

Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2025- 2029

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Message from the Principal

The success of New College Lanarkshire (NCL) is founded upon the relationships that exist among our staff, our students, our stakeholders and our communities. For that reason, NCL puts equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) at the centre of what we do.

We believe that our College sites are places that belong to all people and it is our absolute commitment to make New College Lanarkshire a place where everyone is welcomed, appreciated and valued. Only by fulfilling our pledges on EDI can we credibly deliver on our ambition to support all people to fulfil their potential.

We commit to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is central to the rhythm of each day at NCL. We do so because we recognise that this facilitates the removal of barriers to education and helps people to find and release their brilliance. By embracing EDI we enrich all our experiences, grow a more sustainable community and create a place of social justice and value.

Our mission remains one of Bringing Education Closer to everyone and our purpose is to advocate for social justice, to offer education which meets the needs of our students and delivers positive change in their lives.

We do all that in a safe and secure space where our values include pledges to be just, kind and respectful.

In the past year New College Lanarkshire has launched its Undergraduate School and digital campus – The Learning Well – in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland. These two projects have provided the opportunity for hundreds of students in Lanarkshire, many of whom would otherwise have been excluded from Higher Education, the opportunity to secure a degree and the prosperity and fulfilment that brings.

We continue to work in partnership with stakeholders to deliver national equality outcomes which maximise access to learning for every student regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion or sexuality. We work to ensure other barriers such as poor health are no impediment to fulfilling potential through education.

Our NCL Foundation continues to provide 3500 breakfasts every month – no questions asked - for our students to create an environment where food inequality is not an insurmountable obstacle to learning. And our draft Strategy 2030 plans include using social enterprise opportunities to grow exponentially the support offered to our students and communities through the Foundation in the coming five years.

Our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is something we at New College Lanarkshire are immensely proud of because we understand that, by releasing the brilliance of EVERY student, we can – we will - make a better world.

Professor Christopher Moore

Principal, New College Lanarkshire

Executive Summary

New College Lanarkshire (NCL) is a listed authority covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. This means we are covered by the specific duties that help authorities meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The general equality duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate NCL's progress in meeting the general equality duty and specific duties of the PSED.

NCL stands as a diverse and inclusive college where equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of our achievements and remain committed to creating a supportive environment for our staff, students and the wider community. However, we acknowledge there is always more to do, and we embrace the opportunity to grow and adapt to meet the needs of our evolving college community.

By using examples, the report draws on some of the work the college has achieved since our last report in April 2023. The examples demonstrate our commitment to advancing EDI, progress achieved to date, whilst also enabling us to reflect critically on areas for improvement.

This report covers:

- Board diversity information;
- gathering, using and publishing of employee information;
- gender pay gap information;
- equal pay statement;
- progress made on mainstreaming equality;
- progress on the college's Equality Outcomes 2021-25;
- publishing a set of new equality outcomes 2025-29.

About NCL

Coatbridge College, now part of New College Lanarkshire (NCL), was founded as Scotland's first college in 1865. Just over a decade ago NCL was created, operating across Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire, with campuses in Cumbernauld, Motherwell, Coatbridge, Kirkintilloch and Broadwood making it one of the nation's largest colleges.

With a diverse student body exceeding 10,000 individuals, encompassing full-time, part-time, evening and commercial courses, NCL plays a pivotal role in fulfilling the social, economic and cultural aspirations of its local communities.

The college actively contributes to the advancement of Lanarkshire by delivering exceptional learning opportunities and forging impactful collaborations with the public sector, businesses and the third sector. This ensures our students receive an engaging, enriching and enjoyable educational experience.

Committed to ongoing enhancement, the college has made significant investments in state-of-the-art technology and facilities across its campuses, ensuring students have access to outstanding resources.

Our Purpose

We advocate social justice, enable whole person education and partner to release potential within our communities

Our Mission

We Bring Education Closer

Our Values

- **We are just** - We act with integrity to secure social justice
- **We give our all** - We put all that we have into everything we do, for our students and staff.
- **We are kind** – We see that this makes us better people.
- **We are bold** – We adapt to maximise every opportunity.
- **We respect all** – We are at our best when we can be ourselves.
- **We give me more than we take** - For the sake of our communities and our planet.

Our Strategy 2025 strategic drivers:

- Strengthening the Curriculum
- Expanding our Educational Reach
- Partnering to Grow
- Simplifying how we work
- Prioritising resource close to the student

Legislative Framework

The 2010 Equality Act provides the context for this report. The protected characteristics outlined within the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

We also recognise there will be other groups who find themselves on the periphery of education and society e.g. due to socio-economic disadvantage, being care experienced, being a young carer or for various other reasons. To ensure New College Lanarkshire (NCL) truly creates an environment reflective of the communities we serve, we are committed to adopting an intersectional approach to understand the many facets of people's identities, privileges and lived experiences.

The Equality Act 2010 also placed a general duty, known as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), on listed public bodies (including NCL), in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different protected characteristic groups;
- Foster good relations between people from different protected characteristic groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

In addition to this general duty under the Equality Act 2010, further specific duties were placed on Scottish public bodies by the Scottish Parliament. The following duties are addressed in this report:

- reporting on Board diversity information;
- gathering, using and publishing of employee information;
- publishing gender pay gap information;
- publishing of Equal Pay Statement;
- progress made on mainstreaming the general equality duty;
- progress on the college's Equality Outcomes 2021-2025;
- and publishing a set of Equality Outcomes 2025-2029.

NCL Board

The New College Lanarkshire (NCL) Board, which is part of the Lanarkshire Regional Board, is responsible for approving the college's overall strategic direction and oversees the college's performance and development.

The current Board of Management is comprised of 22 members, with members from an affiliated Lanarkshire college. Of the current members, 8 (36%) are male and 14 (64%) are female.

- There is a total of 12 non-executive members, of which 5 (42%) are male and 7 (58%) are female.
- Of the 3 executive members, 1 is female and 2 are male.
- Two of our 4 committees (Audit and Risk Committee, Curriculum, Student Affairs and Outcomes, Finance, Resources and General Purpose) are chaired by female members.
- The Board comprises of 2 student representatives – one from NCL and one from SLC - both are female.
- Of the 4 elected staff representatives, there is 1 (25%) male and 3 (75%) females.
- Of our 2 eligible Trade Unions representatives – 1 is female.
- The Board also has a female co-optee to the CSAO Committee.

NCL recognises the benefits of when a board includes a diverse range of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds. It enables NCL to better understand and serve our communities whilst building confidence amongst our partners.

We are committed to maintaining our gender balance and achieving wider diversity by working with external organisations, including Changing the Chemistry, Women on Boards, and our business and charity partners. This reinforces our commitment to equity, inclusion and sustainable growth – ultimately driving long term success at NCL.

Further information on our Board of Management can be found on the college website: <https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/corporate/the-lanarkshire-board/>.

NCL Staff

As a public sector employer, New College Lanarkshire (NCL) is required to gather information on the protected characteristics of employees and publish this as part of mainstreaming reports and demonstrate the progress made in gathering and using that information to better perform the equality duty.

Recognising the high levels of non-disclosure and to ensure we held the most up to date information for each member of staff, in 2024 NCL concentrated its efforts in launching a new Staff Equalities Survey.

The survey questions covered the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act, which were compiled using a number of sources including the recent Scotland Census. This was also an opportunity to further our pledge to creating a truly inclusive workplace by embedding additional questions on BSL as a language and caring responsibilities. Although not a protected characteristic, NCL recognises the contributions of NCL's carers and their all-important role in families, communities and broader society.

We also acknowledged that the questions may be considered sensitive, resulting in staff feeling reluctant to provide any details. Therefore, we took the approach to not make the survey mandatory however in order to understand and obtain a more comprehensive understanding of our staff, each question included a 'prefer not to say' option. The survey was shared online and alternative arrangements were made for individuals who did not have access to online facilities.

The benefits of having undertaken the new survey are reflected in some of the figures provided in this report. We are committed to continuing our endeavours in creating a culture of trust where staff feel confident in disclosing data, helping us to break down any barriers associated with inequality and discrimination. The following presents the key findings of our data.

Composition

New College Lanarkshire (NCL) total number of employees:

- 2022-23 = 931 employees
- 2023-24 = 843 employees

Local Authority

North Lanarkshire	50%
South Lanarkshire	21%
Glasgow	11%
Other (e.g. East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, Renfrewshire, Stirling and Dundee)	18%

Summary

- Our current staff composition aligns with the local communities that NCL serve's and has remained consistent for a number of years.
- The home addresses of our staff are spread across predominantly 3 local authority areas North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and Glasgow.
- NCL's staff largely reside within North Lanarkshire - 50%, which is a slight reduction of 3% from our previous report.
- Our second largest local authority area is South Lanarkshire at 21%.
- 11% of our staff come from Glasgow which is a 1% increase since our last report.
- 18% of our staff base comes from a wide range of local authority areas from Falkirk to Dundee.

Age

Age	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
<35	16%	10%
36-50	40%	38%
51-60	33%	35%
61+	11%	17%

Summary:

- Our data shows that from our staff composition, a significant proportion of staff (>70%) are from either the 36–50 or 51–60 age groupings in both years.

- We have seen a drop in our <35 age grouping, from 16% in 2022-23 to 10% in 2023-24.
- Of the 36-50 age grouping the majority are within our Academic Departments.
- Staff belonging to the 61+ age grouping went from 11% in 2022-23 to 17% in 2023-24. This reflects National Records of Scotland (NRS) projection of people aged 65 and over is estimated to grow by 30% by 2045 from 1.06 million to 1.37 million.
- We recognise the implications of an ageing workforce, which may lead to an increase in staff managing caregiving responsibilities – whether for ageing parents or younger dependents – as well as potential health concerns. We remain committed, where possible to support flexible and part-time working arrangements and through our Occupational Health Team and any external supports.
- The college has also established key initiatives which will help to strengthen connections across the college e.g. the Early Career Network will support colleagues who are in the early stages of their career to connect and create professional networks across the college.

