Head of Leadership and Coaching Development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong, collaborative relationships built with OD. • Recommendations regarding EDI are implemented into trainings. • Positive feedback from attendees regarding their sense of empowerment and the EDI knowledge they've gained. 	Sep-23	Nov-24

			to implement these learnings into their role following their participation in the development programmes.				
3.3	Create a best practice document for departments to guide them on maximising the reach and recording the impact of their LGBTQ+ trainings and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a duplication of effort across the university. Locally led initiatives are often limited to a department or faculty. There is a need to widen the reach of trainings and level up the institution. • LGBTQ+ staff are often expected to do the work to educate peers. A resource-effective approach to knowledge sharing would upskill the institution and alleviate the burden from LGBTQ+ staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document(s) drafted and shared with Inclusion Leads or other local EDI staff for feedback before finalisation. • Document(s) will be shared with colleagues and available on central EDI website. 	LEIG Manager & Central EDI Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document accessible and used by colleagues leading LGBTQ+ (and other EDI) events. 	Aug-24	May-25

4. Community and belonging

No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
4.1	Supporting LESG to develop a programme of regular social engagement opportunities for Out@UCL, ensuring that these are unequivocally safe spaces for trans and nonbinary members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback that LGBTQ+ staff and students feel siloed and isolated. Community is vital to staff wellbeing, high performance, and retention. • LGBTQ+ staff survey has reflected a need for a safe space to discuss issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community: ableism, racism, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with LESG to create a programme of inclusive, low-resource social events. (i.e. museum trips, online coffee connect catch-ups etc.). • Guidelines created for socials that explicitly stipulate trans-inclusion and respect. 	EDI Manager and LESG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comms and events delivered. • Strong engagement statistics (i.e. number of clicks, event attendees, likes etc.) • Positive feedback from event attendees (surveys). 	Feb-24	Dec-24

		homophobia and transphobia.					
4.2	Review how LGBTQ+ staff networks and resources are embedded into inductions (and other points within staff lifecycle) to improve awareness of and engagement with said networks and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QUCL/LESG research found that networks are not consistently promoted to new starters. This leads to LGBTQ+ staff feeling isolated from the wider LGBTQ+ community at UCL. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult HR leadership teams on the best way to promote staff networks. • Job information packs (central and departmental) are updated to refer to staff networks. • Process developed for notifying all new starters of all the staff networks (race, disability, LGBTQ+). • Identifying ways to measure engagement of Out@UCL mailing list and Teams space. 	EDI Manager, Head of Leadership and Coaching (OD).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job packs and relevant webpages updated. • Increased engagement and membership of Out@UCL. 	Sep-23	Nov-24

5. Professional development

No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
5.1	Develop careers resources (events, case studies, Q+As) for both UCL students and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current careers offering for LGBTQ+ students and staff is limited, and this group is at risk of hostility and discrimination in the workplace. • In the UK, 35% of LGBT staff have hidden their sexuality and/or gender for fear of discrimination; 10% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff had been physically assaulted at work; and 18% of LGBT people have been the target of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of careers themes relevant to LGBTQ+ staff and students (e.g. inclusive sectors/roles, general development, networking, being out at work). • Create a bank of resources and decide ownership of areas (i.e. UCL Careers, HR, EDI). Ensure EDI is a central space to signpost to resources. • Engage with VPEE to ensure promotion of LGBTQ+ careers content. 	EDI Manager, Information and Research Officer (UCL Careers); and Events Manager (UCL Careers), and potentially OD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank of resources created and positive feedback attained. • Resources promoted centrally. • Events are well-attended and receive positive feedback. 	Mar-24	Nov-24

		<p>negative comments or comments on account of their identity. (Stonewall/YouGov, 2018).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCU research also highlighted issues of widespread LGBTQ+ discrimination within Higher Education. 					
5.2	Explore the feasibility of developing a mentoring scheme for LGBTQ+ staff and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ+ staff and students face unique challenges in the workplace (i.e. being out, harassment, microaggressions etc.). Therefore, there is a need to empower LGBTQ+ staff and students to thrive in their career both personally and professionally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gauge student and staff appetite for mentorship through surveying LESG, Out@UCL, the Students' Union, and other relevant stakeholders. • Have a scoping conversation with UCL Careers and OD to gauge feasibility of delivering the programme. • Explore whether reverse mentoring would be useful to bridge divisions between senior and junior staff members. • Identify a pool of mentors (alumni, staff networks etc.) • Establish training and guidance for mentors and mentees. • Establish a feedback survey to measure impact of mentoring. 	<p>EDI Manager, Director of OD, Talent Manager (OD), and UCL Careers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors and mentees successfully onboarded. • Positive feedback attained. 	Sep-24	Nov-25
6. Structural empowerment (policy, processes, and practice)							

