

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, DIVERSION AND BELONGING BELONGING (EDIB) REPORT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY LIZ BROMLEY, CEO

Our new Strategy Towards 2030 articulates our intention to deliver exceptional education as a diverse and ambitious learning organisation, in order to enable social mobility and economic prosperity for those whom we serve.

Threaded throughout all that we do is our commitment to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging– EDIB. This means equality of opportunity for our learner, student, apprentice and colleague communities; an understanding of the rich experience we all gain from a diverse learner body and diversity in our staff base; and being part of a culture that is inclusive. We define this as welcoming people from any and all backgrounds and life experiences, being mindful of the different skills and knowledge that we all bring to our communities, and acknowledging that we have much to learn by being inclusive and diverse.

This is the first report since we launched the EDIB strategy, which itself was a product of a year-long process of review, including the support of sector experts, and consultation with governors, staff and students. These strategies can look very similar, so we chose not to make a huge deal about the document itself, but to concentrate on a finite number of deliverable actions, each aligned to our six strategic themes. In doing so, we want our actions to speak louder than our words, and build One NCG - where all our stakeholders feel like they belong and can contribute effectively.

In the last year we undertook a commitment to training and development in EDIB awareness and understanding of best practice, and commissioned an ILM Level 4 programme for our EDIB Champions (based right across NCG's national footprint) and for all of our Group Executive – including myself. Additionally the Leadership Hub has opened up new opportunities for ambitious and aspiring leaders from across the Group, to learn how to be inclusive and progress in their leadership activities.

In terms of our student data, we have carefully reviewed the impact of COVID on different groups of learners and detailed narrative is available in both college self assessment reports (CSAR) and the NCG Group overall SAR (GSAR). It is clear that whilst outcomes are generally stable, some attainment gaps have widened in the past year and our Education Recovery Plan seeks to negate the challenges contributing to these gaps. This isn't an easy fix, and requires continued effort from all our staff, and continued investment from government - such as the support given for laptops, and the tuition fund.

We know we have some distance to travel to genuinely diversify our workforce, and leadership teams - however the deliverables associated with improving our analysis of staffing, the continuation of employer feedback forums, and the use of positive action to promote NCG as an inclusive place of work, are essential.

It is said that at the heart of a thriving community, there will be a thriving college, and in our case there will be a thriving Group bonding us all together - my team and I are determined to build a One NCG ethos - where all staff and students wish to work, study and thrive.

Thanks Liz

¹ Note we generally use the term 'learner; to refer to 16-18 learners, adult and HE students, apprentices and commercial clients in this document.

ABOUT NCG

NCG is a values-based organisation, with a mission to 'enable social mobility and economic prosperity, through exceptional education'.

NCG is a family of colleges, pursuing the same mission, values set and business-critical policy frameworks. However, each college retains a very unique place to work and study, with an identity based on its heritage, its specific curriculum, and its place in the community. Professional Services is a support function, dispersed throughout the Group's locations to support the delivery of exceptional education.

NCG's colleagues, customers and learners have worked together to help define the NCG values to which we all

subscribe to as an organisation. These values help underpin the corporate cultures and beliefs of our organisation and are aimed at developing a collective identity and pride for those working for, working with, studying and training at NCG.

The values help define how we should behave towards our colleagues and learners, and provide us with basic guidance on what should govern our decisions to help us make the right ones.



NCG VISION AND Strategic aims

OUR VISION AND STRATEGIC AIMS

NCG's mission sets out the ambition we aim to realise, whilst our vision describes how we will know when we get there. To underpin both, we have six strategic themes that are essentially fundamental pillars of the organisation (quality, curriculum, people, facilities, finance, reach). Our focus in each of those themes is on continuous improvement towards excellence,

and is it therefore essential that our EDIB aspirations are fully integrated into all six areas.

ENSURING OUR STRATEGIC AIMS ARE INCLUSIVE, DIVERSE AND EQUITABLE

We have been careful in the development of our EDIB strategy to avoid creating a new set of NCG aims related exclusively to EDIB – the rationale for this is simple: if our overarching mission, vision and strategic aims do not facilitate, promote, advocate and champion the aims set out in the Equality Act (2010) and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED, 2011) to advance equality, diversity and inclusion, then we need to rethink our fundamental approach, and relevance of our six strategic aims.

