Annual Equality Report

Royal College of Art

2018 / 19

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The RCA is committed to creating an environment of mutual respect, where differences are valued and respected and where innovation, creativity and diversity can flourish. Positive working relationships – whether between staff and staff, staff and students, or students and students – are central to this. Mutual respect is facilitated by the promotion of values of dignity, courtesy and respect, alongside a zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.
RCA strategic plan.[1]

The Royal College of Art (RCA) is a world-leading postgraduate art and design institution that, in 2018/19, had 2283 students and 488 staff based across three sites in Battersea, South Kensington and White City. The vision for the RCA, as expressed in its Strategic Plan 2016-21, is to be an institution that provides transformative experiences for individuals who will go on to transform the world. Key to the achievement of this vision are the values of community, collaboration and connectivity, and diversity and internationalism.

The RCA's educational ethos, as expressed in its Student Charters and its Learning and Teaching Strategy, is one of creative and intellectual challenge. The RCA is a diverse international community of artists, designers and thinkers who are expected to test the boundaries of their practice and discipline.

The RCA recognises that equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity are not only ethically fundamental, they are crucial to its academic, social and commercial success. An inclusive and equitable environment provides an array of benefits, such as increased morale, an expansion of the range of skills and experiences available, an enhanced ability to attract and retain talented staff and students from all backgrounds, and a thriving community in which all members are valued for their contribution and individuality.

The College is therefore committed to providing equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of: Age; Disability; Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality); Gender (including gender reassignment, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity); Religion, belief; Sexual orientation (including civil partnership status). The College is also mindful to ensure that those staff who are on fixed-term contracts or who are part-time are not treated less favourably than comparable staff on permanent (open-ended) contracts or who are full-time.

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1   The RCA culture and values are outlined in the College Strategic Plan 2016-21
     www.rca.ac.uk/more/about-rca/official-information/corporate-publications/

The RCA, in common with all other institutions of higher education, operates within a legal framework which sets obligations to:

· eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
· advance equality of opportunity between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic;
· foster good relations between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic.

These obligations are reinforced in the Higher Education Code of Practice which provides a framework within which university governing bodies should operate.

The RCA's Equality and Diversity Policy outlines the College's commitment to providing an environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics contained within the 2010 Equality Act where all members of its community are treated with respect and dignity. Alongside this, a number of other institutional policies and procedures promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. These include: the Academic Employment Framework and family-friendly policies such as maternity, paternity, shared parental leave, flexible working.

The College's Council has ultimate responsibility for compliance with the College's equality obligations and receives annual reports from the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Chief Operating Officer has overall responsibility for the Equality and Diversity Policy, while the Human Resources and Registry teams ensure the policy is reviewed and revised as necessary.

The RCA collates, monitors, reflects on and publishes equality information as part of the public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010. This report outlines the RCA's Equality Aims 2018-21 and the work we are doing to address them, highlights projects and initiatives that are supporting equality, diversity and inclusion across the institution, and shares equality data about our staff and students in the 2018/19 academic year.

1.1 CONTEXT

We are still a long way from equality of opportunity in our universities, and gaps remain particularly wide at the most selective universities.[2]
Chris Millward
Director for Fair Access and Participation, Office for Students

For both staff and students in the UK HE sector, there are gaps in access, recruitment, retention, attainment and experience between the most and least advantaged groups, particularly in relation to race and ethnicity, disability and socio-economic background.

The University and College Union (UCU) reports that black and minority ethnic (BME) staff in universities are less likely to hold senior jobs and are paid less than their white colleagues. In 2017/18 there was a pay gap of 9% between white and BME academic staff in the HE sector, with the gap between black and white staff at 14%. BME staff are underrepresented in the most senior roles in the sector. 11% of white academic staff are professors, compared to just 3% of black academic staff and 7% of Asian academic staff.[3]

The Office for Students (OfS) reports that in 2017/18 there was a difference of 23% between the proportion of white and black students achieving a first or 2.1.[4] In the introduction to a report by Universities UK and the NUS entitled 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #closingthegap' Baroness Amos stated:

