

1 **Imperial College London**
2 **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

3
4 *DRAFT(v5.1)*

5
6 This is a working document. The version for publication will be formatted professionally and
7 will contain relevant statistical data, graphics/images, quotations and case studies to make it
8 more readable and specific to Imperial.

9 This version has been edited to capture some (but not yet all) of the comments made on the
10 draft discussed by the EDI Strategy Group on 01 May 2018.

11 Further comments are very welcome. Please try to be specific and concise (and refer to page &
12 line numbers where appropriate).

13
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18 **03 May 2018**

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21 **Preamble/Foreword**

22 *Where has this document come from? How was it written? What will it achieve? Notes*
23 *of support from the Provost/President/ICU President*
24

1. Why do Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matter at Imperial?

Imperial College London is a world-leading university that has a declared mission “to achieve enduring excellence in research and education in science, engineering, medicine and business for the benefit of society.”¹ This mission expresses the pride that we take as a university in our civic role as a repository for knowledge and culture, as an institution that fosters independent and critical reflection, and as an agent of positive societal change.

As a university, we are defined by our community of staff and students. Therefore we will only succeed in our mission by cultivating an environment that brings out the best in all the people who come to Imperial to enrich the world and their own lives through work and study.

Our community of undergraduate and postgraduate students, of academics and researchers, of administrators and technicians, of service and support staff, is tremendously diverse, even if it is not yet fully representative of society at large. We are people from all ages and backgrounds, people from the UK and from overseas, people of majority and minority ethnicities, people of different religious and philosophical beliefs, people from a range of socio-economic circumstances, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gender or who identify elsewhere under the umbrella of LGBTQ+, people who are able-bodied and those who live with visible and invisible disabilities, and people who are single, married, in civil partnerships or in informal partnerships, with or without children. We are all influenced by our backgrounds and identities, as they combine and intersect; none of us can be defined by a single trait or characteristic.

Our institutional culture is shaped by our community. It is sustained and expressed day-to-day through the relationships and behaviors between us: formal connections of line management, professional interactions among colleagues, peers and classmates, teacher-student exchanges, and informal contacts and friendships.

It is also shaped by our institutional history and by society. The very name Imperial is a reminder of a historical legacy that is rooted in colonial power and inequality. We choose not to deny that history but not to be defined by it either. Nor do we shy away from the fact that we are embedded within a society that, despite progressive legal and cultural changes in recent decades, is still disfigured by inequality and discrimination. Racism, sexism, ableism, and other prejudices and abuses of power harm the daily experiences of too many of our staff and students inside and outside the institution.

Although in theory, the equal rights of individuals are protected by law, reality too often falls short. In part this is because the ideas of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are still sometimes seen as matters that are secondary to the core institutional and organizational goals. At Imperial we reject that view. We wish to be clear-sighted about what these ideas mean and the value that they can bring to everything that we are aiming to achieve.

¹ See <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/strategy/>

1 Equality is about recognizing that everyone should have the opportunity to fulfil their
2 potential. The Equality Act (2010) defines nine protected characteristics that
3 historically have been the focus of discrimination. These are: age, disability, gender
4 assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion
5 and belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Though such definitions are useful, it is
6 problematic to think simply in terms of a list of characteristics, not least because they
7 intersect in different ways in different individuals. We also need to recognize that they
8 raise issues that impact us all, which is why a holistic approach to achieving equality
9 requires us also to define what we mean by diversity and inclusion.

10 Diversity is about being aware of and valuing difference as openly and as broadly as
11 possible. It involves building a culture that respects and embraces difference for
12 everyone's benefit. Inclusion refers to the experiences of the individual within the
13 organization. We are inclusive the extent to which people feel they are valued and
14 belong within it, and feel free to be fully themselves.

15 Embracing equality, diversity and inclusion is not simply a matter complying with the
16 law, though clearly we are bound by its provisions. Nor is simply a matter of social
17 justice, though as a public institution it is right that we should strive to be
18 representative of the society that we serve. Nor is it an alternative to traditional
19 notions of excellence. Rather, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is in
20 recognition of the fact that excellence comes in forms that are changing as fast as
21 changes in society. If Imperial is to thrive in a world that has never been more diverse
22 and inter-dependent, and to play its full part in advancing social progress through
23 research, teaching, clinical practice, entrepreneurship and public engagement, we
24 must become more cognizant of the benefits that will flow come from moving
25 equality, diversity and inclusion to the heart of our institution.

