

MAYOR OF LONDON



SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

A toolkit for London's Adult Education providers

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Acknowledgements and contributions

The Adult Education providers 'Supporting
an inclusive and representative workforce'
toolkit was authored by The Inclusive
Village Ltd.

Contents





Introduction

The purpose of this toolkit

In the Autumn of 2022, the Greater London Authority (GLA) commissioned this toolkit to support Adult Education providers to become more representative and inclusive organisations. The toolkit is a resource to help providers lead by example in their local communities, implement effective practice and share learning within the sector.

Who it is for

The toolkit is targeted at all City Hall funded Adult Education providers. These providers include Further Education Colleges, Independent Training Providers, Institutes of Adult Learning, Sixth Form Colleges and Local Authority providers. The toolkit can also be used more widely across the Adult Education and Further Education (FE) sectors.

How to use it

The GLA recognises that providers are starting from different positions on their journeys to demonstrate progress against representation and inclusivity expectations. There are also providers of different types and different sizes. Therefore, providers should consider how they can adapt the recommendations and actions provided in this toolkit to suit their specific contexts. We acknowledge that toolkits on their own cannot solve the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) challenges that the sector faces. However, if applied reflexively and diligently, toolkits can powerfully guide organisations willing to make change happen.



The structure

In this toolkit you will find the following 8 elements:

1 FOUR KEY THEMES

The toolkit is structured around 4 themes derived from speaking to sector EDI leads. These themes depict what sector EDI leads consider key priorities for organisations wanting to build an inclusive and representative workforce.

2 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Under each theme are 3-5 recommended actions that providers can adapt and implement in their organisations.

3 GUIDANCE STEPS

Under each action we provide guidance steps and suggestions on how these actions may be implemented.

4 RESOURCES

Under resources, additional information supporting the actions and implementation can be found.

5 INDUSTRY EXAMPLES

We provide examples of how some providers have implemented some of the actions outlined.

6 REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

After considering each theme, actions and implementation guidance, practitioners are encouraged to pause, and reflect using the discussion questions provided. Discussion questions can also be used in joint forums in the sector to delve deeper into any institutional challenges that may be encountered while implementing each action. Such challenges may be as a result of the size or type of provider. It also allows practitioners to problem solve, thinking of ways to address their challenges.

7 ACTION TEMPLATE

Before starting to explore each theme, practitioners are encouraged to use the template provided in [Appendix 1](#). At the end of each theme, outline how you are going to implement the actions as well as any timelines and resources you will assign to each task.

8 APPENDICES

In the appendices section, we provide background and further information on how the toolkit was developed.

Ultimately, we encourage providers to seek connections and shared learning with other providers of the same size or type. In addition, providers at the same stage on the inclusion journey could seek peer support and insights from those slightly ahead in building an inclusive and representative workforce. Where additional support is needed, organisations may seek external expertise.

A black and white photograph of three women sitting on a dark leather sofa in a modern office setting. They are engaged in a conversation, with papers and laptops on a wooden coffee table in front of them. A large potted plant is behind them, and a window with a city view is in the background. The text 'Toolkit summary' is overlaid in the bottom left corner.

Toolkit summary



Thematic Area	Actions
Using data as a starting point	Review workforce data to gain insights on representation gaps that need to be addressed in your workforce.
	Develop an action plan.
	Engage your senior leaders and staff networks to plan actions that will lead to meeting the identified priorities for your organisational context.
	Use learning and development to embed actions across the organisation.
	Adopt industry standards and charters.
Recruitment	Build positive relationships with diverse and underserved communities to attract diverse talent into your recruitment pipeline.
	Diversify your recruitment materials and channels.
	Address bias at all stages of recruitment.
Workforce planning, retention & progression	Publish career pathways as part of workforce planning.
	Support the growth and development of underrepresented groups.
	Offer reasonable adjustments.
	Embed EDI principles into all procedures; including staff appraisal, complaints & discipline procedures.
Creating a sense of belonging in the workforce	Engage staff through internal and external communication.
	Celebrate diversity in the workplace.
	Create spaces for staff to connect, share and learn.



