

Inclusive environments: Annual Report



Introduction

In April 2019, Sustainable UCL employed UCL's first Access and Inclusion Manager, Pip Jackson to create 'an accessible, publicly engaged organisation that fosters a lifelong community' – open and accessible to all. Fiona Ryland, UCL's Chief Operating Officer has been appointed UCL's Disability Equality champion. This document gives a snapshot of the successes and challenges of the last 18 months and the focus for 2021.

“

Everyone at UCL should have an equal opportunity to participate and contribute freely in the activities of UCL, and we should be supporting everyone to achieve their ambitions. A world class university such as UCL should support and not hinder access to our buildings and spaces.

”



Pip Jackson

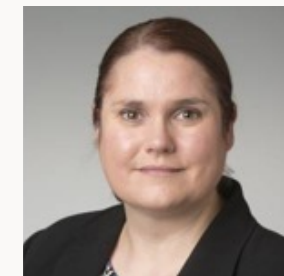
Access and Inclusion Manager

“

I am proud to be UCL's Disability Champion and passionate about ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate and contribute. As an institution we strive to be as inclusive as possible, but we recognise the challenges and barriers posed by our estate for our disabled staff and students. The impact of UCL's first Access and Inclusion Manager is significant and over the last 18 months we have improved and enhanced our estate under their direction.

I recognise there is still much more to do to ensure that accessibility and inclusion is embedded across UCL, but I am confident that we are making progress.

”



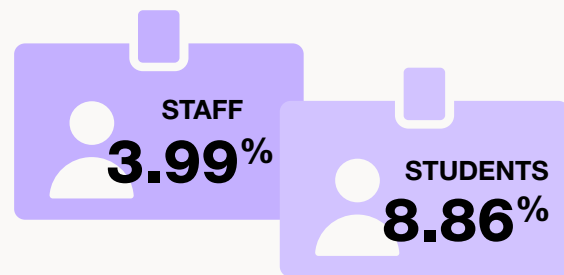
Fiona Ryland

appointed UCL's Disability Equality Champion

Inclusive environments – how is this impacting the student and staff experience?

19%

19% of the UK working age population have a disability*

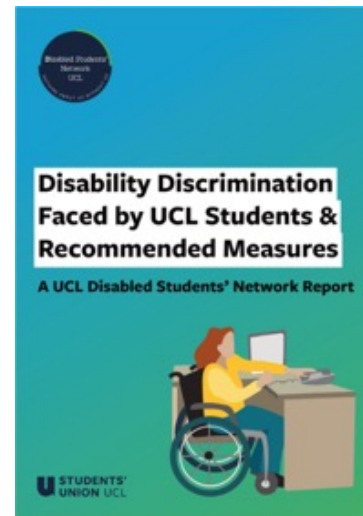


In October 2019 only 3.99% of staff and 8.86% of students declare a disability at UCL.



UCL needs a campus which supports those with a disability.

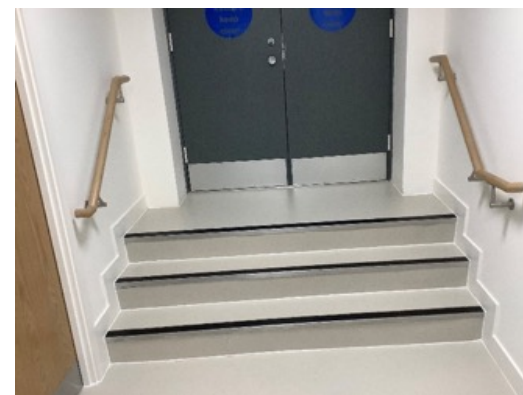
* <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7540/#:~:text=7.7%20million%20people%20of%20working,of%20the%20working%20age%20population.>



In January 2020 the Disabled Student Network released a report 'Disability Discrimination Faced by UCL Students & Recommended Measures'. This was highly critical of the impact the built environment has on the student experience at UCL. 'Issues were mentioned at nearly every level, including building and room access, accommodation, toilet facilities and study spaces.