26 Many of these benefits are readily identifiable, even if they might be challenging to
27 realise in practice. There are a number of different ways in which a commitment to
28 equality, diversity and inclusion will make us a smarter, healthier, friendlier and more
29 productive organisation. It is important to realise that this commitment benefits
30 everyone at Imperial, either directly or indirectly, because it places a particular
31 emphasis on valuing people.

32 For example, if we want to recruit, nurture and retain the best staff and best students,
33 we need to search in the whole pool of talent available to us. To do this effectively, we
34 need to make sure that our culture is inclusive of diversity, so that everyone sees
35 Imperial as a place where they will be treated with respect and given every
36 opportunity to flourish, personally and professionally.

37 A culture that successfully recruits and retains diverse staff and students will inevitably
38 also increase levels of personal satisfaction, and deepen people's commitment and
39 sense of belonging to the organisation. It will also make us more productive:
40 inequalities degrade the experiences of staff and students at Imperial, and prevent us
41 from doing our best work. Just as importantly, a culture that values *all* staff and
42 students should also reduce the incidence of bullying and harassment, and the severe
43 personal and organisational costs of dealing with inappropriate conduct.

1 A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is also supportive of good mental
2 health. Minority and other marginalized groups are known to be more at risk of
3 suffering poor mental health because of societal exclusion. Moreover, because of the
4 stigma that still attaches to mental ill-health, all sufferers are more likely to feel
5 excluded from 'mainstream' society, which will only exacerbate their difficulties. A
6 culture that is aware of and sensitive to the needs of different people will be more
7 effective at tackling the burden of mental ill-health.

8 There is ample evidence from business and industry that diverse teams make better
9 decisions and diverse companies are more profitable². The value of diversity lies in the
10 broader ranges of experiences and perspectives that it brings to team-work and
11 problem solving. Creativity is enhanced in organisations where there is readiness to
12 engage with new ideas and viewpoints that challenge groupthink. Although there are
13 fewer studies on the particular impacts of diversity on research and education³,
14 universities can still learn from business and industry. Emerging evidence already
15 suggests that more diverse research teams produce research that is more highly cited⁴.

16 We also desire to be more inclusive because it will diversify our research and teaching.
17 This will enrich the breadth and relevance of the research questions that we ask, We
18 need to be as diverse as the world we seek to serve if we are to connect with it fully
19 and be relevant to people's lives. This not only aligns with our global mission but has
20 the potential for positive feedback by making our research activities more attractive to
21 more diverse pools of talented staff and student recruits.

22

23

24 **2. Where are we now?**

25 Our efforts to develop an effective EDI strategy build on existing work that involves
26 many people.

27 Valuing the diversity of our staff and students is one of the four cornerstones of the
28 Imperial College Strategy 2015-2020⁵, which rests on the need to harness our
29 collective strength as "a supportive and considerate community based on diversity,
30 mutual respect and a commitment to excellence" and to "support and develop the
31 breadth of talent in our student body and celebrate the diversity of our students."

32 The Learning and Teaching Strategy published in 2017⁶ is focused on the needs of
33 students, who make up about 70% of our university community and are drawn from
34 local, national and international populations. Currently being implemented, this

² Why Diversity Matters, McKinsey, 2015; <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters>; Creating cultures where all engineers thrive, RAEng, 2017

– <https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/reports/creating-cultures-where-all-engineers-thrive>

³ The Diversity Dividend? Briefing Paper, 2017 (Wellcome Trust and Sheffield study):

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/the-diversity-dividend-briefing.pdf>; full report:

<https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/review-of-diversity-and-inclusion-literature.pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/news/collaboration-strength-in-diversity-1.15912>

⁵ See <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/strategy/>

⁶ See <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/learning-and-teaching-strategy/>

1 strategy explains how placing diversity and inclusion at its centre will make our
2 teaching more responsive to our students' diverse needs, by directly addressing bias
3 and increasing the relevance and appeal of the curriculum. The strategy also details
4 how we will identify and remove barriers to access and full participation in education
5 at Imperial, and how we will foster a culture and curriculum of 'inclusive excellence'
6 that engages and values diversity.