THEME 1:

Using data as a starting point

This theme provides guidance on gathering workforce data and insights as a recommended first step in developing an inclusive and representative workforce. Specifically, the theme addresses how to deal with challenges such as low diversity data disclosure (personal data sharing) in the sector. Our research found instances where some providers reported as little as 1% disclosure rates in their organisations. In such cases, low disclosure rates may be due to staff concerns about being treated unfavourably if they share personal characteristics data. Staff may also be unsure of how the organisation intends to use their data. The theme also provides brief guidance on how to put together an action plan suitable for your specific context. Similar guidance on the use of data can also be found in the GLA's Workforce Integration Network resources such as the WIN Workforce Data Equality [Guide](#). This guide provides a step-by-step approach on how to collect, analyse and act on workforce data.

Recommended actions

Thematic Area 1	Summary of actions
Using data as a starting point to develop an inclusive and representative workforce	1 Review workforce data to gain insights on representation gaps that need to be addressed in your workforce at every level.
	2 Develop an action plan.
	3 Engage your senior leaders and staff networks to plan actions that will lead to meeting the identified priorities for your organisational context.
	4 Use learning and development to embed actions across the organisation.
	5 Adopt industry standards and Charters



1

Review workforce data to gain insights on representation gaps that need to be addressed in your workforce at every level

- 1.01.** To start, use public and industry sources to access data on the demographics of the communities you are located within, and of your learners. This will give you a picture of what being representative and inclusive as a workforce would need to look like for your type and size of organisation. You can start with free benchmarking tools such as the [Workforce Data Equality-London Benchmarking tool](#).
- 1.02.** Review the “people data” you hold in your organisation and use other statutory reporting data to gain insights. For example, your institution may already be required to submit staff data to the Department for Education as part of the annual FE Workforce data collection. The [FE Staff Record specification](#) outlines the

types of providers required to submit this data. Submitting organisations should note the insights from their submissions and other staff data held, for example by working out representation by percentage across all protected characteristics.

- 1.03.** Check to what extent your internal data matches the representation patterns of your industry, learners, communities at all levels and functions.
- 1.04.** Consult with your staff networks and learners through surveys, focus groups and/or interviews on what their vision of a representative and inclusive workforce should look like. Ask for their ideas on what improvements should be made. This can be done internally or with the help of an external consultant, depending on resource availability and level of expertise on data collection and analysis.

- 1.05.** Review staff turnover data within your organisations, breaking down staff turnover, progression and retention rates by different groups that you would like to see better represented.
- 1.06.** Take an intersectional approach when working with data. (For more on [intersectionality](#), see resources below).

If you currently hold limited data; start by encouraging people to share their data

- 1.07.** Consult with other HR functions on what mechanisms are available to start capturing staff characteristics for the purposes of EDI progress.
- 1.08.** Seek the support you need to establish a system for capturing employee data and characteristics to allow you to understand underrepresentation and what may be causing this. Pay close attention to language, tone and terminology in the questions used to request staff data.

- 1.09.** Use a campaigns approach to encourage employees to share their data. For example, organise webinars to explain why this data is important for the progress you hope to make, and by linking in to wider goals such as being able to report gender, disability and ethnicity pay gaps.
- 1.10.** Consider making the data capture system self-service and accessible for those with different needs. The system should explain how this data will be stored, used, who can access it, and that employees have freedom to change or remove their data at will.
- 1.11.** Work closely with your organisation's data protection officers and managers to ensure full compliance with data regulations.



Resources

- ✎ [Workforce Data Equality Guide](#) holds data on London's population across various characteristics with practical guidance on how to collect intersectional data. It's a benchmarking tool against which you can compare your own workforce data to London's diversity. It also contains a useful [Beginner's Guide to Data Collection Methods](#), and further [guides for smaller organisations](#) facing initial challenges related to size, limited budgets or lack of EDI expertise.
- ✎ Read this article ([Framing Questions on Intersectionality](#))¹ for how intersectionality can be applied in equality settings. Intersectionality refers to how identity or individual characteristics such as race, class, or gender may be interconnected and simultaneously create overlapping and interdependent systems of advantage or disadvantage. An intersectional approach supports an understanding of data, experience and narratives that spotlight how multiple forms of discrimination or disadvantage can be experienced simultaneously, in different ways by people of different backgrounds.