Gender Reassignment

No members of staff have disclosed they have undergone gender reassignment.

NCL is committed in creating an inclusive and supportive workplace where transgender individuals feel confident and empowered to be themselves without fear of judgement or discrimination.

Disability

Disability	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Disability	3%	7%
No Known Disability	94%	90%
Prefer not to say	3%	3%

Summary:

- Given the work undertaken to review our staff data, we have seen an impact in data collected on disability.
- In 2022-23, staff with a disability accounted for 3% of the staff population.
- However, in 2023-24 this increased to 7%. Although this may appear to be a minor change, this increase could suggest staff are starting to feel confident in disclosing their disability status.

- When comparing the statistics for no known disability, in 2022-23 only 94% of staff declared they were not aware of any disability. However, in 2023-24 this decreased to 90%.
- An important change in our survey in 2024 was the breakdown of the disability categories available to staff. For anyone comfortable with sharing their specific disability status the supplementary question provided additional categories to select from.
- We acknowledge there is still work to be done to ensure staff feel confident to disclose their disability status, however these figures suggest a meaningful step in the right direction.

Gender Identity

Gender identity was only recently introduced as part of our data collection; therefore, we are currently not in a position to provide any meaningful analysis. We anticipate being able to report on this in future reporting cycles.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage and Civil Partnership	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Co-habiting or living with a partner	8%	9%
Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	2%	2%
Married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership	28%	31%
Never married and never registered same-sex civil partnership	2%	2%
Prefer Not to Say	4%	4%
Separated (but still legally married or in a civil partnership)	1%	1%
Single	5%	7%
Unknown	49%	43%
Widowed or Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	1%	1%

Summary:

- Staff being married or in a registered civil partnership remain the largest cohort at NCL.

- It is worth noting Scotland’s recent Census data revealed the percentage of households with couples where the couple were married or in a civil partnership decreased from 86.0% in 2001 to 76.6% in 2022.
- All the other marital groupings have largely remained consistent, with some minor fluctuations, over the previous 2-year period, e.g. we have seen an increase in single people at the college going from 5% to 7%.

Pregnancy and Maternity

In 2022-23 we had 0.8% of staff on maternity leave and 0.2% staff on paternity leave.

In 2023-24 we had 1.06% of staff on maternity leave and 0.47% of staff were on paternity leave.

Supporting staff through pregnancy and maternity remains a priority for the college, which is achieved through our Family Friendly Policies.

Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	1%	0.7%
African, Scottish African or British African	0.1%	0.1%
Caribbean or Black, Scottish Caribbean or Black or British Caribbean or Black	0.1%	0.1%
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group	0.7%	0.7%
White	78.6%	80.3%
Other Ethnic Group	0.5%	0.5%
Prefer not to say	1%	1.6%
Unknown	18%	16%

Summary:

- Over the 2-year period, our largest ethnic group was White – 78.6% in 2022-23 which increased to 80.3% in 2023-24.
- In 2023, 2.4% of our staff were from non-white backgrounds, in 2023-24 this was 2.1%. This figure is also consistent with SFC’s College Staffing Data in 2022-23 where 2.6% of non-white staff made up the total headcount.
- For the purposes of this report, we have decided to present our data in an aggregated format given the data for each non-white classification was limited, however we appreciate and understand the complex and diverse realities of our staff.

- We acknowledge the underrepresentation of diverse staff and are dedicated to taking steps to improve representation across the college.
- We also acknowledge the percentage of staff we do not hold this information for and we are working on ensuring regular communications are shared to encourage staff to complete this data.

Sex

Sex	2022 – 23	2023 – 24
Female	63%	62%
Male	37%	38%

Summary:

- Our gender split has remained consistent over the years, with females continuing to make up the majority of our staff base. These figures are in line with SFC's staff college data where females accounted for 61% of all staff headcount in 2022-23.
- At present, 50% of Executive Board positions are held by women. With respect to Dean positions, 33% of positions are held by females and 67% are held by males. This reflects the inclusion of 2 Interim Dean positions held by males, which disproportionately affects the overall representation.

Religion or Belief

Religion or Belief	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Buddhist	0.3%	0.2%
Christian - Church of Scotland	13.5%	12.2%
Christian - Roman Catholic	20.5%	17.9%
Muslim	0.4%	0.1%
No Religion (including atheist)	19%	23.5%
Other Religion	3.4%	3.3%
Pagan	0.1%	0.1%
Prefer not to say	4.1%	4.3%
Sikh	0.4%	0.4%
Unknown	38.2%	38%

Summary:

- Over this 2-year period the data highlighted that the two largest groupings for religion and belief belonged to the main Christian denominations, Church of Scotland and Roman Catholic. However there has been a slight decline in both categories.
- In 2022-23, 19% of staff stated they had no religion or belief and in 2023-24 this figure increased to 23.5%. Interestingly the recent Census revealed the majority of people in Scotland said they had no religion.
- We accept there is a large number of staff where their religion is unknown, and as with other protected characteristics we are committed in our efforts to encourage staff to feel comfortable and confident in sharing their data.

BSL

BSL was only recently introduced as part of our data collection; therefore, we are currently not in a position to provide any meaningful analysis. We anticipate being able to report on this in future reporting cycles.

As outlined in our BSL Plan 2024-2029, we are committed to working towards the shared Scottish Government vision that Scotland be the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
Bisexual	0.6%	0.6%
Gay man	1%	0.7%
Gay Woman/Lesbian	0.2%	0.2%
Heterosexual/Straight	60%	64.8%
Prefer Not to Say	3%	2.6%
Unknown	35.2%	31.1%

Summary:

- The majority of staff in NCL disclosed being heterosexual, seeing over a 4% increase from 2022-23 to 2023-24.
- Sexual orientation was unknown for 35% of staff in 2022-23, with a slight reduction to 31% in 2023-24.
- This figure is an improvement from our previous report where the numbers have been >50%. This may be a result of some of the key initiatives we have been driving e.g. completion of the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter and partnerships with external

LGBT+ organisations to create a supportive environment where our LGBT+ communities feel safe and confident in disclosing their sexuality.

National Identity

The collection of data on national identity data was introduced in our 2024 survey, therefore we are unable to provide any meaningful comparisons at this stage. However, the data revealed that 40% of staff identified as Scottish and 18% identified as British. Other national identities included Australian, Irish, Italian, Polish and Swiss. As we progress our efforts in staff data collection we hope to be in a position to provide further analysis in future reporting cycles.

Caring Responsibilities

Caring Responsibilities	2022-23	2023-24
No Caring Responsibilities	19.8%	22.8%
Other	3.5%	4.2%
Prefer Not to Say	0.5%	2.8%
Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 yrs.)	9.6%	11.2%
Primary Carer or Assistant for a disabled adult(s) (+18 yrs.)	0.6%	0.7
Primary Carer or Assistant for an older person or people (aged +65 yrs.)	3.3%	3.7
Secondary Carer (other person carries out the main caring role)	2.9%	3.3%
Unknown	59.7%	51.4%

Summary:

- Our data on caring responsibilities shows that the highest percentage of staff have no caring responsibilities in both 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- The second largest group of individuals reported that they were a primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years).
- We acknowledge there is a significant proportion of data that is unknown. We will continue to encourage staff to share information on their caring responsibilities so that we can offer the appropriate supports, e.g. through our Family Friendly Policies.

Recruitment

New College Lanarkshire (NCL) collects information from applicants on all protected characteristics via an online equality and diversity monitoring form which is used as part of our recruitment process.

The total number of job applications, inclusive of internal and external applications, received during 2022-23 was 623 and in 2023-24 we received 607 applications.

For both 2022-23 and 2023-24 the majority of applications received were from external applicants:

- 68% in 2022-23
- 67% in 2023-24

Key Findings:

- In this 2-year cycle, the majority of our applications >94% have come from individuals who told us their gender was the same as assigned at birth.
- Applications from individuals who stated their gender was not the same as the gender assigned at birth remains low. We will continue to raise awareness of the issues affecting the trans+ community through our Trans+ Inclusion Working Group and work with our external partners, including Terrence Higgins Trust and LGBT Youth Scotland, to encourage applications from the trans+ community.
- Over the 2-year period approximately 5% of applicants preferred not to disclose whether their gender was the same as the gender they were assigned at birth.
- The majority of applications have either come from applicants who are married or never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership.
- >40% of applicants over the 2-period stated they had never been married or never registered a same sex civil partnership.
- Consistently >10% applicants preferred not to disclose this data.
- 9% of applications came from minority ethnic applicants in 2022-23 which was a slight decrease to when we last reported. However, this increased to 16% in 2023-24.
- It should be noted that this data has been aggregated due to numbers being extremely low in each of the categories. Having said this, we are cognisant of the individual experiences of different ethnic groups and are committed to

understanding these experiences to ensure we encourage applications from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to achieve wider representation.

- The largest category of applications received from applicants state they have no religion - 42% in 2022-23 and 43% in 2023-24.
- The majority of our applications also continue to come from applicants who are Christian. Although in 2023-24 we did see a decrease in that from 41% to 34%.
- We have witnessed an increase in the number of applications from Muslim applicants - 4% in 2022-23 and 9% in 2023-24.

- Consistent with our current staff profile and previous data, the majority of applications have been received by females.
 - 50% from females and 45% from males in 2022-23.
 - 52% from females and 43% from males in 2023-24.

- Applications from Heterosexual/ Straight individuals remains the highest, 82% for the 2 previous years.
- Approximately 9% of applicants for each year preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation.
- Applications from bisexual applicants was 3% over this 2 year period.

Retention

The total number of employees who left New College Lanarkshire (NCL) in 2022-23 was 135 and in 2023-24 it was 152.

The main reasons cited by employees for leaving included end of temporary contract, voluntary redundancy, resignation, and retirement.