So instead, to make clear the relevance, we have aligned the deliverables of the NCG EDIB strategy to each of the NCG strategic aims – in doing so we aim to ensure that inclusion, belonging, diversity and equality are embedded in every core strategic function.

VISION

To be the UK's leading college group recognised for our local impact, national influence and reach.

*	*	*	*	*	*
QUALITY	CURRICULUM	PEOPLE	FACILITIES	FINANCE	REACH
Exceptional teaching, learner experience and outcomes	Innovative, relevant courses and qualifications	Ambitious and responsible educators and leaders	Outstanding digital and physical learning environments	Financial sustainability powering reinvestment	Impactful external engagement and civic commitment

MISSION

Enabling social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education.

ONE NCG: EDIB INTENT STATEMENT

There is a clear ethical, moral, social and educational case for why equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging matter and why the associated themes should be at the forefront of our strategic action planning. Knowing the communities that we serve and responding to their diverse needs is at the very heart of our educational offer and service.

NCG aims to be an open and welcoming place that inspires excellence and curiosity through exceptional education. We will continue to build a teaching and learning community that is both diverse and equitable. We will create opportunities for personal development, economic prosperity by working together, trusting and respecting each other's identities, and for taking ownership and responsibilities for our actions.

At NCG we have no tolerance for hate and we will oppose discrimination of any kind, should we identify it. In doing so, we are committed to maintaining our efforts to ensure the greatest possible chance that all learners can achieve personal advancement, social mobility and economic prosperity. For the avoidance of doubt:

- NCG is committed to the equality of opportunity
- NCG is an anti-sexist organisation
- NCG will not tolerate misogynistic views or behaviour
- NCG stands against racism
- NCG is against violence and exploitation in all forms
- NCG will not tolerate sexual harassment
- NCG stands against homophobia
- NCG welcomes all faiths
- NCG is against anti-Semitism and adopts the international definition of anti-Semitism



Strategic Theme	Curriculum	Quality	People	Facilities	Finance	Reach
Strategic Aim	Innovative, relevant courses and qualifications	Exceptional teaching, learner experience and outcomes	Ambitious and responsible educators and leaders	Outstanding digital and physical learning environments	Financial sustainability powering reinvestment	Impactful external engagement and civic commitment
EDIB Aim (aligned)	To deliver an inclusive, fair, and varied curriculum to all learners	To inspire all learners to achieve and secure economic prosperity, regardless of starting points	To work collaboratively and take ownership for our values in all aspects of our work and advance opportunity throughout the organisation	To ensure our physical resources meet the needs of all learners and staff	To work collaboratively to invest in our learning communities	To champion EDIB themes and campaigns locally and nationally
How we will know when we get there	When our curriculum results in positive destinations for all ² our learners, regardless of starting points	When no significant ³ differences exist between learner groups at NCG, who in turn perform in line with the best GFECs	When our learner and staff engagement work reports overwhelming positive experiences at NCG	When all learners, no matter their needs, have the materials, tools and equipment required to help them succeed	When our resource management ensures that we are able to confidently invest in the continuous improvement of all our curriculum and learning communities	When NCG is identifiable in all communities it serves, with our mission and values we have set out
How we will measure our progress	Annual Destination Survey	Qualifications Achievement Rates and Learner Progress Data(QAR)	Staff Survey Learner Exit Survey	Learner Exit Survey	EBITDA ⁴	Stakeholder engagement surveys and forums
Where we will report our progress	NCG and College Self-Assessment Reports	NCG and College Self-Assessment Reports	NCG and College Self- Assessment Reports Equal Pay Reporting	NCG and College Self-Assessment Reports	Annual Accounts	Board Strategy Review Updates

2 The term 'all' is used to signal intent and the need for continuous improvement for all learners, it is unlikely that 100% will ever be achieved and therefore we will use the relevant KPI to measure success.