We face significant challenges in terms of representation, pedagogy, curriculum reform and student experience. BAME students do not do as well at university compared with their white counterparts...BAME staff are poorly represented in both senior academic and university leadership roles: of 19,000 people employed as professors in the UK, only 400 are BAME women...Why is this happening? In Britain, we are proud to have some of the best universities in the world attracting global talent, yet...even when BAME students overcome the hurdles that prevent them getting to university in the first place, they do not have an equal chance at succeeding. We are not operating a level playing field.[5]

The report includes recommendations that extend beyond data gathering and policy. It concludes: "A change in culture is needed alongside a clear institutional message that issues of race will be dealt with as part of wider, strategic, organisational practice, not as an 'add on'." BME staff working in HE warn that 'as institutions rush to be seen to be "doing diversity" they ignore the very people who embody that diversity'[6] and BME students are calling for universities 'to urgently

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2　　　　www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/highly-selective-universities-must-follow-through-on-promises-to-improve-access-regulator-warns/
3　　　　www.ucu.org.uk/article/10360/Black-academic-staff-face-double-whammy-in-promotion-and-pay-stakes
4　　　　www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/highly-selective-universities-must-
follow-through-on-promises-to-improve-access-regulator-warns/
5　　　　www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/bame-student-attainment-uk-universities-closing-the-gap.pdf
6　　　　Lola Okolosie: www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jul/08/uk-universities-racism-diversity-black-

listen to the experiences of their BAME students by viewing them as collaborative partners'.[7]

Disabled students and those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds also face inequalities in their access to higher education and their attainment. There is an attainment gap of 2.9% between disabled and non-disabled students.[8] And a 2018 report from the Department for Education reported that the gap in HE entry rates between young people who had been eligible for free school meals (one of the indicators of disadvantage used by UCAS and the HE sector) and those who had not has remained at 17.7% for the past three years.[9] Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to drop out, less likely to gain a first or 2.1, or find graduate employment compared to their more advantaged peers.

In response, the OfS has set targets to achieve equality of opportunity in higher education. The targets aim to eliminate gaps in entry rates at the most selective universities between the most and least represented groups; drop-out rates between the most and least represented groups; degree outcomes between white and black students; and degree outcomes between disabled and non-disabled students.[10]

In this context the RCA is working to identify and actively address any imbalances, gaps or barriers that may hinder equality of opportunity for our staff, students and applicants. We acknowledge that inequality and discrimination are intersectional.[11] And we know that there is work to be done so that our policies work in practice, our aims become actions, and our values are upheld in every part of the institution.

minority-ethnic-academics

7   Adesewa Esther Adebisi: www.theguardian.com/education/2019/may/02/as-a-black-student-i-know-why-our-grades-are-worse-universities-dont-listen-to-us

8   www.theguardian.com/education/2019/jul/02/black-academics-bear-brunt-of-university-work-on-race-equality

9   https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education-2018
      And www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation-and-effective-practice/low-higher-education-participation-household-income-and-socio-economic-status/

10   www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/highly-selective-universities-must-follow-through-on-promises-to-improve-access-regulator-warns/

11   A term coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in her paper 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politic' chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1052&context=uclf

2. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

In recent years the RCA has focused on improving data systems for staff and students to address challenges in how this information has been collected, managed and analysed. A new Human Resources system has improved the quality and accessibility of data, and is now enabling us to conduct more in-depth analysis of the demographic profile of our staff. A new student information system is in development and is due to be launched in 2019/20.

Following analysis of workforce data in 2017 and feedback received from staff and students across the institution, the College has set its Equality and Diversity Objectives for 2018-2021.

Objective 1: Improve gender balance in the workforce

Objective 2: Improve the ethnic diversity of the workforce

Objective 3: Establish effective methods for monitoring equity of opportunity and experience in student application process and in student success and progression

Objective 4: Identify and implement a mechanism for measuring participation levels amongst students and applicants according to socio-economic status.