¹ US Human Rights Network – Rutgers Centre for Women's Global Leadership

2

Develop an action plan



Your data review process above should give you some key insights that you can use to build an action plan to make your workforce more representative and inclusive. [Appendix 1: Action template](#) provides a sample document that you can adapt using further guidance below;

- 2.01.** Make a list of all insights you have gathered from the data and consultation with your staff, for example, a lack of representation of Black females in senior roles may be an example insight.
- 2.02.** Outline some key actions your organisation can take in the immediate, medium, and long term to increase representation and better experiences in the areas identified above. For example; in the immediate term, we are going to identify the number of Black females who are immediately ready for promotion

within the next 6-12 months; in the medium-longer term we commit to attracting more Black females into our senior management applicant pool; we will work with talent agencies that can supply these candidates such as [BYP network](#).

- 2.03.** Allocate responsibilities and delivery timelines against each action you set.
- 2.04.** Outline resources you will need to deliver each action and how you will get these resources.
- 2.05.** Ensure there are clear goals to work towards and to hold the business to account. Demonstrate through clear communications to your stakeholders that this is not a tick-box exercise, but a goal aimed at supporting wider EDI aspirations.
- 2.06.** You may further develop this action plan into a wider EDI strategy. (See resource section below for how to).

**Resources**

-  To ensure your Action Plan is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART), refer to this sample [Inclusion Action Planning Template](#).
-  In this recorded webinar, [The Inclusive Village](#) provides further guidance on how to [Build a Sustainable Diversity & Inclusion Roadmap](#).





3

Engage your senior leaders and staff networks to plan actions that will lead to meeting the identified priorities for your organisation

- 3.01.** While developing your action plan and strategy as above, you may need to work closely with a representative group, such as an EDI committee, or a diversity Employee Resource Group (ERG) on this to ensure staff voices are represented.
- 3.02.** Where such groups don't yet exist, set them up, making sure you also identify senior diversity champions and sponsors. Ensure these groups are well supported, have clear terms of reference and have clear connections to the leadership and governance structures of the organisation.
- 3.03.** Depending on the size and type of the organisation, you may designate roles with a main focus on delivering EDI objectives for example, creating a Head of EDI, or EDI manager role to oversee function, report and manage EDI internally and externally.
- 3.04.** Smaller organisations can second people (preferably people with lived experience and some expertise) into an EDI role. You may also consider job-shares with appropriate recognition and compensation.
- 3.05.** Secure buy-in from your senior stakeholders (find further guidance on the resource section below). This will help with securing adequate resources to support EDI objectives so that the burden of ensuring progress is not squarely borne by the underrepresented groups.
- 3.06.** Share your plans and activities with your entire workforce to show why this journey matters to your organisation, particularly championed by your senior leaders.

- 3.07.** To advance, work closely with HR and IT to develop systems or processes that can map the relationship between employee appraisals, interview feedback and career progression so that data is triangulated and insights can be communicated to the business.