7 EDI issues touch all aspects of life at Imperial and are also being tackled by a wide
8 range of initiatives.

9 The most visible components of this work are perhaps schemes that provide external
10 benchmarking of our efforts. These include the Athena SWAN awards, which operate
11 at College and departmental level, the Race Equality Charter, Imperial's participation in
12 the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and the College's status as a Disability
13 Confident Employer. An extensive array of staff development courses includes
14 programmes that are specifically targeted at women (Springboard), at black and
15 minority ethnic staff (IMPACT⁷) and at staff with disabilities (Calibre⁸).

16 In 2016 an independent review of the College's institutional culture noted many
17 positive aspects of life at Imperial. But it also highlighted concerns that our focus on
18 excellence risked fostering excessive competition at the expense of the empathy
19 needed to build a more supportive environment that deals effectively with episodes of
20 bullying and harassment. The review also suggested that more avenues for dialogue
21 within the organisation were needed to create a stronger sense of belonging.

22 Work to address these findings has already begun. For academics, the Richardson
23 Review⁹ has re-invigorated our determination to evaluate staff holistically by
24 embedding a culture that values all contributions, including, research, teaching,
25 societal engagement and departmental citizenship. For all staff, the regular College-
26 wide staff survey¹⁰ remains an important mechanism for monitoring the health of our
27 institutional culture, as do internal and external surveys of the student experience.

28 The College is also increasingly aware of the importance of mental wellbeing for its
29 staff and students. Poor mental health, whether temporary or permanent, can be a
30 disability that leads to poor performance, isolation, and in some cases, to self-harm. A
31 number of coordinated efforts have been made to tackle this challenge across the
32 College. Volunteer Mental Health Champions now help to raise awareness of mental
33 health wellbeing at departmental level, while over 200 trained Mental Health First
34 Aiders College can now provide initial frontline support. This year the Student Union
35 has created a network of student wellbeing representatives who can relay important
36 feedback from students to departments as well as signposting students to any relevant
37 support services.

38 One of the most recent developments indicating increased institutional commitment
39 to equality, diversity and inclusion is the appointment of Imperial's first Assistant

⁷ <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/support-for-staff/training/impact/>

⁸ <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/support-for-staff/training/calibre/>

⁹ <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/about-imperial-research/research-evaluation/>

¹⁰ <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/working-at-imperial/staff-survey/>

1 Provost (EDI) and the establishment of an executive EDI Strategy Group, headed by the
2 Provost, and a representative EDI Forum with a broad membership. These two new
3 bodies will work closely together to promote the integration of the values of equality,
4 diversity and inclusion across the whole organisation that is envisaged in this strategy
5 document.

6
7

8 **3. Why do we need an EDI strategy?**

9 *(This section may be moved to beginning of document).*

10 With so much work already going on, why does Imperial need a strategy for equality,
11 diversity and inclusion?

12 The short answer is: because we believe we need to do better to ensure our future
13 success as a university. The various pieces of work that we are now doing on EDI issues
14 have mostly emerged responsively and in a piecemeal fashion. While significant
15 progress has been made, we recognise that we are still not as diverse or as inclusive or
16 as effective an organisation as we desire to be.

17 This strategy represents an opportunity to bring a new focus and coherence to
18 equality, diversity and inclusion at Imperial. It outlines our priorities and the practical
19 steps that we will take to achieve our goals. In particular, it emphasises how we aim to
20 position the value of embracing equality, diversity and inclusion at the centre of
21 everything that we do at Imperial. We believe that our efforts will be more efficient
22 and more effective if they are integrated.

23 Our strategy also represents a renewed resolve to be more clear-sighted about the
24 challenges ahead. We want to be more proactive, and more courageous in our efforts
25 to be truly inclusive, by supporting individuals and by reforming structures and
26 practices that maintain inequality and discrimination.

27 To succeed in these aims, it is vital that the responsibility for promoting equality,
28 diversity and inclusion is shared by everyone in our community. It is not an optional
29 extra, or a job that falls only to managers or committees. Our strategy therefore is also
30 a call to arms, to everyone at Imperial – staff and students – who believes that the
31 dignity and individuality of every other person here should be respected and
32 cherished. We hope our strategy will empower all staff and students to speak out
33 should we fail to meet the standards that are enshrined within it.