3 The term statistical is used to refer to statistical significance.

4 EBITDA - earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation - a measure of profitability of working capital that can potentially be re-invested.

NCG TODAY: STUDENTS

The table below highlights the approximate proportion of declared⁵ staff and learner characteristics in a number of areas for illustration:

	Staff Profile (Dec 2021)	Student Profile (classroom learners, July 2021)
Female	62%	59%
White British Ethnicity ⁶	83%	56%
LGBTQ	3%	Not Collected
Declared Disability or Difficulty	4%	22%

ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES OF OUR LEARNERS

We closely monitor our learner outcomes to determine whether there are any significant achievement gaps, based on a number of protected characteristics. It is possible to undertake this work accurately through the use of a learner record system, and through the use of nationally-consistent funding and coding conventions. There are some EDIB reporting limitations to the use of this information, for example some information is not collected, such as sexual orientation. All college and professional service managers are able to use this system for detailed analysis as part of the annual self assessment process, whilst in-year monitoring is supported through a suite of dashboards, and management information reports.

Self assessment for the 2020/21 academic year (completed between September and October 2021) has helped establish the following key points:

- 16-18 girls achieve at a slightly higher rate than boys (around 3%points); for adult learners the same is also true, allow the gap is reduced to around 1.5% points
- There are small, but significant differences due to the ethnicity, however learners who identify with Black Caribbean and Black African ethnicity groups (mainly residing in London) perform marginally lower than White British learners⁷ (who tend to track around the mean due to the cohort size). Learners who identify with the White Gypsy and Irish Traveller ethnic group also continue to achieve at lower rates.
- Whilst not entirely linear, it is the case that learners from the least deprived post codes achieve slightly higher on average, than those from the most deprived, whilst learners identified in the bursary ILRs fields also perform lower than their peers. These gaps have widened in the past few years and is likely an effect of COVID lockdown, and space/tech to work effectively at home.
- · Learners eligible for free meals now achieve as well as their peers who are not eligible
- Achievement is marginally higher for learners with high need and again for those with education, health and care (EHC) plans; learners with a declared difficulty/disability achieve at a higher rate than those learners without.
- The vast majority of apprentices are White British.

 $^{5\,}$ Note that the accuracy of this information relies on self-declaration in some cases.

^{6 %} is calculated from known staff self-declarations; staff preferring 'not to say' or 'unknown' has been excluded from this figure.

⁷ Note that NCG has adopted the government guidance and phrasing when writing about ethnicity. It is essential to note that ethnicity is often the focus, rather than nationality For example, the majority of Black African learners at NCG are British; White British, Chinese, Indian etc are therefore an ethnicity group, rather than nationality when used in such reporting unless specified.

NCG TODAY: STAFFING

CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR STAFF:

Staff characteristics are gathered on joining NCG, via a voluntary form, and are periodically updated following a request for colleagues to review the information held on iTrent. A task undertaken in 2021 sought to reduce the instances of unknown

fields to provide for a more comprehensive overview however some staff still choose not to identify. Where this is a significant proportion, a note is made below (characteristics in alphabetical order)