Key Findings:

- In 2022-23, 34% of leavers belonged to the 61+ grouping and 15% leavers belonged to <35-year olds.
- However, in 2023-24, we saw an even split between all the age groupings:
 - 25% belonged to <35
 - 33% belonged to 36 – 50 age group
 - 20% belonged to 51 – 60 age group
 - 22% belonged to 61+ age group
- In 2022-23, 2.2% individuals with a disability left NCL with 0% citing this as their reason for leaving.
- In 2023-24, 4.6% individuals with a disability left NCL with 0% citing this as their reason for leaving.
- For 98% of staff who left NCL in 2022-23, their disability status was unknown. This figure significantly reduced to 60% in 2023-24.
- Given White Scottish staff make up the majority of our workforce, our data on ethnicity showed that the largest group of leavers have identified as White Scottish.
- The statistics for minority ethnic leavers were limited to be able to draw any substantial conclusions.
- 7% of individuals with no religion left NCL in 2022-23 and 9% in 2023-24.
- In 2022-23, 20% of staff leaving the college identified as Christian and in 2023-23 this figure reduced to 14%.
- A significant proportion, >72% of the leavers' data on religion or belief is unknown. We acknowledge our lack of data on this and will work to enhance our data collection as part of our exit processes.

- In 2022-23, 56% of leavers were female and 44% identified as male. These figures remained in line with the data presented in our previous report.
 - However, in 2023-24 there was a significant shift in the numbers resulting in 72% of leavers being females and only 28% of male leavers.
 - This increase of female leavers in 2023-24 can be attributed to our recent Professional Services reorganisation, which included closure of our Coatbridge Campus Nursery and Halls of residence, both of which employed a significant proportion of females.
 - We will continue to monitor our data on leavers to ensure no discrimination or inequality is experienced as a result of sex.
-
- In 2022-23, 25% of our leavers identified as heterosexual/straight and in 2023-24 this reduced to 14%.
 - Similar to some of the other protected characteristics, the data on sexual orientation of leavers is largely unknown – 73% in 2022-23 and 83% in 2023-24.

Development

The growing financial pressures facing Scottish colleges has led to a series of changes. This has directly impacted how we operate as a college and in some cases having to make some tough decisions, particularly the decision to undergo significant restructures within Academic Departments and Professional Services. This has resulted in offering a Voluntary Severance Scheme to all staff as part of a range of deficit reduction measures.

These restructures have presented unique challenges for staff recruitment and progression, particularly due to statutory and policy obligations surrounding redeployment. Whilst they are designed to protect our employees, we recognise this may have inadvertently impacted our staff profile and progression opportunities.

Notwithstanding these challenges, New College Lanarkshire (NCL) remains resolute in our commitment to our staff, ensuring they have the right resources and opportunities to succeed. Alongside our ongoing initiatives the following initiatives represent some of the recent measures we have undertaken to promote staff development.

Through our partnership work with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the launch of The Learning Well, our digital campus, staff have benefited from opportunities to undertake degree or MBA courses. The 2022 Census found that only 23.1% of adults in North Lanarkshire had a degree level qualification - the second lowest of any council area in Scotland and well below the national average. The opportunity to study a degree course will help to address this educational gap, promote development and cultivate a culture where all employees have the chance to grow and succeed both on a personal and professional level.

The Staff Development Academy (SDA) is a team dedicated to supporting staff through their professional journey at NCL. The department oversees training, resources, promotes staff professional growth, skill development and career advancement. It serves as our centralised hub for continuous learning, development and organisational improvement. For example, monthly development workshops are facilitated with Academic Leaders and Professional Services Leaders, ensuring issues relating to equality and diversity are embedded in staff development programmes.

The SDA has recently launched a dedicated space at our Motherwell campus to enhance staff professional learning and development. The space is well equipped and can be

customised for different training needs. It will help to encourage our staff to develop new skills, stay engaged and drive long-term success at NCL.

Also Led by our SDA and integral to delivering our mission to “Bring Education Closer” the college has established Professional Development Discussions (PDD). The PDD process provides members of staff with an opportunity to reflect on their role, discuss achievements, highlights, and challenges. The discussion also allows staff to showcase how they have contributed to NCL’s purpose, mission and values and identify any development needs they may have in line with NCL and their departmental priorities.

Our new Leadership Mentoring Programme will be launched later this year as a pilot and will involve trained mentors working with mentees to provide support and benefits that are well established within mentorship practice. The Executive Board and Deans will receive training in April to ensure they have the right skills and qualities to support their mentee. The second phase of the pilot will work on matching mentors with Academic and Professional Service mentees. The programme will help facilitate learning and sharing of knowledge within the college which will in turn help create opportunities.

The college has established a number of Sub Committees of NCL’s Executive Board. They are comprised of staff from departments across the college and focus on key college governance including staff, learning and teaching, professional services and finance. The Sub Committees have resulted in: creating staff development opportunities, ensuring diverse perspectives are being considered, improved communication, encouraged collaboration and undoubtedly enhanced creativity.

Gender Pay Gap

The Gender pay gap compares the mean and median differences of pay between men and women within organisations.

From our pay audit carried out for 2024, it indicates that the Gender Pay Gap at New College Lanarkshire (NCL) increased slightly in 2024/2025. It was 11.3% in 2023/2024 and now sits at 11.68%. All male average hourly salaries still exceeded female hourly salaries by 11.68%, based on average (mean) hourly pay.

Staff Category	Gender Split		Gender Pay Gap
	% Female	% Male	
Academic Staff	52	48	-1%
Professional Services Staff	73	27	12%
Executive Board and Deans	50	50	13% (11%)*
All Staff	62	38	11.68%

The Executive Board and Deans category includes the post of Principal which impacts on the gender pay gap as this post is currently held by a man. Two posts in this category* warrant a regional allowance whilst the Lanarkshire Regional Board is in place. Without these allowances, the gender pay gap reduces slightly to 11%.

The main gender imbalance remains within our Professional Services staff group, as it has done for several years. The Professional Services staff group is 73% female and has a more diverse salary range which accounts for the imbalance compared with our Academic staff group where salaries are all within the same five band range.

Across all staff, the median gender pay gap has increased to 17%. There remains no gender pay gap based on median hourly rates for Academic Staff. For Professional Services staff, the median gap has increased from 10% to 11.9% The number of female staff employed decreased by 11% between 2023/24 and 2024/25 compared with only 5% of males which will have an impact.

Equal Pay Statement

Purpose and Benefits

This Policy statement demonstrates New College Lanarkshire's (NCL) commitment to upholding the principle of equal pay for like work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value across all areas of our institution.

Equal Pay Policy Statement

At NCL we value the contributions of our academic and professional services staff and believe that all staff regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, or any other protected characteristic, deserve to be compensated fairly and equitably based on their skills, experience, and contributions.

We are dedicated to creating a fair and transparent compensation framework working within our National Bargaining Framework and ensuring our policies and procedures meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Through pay audits, clear salary structures, and equitable practices, we ensure that pay decisions are free from bias and based solely on qualifications, responsibilities, and performance. Our goal is to foster a diverse and inclusive community where every individual feels valued and fairly compensated for their work

The college's approach to pay remains largely as set out in our previous equal pay statement published in April 2021. The numbers of staff declaring a disability or from a minority ethnic background are low. The college continues to monitor these protected characteristics to ensure that members of staff belonging to these groups are not treated unfairly in relation to pay and salary placement.

Responsibilities

The principle of equal pay applies to all members of staff employed by the Board of Management of NCL.

The Executive Board are responsible for ensuring that all staff policies and procedures meet our organisational and legislative requirements and that these are reviewed regularly.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that they apply recruitment and selection procedures, follow relevant college policy and procedure in relation to flexible working and respond to time-off requests in a fair and consistent manner. Advice can be sought from Human Resources about the application of any relevant policy or procedure. Line Managers are also responsible for reviewing job descriptions to ensure that these accurately reflect the role undertaken.

Members of staff who believe that they are not being paid equally to a Colleague for reasons related to a protected characteristic should raise concerns informally with their line manager or contact Human Resources for advice.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy statement pay is defined as contractual pay and non-cash contractual benefits such as pensions contributions, overtime rates, allowances and sick pay.

Equal Pay is defined under the Equality Act 2010 to include the following^[1]:

- Like Work – work which is the same or broadly similar. It involves tasks which require similar knowledge or skills, and any differences in the work are not of practical importance.
- Work Rated as Equivalent – work which has been rated under a valid job evaluation scheme as being of equal value in terms of how demanding it is.
- Work of Equal Value – Work which is not similar and has not been rated as equivalent but is of equal value in terms of demands such as effort, skill and decision-making.

The Living Wage

NCL is a Living Wage employer and achieved accreditation in December 2018, after shadowing Living Wage rates since 2013/14. It is hoped that this will help address the gender pay gap due to the high number of female staff in our professional services lower paid roles.

National Bargaining

For both Academic and Professional Services staff pay awards and terms and conditions are collectively bargained via the National Joint Negotiating Committee for Scotland's colleges that has been in place since 2015. The only group not covered by the collective arrangements are the salaries and terms and conditions of the Deans, which are set by the Principal, and the Executive Board (covering the roles of College Registrar, Chief Resources Officer, Assistant Principal, Deputy Principals and Principal) which are set by the Board of Management. This guided by a set of key underpinning principles and informed by both Scottish Public Sector Pay Policy and sector settlements. All Executive Board and Professional Service roles are paid at spot points and there are no incremental scales. Under this arrangement, everyone undertaking the same role (or a role that the college considers is of equal value) receives the same salary.

For our Academic Staff, the roles of Head of Department and Academic Leader are all paid at fixed points, matched to one of three nationally agreed salary points for promoted posts. All staff undertaking one of these roles receives the same salary as everyone else in the same post.

For Academic staff more widely, in terms of lecturing staff, we operate a nationally agreed five-point scale and staff are placed on the appropriate point on the scale using nationally agreed placement arrangements. All staff not at the top of the scale will progress through annual increment or achievement of teaching qualifications until they reach Point 5.