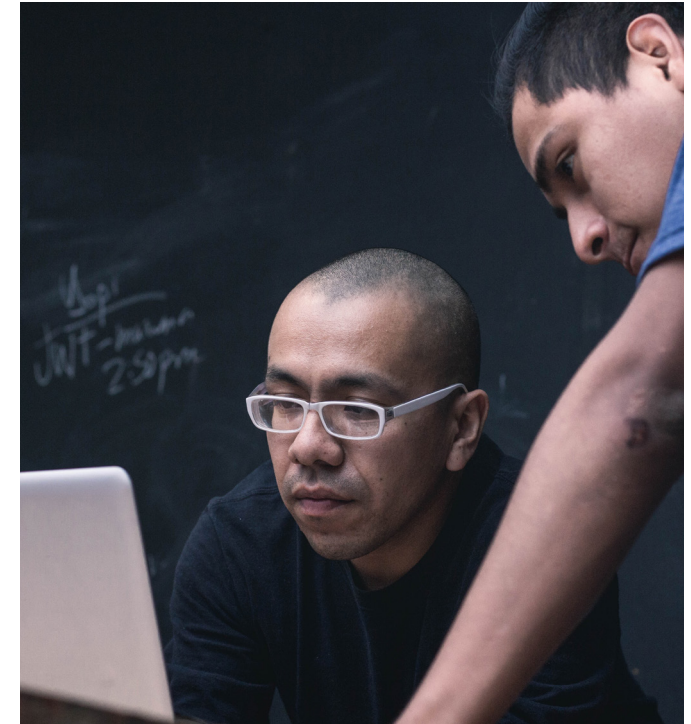
Resources

-  [How to engage your stakeholders in EDI](#)
-  Acas: Addressing inequalities: [The role of staff race networks](#)
-  TED Talk: [“How Studying Privilege Systems Can Strengthen Compassion”](#) can help you start conversations with your senior leaders.
-  [Improving staff equality networks through partnership working: A good practice guide](#)

4

Use learning and development to embed actions across the organisation

- 4.01.** Include EDI insights from the process above in induction programmes and raise awareness of employee network groups to incoming staff members. This will encourage new staff to understand the organisation's EDI goals and, therefore, be more willing to disclose data. It will also encourage participation in any planned activities and the overall vision.
- 4.02.** Undertake training programmes such as Active Bystander and Active Allyship, inclusive leadership, The "Let's Talk About" series to begin conversations around different topics.
- 4.03.** If training is procured from external parties, ensure you work with providers with lived experience and from underrepresented groups.
- 4.04.** Provide other resources such as an inclusive language guide to enable the workforce to build confidence around different diversity topics.



Resources

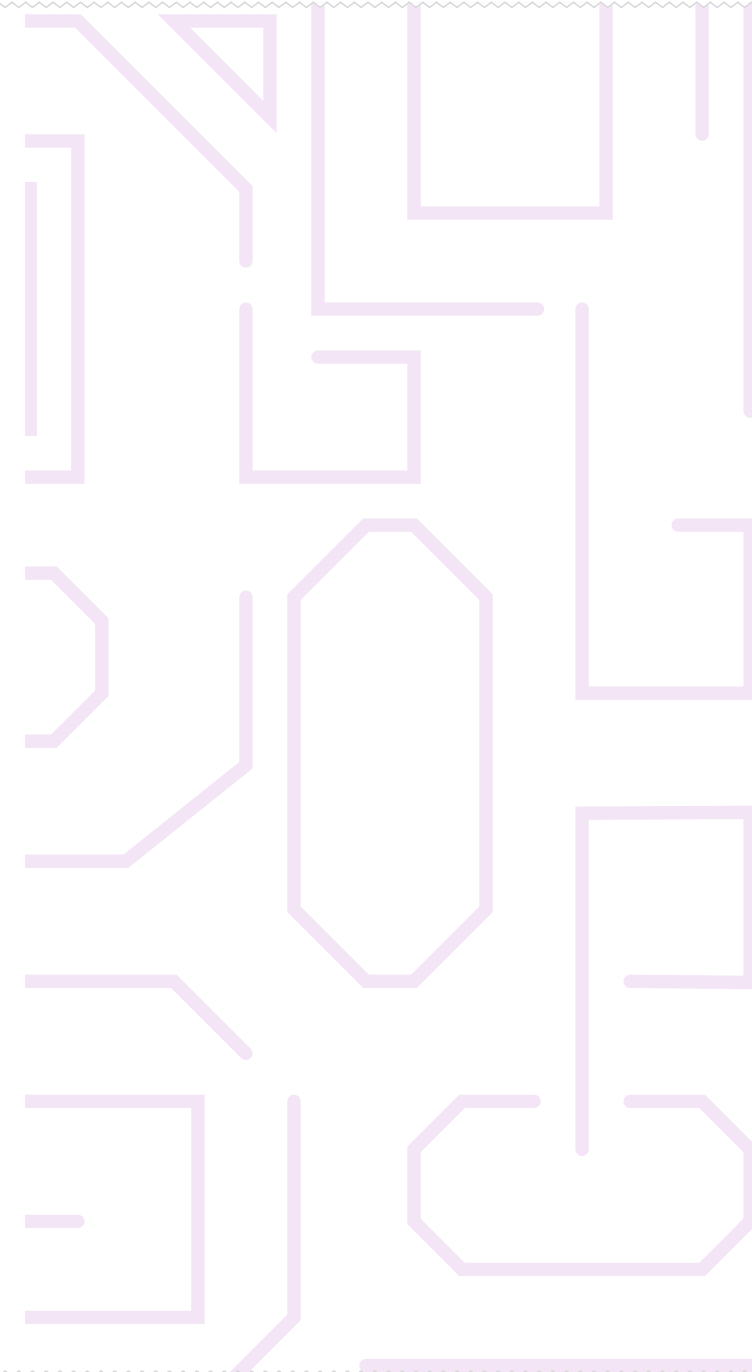
- ✎ [Sample Inclusive Language Guide](#) by Hackney Council
- ✎ Video: [Becoming a White Ally](#)
- ✎ Video: [An Active Bystander](#)
- ✎ For other easy to implement solutions to improve racial equality, but which can be adapted to other areas, see the [Race Equality Network site](#).