Objective 5: Monitor equity of opportunity and experience in the student application process and in student progression

Over the 2018-19 academic year, members of the Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC) established working groups to address each of the objectives. Colleagues with relevant knowledge and experience from across the College were also invited to join or inform each working group. Membership of these working groups may fluctuate with staff changes, the election of new Student Union co-presidents and changes to the membership of EDC. To ensure the working groups maintain some momentum, EDC will review working group membership in early 2019/20 to ensure each group has enough members and is well-supported.

3.4   OBJECTIVE 1

IMPROVE GENDER BALANCE IN THE WORKFORCE

While the RCA's workforce has a good gender balance overall, analysis of workforce data in 2017 identified gender imbalances in particular areas: two-thirds of academic senior managers were men; three-quarters of technical staff were men; three-quarters of administrative and professional staff (grades 6 – 10) were women; and two-thirds of support staff (grades 1 – 5) are women. This analysis informed Objective 1.

In 2018/19 the working group for this objective reported back to EDC. To support career progression, retention and leadership the group has focused on promoting the Aurora programme, laying the groundwork for a new mentoring scheme and piloting an apprenticeship programme. (See sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 below for more detail).

The group also devised a number of questions on flexible working, maternity/paternity/adoption leave and caring responsibilities, that will be incorporated into a major staff survey being undertaken in 2019/20. The learning from this will inform future actions.

In 2018/19 there has been some positive progress: many recent appointments at Director level are women, and now all Directors of Professional services are women. This year the HR team has worked closely with staff and their managers in order to support a number of flexible working requests.

The RCA's performance on Gender Pay Gap (GPG) in 2018/19 was not as strong as 2017/18. Although the RCA performed well when benchmarked against the HE sector, this result is disappointing. There was a greater difference between the Visiting Lecturer (VL) rates, with a larger proportion of men paid at the higher rate, which resulted in a bigger median gap. The RCA is working with representatives of the University and College Union (UCU) to review the VL situation. In 2019/20 reviews of VL terms of engagement and strategic workforce planning will be undertaken and will inform our next steps.

2.2   OBJECTIVE 2

IMPROVE THE ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF THE WORKFORCE

Analysis of the workforce in 2017 indicated that 14% of the workforce were BME and 79% are white (7% did not disclose their ethnicity). Higher percentages of BME RCA staff were in lower graded roles and there were reduced percentages of BME staff in grades 7 -10.

Amongst applicants for jobs at the RCA in 2017 29% of applicants for roles were BME and 65% are white yet around 20% of shortlisted applicants are BME and 17% of appointed candidates are BME. White applicants were almost twice as likely to be appointed to an RCA role than a BME applicant. Technical roles attracted proportionally fewer BME applicants than other job categories. These disparities are of concern. Objective 2 supports our institutional goal to understand, address and reduce these imbalances.

The working group for this objective examined the HR data set, looking in particular at the success rates of BME candidates at the application and shortlisting stages. Following on from this their initial areas of focus will include career progression practices, and attraction and retention strategies.

The group intends to raise the profile of accelerated opportunities, examine attrition rates and review exit interviews, and further explore data that suggests that BME staff had a higher success rate of being appointed via agency over in-house recruitment.

The working group, and the wider Equality and Diversity Committee, supports blind shortlisting as the default in the College's recruitment process. Our Human Resources team is ready to support all recruiters to follow this lead.

2.3   OBJECTIVE 3

ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE METHODS FOR MONITORING EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND EXPERIENCE IN STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS AND IN STUDENT SUCCESS AND PROGRESSION

A working group including Student Union co-president, student representatives and members of staff worked together in 2018/19 to begin examining questions and actions associated with Objective 3, particularly in relation to record-keeping; learning from student experience; and language and communication used in the application process.

The group has listed a series of initial actions, but acknowledges that these may change as more work is done, as issues emerge and as more is learned.

The group has identified three actions in relation to record-keeping:
· to ensure student data is gathered and evaluated regularly;
· to establish a mechanism for monitoring whether protected characteristics (one or more in combination) affect an applicant or student's chance of success;
· to ensure consistent records for reasons of leave of absence are kept and examine whether particular programmes or people with particular protected characteristics are disproportionately affected.