As part of national bargaining a national job evaluation for Professional Services roles falls within the scope of collective bargaining we await further update of any appropriate actions necessary as a result of the process which commenced in 2018 but has yet to be fully concluded.

^[1] <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/equal-pay>

NCL Students

The figures below show the profile of New College Lanarkshire's (NCL) Full Time-Further Education (FE-FT) students for Academic Years 2024/25 and 2023/24.

Protected Characteristic	2024/25 (4143 total headcount)	2023/24 (3875 total headcount)
Under 16	1%	1%
Age band 16-19 age band	66%	63%
Age band 20-24 age band	18%	18%
Age band 25 and over	15%	18%
Care Experienced	8%	6%
Carers	7%	8%
Disability	42%	43%
Ethnicity	4%	4%
Trans	2%	2%
Religion or Belief – Another religion or body, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Buddhist	4%	4%

Sex – Female	51%	48%
Sex – Male	48%	49%
Sexual Orientation – Bisexual	7%	6%
Sexual Orientation – Gay <am or Gay Woman/Lesbian	3%	4%
SIMD	54%	54%

Student Services

It is understood that good academic performance is linked to improved career opportunities and quality of life. However, we recognise this is not always possible due to factors including illness, family responsibilities, financial challenges, personal difficulties and unforeseen events. We also acknowledge that academic performance cannot simply be achieved with just a strong foundation in curriculum, but we need to be flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of our students.

Following the recent Professional Services restructure, we have established a coherent, consistent approach to providing support to our students, ensuring they get the support they need all in one place. Whilst all departments were previously doing an excellent job of supporting our students, uniting all our student facing departments into a single cohesive department has created an ideal platform for delivering more seamless support. This is now delivered by our Student Services Department, which consists of 7 teams – Student Admissions, Educational Support, Student Advisory Services, Student Funding, Student Records, Student Retention and Student Services.

The following outlines a number of ways the Student Services Department support our students.

- Student Records Team oversees the collection and management of student data which is used to track and monitor progress of students from each protected characteristic. Having access to this data allows staff to regularly review admissions, retention, progression and attainment figures.
- To ensure our students are supported at every stage of their academic journey our Student Retention Team works closely with students, lecturers and Academic Leaders to monitor attendance, achievement and progress. This helps us to identify those who are experiencing difficulties to progress and offer support to maximise their attendance.

We offer an early intervention service to support students, encourage them to take responsibility for self-authorising absence and monitor attendance. Departments can also contact the Team if they are concerned about a student's attendance, which the Team follows up with by contacting the student. If required, we also refer students to other support services within the college.

A key development is our Priority Status Register which identifies potential students who may be at risk of early withdrawal. The priority status is calculated based on information related to the student and the level of course, which provides the team with an indication of the risk that a student will withdraw (e.g. 10% very low risk, 90% very high risk). Any student with a risk of 50% or more is categorised as a priority, helping the college to understand the profile of the student and offer crucial interventions.

- The Educational Support (ES) Team has staff based in our Motherwell, Coatbridge and Cumbernauld campuses. They work collaboratively with all academic departments and professional services teams to ensure that the needs of individual students are met. Following the needs-led model, our aim is to identify and provide appropriate support measures which will aid, develop and encourage all students to fulfil their academic potential.

This support includes access to a named Educational Support Adviser, Adult Literacy and Numeracy support, classroom and communication support, as well as having a range of equipment and assistive technology which may benefit individual students. All applicants who disclose a disability or additional support need at application stage, are contacted and offered the opportunity to meet with a member of the team. We also support applicants during the interview process as required. Students can also self-refer to the team at any stage of their journey.

- Student Advisory Services Team offers students pastoral support and a listening service. They are offered a confidential space to discuss issues or concerns impacting on their focus and concentration at college. Advice, Guidance and support is student led and is tailored to the individual. Support is unique to the individual student, but could

include: emotional support/listening service; support with academic issue; support with disciplinary matters; signposting/referral to both internal and external services; and practical emergency fund support.

- Our Student Advisory Services Team have also been working in partnership with Action for Children who offer 1:1 support through the STAY Mentoring Programme. The service aims to help care experienced and other vulnerable students who are at risk of not sustaining their college place due to external barriers or difficulties. Young people can receive support to give them the best possible chance of re-engaging with their course or alternatively, progression to a positive destination whether that be employment or further study. Stay Mentors assist and support our students across a variety of areas including, budgeting, housing support, learning support, mental wellness, job applications and advocating on a student's behalf.
- The Student Funding team process student funding applications in line with Scottish Funding College Policy. They are responsible for making payments of Bursary, EMA, Discretionary and Childcare to our students and follow SAAS Policy for Discretionary and Childcare for our HE Students. Recently, as part of the Financially Fit Campaign, the Team have been involved with developing a funding roadmap which guides students, step by step, through the funding process ensuring students can access the appropriate financial support. In addition, given a significant proportion of our students are from SMID backgrounds, the Team have taken proactive measures to ensure eligible students receive the appropriate support through the college's discretionary funding scheme.

Student Satisfaction

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) requires all colleges to distribute the Student Satisfaction & Engagement Survey (SSES) as a means to evaluate and enhance college provision in Scotland. The survey provides a national approach to monitoring student satisfaction and engagement across the sector and SFC annual guidance issued to colleges includes the selection criteria and questions.

Alongside the SFC's SSES, NCL have been undertaking an initial perception survey - "Did we get it right?" – making it available to all enrolled students. This survey complements SFC's Survey, allowing NCL to capture and understand the early experiences of our students. Early identification of issues enables NCL to adjust student support and systems that will benefit their total student journey.

Below are some of the results from the latest SSES and 'Did we get it right' survey. It should be noted the data presented does not represent all protected characteristics; however, this does help to provide a picture of the experiences of our diverse student body and ultimately enables the college to better understand their experiences.

From our 2023/24 SSES - 4,306 respondents

- 92% of all respondents agreed they were satisfied with their college experience.
- 89% of all respondents agreed they were treated equally and fairly by staff.
- 86% of all respondents agreed they felt part of the college community.

Below are some of the results from our latest SSES with respect to protected characteristics.

- 93% of African, African Scottish or African British students agreed they felt part of the college community.
- 90% of Pakistani students agreed they felt part of the college community.
- 87% of care experienced students felt part of the college community.
- 84% of Bi-sexual students agreed they were treated equally and fairly by staff.
- 82% of students with a mental health condition agreed they were treated equally and fairly by staff.
- 89% of students either Deaf or with a hearing impairment agreed they were treated equally and fairly by staff.
- 92% of females and 92% males were satisfied with their college experience.
- 92% of 18-19-year olds were satisfied with their college experience.

From our 2024/25 'Did we get it right?' Survey – 5519 respondents

- 92% of all respondents (compared to 90% in 2023/24) agreed they received help if they have a learning problem.
- 94% of all respondents (compared to 93% in 2023/24) agreed All students are treated fairly and with respect.
- 95% of all respondents (compared to 94% in 2023/24) agreed that NCL overall is a good college.

With respect to protected characteristics our 'Did we get it right?' survey revealed:

- 92% of Polish students agreed NCL overall is a good college.
- 89% of Gay Woman/Lesbian students agreed NCL overall is a good college.
- 93% of care experienced students agreed NCL overall is a good college.
- 91% of students with a mental health condition agreed all students were treated equally and fairly.
- 96% of students deaf or with hearing impairment agreed all students were treated equally and fairly.
- 97% of Muslim students agreed all students were treated fairly and with respect.
- 90% of students with a Specific Learning Difficulty - Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or AD(H)D – agreed knew about the help they could get if they have a learning problem.

By undertaking both surveys, it helps to provide a more comprehensive representation of our student experience and take the necessary and relevant actions forward. For example, in response to the 2023/24 SSES, the college launched our new Wellbeing Academies, a significant initiative to bridge the gap between an individual's studies and their overall emotional wellbeing.

NCL are delighted our students feel NCL has created the right conditions for them to have a positive student experience. However, NCL is committed to continuous improvement and will strive to make changes to meet the needs of our diverse student body.

NCL Fellows

At NCL we believe education should be open to everyone regardless of their background. In recent years, NCL have elected a number of Fellows. All our Fellows have Lanarkshire roots who come from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines, modelling the importance of equality and inclusion across a broad spectrum of industries. Our 2 most recent Fellows include:

- Paralympic Gold Medallist Stephen McGuire has overcome extreme adversity to become one of Scotland's most distinguished Paralympians winning Gold in Paris in 2024. Born and brought up in Hamilton, Stephen was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, a degenerative muscle-wasting disease which eventually resulted in him using a wheelchair from the age of 12.
- Founder of the charity Smart Works, Maggie Darling has taken the challenges faced in her early childhood and used them to transform the lives of thousands of women across Britain. Smart Works, a charity offering a comprehensive framework to get women into careers by supplying interview outfits, one-to-one coaching and confidence building and a first wardrobe of clothes for when they start their new jobs.

Other Fellows of the college include:

- Lorraine Kelly,
- Elaine C Smith,
- Lady Rita Rae,
- Professor Lesley Sawers,
- Maggie Smart and Cathal McAteer
- Lady Susan Haughey CBE
- Professor Pamela Gillies CBE

Mainstreaming

To mainstream equality is to embed equality into the everyday functions, activities, and processes of the college to help:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different protected characteristic groups;
- foster good relations between people from different protected characteristic groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

Consequently, equality becomes part of New College Lanarkshire's (NCL) fabric; where it becomes integral to the existence of NCL. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are the cornerstone of what we do and commitment by our Board and Executive Board is an essential driving force in our approach to mainstreaming equality. This empowers the college to continue to improve student and staff experiences and make positive changes more widely.

This section of the report details examples of where the college's approach to mainstreaming equality has positively influenced the experiences of our staff and students or has contributed to wider organisational understanding of EDI.

Strategy and Leadership

Board and Executive Board

The Board of Management has the principal role in ensuring that New College Lanarkshire (NCL) fulfils the requirements set for all public authorities by the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and Scottish Specific Duties.