34 Lastly, one of the biggest questions that equality, diversity and inclusion asks of us is
35 how far the institution should go in seeking to overcome structural inequities in
36 society. We do not have the capacity to solve all of society's ills but nor should we fall
37 back too quickly on this as an excuse for failure or inaction. We will sometimes find
38 ourselves facing difficult choices because our resources are finite and we cannot do
39 everything that our aspirations demand. At such times, we might at least return to the
40 principles articulated here as the starting point of a discussion on how to do better.

1 **4. Aims and Actions**¹¹

2

3 **4.1 We will integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into all management processes**

4 An integrated approach requires the responsibility for change to be distributed
5 throughout the organisation. While the creation of the post of Assistant Provost (EDI),
6 along with the EDI Strategy Group and the EDI Forum will provide a new prominence
7 and focus for EDI matters within the College leadership, we need to create an
8 organisational culture in which consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion is a
9 core part of all decision-making processes.

10 To that end we need to build effective mechanisms for embedding consideration of
11 EDI matters in management and decision-making processes at all levels. We will:

- 12 • Develop a plan to enhance the value placed on people-management skills and
13 ensure that anyone taking on management responsibilities receives
14 appropriate training.
- 15 • Raise awareness of EDI issues among all staff with line management
16 responsibilities and provide them with the capabilities to respond effectively.
17 This will ensure that consideration is made of the EDI aspects of all decisions
18 that impact staff and students.
- 19 • Take active measures to empower staff and students to discuss decisions that
20 appear to deviate from core purpose of this strategy.
- 21 • Extend the 'know your pool' approach to cover all protected characteristics in
22 staff recruitment processes. We expect this approach to eliminate short-lists
23 that are not representative of the underlying pools of talent.
- 24 • Implement reverse mentoring programmes targeted at staff from under-
25 represented groups
- 26 • Create and publicise effective management policies to proactively identify and
27 nurture talent from under-represented groups. Ultimately this will help to
28 provide the necessary diversification of leadership positions at departmental,
29 faculty and college level.
- 30 • Extend the 'know your pool' approach to appointments to the College Council.
31 While seeking to maintain a breadth and quality of expertise of the Council
32 membership, we aim to recruit to a profile that matches the diversity of the UK
33 population as quickly as is permitted within the renewal timescales of Council
34 appointments.
- 35 • Recognise and reward incorporation of equality, diversity and inclusion into our
36 research questions. Though recognising that the choice of research topic has to
37 be freely made by academics and researchers, we wish to stimulate efforts to

¹¹ Please note that the listing does not imply any order of priority.

1 align our research with our mission to be inclusive. This will help to make it
2 more relevant to diverse needs and cultures. It could also create opportunities
3 to directly address some of the needs of under-represented groups within
4 Imperial (e.g. technologies to help people with disabilities). Development of
5 these capabilities will facilitate recruitment of more diverse students and
6 researchers to Imperial.

- 7 • Extend our commitment on equality, diversity and inclusion to suppliers, sub-
8 contractors and commercial customers (e.g. organisations that hire our
9 facilities). For example, we will insist that conference organisers using Imperial
10 College facilities are attentive to equality, diversity and inclusion in their
11 invitations to speakers and panellists. We will expect management of sub-
12 contracted staff to conform to the EDI standards that set for ourselves. In this
13 way we will promote the value of equality, diversity and inclusion beyond the
14 confines of our campuses.

16 **4.2 We will integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into the student experience**

17 Much of our ongoing work to place considerations of equality, diversity and inclusion
18 at the centre of our educational offerings is detailed in the 2017 Learning and Teaching
19 Strategy. This focuses on developing an inclusive curriculum that will attract, engage
20 and support students of all backgrounds and identities.