5

Adopt industry standards and charters to signal institutional commitment to EDI

Recommendations include:

- 5.01.** The Mayor's Good Work Standard (GWS) brings together best employment practice, links to resources and support from across London to help employers improve their organisations. The standards cover 4 pillars of accreditation namely; fair pay and conditions, workplace wellbeing, skills and progression, diversity and recruitment. All these areas are crucial in supporting an inclusive and representative workforce.
- 5.02.** Advance HE's Race Equality Charter provides a framework through which organisations can identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers standing in the way of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students. Member institutions develop initiatives and solutions for action, and can apply for a Bronze or Silver Race Equality Charter award, depending on their level of progress.
- 5.03.** The Athena Swan charter provides institutions, academic departments, and professional units with ideas for impactful and sustainable gender equality work, building capacity for evidence-based progress.
- 5.04.** Stonewall Work Equality Index provides clear guidance on how to become more inclusive as an employer, but also a benchmark against other organisations to aid progress and learning from best practices.
- 5.05.** Disability Confident enables employers to create more accessible and more inclusive workplaces for those with disabilities and long-term health conditions.



Industry example 1

Learning from your data to create incremental progress

In this example, one provider describes how they have used data and insights to reflect on the progress they have made with racial equality. The provider focused on race equality progress, while incrementally extending actions to other areas such as disability where there are data sharing challenges. They are drawing line managers into conversations that will enable the change to happen. As the case study shows, organisations who find gaps in multiple areas can develop an incremental approach, rotating the spotlight from one issue to the next, and applying lessons learnt.

With the campaigns that followed the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, this provider reviewed their Race Action Plan, followed through with implementation and seen great improvements in the degree of engagement of their minority ethnic staff.

In wanting to make similar progress towards disability action, the provider noticed through their people survey that disabled employees reported a lower degree of engagement. They began to prioritise disability action starting with access to workplace adjustments. In addition, they are supporting managers to have regular conversations with staff to establish areas of need and the right kinds of adjustments and support needed for different individuals with disability.

“

Race has been a big area for us. We have made sure to stick within the guidance of the Equality Act and got really good data on race. And we've been able to undertake some positive action as well. For disability, we want to do the same, but unfortunately, we still haven't got the data sharing rates to enable us to make progress. We know there's a problem, but we've not got the evidence to back action. As such, we're doing a campaign to encourage more staff members to share data with us.