The Principal and Executive Board (EB) provide a clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, cultivating a culture where everyone feels valued, respected and included. This strong and passionate direction has been instrumental in setting the tone that diversity, respect for others and equality of opportunity is integral to the college. This has been evidenced through the Principal's willingness to meet with staff and students to address key issues of disadvantage, to forging and developing global partnerships. Further, EB members act as EDI Champions to help drive inclusion efforts and ensure accountability, e.g. being members of the EDI Committee and BSL Working Group.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

The college's EDI committee continues to play an integral role in progressing our EDI agenda. Meeting regularly, the committee is responsible for reviewing, monitoring, and implementing key priorities.

The committee has a broad representation of 22 inspirational and skilled individuals from across the college: this includes Executive Board Equality Champions, staff from a range of academic departments, Student Engagement, Data Protection, Finance, Trade Union representatives, Student Services, Educational Support and our Staff Development Academy.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser

The role of EDI Adviser continues to be established within key college structures and is engaged with many of the practices across the college, regularly communicating and meeting with staff. This has resulted in staff engaging with the EDI Adviser from the outset for a number of key activities across the college including, e.g. Committee and Working

Group membership, policy and project reviews, and helping to shape the wider work and direction of NCL.

Purpose, Mission and Values

The college's purpose, mission and values continue to demonstrate that mainstreaming equality is a key priority. We believe that our values are core to developing an inclusive working and learning environment in which all of our college community can thrive and advance equality and inclusion in all that we do. This is reflected in all of our values but particularly 'we are just' and 'we respect all'.

Strategy

Our 2025 strategic drivers and their intersecting themes, reflect our dedication to mainstreaming equality, whilst also supporting our drive to achieving our Equality Outcomes.

Having made significant progress over the past 5 years with Strategy 2025, work is well underway to develop Strategy 2030. Strategy 2030 will allow us to build on our achievements to date and set out the future direction of our college by identifying key priorities and projects. More importantly it will continue to underpin our efforts to mainstreaming equality in all facets of college life.

Education Strategy

NCL's Education Strategy is designed to offer a learning experience that will develop inquisitive and creative minds, support ambition and talent while developing students and staff to allow them to realise their potential. The Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with our college community and provides the framework for staff to refresh their focus on transforming the curriculum. NCL is dedicated to delivering high quality education which promotes social justice and enables whole person education.

Central to this is our Student Partnership Agreement. The Student Partnership agreement outlines how we will work together to enhance the NCL student experience. It is built on equal collaboration between staff and students creating a supportive and innovative learning experience. Through this partnership we aim to empower students to shape the

curriculum ensuring that it stays relevant and future focused, run campaigns, like our Be Well to Do Well, and raise the student voice to ensure their feedback results in action.

Course Curriculum Review

The college's Course Curriculum Review not only demonstrates our hard work to continually evolve and transform the curriculum, but to also support the need to mainstream equality. Central to this process is meaningful consultation, reflection and evaluation involving students and other partners to act as change agents and co-creators in the delivery of education. Comprised of 3 stages, a recent review of the process has seen the inclusion of specific EDI related questions, ensuring that the college is listening to our students and has a better understanding of the diverse student body we work with.

Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA)

In response to the recommendations highlighted in the Thriving Learners Report, NCL have launched a focused Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA), a partnership between the college and all students.

In Scotland 64% of students reported low mental health and wellbeing and 14.67% of NCL students in academic year 2023 -2024 withdrew from their course due to health issues, including mental health. With this in mind, the Agreement is anchored in 3 key stages: raising awareness; identification of factors and triggers; and coping strategies.

NCL recognises the relationship between emotional wellbeing and student withdrawal. It is noted that students who struggle with wellbeing issues (such as stress, anxiety, depression, or physical health), or financial issues are likely to be challenged by the demands of their programme of study and, therefore, are more likely to withdraw from their studies.

To support a holistic approach which does not simply focus on academic results, NCL has developed 3 key campaigns:

- Be Well to Do Well
- Be Financially Fit
- Getting to Know You.

These critical campaigns have helped to bridge the gap between students' wellbeing and their academic studies whilst also addressing retention of our students.

BSL

In line with the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015, NCL has developed a British Sign Language Plan to enhance support for the deaf community. Our BSL Action Plan 2024-2029 aligns with the core themes of the national plan, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to advancing BSL support through expanded teaching resources. NCL is dedicated to promoting and supporting the use and understanding of British Sign Language, ensuring its integration within our college community. This plan also reflects our broader commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students, regardless of background.

Undergraduate School – NCL & UWS

Recognising that degree attainment in North Lanarkshire is below the national average in Scotland, since 2024 NCL students have had the opportunity to study a range of industry-focused degree programmes close to home and directly benefiting from the teaching expertise, industry knowledge and resource capability of NCL and the University of the West of Scotland.

Our new Undergraduate School has provided significant, diverse and sustained opportunities for people in Lanarkshire to gain a degree qualification. With 13 degrees programmes running, areas of focus have included health and social care, business, digital technologies, science and the Arts with a strong focus on supporting, developing and growing the SME community in the region.

We followed up the launch of our undergraduate school with the launch of The Learning Well, our digital campus, which has been designed to offer flexible, high-quality, blended education for Lanarkshire and beyond. But more importantly it aims to address the educational attainment gap experienced within the wider Lanarkshire area.

Our flagship course, BA Business and Leadership, has been designed to unlock potential and drive career growth by exploring marketing strategies, entrepreneurship, innovation and the impact of technology on business success.

The new qualification examines approaches for balancing environmental, social and economic factors in business and emphasises the need for adaptability, ethical considerations and sustainable practices in order to connect with communities, inspire organisational teams and achieve lasting success. The course to date has enrolled over 90 students either working or living in the Lanarkshire area.



Equality Impact Assessments

The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process continues to support the college in mainstreaming equality in all its day-to-day functions. A number of policies and activities have been supported by the EQIA process. Examples are wide ranging and include: Dogs on Campus Policy, Learner Behaviour Policy, All Staff Essential Learning Modules, First Aid Policy & Procedure (Mental Health & Physical First Aid) and Family Friendly Policies.

However, we recognised that work is still required to ensure staff have the confidence and awareness of equality considerations during decision-making processes, e.g. the importance of consultations and involvement of protected groups. To this end, EQIA guidance has been developed to support with the EQIA process and this has resulted in more staff connecting with the EDI Adviser to ensure a more thorough and comprehensive EQIA is completed. Future plans will also involve facilitating drop-in surgeries and training in EQIA completion.

Training

Our Staff Development Academy (SDA) is a team dedicated to supporting staff through their professional learning journey, working towards a culture of maximising and celebrating

opportunities. Furthering our commitment to mainstreaming equality in 2023, the SDA launched a new course 'All Staff Essential Learning' package.

The courses were developed by NCL staff for NCL staff, promoting the importance of working safely and effectively in relation to a range of critical issues including equality and diversity. The course contains five modules and completion of them all is an essential requirement for NCL staff.

- In 2023/24 the package included the module 'Equality, diversity and inclusion at NCL – The Basics', and was completed by 91% of staff.
- In 2024/25 the package included the module 'Understanding Race and Racism at NCL – The Basics' and was completed by 93% of staff.

Determined to continue the success of these modules, efforts are now in progress to design the next All Staff Essential Learning Course for 2025/26.

Mainstreaming Highlights

The following section provides some key highlights of how we are progressing mainstreaming at New College Lanarkshire (NCL).

Student Wellbeing Campaigns

Duty: Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Be Well To do Well Campaign

To support students to improve their wellbeing and remain on their programme of study, in 2024 NCL invested in three Wellbeing Academies (WA's) situated in each of our main campus sites, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, and Motherwell. The Academies are a pioneering initiative designed to prioritise wellbeing at the core of the student experience.

Recognising the critical link between student wellbeing and academic success, the WA's aim to provide holistic support services and programmes that cater to the physical, emotional, and social wellbeing needs of our students. By doing so, it seeks to enhance student retention, academic performance, and overall satisfaction, aligning with NCL's Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

Activities in our WA's have included holistic therapies intervention programmes, curriculum-based events, team building and health and wellbeing surgeries, and partnership events. To date our WA's have engaged 4226 students, and 126 of those students are in intervention programmes with the WA across each of our campuses.

Be Financially Fit Campaign

Financial instability is intrinsically linked to poor mental health causing stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and poor academic performance. NCL acknowledges that financial challenges are a key reason for student withdrawal. To mitigate against this, NCL introduced a flexible approach to learning, offering an adaptive curriculum to support students with work demands and family responsibilities. Whilst this was well received, it was recognised that students also require knowledge, skills, and support to take control of their finances and improve their overall financial well-being.

The Campaign empowers students with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to manage their finances effectively and alleviate financial stress. By fostering financial wellness, the campaign aims to equip students with the tools to make informed financial decisions and provides support to mitigate financial difficulties. Additionally, it seeks to reduce the risk of student withdrawal, thereby improving retention rates and overall student success.

Getting to Know You Campaign

NCL's Getting to Know You Campaign aims to better understand the needs of both current and prospective students by examining their behaviours and interactions through initiatives such as 'Getting to Know You.'

This approach allows NCL to gain insights into students' motivations and mindsets. By employing customer segmentation techniques, NCL can make more informed decisions to support its diverse student body. The Getting to Know You Campaign is framed around four broad themes: -

1. Gathering and integrating student data from prospect to graduate;
2. Engaging new students in extended induction programmes;
3. Understanding students' social dynamics to create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment;
4. Understanding students within an academic setting to create a supportive and enriching environment that empowers students to realise and achieve their full academic, personal and professional potential.

[Breaking the Cycle Conferences](#)

Duty: Fostering Good Relations / Advancing Equality of Opportunity

New College Lanarkshire's (NCL) ground-breaking inaugural conference Breaking the Cycle: Crime and Poverty was delivered at our Coatbridge Campus in 2023. It was driven by the necessity to delve into how poverty and crime intersect, creating a challenging cycle for individuals to break free from once they become involved in a criminal lifestyle. The initiative aimed to provide students and the community with a deeper understanding of these issues, thus fostering a more informed and empathetic approach.