Registry acknowledges that some of this work will not be possible until the new Student Information System (SIS) is live. So some action here is to be put on hold until SIS has been fully launched and populated. A representative from Registry has agreed to look at records relating to Leave of Absence rates and fail rates throughout the last few years to determine any trends, particularly in relation to protected characteristics. Once this has happened the group will consider the best way to use this information.

To establish workable methods for monitoring student experience in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion the group felt there should be a variety of regular ways for students' experience to be communicated to EDC and for the committee's work to be shared and shaped with students.

· In 2018/19 the SU co-president regularly invited a student (from a society or group or as an individual) to make a short presentation at each EDC. This is an opportunity for the committee to hear directly from students who have experience of a particular issue, are involved in special-interest groups and societies, or have taken part in a focus group that has been convened specifically to discuss a particular theme.

· The SU co-president who sits on EDC updates co-presidents on the committee's work and current focus. Each president attends campus and school assemblies each term; all student reps attend at least one assembly. So at each of those assemblies a co-president will provide an update on EDC business and invite feedback from the reps assembled. They may also ask reps to go back to their cohorts to get feedback on a particular issue. The reps then feed back to the SU before the end of that term. So the SU president who sits on EDC can then return to committee the following term with feedback to report so that communication is going both ways.

· In 2018/19 the SU co-president also piloted a focus group approach to seek input on a particular issue (see Objective 4 for more information about this). The focus group format worked well, and the SU intend to follow the format in the future.

· In 2018/19 SU co-presidents launched an annual student survey which included questions that relate to equality, diversity and inclusion.

· The Academic Development Office (ADO) manages an annual student survey. The working group has proposed that ADO shares data relating to equality, diversity and inclusion with EDC so that the committee is aware of any trends and themes emerging from the results.

Thinking about language and communication, the group invited the RCA's Dyslexia Co-ordinator to undertake a dyslexia and dyspraxia-focused audit of application and induction processes. The Dyslexia Co-ordinator concluded that the application and induction processes do not discriminate against dyslexic and dyspraxic applicants.

In 2019/20 members of the group will be mapping official communications with students throughout their time at the RCA with the view of ensuring a consistent, accessible and equitable experience for all applicants and students. The RCA's English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Co-ordinator is part of the working group, and will bring learning from various seminars and workshops she has conducted with staff and students in order to inform the group's work.

Representatives from the working group met with colleagues at Imperial College London to discuss bystander training with a view to offering it at the RCA in 2019/20.

In 2018/19 two members of the working group collaborated in drafting guidance for RCA interview panels to ensure that everyone attending interview feels welcome and supported, and has an equitable experience. This guidance has a particular focus on supporting disabled students; students who are genderqueer, non-binary and trans; and international applicants / applicants for whom English is an additional language. The guidance will be reviewed for feedback by students and recent graduates in 2019/20 and following this will be adopted college-wide.

2.4   OBJECTIVE 4

IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT A MECHANISM FOR MEASURING

PARTICIPATION LEVELS ACCORDING TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

In 2018/19 the working group for this objective researched and wrote a paper outlining arguments relating to measuring socio-economic status and listing possible methods used by other organisations. Socio-economic status can affect people's access to higher education, and how successful they are whilst studying and upon graduation. But defining, measuring and monitoring socio-economic status is complex.

SES (Socio-economic status) is a construct that reflects one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities.[1]

There are a number of reasons why gathering socio-economic data has been identified as an objective. In particular, it will help us identify and address barriers to access and success, and provide more information to those administering hardship funds and scholarships. However, there is no definitive method of defining, measuring and tracking students' socioeconomic circumstances. So the working group looked at the ways in which UCAS, universities and the civil service measure socio-economic status, and considered methods of measurement that could be appropriate and feasible for the RCA.

The paper was shared with EDC members who then discussed it with their teams. The working group also conducted a focus group with students exploring the issues outlined in the paper. All this feedback has been very useful, particularly in identifying concerns people have about how and why an organisation might gather this sort of information. The working group's plan for 2019/20 is to bring the feedback back to EDC in order to set priorities and take steps to make progress on this objective.