- Age: The age profile at NCG has remained consistent in the last 12 months, and is shown in the image overleaf. The profile is broadly the same as the national comparator (Note 2) with less than average in the under 25 category. There is still more work to do to increase the number of apprentices to 14, from 12 in 2021.
- Disability: Just 4% of staff have identified a disability a small, but significant decrease of 1 point from last year.
- Ethnicity: The proportion of White British staff has remained around 85.6% in the last year, however the proportion of staff from other (non-White British) ethnicities has increased by nearly 2%point to 11%. This is in part due to a 1.5 point reduction in 'unknown' records to 3.5%. A summary of nationality is also included overleaf.
- Gender: 62% of staff identify as female, a slight increase from 61% last year this is around the sector average. There are broadly the same amount of female and male staff working full time (701 and 682 respectively); although NCG employs significantly more female part time staff (864) than male part time staff (292). These figures follow a national sector tendency (note 1). However the gap between full time male and female staff has closed and reversed in the past 2 years (now 19 more female than male staff, from 48 less in 2020).
- Marriage/Civil Partnership: the proportions are similar this year to last, with marginal increased due to the proportion unknown reducing by around 1%point. 45% of NCG identify as being single, with approximately the same proportion in marriage or civil partnerships. The majority of the remaining staff are unknown (7%), with divorced, separated or widowed (2% collectively) and just under 2% with a partner.
- Nationality: NCG staff are drawn from 54 nationalities (shown on the map in blue) which has remained broadly the same in the past few years (53 last year, and 48 the year previous). Our international coverage is illustrated in the diagram above, although the vast majority (83% of staff) identify as British/Northern Irish. The number not known/ prefer not to say has reduced by 2points to 12%.
- Religion: The proportion/reporting of staff identifying with Christian faiths has increased by 6points to 40% in the past year; those staff not identifying with a religion has also increased by 1.5pints to nearly 34%. This partly as slightly less (20% down 2 points) staff are classed as unknown/prefer not to say. The other religions are very small in comparison, and consistent with last year.
- Sexual Orientation: There has been a significant increase of staff who have identified as unknown/prefer not to say in the past year (increasing to 38% from 27%). This has had an associated influence on the rates of those identifying as heterosexual (rising from 59% to 68%) and a fractional impact on those identifying with LGBTQ sexual orientations.

A Note on Gender Pay Gap reporting. The annual report on Gender Pay Gap is published in March annually (last published in Mar 2021). It highlights that whilst the mean and median average gaps are reducing, there remains a gap of 9% (mean) largely due to the higher proportion of female staff in administrative and services roles, which tend to be positioned in the lower pay quartiles.

Note 1 https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/research/workforce-data, p26

OUR WORK SINCE WE LAUNCHED THIS EDIB STRATEGY

A working group of College EDIB Champions is now convened (half-termly) to support the successful delivery of this stratgey. We have appointed link governors at Corporation and College Board level and have embedded this EDIB stratgey into our procurement agreement for subcontractors, self assessment and the NCG policy framework. However there is still much to do and each NCG college is required to ensure that staff and learner focus groups are available to review the efficacy of the strategy and to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement, and future actions.

That said, we have made good progress in a short space of time.

OUR PROGRESS TOWARD OUR EDIB DELIVERABLES

We have chosen to pursue a number of deliverables, aligned to our strategic aims. We will continue to use the word 'deliverable', rather than 'objective' or 'outcomes', as we fully intend to succeed within the prescribed timescale and for this reason the deliverables must be achievable. Whilst we have consulted with our governors, staff, learners and stakeholder, we fully expect the deliverables to change organically due to changing contexts. factors and relative degrees of success, hence the timeframes proposed are all relatively short. All staff have an obligation to consider their respective contrinution to these deliverables, and in doing so work toward an inclusive One NCG.



Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
Quality	Exceptional teaching, learner experience and	Short Term [®] EDIB Deliverables under theme 1:	
	outcomes	1. Convene learner-led focus groups / learner EDIB champions groups with diverse characteristics, to provide a safe space to highlight their respective experiences for action-response and seek to understand/ respond to any perceived or actual barriers to access and participation.	Green: Focus groups set up and scheduled for the year - EDIB leads will continue to review the efficacy and influence of the EDIB strategy on behalf of NCG's colleagues and learners
		2. Establish learner characteristic filters in version 2 of the data dashboards to immediately identify and respond to emerging gaps in engagement, knowledge and skills development and learner destinations.	Amber: Working Group established and the dashboard specification is complete; aiming to launch in the summer term of 2022. Existing platforms continue to operate.
		3. Implement an NCG wide approach to support mental wellbeing and fitness through structured use of FIKA to build resilience and support retention.	Amber: App available for all learners and monitoring of participation in place; to be further promoted and developed as part of NCG Guarantee initiative
		Medium Term ⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 1:	
		4. Deliver contextualised training to staff and seek to understand and champion EDIB themes, including anti-racism, divisive or outdated curriculum content and subsequently embed into their leadership, teaching and business support activity.	Amber: some very useful CPD sessions delivered in Lewisham (and shared with staff via GPTT) and now across NCG via Jan CPD day, framework to be developed during spring term of 2022
		5. Produce high quality NCG staff/learner role model case studies to be used as a tutorial resources to highlight the varying backgrounds, experiences and challenges faced by our staff and learners in their work and communities.	Amber: Initiative started - to complete summer 2022

Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
Curriculum	Innovative, relevant courses and	Short Term ⁸ EDIB Deliverables under theme 2: 1. Strengthen curriculum leader training	Amber: Reports available and training
	qualifications	and subsequent use of destination reports to inform course-level and dept level self-assessment to ensure potential micro-inequalities, or micro-exclusions, are identified for action-response.	provided - more work required to fully embed and promote features of report at course level.
		2. Expand learner destination survey capture to facilitate the monitoring of at risk groups.	Amber: Reports currently identify protected characteristics and standard EDIB filters; review work in progress.
		3. Develop an approach to help identify and remove any areas of the curriculum that could propagate stereotypes or residual discrimination.	Amber: Ongoing at college level; framework to be established to support.
		Medium Term ⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 2:	
		4. Integrate a digital skills assessment and associated training package into the workstream on the NCG Guarantee and thereby seek to ensure that all learners have the digital skills required to access the curriculum.	Amber: Preparatory work underway ready for pilot in summer 2022, and roll-out in 2022/23 academic year
		5. Prioritise partner delivery (franchise/ subcontracting) where it is targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, above other potential contracts.	Green: Subcontractor Management Framework updated and running, monitored via QCPR
		6. Increase the diversity of apprentices at NCG with a focus to improve proportional representation of race, disability, and care leavers by targeted WEX and promotion of vacancies internally.	Amber: Plans in place - impact to be monitored alongside growth strategies in QCPR/Apprenticeship Council

Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
People	Ambitious and responsible educators and leaders	 Short Term^a EDIB Deliverables under theme 3: 1. Appoint link EDIB governor and staff champions in all colleges to support the establishment of representative staff focus groups (similar to learner groups in theme1) and to monitor/advise on the efficacy of this strategy. 	Green: Working Group running and contributing; governors appointed
		2. Produce an annual calendar to highlight EDIB activity, key dates of faith dates, celebrations and festivals, international days.	Amber: complete, but requires further promotion
		3. Deliver Leadership Hub training to all managers on EDIB and inclusive leadership, role and commitment, unconscious bias and designing inclusive policy.	Green: First 12 cohorts complete ILM (including Exec/EDIB champs); core part of LH programmes (Inclusive Leadership)
		4. Update EDIB mandatory training and ensure it is complementary to the contextualised training to be delivered in point 3 and in theme 1.	Amber: in progress to complete summer 2022
		Medium Term ⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 3:	
		5. Promote and champion sector EDIB initiatives and campaigns with representation on relevant panels, boards and forums.	Amber: a number of news articles/ thought pieces published to date, see links on page 16
		6. Improve : staff data associated with EDIB for purposes of monitoring equitable recruitment, pay and promotion to target positive action response to tackle areas of under-representation.	Amber: People dashboard development in progress, working group established - completion date expected Autumn 2022
		7. Pro-actively utilise community-based advertising of vacancies to ensure staff representation is reflection of our local communities.	Amber: review of promotional channels and use of agency work ongoing.
		8. Integrate an opportunity for all staff to highlight their own contribution to these deliverables in the annual appraisal	Not yet started: summer 2022

Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
Facilities	Outstanding digital and physical learning environments	 Short Term⁸ EDIB Deliverables under theme 4: 1. Respond to the digital divide with the annual provision of IT and accessibility equipment to vulnerable groups as part of the NCG Digital Challenge Fund. 2. Maintain the NCG ILT Development Group as an innovation and focus on digital inclusion and to develop solutions to widen participation. 	Amber: Comms and payment structure in place and ready to launch in Spring Term 2022; also continuing to work with Good Things Foundation to influence national policy. Green: now in third year with significant progress in terms of digital pedagogy and adoption of digital delivery.
		 3. Undertake an annual audit against specific EDIB criteria* to review accessibility, signage, space for worship and faith, provision of food in catering facilities, adequacy of gender neutral toilet facilities to ensure all NCG campus are accessible, safe and welcoming. (*note – will review existing approaches/format as much is covered by legislation already). Medium Term⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 4: 4. Respond to any inadequacy in the availability of college quiet digital study areas for learners without such space and facilities at home. 	Design of this audit currently in progress and will be included in the Estates Strategy Development Framework. Note: IT and Estates have recently merged to form a new Information, Data and Estates Service (IDES). The aim here is to acknowledge the interdependence of the physical and digital environments and align our efforts to ensure a fully inclusive experience for all our learners whether they are in class, at work, at home or in transit. Yet to start - linked to #3 above.
		5. Action any requirement for social wellbeing spaces and continue to action any estates-based 'hot-spots' for the likely occurrence of bullying and harassment.	Yet to start - linked to #3 above.

Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
Finance	Outstanding digital and physical learning environments Financial sustainability, powering reinvestment	 Short Term⁸ EDIB Deliverables under theme 5: 1. Facilitate the deliverables within this plan with a dedicated and costed financial plan. 2. Extend funding to build on excellent work achieved via the Care Leaver Coordinators pilot, to learn from what has worked and to extend the programme to other disadvantaged or underrepresented groups. Medium Term⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 5: 	Amber: short term elements included in forecast plans, however specific task required to identify re-forecast remaining medium term items. Amber: provision or additional project funding to be secured on completion of project and impact evaluations.
		3. Benchmark internally, and where possible externally, the annual expenditure given to dedicated cost centres and projects intended to promote inclusion and seek to build capacity annually, including an allocation of discretional funding to support underrepresented or 'at risk' groups.	Yet to start: plans in place to incorporate into budget planning process for 2022/23. An approach will be proposed and agreed to identify such projects are identified and costed; making internal benchmarking possible.

Theme	Strategic Aim	Deliverables	Update Jan 2022
Reach	Reach Impactful external engagement and civic commitment	Short Term ⁸ EDIB Deliverables under theme 6:	
		28. Ally and champion national groups who are actively working to promote EDIB strands consistent with our mission, values and these deliverables by supporting with governance (where invited to do so) participation and attendance at key events, conferences and forum.	Green: e.g. representation on Govermental Green Jobs Task Force Panel; representation on Black Leaders in FE forums. Green: e.g. Our Community is Your Community initiative launched at the end of 2021 with specific aims to
		29. Require curriculum teams to reach out to marginalised and/or separated communities as part of deliberate college strategy for social and community engagement – undertake community project work, volunteering and providing physical support to local charitable initiatives.	support ESOL learners and refugee communities. Also engaging with City of Sanctuary movement in Newcastle and Carlisle with view to achieving College of Sanctuary status. Bids in Lewisham with Goldsmiths' University to secure economic prosperity,++ and 'Lewisham Deal Group' to better understand and
		Medium Term ⁹ EDIB Deliverables under theme 6:	support Black and Asian progression and representraion in the workplace
		30. Partner with NCG alumni for the benefit of learners in securing work experience and progression opportunities, sponsorship of equipment and patronage of related subject sectors.	Not yet started
		31. Develop training opportunities and progression agreements with local charities and community groups to signpost staff vacancies and volunteering opportunities to level-up underrepresentation.	Amber: e.g. preparatory work with English Heritage to support recruitment of refugee and settled migrant for roles in the Trust.
		32. Promote our success stories to our learners and stakeholders via sector media publications, though leadership blogs, website news and social media (externally) and staff and learner communications (internally).	Green. Running via NCG News, NCG Student Life feed https://www.ncgrp. co.uk/student-life/ and NCG Creating impact feed https://www.
		33. Integrate these EDIB deliverables into employer forums for the purposes of civic engagement and continuous improvement – seek to establish the perceptions and barriers faced by SMEs in recruiting a diverse workforce and embedding EDIB themes into our partnership work.	ncgrp.co.uk/ncg-creating-impact/