21 This is hugely important work that needs to be supported by active measures to
22 diversify student recruitment and to ensure that student interactions with the college
23 community are inclusive and respectful both inside and outside the classroom. To that
24 end we will:

- 25 • Develop “intelligent recruitment” processes that are context sensitive. These
26 will allow us to diversify our student community without compromising on
27 academic standards. (Student attainment and retention are also important
28 components of this objective but are already covered within the Learning and
29 teaching Strategy.)
- 30 • Develop an “Imperial Expectations” package for all students (undergraduate
31 and postgraduate) that will be integrated into induction programmes in all
32 departments. These will be designed both to raise awareness of EDI issues
33 among students and to define expected standards of behaviour.
- 34 • Collaborate with Imperial College Union to promote measures to create a
35 student culture is inclusive, respectful of diversity and intolerant of
36 harassment.
- 37 • Ensure that all staff involved in delivering student services have EDI awareness
38 training

1 **4.3 We will gather and publish data to monitor our progress**

2 To ensure that the actions we take to promote equality, diversity and inclusion are
3 effective, we need to gather and analyse data on our staff and students as a function
4 of their various protected characteristics. This will give us a clearer picture of variations
5 in staff and student recruitment, progress and retention that are associated with
6 diversity. To demonstrate the seriousness of our intent to achieve real change, we also
7 need to be as transparent as possible (within the bounds of individual confidentiality)
8 about these data, how they compare to other universities and to national and
9 international benchmarks. To achieve this, we will:

- 10 • Develop robust and user-friendly tools (where they do not yet exist) for
11 monitoring student and staff data
- 12 • Publish an annual summary of diversity data on staff and students and track
13 longitudinal progress.
- 14 • Build the confidence of staff and students in our ability to handle data
15 confidentially and to use it responsibly. This will increase declaration rates and
16 the robustness of our data.
- 17 • Ensure that data-gathering and analysis is consistent as far as possible with the
18 demands of external benchmarking schemes (see below).

19

20 **4.4 We will test our progress using external benchmarks**

21 The College already engages with a variety of schemes that are designed to promote
22 equal opportunities for groups with particular protected characteristics. These include
23 Athena SWAN (gender equality), the Race Equality Charter (Black and minority ethnic
24 people), the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (LGBTQ+ people) and the Disability
25 Confident scheme (people with disabilities).

26 They are useful tools because they provide an external benchmark for the impact of
27 internal initiatives. However, they are all form-based and run the risk of being
28 perceived as bureaucratic box-ticking exercises. Since they focus on specific subsets of
29 people, they also run the risk of fragmenting efforts at inclusion. In making use of
30 these schemes we need to ensure we do not unduly burden the under-represented
31 groups they are designed to help. We should also keep in mind that they are only
32 worthwhile insofar as they enable real and positive impacts on the experiences of staff
33 and students. A strategic approach also requires us to adopt a joined-up approach to
34 these benchmark tools: often initiatives to address the needs of one group may well
35 have positive impacts on others, as well as wider positive effects of helping to instil a
36 culture of respect and inclusion at Imperial.

37

4.4.1 Action in support of gender equality

Progress on gender equality remains a major goal at Imperial and has largely, but not exclusively, driven through the Athena SWAN Charter¹². As an institution we have now been engaged with Athena SWAN for over 10 years; it remains an important initiative but one where our efforts should be kept under review to determine that they are delivering real benefits. To that end we will:

- Use the Athena SWAN Charter at College and departmental level to coordinate action on gender equality and monitor progress. We aim for every department to attain at least a Bronze award by the end of 2019 so that the College will be positioned to apply for a Gold award.
- Reduce the bureaucratic burden by sharing best practice on applications and action plans between departments, and by learning from other institutions.
- Maintain a dialogue with the Equality Challenge Unit to help improve the operation of the Athena SWAN scheme.
- Support and celebrate the achievements of women through Women@Imperial week (among other events), Faculty Ambassadors, the Elsie Widdoson Fellowship, the Julia Higgins medal and awards, and tailored training and development programmes
- Support parents through parental leave, nursery provision, family-friendly timing of College events whenever possible, and assistance with childcare to enable them to attend conferences and events outside normal working hours.
- Make year on year reductions in our gender pay gap¹³, which arises primarily because we have more men than women in our senior, more well-paid roles.

4.4.2 Action in support of black and minority ethnic (BAME) staff and students

Imperial has many staff and students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, drawn from the UK and overseas. Though race equality has made significant strides in the UK in recent decades, the government's race disparity audit¹⁴ shows starkly that BAME people still face very significant barriers in education and employment¹⁵. The effects of this can be seen in the staff and student profiles at Imperial, acutely so in some quarters, e.g. in senior academic and administrative appointments, or in the numbers of home students who are black African or Caribbean.