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[1]   *The measurement of SES in health research: current practice and steps toward a new approach*. Oakes JM1, Rossi PH.Soc Sci Med. 2003 Feb;56(4):769-84.

2.5   OBJECTIVE 5

MONITOR EQUITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND EXPERIENCE IN THE

STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS AND IN STUDENT PROGRESSION

Work on this objective and associated actions will commence when Objective 3 is sufficiently under way.

3. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY PROJECTS

3.1 AURORA

The RCA participates in Aurora, Advance HE`s leadership development initiative for women. Aurora seeks to support women to fulfil their leadership potential by establishing networks across the sector to share best practice, insights and experiences. The Aurora leads at the RCA are Darlene Maxwell, Head of Library Services and Jo Tremain, Talent & Organisational Development Manager. In 2018/19 three members of staff were selected from a larger pool of applicants to attend AdvanceHE's Aurora training programme; two members of academic staff and one member of professional services staff.

In July 2019, Darlene and Jo hosted the College's first Aurora Symposium, attracting 35 staff to the half-day event. The event began with a panel discussion of senior staff chaired by Dr Catherine Dormor, with Dr. Amanda Spencer and Professor Johnny Golding. This was followed by presentations on 'Women on Presence' by external consultant Dr. Melanie Flory, and 'Creative Leadership' by Ninela Ivanova, Research Fellow, Helen Hamlyn Centre. The event was well received, with attendees feeding back that having networking opportunities to share knowledge, experience and challenges would be useful.

In response to this feedback an Aurora networking event will be held in 2019/20. This will be an informal opportunity for women to meet new colleagues, with a particular focus on action learning and networking exercises. In March 2020 there will be an Aurora workshop exploring 'Personal Presence', on International Women's Day the Research Office will be hosting an event, and in the summer term another Symposium is planned.

3.2 MENTORING

In 2018/19 the College laid the foundations for a new mentoring programme that will launch in the autumn of 2019. The purpose of the mentoring programme is to support staff to share knowledge and experience, be successful in their current roles and prepare for future opportunities. It will be coordinated by Jo Tremain, Talent & Organisational Development Manager.

In 2018/19, to prepare for the new programme, mentoring training sessions were offered to staff. Following this 13 new mentors have been trained, which has increased our pool of mentors to 35. The pool includes staff from across the College, from administrators to Heads of Programme, Heads of Service, Deans and Directors.

3.3 APPRENTICESHIPS

In 2018/19 a group of staff began taking part in a pilot apprenticeship programme. Three members of staff are working towards the Level 5 (typically those working at Grade 8 and above), and seven are completing Level 3 (aimed at those working at Grades 6-8). Level 5 is a two year programme, and Level 3 is a one year programme. Both include formal study days, manager involvement and 20% off-the-job training time to work on assignments, gather evidence and sit assessments.

Both programmes also include time to learn about equality, diversity and inclusion. Participants are building a supportive learning community that we hope will extend beyond the apprenticeship.

3.4 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A new staff learning portal was developed and became available in 2018/19. Alongside this, staff had access to online learning resources at Lynda.com. Mandatory online training for new and existing staff included modules on diversity at work and unconscious bias. Staff can elect to do additional modules on topics including transgender awareness.

In 2018/19 the College's new face-to-face bite-sized learning opportunities for staff included sessions on cultural diversity. Staff also applied for staff development funds in order to attend external events or participate in more sustained training on topics including: mental health first aid; resilience; decolonising pedagogies; the BME attainment gap; and 'Universities, 'whiteness' and diversity'.

In 2019/20 a working group will be established to develop a strategy of e-learning and online learning for all staff.

3.5 TEACHING FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

In 2018 the RCA's Academic Development Office (ADO) launched an internal Teaching Fellowship Scheme (TFS). The scheme offers College staff an opportunity to develop and gain recognition for their contribution to creative arts education. The TFS is for academic, technical and professional services staff engaged in a range of educational activity, including postgraduate taught provision, research supervision, executive education, and public engagement

The scheme - which leads to the award of a PG Certificate in Art and Design Education - addresses themes of equality, diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning; a key learning outcome for participants is to 'demonstrate awareness of the principles of effective and inclusive curriculum design'. Several TFS student action research projects this year looked at issues connected to equality, diversity and inclusion such as decolonising teaching approaches and course materials, and supporting dyslexic students and those who speak English as a second language.