The event brought together a diverse group of speakers, including an ex-police chief, a victim of crime, a Sociology professor, and a former criminal, to explore the intricate links between poverty and crime in Lanarkshire.

Following the success of our first conference, NCL delivered a second conference in 2024 - Breaking the Cycle: Pure class perspectives on Mental Health. Our second conference aimed to raise awareness surrounding the socio-economic challenges linked to class and access to mental health and well-being services. The conference was an opportunity to promote the college's latest retention campaigns while exploring the underlying factors driving the need for these initiatives. Many of our students come from areas of significant deprivation, and we wanted to inspire them to overcome the barriers imposed by poverty, class, and limited access to services.

The speakers shared diverse lived experiences and examined the factors influencing access to mental health services and the role of class in shaping these challenges. By aligning the event with the Be Well to Do Well campaign, the college demonstrated its dedication to creating an inclusive environment where well-being, regardless of background, is integral to student retention and success.

Both conferences welcomed over 300 staff and students.

As a college we are committed to bringing social inequalities and their intersections to the forefront and challenging them to help us become a more diverse and inclusive college. Given the success of these conferences, discussions are in motion to prepare for the next conference in late 2025.

'The 'The Breaking the Cycle' conferences were born out of a need to provide students with tangible, lived experience to bring their theoretical subjects to life. Many of our students and staff are emotionally moved by these conferences and they have highlighted the positive impact they can have on other people through their academic journeys and careers.'

Levi White ,

Lecturer, Humanities

Women's Aid Project results in She Means Business

Duty: Advancing Equality of Opportunity / Fostering Good Relations

The Women's Aid Project first launched in 2023, to help survivors of domestic abuse, often facing challenges such as low self-worth, feeling devalued, and having limited control over their daily lives, to reclaim their lives by breaking down barriers and providing a pathway to education.

Partnering with Cumbernauld and District Women's Aid (CADWA), college lecturers in our Access and Progression department designed a unique trauma-informed 12-week pilot course for 14 women in Women's Aid refuges. Women from diverse backgrounds, were offered the opportunity to share unique talents and skills, boosting their chances of a brighter future and form friendships.

The students worked hard over the 18-weeks and created craftwork, which has been sold at our spring fayre. This was made possible through the utilisation of the wellbeing fund by providing CRICUT machines, materials and external guest workshop facilitators. Each survivor has been encouraged and empowered to share their ideas and skills, including the construction of beautiful tissue paper flowers which were handed out for International Women's Day in 2024. A total of £300 has been raised and donated back to the Women's Aid to help support others in need.

"The ladies have built a fabulous rapport with the staff members and have demonstrated that they have grown to trust us over the weeks and feel able to talk to us about any concerns. This in turn has allowed us the opportunity to signpost additional supports where appropriate such as to the college clothing and beauty banks".

Lucie Armstrong ,

Academic Leader, Access and Progression

"Just talking to other women on the course has been really relaxing and distracting. We are all from different backgrounds, but we all have a lot in common, even if some of that's bad. I don't want to speak for everyone here but think we'd all lost ourselves - who we were - and this has helped us find ourselves again. I don't have nice enough words for what Lucie and Nicola have done for us."

Course participant

Following the positive success of our pilot, it has led onto a second year of the programme running in 2024/25 being devised as ‘She Means Business’ at Cumbernauld Campus. Progression discussions have also resulted in some students wishing to pursue full-time education within other NCL departments.

NCL has also mirrored the pilot project at our Coatbridge campus in 2024-2025 with the support of Monklands Women’s Aid. There are plans to further enhance the Social Enterprise into a full time “She Means Business” programme, which will hopefully widen participation to females throughout Lanarkshire.

Global Dental Partnerships

Duty: Fostering Good Relations

Launched in 2019 and completed in 2024, the DHTP initiative has set a new standard in international dental education by partnering with institutions in China, Mongolia, and the Philippines to address skill gaps in dental healthcare.

Funded by the UK-China-BRI Countries Partnership Initiative Fund, the project involved in-depth research and analysis of global dental nursing standards, leading to the creation of a standardised Certificate and Diploma in Dental Nursing, complemented by comprehensive support materials. One of its key accomplishments is the Dental Teaching Manual, now widely adopted by all partner institutions.

DHTP’s research-driven curriculum has enriched learning for students and staff, bolstering both educational standards and international cooperation.

To celebrate the project coming to an end, a 2-day event was held for delegates from the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, the National University of the Philippines and Shijianzhuang Medical College attended the event to represent China.

Although this funding has now come to an end, all partners wish to continue this collaboration in order to strengthen international relationships and upscale the quality of dental nursing education worldwide through multilateral activities. As a result, a memorandum of understanding was signed, committing all partners to future collaborations in dental education.

In addition to meetings specific to the project, partners had the opportunity to meet a group of NCL's HNC Dental Nursing students who delivered a presentation on their course and provided feedback on the Dental Nursing manual which was written by the 5 partner organisations as a project outcome.

The project itself won 2024's CDN Research Project Award with judges praising the project's achievement, with the award announcement celebrating their 'incredible work' in transforming dental healthcare education on a global scale.

[NCL International Week](#)

Duty: Fostering Good Relations

International Week at NCL has become a key fixture in our calendar of activities. It is an opportunity to celebrate the fact that there are staff and students of more than 40 nationalities at NCL.

It is not just about ticking boxes at NCL; but our driving force is to embrace a culture of respect and belonging into the fabric of NCL. This means recognising and appreciating the unique strengths and perspectives that each individual brings, regardless of their race, ethnicity, nationality, cultural background, religion, or any other aspect of diversity.

Our International Week in 2024 provided some of our ESOL students with a platform at Motherwell Campus to talk about their cultures and stories.

In 2025, the college hosted a number of activities around the theme 'Journeys to NCL' exploring staff and students experiences going from around the world to Lanarkshire and the challenging and beautiful parts of those voyages.

This year, with support from The Scottish Government's Scottish Educational Exchange Programme (SEEP), NCL was delighted to host an event at which partners from Europe and beyond came together to share information and practice on internationalisation in education.

Events included a full day conference attended by the Head of Education for the British Council in Scotland, a gala dinner attended by approximately 60 delegates which was managed, prepared and served by our Hospitality Students and entertainment provided by our very own NCL students.

Vex Robotics

Duty: Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination / Advancing Equality of Opportunity

VEX Robotics is more than just a competition, it's a chance for students to get hands-on with engineering, coding, and teamwork while having a great time. We're all about making robotics accessible, inclusive, and fun.

A weekly VEX class is run with Buchanan High School, allowing students to develop their problem-solving and technical skills in a supportive environment. Alongside the weekly session, we also run an evening VEX Robotics Club, bringing together students from 6 schools across North Lanarkshire, with participants ranging from 1st to 6th year. We're also incredibly proud to have ASN (Additional Support Needs) schools, Buchanan High School and Firpark High School, actively involved, ensuring robotics is an opportunity for everyone.

Sixty percent of our Vex Robotics Club are female, a massive step towards breaking down barriers in STEM. Only 29% of the current workforce are women (gov.uk). Seeing more young women actively engaging in robotics, coding, and engineering is exactly what we want to encourage, and it's fantastic to watch them grow in confidence and skill.

What makes this even more exciting is that everyone from the evening school club competes in the same competition, giving all students the chance to put their skills to the test in a real-world setting. Competing together strengthens their technical abilities and builds teamwork, resilience, and key skills that will benefit them beyond robotics.

Vex Robotics is about giving every student the chance to be part of something exciting, regardless of their background, experience, or ability. There's a place for everyone, whether it's building, coding, driving, or just figuring things out together. Looking ahead, we're excited to keep growing, reach more schools, and give even more students the opportunity to get involved. It isn't just about building robots, it's about building confidence, teamwork, and a love for STEM.

CADD lecturer Lisa Nicholson has also been recognised for her commitment to broadening access to STEM subjects with three nominations in the prestigious WorldSkills Equality awards - Role Model, Skills Competition Diversity Champion and Inclusive Skills Development categories.

“I always remember being the only woman in my HND class and not thinking I had anything to say. So I always make a point of bringing the female students in my class into the discussion, so they don’t feel shut out.”

Lisa Nicholson ,

Lecturer, CAD

Project Search

Duty: Eliminating Unlawful Discrimination / Advancing Equality of Opportunity

The DFN Project SEARCH is a one-year, full-time course which takes place within Lanarkshire’s University Hospital Wishaw and University Hospital Monklands. DFN Project SEARCH has a very clear goal - to equip young people with additional support needs with the essential skills that will help them progress towards competitive paid employment.

It is a partnership programme between North and South Lanarkshire Councils and offers internships with a local employers, NHS Lanarkshire and ISS.

The Project runs during the college academic year for a duration of 36 weeks. During this period, students have the opportunity to complete three work placements. They experience a mixture of classroom-based education and workplace experience. Students are offered the opportunity in a variety of placements throughout the site and will be supported by job coaches from Lanarkshire Councils. Furthermore, students will have the opportunity to evaluate their day and focus on key employability skills.

Each successful candidate becomes a student at New College Lanarkshire (NCL). The college provides academic structure whilst adhering to Project SEARCH guidelines

Curriculum areas covered include:

- Work experience
- Communication
- Employability skills
- Interview skills
- Personal development
- Health and Safety in the workplace
- C.V. development
- Money management

[New College Lanarkshire Foundation](#)

Duty: Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Since its launch just two years ago, the New College Lanarkshire (NCL) Foundation has provided tens of thousands of free breakfasts – no questions asked - for students. Every month 3500 students receive something to eat before they begin their studies. Sometime this is the only meal they will have all day.

The Foundation's ability to deliver is a result of the enormous buy-in of our staff who see the value of a breakfast reflected in class performance and student retention.