We aim to be more proactive in eliminating these barriers. Although we already have dedicated initiatives to highlight and address the experiences of BAME staff

¹² <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/achievements/athena/>

¹³ <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/salaries-terms-and-conditions/pay-gap-report/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/race-disparity-audit>

¹⁵ White Privilege: the myth of a post-racial society, Kalwant Bhopal. Policy Press, 2018

1 and students (e.g. Diverse@Imperial week, the IMPACT talent and development
2 programme), we need to do more. As a first step, at the start of 2018 Imperial
3 College became a member of the Race Equality Charter (REC)¹⁶. We see this as a
4 vital component of reinvigorating the impetus for ongoing efforts to recruit,
5 retain and nurture talented staff and students from minority ethnic backgrounds
6 This means that we will:

- 7 • Survey all staff and students, to gather information on the particular
8 experiences of BAME staff and students at Imperial and explore these in
9 greater depth in focus groups;
- 10 • Identify institutional impediments to the inclusion, recruitment and
11 progression of black and minority ethnic people Imperial and formulate a
12 robust and specific action plan to tackle these;
- 13 • Submit a full application for a university-wide REC Bronze award well within
14 the three-year time limit that membership entails (if possible by the end of
15 2019);
- 16 • Use ongoing work on the REC to raise awareness of the problem of racial
17 discrimination at Imperial
- 18 • Support and promote the IMPACT training and development programme
- 19 • Promote participation in the Imperial as One staff network

22 **4.4.3 Action in support of LGBTQ+ staff and students**

23 The particular challenges to inclusion of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual,
24 trans-gender, queer, or who identify anywhere under the spectrum defined by
25 LGBTQ+ may be harder to see because they arise from traits that are less visible.
26 However, the experiences of marginalisation are no less real. The challenges are
27 all the more acute because the experiences of LGBTQ+ people are often lived at
28 or beyond the frontiers of what many members of society believe to be 'normal'.
29 Protection in law is no guarantee of acceptance for who you are. LGBTQ+ students
30 may face particular challenges, especially those for whom coming to university
31 may represent the first time that they feel able to express their gender identity
32 or sexual orientation.

33 We know from survey data that prejudices of society against LGBTQ+ people
34 inevitably infiltrate attitudes among some staff and students at Imperial,
35 resulting in harassment and experiences of exclusion. We are determined to
36 combat that to create a culture where LGBTQ+ people feel welcome, included
37 and able to be themselves. We will:

¹⁶ <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/race-equality-charter/>

- 1 • Make fuller use of our participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality
2 Index¹⁷ to drive change at Imperial. While progress has been made in recent
3 years to make Imperial more inclusive of LGBTQ+ people, the Stonewall Index
4 shows that we have not kept pace with best practice in the higher education
5 sector. Therefore from now on, as part of our annual submission we will
6 create and publish an action plan with specific and time-sensitive
7 deliverables. We expect these actions to have the effect of improving our
8 ranking in the Stonewall Index year on year, with the ultimate aim of being a
9 leading HE institution in terms of the environment we offer to LGBTQ+ staff
10 and students. As well as providing tangible benefits, this will boost our
11 reputation as an inclusive university.
- 12 • Provide LGBTQ+ awareness training for all new staff and students
- 13 • Provide guidance to all staff on the importance of inclusive language for
14 LGBTQ+ people and respect for individual choices of pronoun or titles.
- 15 • Collaborate with Imperial College Union to ensure that needs are met and
16 that College procedures and practices are supportive of all students
17 regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- 18 • Seek opportunities to celebrate the contributions of LGBTQ+ people, at
19 Imperial (including events such as Diverse@Imperial week and during LGBT
20 History Month)
- 21 • Promote participation in the Imperial600 staff network

22

23 **4.4.4 Action in support of staff and students with disabilities**

24 Imperial is proud to be a Disability Confident employer¹⁸ and to offer a broad
25 range of support to staff and students with disabilities, which can be visible or
26 invisible, physical or mental. Our provision for students is generally well
27 organised and has central funding that allows it to operate in a timely and
28 responsive manner in providing broad range of support and professional advice.