No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date
6.1	Undertake a policy and guidance document audit (both general HR policies and LGBTQ+ inclusion policies/statements). Ensure these are inclusive and mirror best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many UCL LGBTQ+ guidance documents are outdated. A lack of inclusive and up-to-date LGBTQ+ guidance means that line managers and colleagues cannot effectively support their LGBTQ+ colleagues. • The lack of inclusive language marginalises and erases LGBTQ+ staff and students, contributing to a lack of belonging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing policies and ensure they are in line with best EDI practice. • Encourage feedback from LGBTQ+ community (i.e. via small focus groups) to ensure policies / guidance are useful and relevant to their lived experience. • If any new policies are deemed necessary, the EDI team will work with the Policy team to determine an achievable timeframe for the creation of these policies, ensuring they follow the Policy Review and Consultation Checklist. 	EDI Manager and Head of Employment Policy (HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to policies and guidance documents approved and updated. 	Mar-24	Dec-24
6.2	Undertake an audit of UCL systems and processes, ensuring these are trans-inclusive. For example, removing unnecessary references to gender and sexuality and streamlining the process of changing name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems that don't recognise someone's gender identity (for example, not having an option for <i>Mx</i> or asking someone to disclose their sex unnecessarily) delegitimises trans people's identity and contributes to a lack of belonging. • Feedback from staff and students has also identified challenges and delays when attempting to update name, gender and title on various UCL systems. This has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ISD to create a run-book of all UCL systems which capture name, title, and gender; and outline if/how these can fields can be changed. • Work with ISD to identify which systems cannot accommodate changes to name, gender and title, and establish a priority list of systems that ISD can factor into their regular system development work. 	EDI Manager, Head of HR Transformation Projects, Head of Service Performance & Monitoring (ISD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process documents created and are easily available. • A run-book listing all UCL systems that capture name, title and gender should be created by November 2023. • The timelines for other system improvements will depend on the outcome of the 	May-23	Nov-24

		<p>resulted in people being outed or deadnamed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear guidance document or webpage for students/staff wishing to change their name/gender. • Create a process document or webpage for staff supporting students and staff with name/gender updates. 		<p>systems audit in Autumn 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback that trans people feel supported and that staff feel more confident in assisting trans people. 		
6.3	<p>Administrate LEIG Fund to ensure key LGBTQ+ inclusion projects are delivered, and that the impact is maximised, reported, and celebrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is vital that the LEIG Fund effectively supports UCL's LGBTQ+ community and contributes to the wider strategy of understanding the LGBTQ+ community's needs. These findings could inform future EDI action plans. • Effectively reporting on impact raises awareness of issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community and makes the case for future funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create tracker for fund applications to ensure spend is monitored. • Assess applications and offer advice to departments on how to maximise the impact of their initiatives. • Collect effective data and recommendations from initiatives to inform longer term change. 	<p>EDI Manager and LEIG members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEIG Fund is spent and its impact is reported. • The findings from initiatives can be used to inform future iterations of the LGBTQ+ action plan. 	<p>Nov-22</p>	<p>Apr-24</p>
6.4	<p>Make the Gender Expression Fund permanent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trans people often face workplace (and societal) harassment, unemployment, and estrangement from their families. This, along with additional concerns for students around the cost of living, makes the cost of transitioning all the more burdensome. UCL has a commitment to protect its vulnerable community members and ensure they 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with other universities on best practice. • Bid for continued funding created, proposed, and accepted. 	<p>Director of Policy, Governance and Advocacy (Students' Union).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding bid is accepted. • If bid is not accepted, the SU should ask for specific feedback regarding what would make the bid successful. This will then support them to re-apply for permanent funding. 	<p>May-23</p>	<p>Jul-24</p>

		<p>can thrive as their authentic selves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Gender Expression Fund is a feasible, meaningful and successful initiative that has been permanently implemented by other Russell Group universities such as Cambridge, Oxford and Warwick. 					
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7. Data and monitoring							
No.	Planned action	Rationale/data	Key outputs	Lead	Success criteria	Start date	End date

7.1	Develop a self-audit framework which outlines how the LGBTQ+ action plan will be monitored and updated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To guide UCL's inclusion activity, it must establish a way to measure its progress regarding LGBTQ+ equality. External frameworks provide impartiality and areas for improvement, although, they are not always specific to the institution applying. Therefore, UCL should establish a self-audit framework that leverages internal, external (or a mixture of both) scrutiny to measure our impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key areas of improvement identified through data (i.e. staff surveys, network feedback etc.) and solutions proposed. • Establishing a governance structure. I.e. who decides the priorities on an action plan, who decides how we measure the progress of an action, and who "marks" the impact of an activity. • Establishing timelines (i.e. how often progress is reviewed). 	Director of EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework and process for reviewing UCL's progress regarding LGBTQ+ equality is established. 	Nov-22	Nov-23
7.2	Develop clear method(s) to monitor LGBTQ+ (and specifically trans) experiences and wellbeing at UCL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rates of staff sharing their sexual orientation and gender identity on UCL systems. Increasing this would allow for a more meaningful analysis of the LGBTQ+ staff and student experience. • Athena Swan action plan specifically recognises this lack of data on the trans experience within HE. • Having clearer data will allow the institution to plan effective and targeted initiatives that redress issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure any existing staff surveys (e.g. My UCL Experience) have options for staff to share whether they are LGBTQ+ so relevant data can be collated. • Campaign to encourage staff and students to share their sexual orientation and gender identity on UCL systems, outlining the importance of this. • Establish guidelines on how questions are asked and responses are encouraged. • Share survey accordingly. 	EDI Manager, Director of OD, and Lead Workplace Wellbeing Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in sharing rates and therefore clearer data on numbers of LGBTQ+ (specifically trans) staff and students (i.e. less "prefer not to say"). • Clear feedback gathered on what barriers and challenges staff and students are facing that impact their experience and wellbeing. 	Nov-23	Nov-24

		faced by the LGBTQ+ community at UCL.	• Analyse findings to steer future equality initiatives.				
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