We have also received enormous backing from a series of supporters including our Patron, Lady Susan Haughey, star of stage and screen Elaine C Smith and broadcaster Lorraine Kelly.

NCL's Foundation exists because we believe students should simply be hungry for education. Food poverty should never be a barrier to learning.

As part of NCL's Draft Strategy 2030 we intend to create a series of social enterprises which will help us exponentially grow funding for the Foundation and allow us to create other supports to boost the learning opportunities for students across Lanarkshire.

The growth and direction of the Foundation will be led by staff, students and community needs and guided by the relationships enjoyed with all our stakeholders.

The Foundation's core aim is to remove every impediment and obstacle to education and to allow every person to fulfil their potential. By doing so we remove stigma, tackle poverty and create opportunity for individuals, communities and our nation.

2021 – 2025 Equality Outcome Progress

Equality outcomes are strategic commitments, and express results institutions will achieve to improve people's life chances over a four-year cycle. In Scotland, there is a specific duty for institutions to publish a set of equality outcomes and to report on progress every two years.

In 2021, NCL published 5 Equality Outcomes we said we would focus our energy on during 2021 - 2025.

- All students and staff at NCL will be confident calling out racism in all of its forms, as race and ethnicity must never be a barrier to accessing education or employment at NCL.
- NCL will provide a safe environment for all students and staff, with a particular focus on the needs of women and girls, and members of our LGBT community.
- All NCL staff will be confident providing support to students and colleagues in relation to gender identities, but particularly to members of our transgender community.
- All students and staff will be confident discussing disability – particularly in relation to mental health, knowing that they will be provided with support and understanding.
- NCL will be known for communicating at a human level, with kindness and compassion.

In our 2023 report, we recognised much of our work had been focused on fostering understanding and influencing change to address some of the most persistent inequalities in society. Since then, we have redoubled our efforts in addressing these inequalities and as such have implemented a range of strategies and initiatives to progress our equality outcomes.

This section of the report, using key examples, demonstrates some of the progress made in achieving our equality outcomes and the college's drive to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone.

Equality Outcome 1

All students and staff at NCL will be confident calling out racism in all of its forms, as race and ethnicity must never be a barrier to accessing education or employment at NCL.

What have we achieved since 2023?

- Developed NCL's 'Understanding Race and Racism – The Basics' Module as part of the All-Essential Staff Learning Course. The module enabled staff to become familiar with and understand race at NCL and the wider issues of race, racism and society. It was also an opportunity to help staff to understand racism through the lens of microaggressions. The module was completed by 93% of our staff.
- Celebration of Black History Month (BHM) and wider cultural and religious festivals, which are part of the college's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) calendar. For example, in 2024, in partnership with the sector's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Network (hosted by CDN), colleges across Scotland had the opportunity to engage in an inspiring and essential webinar in celebration of Black History Month. The live webinar involved a panel of Black educators from Scotland who shared their personal stories, reflecting on their lived experiences and reclaiming the narrative on Black history in education. The webinar was attended by 40 educators from across Scotland.
- International Week at NCL has become a fixture within the college's calendar of activities, celebrated by both staff and students. The event helps to showcase diverse cultures, traditions and talents represented within the college community. For example, in 2025, the event resulted in:
 - Welcoming a number of our international partners.
 - ESOL students showcased their cultural experiences including food, art, history, traditions and much more. Over 300 staff and students engaged with our ESOL students across the campuses.
 - 150+ staff and students across 3 campuses attended our Panel Discussions on 'Journeys to NCL'.
 - Kabbadi showcase delivered to NCL's Sport and Fitness students by NCL's very own International Kabaddi player, Arun Sidhu.
- As part of the Staff Development Academy 'Enhancing Learning and Teaching at NCL' development programme for academic staff in 2024, we spotlighted Race inclusion. This involved sharing of key resources for staff to use as part of their curriculum

development. We also hosted a 'Coffee conversation' attended by a guest speaker from City of Glasgow College to provide insights into navigating the education system through a diverse lens. The coffee conversation was attended by 30 staff from across our academic departments and received positive feedback.

'That session has to be by far the most informative session I have been to in a very very long time, it's given me quite a bit to think about.'

Attendee

Equality Outcome 2

NCL will provide a safe environment for all students and staff, with a particular focus on the needs of women and girls, and members of our LGBT community.

What have we achieved since 2023?

- Students and staff from NCL offered 286 P5 pupils from 17 different schools an introduction to Football, Dance, Rugby, Handball & Fun Fitness. Delivered in partnership with Active Schools North Lanarkshire, the day was designed to introduce girls to the life-changing physical and mental benefits of exercise. Our aim is to encourage and inspire young girls to pursue sport related studies and careers in the future, helping to address the gender gap and keep them active and engaged throughout life.
- The college has successfully achieved LGBT+ Youth Scotland Foundations Charter Award. The 2-year journey to achieving our award involved meeting a number of key standards:
 - established a Champions Group to progress the Charter journey
 - undertook consultation with our college community with approx. 350 staff and students participating
 - delivered training to 35 staff members
 - reviewed key policies and procedures to ensure LGBT+ inclusion
 - raised awareness of and engaged with LGBT+ cultural activities e.g. Trans Awareness Week and Pride march.

- To celebrate LGBT+ History Month, NCL worked in partnership with Terrence Higgins Trust to host talks on HIV Activism and how it resulted in social change in the 80s and 90s. Sessions were delivered at Coatbridge, Cumbernauld and Motherwell campus with 62 staff and students in attendance. An information stall was also made available for staff and students who were unable to attend the talks with 54 individuals visiting the stall. The success of our LGBT+ talks resulted in further discussions with THT to deliver a tailored workshop for students within the Dental department.
- Since 2023, NCL has worked in partnership with Naked by Unicorn Cup and Banner UK to provide students with a wide range of sustainable and reusable period products. The products have been offered in conjunction with continued training, support and education to the college community around menstrual health and what benefits and impacts the different options of period care can bring. Over the past 18 months approximately 1000 students have been engaged.
- To mark World Menopause Day and raise awareness of menopause more widely at NCL, regular podcasts, seminars and information sources have been shared with staff. In 2024, two Menopause Awareness sessions were hosted with one of our Menopause Champions and our Occupational Health Advisor. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing team will also be offering online training sessions on Menopause Risk Assessment - 21 members of staff have expressed their interest to attend the training. This has all been supported with a dedicated Menopause Page on the staff intranet.
- Supporting the National Campaign for Violence Against Women and Girls, the Beauty, Aesthetic and Hairdressing Team collaboratively organised an event with Police Scotland. The event was officially opened by Michelle McManus, and featured interactive workshops on wellbeing, mental health, and self-care. The event showcased the power of cross-departmental collaboration and engaged external organisations including Assist, Aura, Tony's Safe Place, Smart Works Scotland and Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid, to address social issues of violence and inclusivity. The event attracted approximately 100 staff and students on the day.
- A Working group has been established to help design and shape a college wide gender-based violence and sexual harassment campaign to raise awareness and promote a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all staff and students.
- At our Motherwell Campus, a dedicated LGBT+ Student Officer has been appointed to support the Student President. This voluntary role represents the interests of our LGBT+ student body and organises and co-ordinates events to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues on campus.

Equality Outcome 3

All NCL staff will be confident providing support to students and colleagues in relation to gender identities, but particularly to members of our transgender community.

What have we achieved since 2023?

- The New College Lanarkshire (NCL) has successfully achieved LGBT+ Youth Scotland Foundations Charter Award. The 2-year journey to achieving our award involved meeting a number of key standards:
 - established a Champions Group to progress the Charter journey
 - undertook consultation with our college community with approx. 350 staff and students participating
 - delivered training to 35 staff members
 - reviewed key policies and procedures to ensure LGBT+ inclusion
 - raised awareness of and engaged with LGBT+ cultural activities e.g. Trans Awareness, Pride march.
- In response to staff feedback a Trans+ Inclusion Working Group has also been established. The first meeting was held in 2024 as part of Trans Awareness Week. Twenty-two staff members from across academic departments and professional services attended the meeting to help inform our approach to Trans+ Inclusion at NCL. The meeting was also an opportunity for staff to hear about personal lived experiences from our LGBT+ Student Officer on non-binary and gender diverse identities.
- Discussions are underway with our partner Terrence Higgins Trust to deliver Trans+ Awareness training to members of our working group and the wider college community. The training will support staff to have a better understanding of the experiences and challenges transgender people may face at college and within wider society.
- To ensure NCL promotes and supports an inclusive and respectful environment for gender diversity and accommodates a wide range of identities, our application and enrolment form has been reviewed. Students now have the option to share their preferred pronouns, whilst still leaving space for those who are not ready or don't wish to disclose. The next phase of this initiative is to design and launch an awareness campaign with staff to help promote the use of pronouns and their importance in creating a welcoming and supportive environment.

Equality Outcome 4

All students and staff will be confident discussing disability – particularly in relation to mental health, knowing that they will be provided with support and understanding.

What have we achieved since 2023?

- With the support of the Estates Team and our Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team, students from our Supported Learning department launched the No Badge! No Parking! Campaign. Launched at our Motherwell Campus, 35 students were involved with the design of the campaign to help raise awareness and educate staff and students college wide on the need for students with disabilities to have access to accessible parking and the impact of incorrectly using the accessible parking bays. This has resulted in Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team, on occasion, patrolling the college car parks, making sure there is accessible parking for those with Blue Badges.
- Part of the college's sport and physical activity offering, a Boccia festival was held in Ravenscraig Sports Club which was open to the whole college community. Approximately 145 students participated on the day. Invitations were also extended to neighbouring colleges with representation from NCL Motherwell & Cumbernauld, Ayrshire college, Borders college and UHI Perth. This is complemented with the delivery of our weekly Boccia sessions, with approximately 30 students per week taking part.
- The recruitment of our Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) has resulted in a number of measures being implemented. NCL's MHFS's are required to sign in at Reception on their arrival and can be identified by the Green Lanyards they wear. The college has also introduced a Radio System which means our MHFA can be notified quickly should their response be urgently needed. Our Incident Reporting Forms, now have an additional section to notify if Aid was given as a result of Mental Health. All Statistics are presented at the Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing meetings which happen periodically throughout the year. Like general First Aiders, our MHFA's, are required to complete refresher courses.
- Launch of 3 Wellbeing Academies at our Motherwell, Cumbernauld and Coatbridge campuses. Activities in our Academies have included holistic therapies, intervention programmes, curriculum-based events, finances, team building and health and wellbeing surgeries, and partnership events. To date 4226 students have engaged with the Wellbeing Academy activities and 126 of those students are in intervention programmes across each of our campuses.