29 Support for staff is more typically devolved to departments, which are supported
30 by expert advice provided through Occupational Health and the Equality,
31 Diversity and Inclusion Centre. Although coordination of support is provided
32 through the Disability Action Committee, there is a case for making sure that
33 provision is more 'joined up'. We recognize the need to improve the experiences
34 of staff and students with disabilities. Therefore we will:

- 35 • Establish a formal and effective mechanism for recording requests for
36 support for disability, and monitoring responses.

¹⁷ <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-equality-index>

¹⁸ <https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/>

- 1 • Create a mechanism to fund reasonable adjustments that works uniformly,
2 equitably and responsively across all College departments.
- 3 • Ensure that all staff with line management responsibilities are trained to deal
4 sensitively and appropriately with disability cases.
- 5 • Increasing awareness of the impact of ‘ableist’ attitudes.
- 6 • Achieve the target of training 700 volunteer mental health first aiders across
7 all College campuses
- 8 • Ensure that disability is included in planning and strategic development
9 throughout the College (*e.g.* procedures, buildings, website) will not only
10 fulfil our legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments but do so in a cost
11 effective way that values and benefits everyone.
- 12 • Seek to mainstream disability in the College’s educational offerings by
13 adopting as general practice strategies that may be of particular benefit to
14 students with disabilities (*e.g.* use of microphones, lecture recording,
15 advance provision of reading lists and course materials)
- 16 • Require the College Disability Action Committee to update the Disability
17 Action Plan in the light of the EDI strategy, and to publish both the plan and
18 regular updates on progress towards specific goals on its website.
- 19 • Set ourselves the goal of applying to be a Disability Confident Leader¹⁹ within
20 two years.
- 21 • Support and promote the Calibre training and development programme
- 22 • Promote participation in the Able@Imperial staff network

23
24

25 **4.5 We will reduce the incidence of bullying and harassment**

26 An organisational culture that values diversity and aims to be inclusive must be built
27 on respect for the individual, whatever their identity, circumstances or background.
28 This requires us to be sensitive to shifting societal norms and to be clear in our
29 messaging and training on behavioural expectations. It also requires us to be effective in
30 dealing with bullying and harassment.

31 Bullying is not legally defined but is generally considered to be repeated behaviour
32 which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically. Harassment, by
33 contrast, is defined in the Equality Act 2010 in relation to protected characteristics to
34 include unwanted behaviour, whether intentional or not, that is offensive,

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-guidance-for-levels-1-2-and-3/level-3-disability-confident-leader>

1 intimidating, humiliating or otherwise harmful; it includes emotional, physical or
2 sexual harm.

3 Imperial has made significant efforts in recent years to reflect on and improve the
4 institutional culture. Yet we know from surveys of staff and students that incidents of
5 bullying and harassment still affect a significant minority of people. Recent publicity,
6 particularly around sexual harassment in Hollywood, Parliament and within higher
7 education²⁰, leads us to suspect that we do not yet have a clear idea of the scale of the
8 problem. What is clear is that we have to do better. We need to bolster credibility so
9 that no victim feels inhibited from reporting instances of harassment. Therefore we
10 will:

- 11 • Continue development work to improve our organisational culture.
- 12 • Develop a coherent and credible approach to harassment. A working group chaired
13 by the Assistant Provost (EDI) has already been charged with reviewing the policies
14 and processes for reporting and dealing with cases sexual harassment, and is due
15 to report later this year. The working group will bring forward proposals to more
16 effectively enable staff and students to report incidents, and to receive support
17 and redress. As far as possible, the lessons learned from this work will be applied
18 to all other cases of bullying and harassment.
- 19 • Facilitate the roll-out of active bystander training for staff and students (pioneered
20 in the Faculty of Engineering) across the College. This helps to equip people with
21 strategies for dealing with poor behaviour that can occur in professional,
22 educational and social settings at the College; at the same time it raises awareness
23 of many of the biases (conscious and unconscious) that hinder our institutional
24 culture from being fully inclusive.