In 2018/19 these themes were also explored in presentations at the TFS Teaching Conferences. The September 2018 Conference included a session on 'Students from and for a globalised world' led by Dr David Killick, Leeds Beckett University. And the April 2019 Teaching Conference included sessions on 'Decolonisation: Power and Practice' led by Dr Annouchka Bayley, Tutor and Programme Lead Creative Education, and 'Internationalisation' led by Siân Lund, EAP (English for Academic Purposes) Co-ordinator.

3.6 ACCULTURATION AND ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Over the year Siân Lund, our EAP Co-ordinator, has led a series of events exploring cultural diversity in a learning environment.

In November 2018 Siân led an AcrossRCA project to raise awareness of student voices talking about acculturation and diversity. The project encouraged everyone to reflect on their own assumptions and values. It nurtured conversation by creating an open-minded atmosphere and context from which to begin, and by sharing learning. Project outcomes included powerful portrait posters by students that communicated their experiences of feeling different at the RCA and in London.

Siân launched an intranet hub for staff and students interested in learning more about Cultural Diversity and Acculturation. The RCA has a diverse student body from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. This diversity provides exciting cultural capital and opportunities. To challenge our assumptions and help take advantage of cultural capital, these intranet pages provide ideas for ensuring equality of educational experience. The hub supports teaching styles that enhance inclusive practice; enables students to place learning outcomes within explicit frameworks (making the implicit explicit); shares student experience (videoed interviews with students); and provides reading materials around teaching in diverse contexts and acculturation.

In January EAP hosted a seminar entitled 'Criticality, Creativity and Context: EAP in Art and Design' which was open to RCA tutors on the TFS and HEA Fellowship scheme, and colleagues working in EAP in other HE institutions. The seminar explored the ways in which EAP practitioners integrate the requirements and working methods of a creative Art and Design education within language support for students. It examined how criticality is developed in a creative practice and what part EAP is able to play in this process.

In February Siân and Benji Jeffrey (SU Co-president) hosted a Language & Communication forum for students. The group discussed the ways in which communication is shaped by affective experiences, behavioural expectations and understandings, and socio-cultural assumptions. The group considered how discussion in studios and crits could be more inclusive. Siân also led a workshop entitled 'Acculturation, Communication and Disrupted Assumptions' for students participating in one of the RCA's Grand Challenges.

3.7 STUDENT SUPPORT

The Student Support team plays a vital role in the RCA's efforts to ensure that all our students feel welcome and included at the College, and have an equitable experience whilst studying with us.

A significant development in 2018/19 was the appointment of a dedicated Mental Health Coordinator. The Coordinator joined the team in May, and has since been busy supporting students with their mental health and wellbeing. Day to day duties involve managing a caseload of students, planning for the implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and updating the resources on the Student

Support moodle page. Students can now book themselves directly into appointments with the Mental Health Coordinator, as well as all members of the Student Support team.

The Mental Health Coordinator also undertook a survey of all graduating students in June 2019 in order to learn more about the factors that have contributed to students' sense of well-being and community during their time at the RCA. The results and recommendations emerging from this survey will be shared with the Equality and Diversity Committee in 2019/20.

The Student Support team is often the first port of call when students have experienced or witnessed something that concerns them. The team provides dedicated and confidential support and counselling, and works closely with those students who decide to formally report complaints or student misconduct allegations. In order to expand the reporting options available to our students, and to reflect good practice within the sector and the recommendations of the Changing the Culture report the Head of Student Support and Student Union Co-President worked together in 2018/19 to research and develop a new anonymous reporting system. The system will give students and staff an additional way to share their concerns or experiences with the Student Support team. The system will be piloted in 2020.

In 2018/19 the Student Support team created a prayer room at the RCA's Kensington campus. This has been welcomed by students and staff. In 2019/20 Student Support will be advocating for similar spaces to be created at the other RCA campuses.