Some students felt that the UCL Bloomsbury Campus is simply not accessible to them'. As such, disabled students are demanding a more inclusively designed campus.

[Disability Discrimination Faced by UCL Students and Recommended Measures >](#)



By improving the accessibility of our built environment the campus will be a more attractive and less stressful place to work and study for disabled staff and students.

Photographs of inaccessible estate across UCL.

Inclusive Design Strategy

In 2020 the UCL inclusive design strategy was adopted – [Inclusive Design Strategy](#) >
The strategy comprises three key objectives:

1.
To create an inclusive campus, that is welcoming to all.

2.
Work inside and outside UCL to embed inclusive design principles across all our estate and operations.

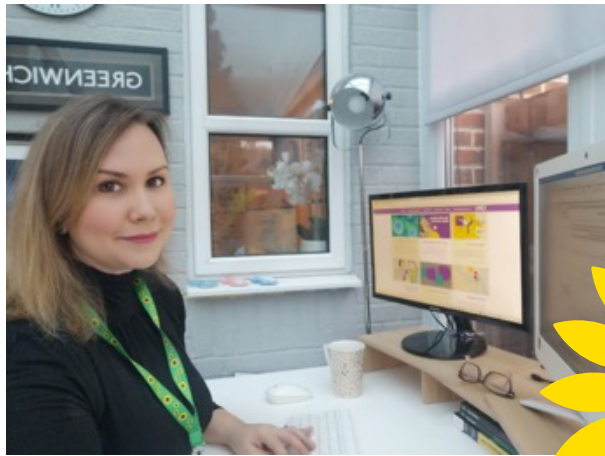
3.
To ensure that UCL influences the inclusive design agenda at local, regional, national and at an international level.



To achieve these objectives, the strategy outlines the following activities:

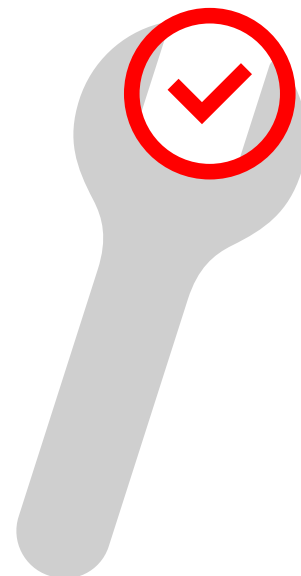
- baseline mapping to understand where improvements to the estate are required
- ensuring new acquisitions and refurbishments follow the inclusive design standards
- training key staff in inclusive design principles and engagement with stakeholders to ensure that changes meet the needs of our community.

What has been achieved?



250

The Sunflower Lanyard Scheme has been launched with over 250 lanyards provided to staff and students, with 750 ready when needed. The Sunflower lanyard scheme is an initiative designed to act as a discreet sign that somebody has a non-visible disability and requires additional assistance while out in public. [The Sunflower Lanyard](#)



13 training sessions on inclusive environments for UCL's Estates Development Team has provided knowledge to key staff on how to improve accessibility.



Inclusive design checks have been embedded into the approval process for construction and refurbishment projects, including post completion checks to check on the accessibility of the finished space(s).



UCL has installed its first two changing places toilets. They are accessible and provide sufficient space and equipment for people who are not able to use the toilet independently

Focus for 2021

- Act on all objectives that underpin the vision in the Inclusive Design Strategy.
- Develop a long-term training programme for Estates Development and Estates Operations staff that will increase their inclusive design knowledge.
- Baseline mapping of accessibility features. Starting with mapping all wheelchair accessible toilets.

How can you help deliver the change at UCL?

- By building awareness of access and inclusion issues at UCL.
[Accessible organisations >](#)
- By ensuring resources are appropriately prioritized to enable access improvements to buildings needed to support staff and students with disabilities in a timely manner.
- Recognising the challenges faced by disabled staff and students.
[DSN report >](#)
- Through growing your awareness of and supporting the Sunflower Lanyard Scheme.
[The Sunflower Lanyard >](#)
- By including consideration of the inclusive environments agenda as part of all decision-making, and identify appropriate opportunities for improvements.
[Equality impact assessment >](#)