25

26 **4.6 We will collaborate internally and externally to develop good practice**

27 Individual and organisational needs and expectations around equality, diversity and
28 inclusion remain in a state of progressive flux. There is a sense across many sectors
29 and organisations of travelling tortuous roads to a destination that is not yet visible.
30 This presents a challenge, because it is not always obvious which is the best way to go.
31 But it is also an opportunity. Since no one group has all the answers, there is a
32 willingness to turn to others for advice and guidance.

33 At Imperial, our mission to disseminate knowledge and practice will include our work
34 on equality, diversity and inclusion, but we are also keen to learn from the diversity of
35 experience within and without the institution. Therefore we will:

- 36 • Establish an EDI excellence fund to identify and encourage local initiatives. The
37 fund will recognise and reward people at Imperial with a passion for EDI by
38 providing funding and other support to help their ideas to be implemented and

²⁰ <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/changing-the-culture-one-year-on.aspx>

1 disseminated. This funding support needs to be managed carefully to ensure that
2 support is offered to address the whole spectrum of EDI needs.

- 3 • Work with outside groups to learn and share best practice (*e.g.* other universities,
4 networks, international bodies, and experts). We are determined to be a leading
5 voice in this endeavour and will work with other relevant organisations (*e.g.* UKRI,
6 the Office for Students, Russell Group, UUK, LERU) to disseminate best practice
7 across the sector.
- 8 • Increase awareness of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion at
9 Imperial, by seeking out and promoting scholarship and learning in relation to the
10 value of diversity in STEM education and research.
- 11 • Work with Advancement to identify new sources of support, both to advertise our
12 efforts to be more inclusive and to fund new activities,
- 13 • Seek with Advancement to harness the experiences and perspectives of our
14 alumni, especially those from diverse backgrounds, to expand the horizons and
15 opportunities of students and staff. We will also work with them to develop post-
16 graduation support as part of our widening participation activities.

17 18 **4.8 We will be open to dialogue on our work on equality, diversity and inclusion**

19 Communication is vital for the overall success of our EDI strategy. Equality, diversity
20 and inclusion are difficult and contested ideas because they challenge the status quo.
21 Imperial is determined to create a culture of inclusion where all people feel valued as
22 individuals, but we know we are not there yet. We know also that even as we make
23 progress, it will not be fast enough for some. There will be mis-steps along the way.

24 Effective communication is important, not just to mitigate such problems but also to
25 build trust within and across the organisational divisions and hierarchies at Imperial. As
26 we saw in the 2017 staff survey, there remains a disconnect between the deliberations
27 of the College leadership and the perceptions of that effort on the ground. Addressing
28 that issue is necessary not just for the health of the institution, but also to instil
29 confidence among staff and students that our commitment to equality, diversity and
30 inclusion is built on lasting foundations. Therefore we will:

- 31 • Explain our EDI strategy clearly and keep it open to challenge. Since our strategy
32 also needs to be rooted in reality, we need to be able to have frank conversations
33 with staff and students when practical and financial constraints mean that we
34 cannot meet expectations. In such circumstances we will be constructive and open-
35 minded about mapping out routes to further progress.
- 36 • Establish two-way channels of communication to ensure not only that people feel
37 listened to and valued, but also that the College leadership is kept in touch with
38 the breadth and variety of the experiences of staff and students. We will create
39 regular opportunities for staff and students to interact formally and informally with
40 the leadership team.

- 1 • Advertise the EDI Forum as a major portal for people to make their views known.
- 2 • Seek ways to raise the voices of under-represented groups. The privileges of the
- 3 majority mean that they do not always encounter problems endured by others.
- 4 • Ensure that EDI information on our web-site (e.g. support, training opportunities,
- 5 events) is presented in a coherent and accessible manner. Where possible and
- 6 appropriate, we will ensure that there is matched provision of information for staff
- 7 and students.

8

9

10 **5. Concluding remarks**

11 *Still to be written...*

12

13 *What does success look like? What are the take home messages?*

14 *Progress on equality, diversity and inclusion has to be a shared responsibility and*

15 *become a core activity. We will incorporate EDI more explicitly and implicitly within the*

16 *overall Imperial College Strategy, which is due to be revised for 2021.*

17 *End with a call to action – encouraging people to get involved and showing how they*

18 *can do that (e.g. networks, events, committees, Forum, training, etc).*

19