- At our Motherwell Campus, a dedicated Disability Awareness Officer has been appointed to support the Student President. This voluntary role represents the interests of our disabled student body and organises and co-ordinates events to raise awareness of issues on campus. This has resulted in working closely with the Supported Learning department, to deliver a number of activities within our Wellbeing Academies including meditation and mood management.
- NCL has undergone consultation with the Access and Progression and Supported Learning Teams along with Parents and Support Workers to ensure the college is accessible for all in all eventualities. With the Fire Lift Panels being installed this has allowed our students with additional support needs, to be able to learn on any level of the college, be able to visit the library, coffee shop and internet cafe. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team have conducted Fire Evacuation Training with all people who require a PEEP and their Support Workers to train them in what best to do in the event of an Emergency Evacuation. We currently have no staff members with the need of the use of a fire lift, however the addition of the fire lifts immediately breaks down any barriers in any employment or changes to personal circumstances. Both the Estates Team and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly for drills and further training on the Fire Lift Evacuation process.
- A Dogs on Campus Policy and Procedure has been developed to provide guidance to staff, students and visitors about permitting dogs on college premises. The policy particularly takes into account highly trained assistance dogs and their role in helping people with a disability to complete everyday tasks. It helps prevent staff, students and visitors with a disability experiencing any barriers or discrimination. To ensure the policy is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we have worked with a number of external organisations including Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) to ensure the policy meets the needs of all assistance dogs handlers – whether that be owner trained, trained by an independent trainer or trained by a charity (ADUK or non-ADUK).

Equality Outcome 5

NCL will be known for communicating at a human level, with kindness and compassion.

What have we achieved since 2023?

- Our Brand Team ensures regular communications on EDI related activity is embedded into the college communications strategy, e.g. newsletter communications raise awareness of BHM and Ramadan and how fasting may impact staff and students at New College Lanarkshire (NCL).
- NCL's EDI Calendar helps to demonstrate our support and commitment to respecting and promoting awareness of diverse communities, cultures and faiths by recognising key dates and celebrations that are relevant to achieving our equality outcomes and mainstreaming more broadly. The calendar helps inform and develop EDI related projects and initiatives within departments across Academic departments and Professional services.
- The college continues to work in partnership with a variety of partners and stakeholders, but particularly those who represent our diverse college community. Partners include CDN (FE) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Network, HE Sector, Anti-Racist Education Network (AREN), LGBT Youth Scotland, TransEdu Community of Practice, Rape Crisis Scotland, Terrence Higgins Trust and many more.
- The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Network have also been working collaboratively to strengthen equality, diversity and inclusion efforts across the sector to create a stronger voice and make meaningful change. Creation of sub groups to address some of the persistent inequalities outlined by SFC and EHRC – the sub groups, have involved joining forces to explore and address issues surrounding Black History Month, Gender Based Violence, LGBT+ Inclusion and Disability.
- Colours of our Scarves workshops delivered to SCQF L4 to L7 HNC Students by Fair Play Foundation. The Colours of our Scarves workshop is an anti-discrimination and education in-person workshop, promoting equality and tolerance within Scottish sport and wider society. The workshops have been delivered across both Motherwell and Broadwood campuses. The success of the workshops has resulted in them being delivered as part of the department's curriculum.

- The Brand Team has made considerable progress to raise awareness and strengthen the visibility of our under represented communities within both internal and external communications. For example, through the use of impactful visual content such as photography and videos, helping to create a more inclusive representation across various platforms.

2025 – 2029 Equality Outcomes

Equality outcomes are the results which we aim to achieve in order to further one or more of the needs outlined in the PSED: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

In Scotland, there is also a specific duty for institutions to publish a set of equality outcomes and to report on progress every two years.

This section of the report outlines NCL's Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029.

National Equality Outcomes (NEOs)

In 2019, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) entered into a strategic partnership to enhance leadership and oversight in tackling persistent inequalities in the tertiary system.

This resulted in a series of National Equality Outcomes (NEOs) being developed with an expectation that colleges and universities across Scotland contribute to these as part of their Public Sector Equality Duty.

NEOs were published by the SFC in January 2023. For this next reporting cycle, we have aligned the NEOs to the college's Equality Outcomes 2025-2029. Between now and April 2027, we will take appropriate measures to contribute to the achievement of these NEOs, where relevant to our students and staff.

Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029

Our refreshed Equality Outcomes 2025 – 2029, are largely focused on continuing some of our current equality outcomes (with revisions) for some of the 25-29 cycle, subject to review in 2027, whilst also contributing to the national equality outcomes.

We acknowledge there is no one size fits all approach to achieving equality and inclusion and we also acknowledge this is not something which can be achieved overnight. Therefore, we want to remain measured with our approach.

Our decision to continue our current equality outcomes has been based on a number of factors.

Whilst the college has made significant progress in achieving our equality outcomes, we feel there are still areas of work which are outstanding which we would like to address. This is in part due to the fact that our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 were tackling issues which are unfortunately entrenched and far-reaching within society. Having set clear foundations to build on further, the college will redouble its efforts in tackling the most persistent inequalities in society.

By adopting this approach, the college is not only advancing its internal equality priorities but also contributing to the broader national equality agenda. This dual focus ensures a more co-ordinated and impactful response to some of the most long standing and complex inequalities.

The college has also used internal and external evidence relating to different protected characteristics to inform our decision. Internal evidence has been supplemented with national and sector wide priorities in relation to persistent inequalities. Some of our evidence includes:

- SFC College Staff Data
- Scotland Census 2022
- Scottish Trans and Non-binary Experiences Report 2024
- LGBT Health and Wellbeing: Trans People and Work Report
- Life in Scotland report for LGBT Young People in 2022
- Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- Emily Test / Equally Safe Strategy
- Women and Equalities Committee Sexual harassment of women and girls in public place Report
- EHRC Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities challenged
- SFC/EHRC Persistent Inequalities Report
- Hate Crime in Scotland Statistics
- NCL Internal Staff Data and Student Records
- NCL's LGBT+ Consultation
- NCL Wellbeing Academy Survey
- NCL Student Satisfaction Surveys

More importantly, the college has also listened to our college community to ensure we are working towards equality outcomes which are the most appropriate for us as an institution. Consultation was undertaken in the form of drop-in sessions and staff and students had the opportunity to contribute to our decision to continue the current equality outcomes. To ensure as many voices as possible were represented, three separate drop-in sessions were facilitated.

Dedicated sessions were also facilitated with our EDI Committee, Academic Leaders and Professional Services Leads. Our Executive Board has finalised, approved and endorsed the final equality outcomes.

Equality Outcome 1:

NCL will provide a safe and inclusive environment for all staff and students from different protected characteristics, creating a sense of belonging.

Alignment with National Equality Outcome:

- Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.
- Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system.
- Staff and students feel supported and safe and are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress.
- Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.
- Staff and students know how to access support about violence, harassment and abuse, report their experience and feel properly supported in doing so because the services are fit for purpose.
- Institutions can evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.
- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college.

Protected Characteristics: All

Duty: Eliminate unlawful discrimination / Advancing equality of opportunity / Fostering Good Relations

Equality Outcome 2:

NCL will create a culture where students and staff feel confident discussing disabilities, including mental health, and are confident in accessing the appropriate supports.

Alignment with National Equality Outcome:

- The success rates and retention rates of college and university students who declare a mental health condition will improve.
- Disabled students report feeling satisfied with the overall support and reasonable adjustments received, including from teaching staff, while on their course.
- Disabled staff and students report feeling safe in the tertiary system.
- Men (staff and students) know how to access mental health support (recognising intersectionality within that group).

Protected Characteristics: Disability

Duty: Advancing equality of opportunity / Fostering Good Relations

Equality Outcome 3:

LGBT+ staff and students experience feeling safe being 'out' at college.

Alignment with National Equality Outcome:

- Trans staff and students report feeling safe to be themselves in the tertiary system
- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual staff and students report that they feel safe being 'out' at university and college.

Protected Characteristics: Sexual Orientation / Gender Reassignment

Duty: Fostering Good Relations / Advancing Equality of Opportunity / Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination

Equality Outcome 4:

Staff and students feel confident in identifying and addressing racial and religious discrimination.

Alignment with National Equality Outcome:

- Staff and students feel supported and safe and are confident that complaints of harassment or bias on the grounds of race will be dealt with appropriately because complaints procedures are fit for purpose and offer effective redress.
- Students and staff report that they have confidence in institutional report and support mechanisms because they are fit for purpose.

Protected Characteristics: Race / Religion or Belief

Duty: Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination / Advancing Equality of Opportunity / Fostering Good Relations

Looking Ahead

This report cannot fully convey the breadth of ongoing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work at New College Lanarkshire (NCL). However, what it does do is provide a glimpse into the progress and showcases key accomplishments from the past 2 years. More importantly, it demonstrates our unequivocal commitment to challenging the most entrenched inequalities within society to ensure everyone at NCL can succeed regardless of their background or circumstances.

We acknowledge the challenges ahead for both the college and the sector as a whole, but we are firmly committed to strengthening our efforts to mainstreaming equality, achieve our equality outcomes, whilst also contributing to the progress of the national equality outcomes.

The development of Strategy 2030 is progressing well. This strategic framework will consolidate the college's achievements to date and set a clear direction by identifying key priorities and initiatives. Critically, Strategy 2030 will continue to underpin and strengthen our commitment to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work.