3.8 MENTAL WELLBEING STRATEGY

A 'Strategy for Supporting Mental Wellbeing in Students and Staff 2019 - 2024' was drafted by a College-wide group including student representatives, and approved by the Vice Chancellor's Group in 2018/19.

The strategy supports mental wellbeing in students and staff. It seeks both to demonstrate the RCA's commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and its ambition to develop sustainable wellbeing policies and practices that ensure that all students and staff are able to fulfil their potential. The strategy sets out key principles, objectives and an action plan.

Central to the strategy is that the College will continue to promote a culture of dignity and respect within the workplace, including the promotion of inclusive learning and inclusive communication as well as emphasis on sensitivity and discretion for all when dealing with mental wellbeing challenges.

A key element of the strategy is the establishment of a Mental Wellbeing Steering Group. The Group, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, will include the Head of Student Support, the Registrar, and representatives from HR, academic, technical staff, professional services staff, and the Students' Union. This new group will meet regularly during 2019/20, ensuring the strategy objectives and action plan are met. The Group will monitor feedback from users of wellbeing services and make recommendations to Senate on ways for the College to support mental wellbeing.

3.9 CHANGING THE CULTURE GROUP

Another significant development is the establishment of the Changing the Culture Group to respond to the Universities UK taskforce's examination of violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students and the resulting recommendations. Plans are in place for the Group to meet regularly in 2019/20.

3.10 STUDENTS' UNION

The RCA Students' Union champions equality, diversity and inclusion across their programme of events and projects. In 2018/19 they initiated a series of panel discussions under the heading 'Decolonising the Institution'. Each event focused on themes such as race, class and disability with contributions from speakers including Danah Abdulla, Tanveer Ahmed, Hannah Catherine Jones, Lola Olufemi, Cecilia Wee, Aisha Richards, Andrew Illman and Melodie Holiday.

3.11 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2021: CODE OF PRACTICE

In 2018/19 Christie Walker, Head of Research Development, and Bernadette Ovens, Deputy Director of Human Resources, developed a Code of Practice for the RCA's participation in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. The Code of Practice sets out the steps the College will take to ensure that fairness, transparency, equality and diversity are at the heart both of the way we deliver our strategic objectives for research and knowledge exchange, and of the way we prepare our submission for REF2021.

The RCA recognises the importance and value of a Code of Practice which details responsibilities, operating criteria and processes, and provides a framework for decision-making for REF2021 which addresses the principles of transparency, consistency, accountability and inclusivity.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be conducted at key points in the RCA's REF2021 preparation, including:

· Informal internal quality assessment (winter 2018/spring 2019)
· Application of research independence criteria for research-only staff (autumn 2019)
· Formal internal quality assessment (late winter 2019/early winter 2020)
· Final output selection and submission (November 2020)

The purpose of conducting the EIAs is identify whether there is a differential impact on particular groups by reference to one or more protected characteristics. As a small specialist institution, EIAs within the RCA will involve smaller numbers of staff which could heavily influence percentages reported in statistical data, so the EIAs will reflect this, where appropriate, highlighting instances that have a marked impact for particular groups. The RCA will investigate should any prima facie imbalance be found.

EIAs will be undertaken by a relevant member of staff within HR and, in line with best practice, will involve members of the College's Equality and Diversity Committee who fall within particular protected characteristics as a means of informing the EIA. The findings of the EIAs will:

· be reported to the Equality and Diversity Committee and the REF Strategy Group;
· inform the ongoing development of this Code of Practice;
· be kept under review as the submission is prepared.

The EIAs should enable the College to identify where discrimination may inadvertently be occurring within our REF processes. They will also enable the College to identify where a particular policy or practice has a positive impact on the advancement of equality or where there is an opportunity to take a step that will have a positive impact.

The ongoing monitoring process is an important way of determining whether anti-discrimination measures taken, such as this Code of Practice, are effective. It plays an important part in ensuring that equality of opportunity is a reality within the RCA.

4. DATA

This report contains student statistics that were taken as a 'snapshot' in March 2019. The total number of students was 2192, and we welcomed 76 nationalities to the College. Statistics on staff appointments are based on all staff who joined between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019. Workforce data is based on a 'snapshot' taken on 31 July 2019. The total number of staff in 2018/19 was 488.

Ethnicity

Total Workforce

Table 1: Proportion of BME staff by main staff group The percentage is calculated as the total number in the population excluding those whose ethnicity is withheld or not disclosed.

Staff group	% BME staff in the work-force 2014/15	% BME staff in the work-force 2015/16	% BME staff in the work-force 2016/17	% BME staff in the work-force 2017/18	% BME staff in the work-force 2018/19
Academic	11.1%	13.9%	12.3%	10.7%	12.8%
Full time academic	4.2%	12.1%	18.9%	18.4%	18.2%
Part time academic	11.9%	12.1%	11.0%	8.2%	10.9%
Non-academic	16.9%	14.6%	15.8%	19.6%	21.2%

Total Student population

Table 2: Proportion of BME students by fee status group. The percentage is calculated as the total number in the population excluding those whose ethnicity is withheld or not disclosed.

	% BME Students 2014/15	% BME Students 2015/16	% BME Students 2016/17	% BME Students 2017/18	% BME Students 2018/19
Total student population	34.7%	37.9%	41.03%	42.4%	48.82%
Home student population	16.4%	18.9%	15.1%	18.6%	20.32%
EU student population	5.3%	9.5%	12.02%	9.6%	10.08%
O/S student population	82.3%	87.3%	84%	81.1%	84.95%

Gender

Total Student population

Table 3: All students by gender

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	63%	63%	62%	65%	66.1%
Male	37%	37%	38%	35%	33.7%
Other					0.2%

Total Workforce

Table 4: All staff by gender

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	49%	52.1%	52%	54.9%	54.7%
Male	51%	47.9%	48%	45.1%	45.3%

Staff Recruitment

Table 5: Staff appointments by gender

All staff appointments	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	57.4%	68%	69.5%	64.4%	61.9%
Male	42.6%	32%	30.5%	35.6%	38.1%

Academic appointments	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	72.2%	50%	69.5%	66.7%	60%
Male	27.8%	50%	30.5%	33.3%	40%

Non-academic appointments	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Female	51.2%	71.7%	69.5%	63.9%	62.1%
Male	48.8%	28.3%	30.5%	36.1%	37.9%

Disability

Total Workforce

Disability is a matter of self-definition, and this can make it hard to obtain meaningful comparative data. The 2015 national HE figure for declared disability was 4.2%.

Table 6: Staff by reported disability

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Staff: reporting a disability	13.6%	12.1%	13.4%	10.5%	8.8%
Staff: prefer not to say	N/A	13.9%	13.6%	11.6%	13.5%
Staff appointees: reporting a disability	1.64%	2.78%	2.82%	7.9%	2.9%
Staff appointees: prefer not to say	N/A	44.4%	39.4%	5.0%	9.5%

Total Student population

Within the RCA student population 9.22% report a disability. The majority of those students (63.8%) reported a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia/dyspraxia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Table 7: Students by reported disability

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Students: reporting a disability	11.7%	17.7%	12.9%	11.98%	9.22%

Religion and Belief

Table 8: All staff by religion

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Staff: No religion	46%	48.7%	49.6%	50.5%	50.4%
Staff: Religion	24.9%	22.9%	23.4%	25.1%	24.8%
Staff: Prefer not to say	29.1%	28.4%	27.0%	24.4%	24.8%

Sexual Orientation

Table 9: All staff by sexual orientation

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Staff: Heterosexual	71.1%	72.7%	73.5%	72.1%	70.9%
Staff: Gay	5.3%	4.9%	4.4%	5.1%	5.3%
Staff: Bisexual	N/A	0.8%	0.8%	1.5%	1.8%
Staff: Prefer not to say	23.4%	21.6%	21.1%	20.9%	21.5%
Staff: Other				0.4%	0.4%

Please note: In previous years data on sexual orientation has been exclusive of staff who have selected "other" so did the figures did not add up to 100%. Since 2017/18 'Other' has been included in our reporting.