”

AE provider example



Reflection/Discussion Guide

As a next step, use the Reflection and Discussion Guide below. A Discussion Guide will appear at the end of each theme to allow you to pause, reflect and develop your actions. Discussion questions can be used for reflections by individuals, teams or in joint forums to delve deeper into any institutional challenges that may be encountered while implementing each action. Such challenges may be as a result of the size, context or type of provider. It also allows practitioners to problem-solve and think of solutions while setting out actions.

Reflection/Discussion Guide

1. What workforce data do you currently gather to support representation and inclusivity objectives?
2. Which of the 5 actions recommended will you find easiest or most challenging to implement and why?
3. How will you address these challenges based on the recommended actions and resources provided?

Proceed to Action Template

Using your adapted version of the Action Template ([Appendix 1](#)), set out your actions and timelines for Theme 1.



THEME 2:

Recruitment

This theme provides guidance on recruiting a diverse and representative workforce. Providers have indicated that there are certain groups that they generally struggle to attract into certain roles. For example, one provider noted that student-facing roles tend to have more diversity, whereas business support areas such as finance tend to attract less diverse candidate pools. This provider illustrated how a recent advertisement for the Head of Management Information System in their organisation failed to attract any female candidates. She noted that this was reflective of the senior finance field (external factors), which is predominantly white male-dominated at senior levels. Such nuanced reflections on specific contexts should guide recruitment decisions. The insights can lead to creative problem solving on what organisations need to do to attract and recruit the underrepresented groups, challenging long-standing organisational and industry norms.

Recommended actions

Thematic Area 2	Summary of actions
Recruitment	1 Build positive relationships with diverse and underserved communities to attract diverse talent into your recruitment pipeline, and diversify your recruitment channels.
	2 Diversify your recruitment materials.
	3 Address bias at all stages of recruitment.



1

Build positive relationships with diverse and underserved communities to attract diverse talent into your recruitment pipeline

- 1.01.** You may start by researching activities in your local community that support underrepresented groups, and arrange to attend, sponsor or collaborate on these activities.
- 1.02.** Proactively share your staffing needs within the community, industry groups, sector bodies, your staff, and universities that have a [high diversity index](#).
- 1.03.** Reach out to local skills partnerships and charities that are engaged in the diverse talent space.
- 1.04.** Build relationships with diverse industry experts and senior leaders who may act as referral points for diverse talent or who may share vacancies within their networks. Research suggests “word of mouth” as one of the key ways through which many get to hear about sector roles and are motivated to apply.
- 1.05.** Diversify advertisement channels. Industry reports estimate that 80% of roles are advertised on college websites only, thereby missing the potential for wider reach. Explore new channels such as industry networks, specialist recruitment agencies who are linked into community organisations, diversity focused publications such as [Panjab Times](#), [BYP network](#), [Pink Jobs](#), [diversity job boards](#), [Even Break](#), [Project Search](#).
- 1.06.** If working with recruitment agencies, be explicit about your desire to attract a shortlist of candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- 1.07.** Encourage your diverse pool of learners to join your workforce. [Industry reports](#) have highlighted that up to 59% of Initial Teacher Education (ITE learners completing diploma/ PGCE, CERT Ed in 2016-17 progress to a teaching role within 6 months of completing their course.

2

Diversify your recruitment materials

- 2.01.** Work with your comms and marketing team to visually promote underrepresented communities and groups in positive marketing, promotional materials, and recruitment campaigns to enhance your employer brand to these communities. [Industry reports](#) have highlighted that providers with stronger, visually diverse brands attract good industry partners and potential candidates who become a network from which they can recruit widely.
- 2.02.** Include impactful diversity statements in your recruitment materials and ensure that inclusive language is used. (See resources section below for examples).
- 2.03.** Reframe recruitment ads to include “purpose driven language” e.g., attracting those who would like to support learners or staff from underrepresented backgrounds to thrive and reach their full potential.
- 2.04.** Ensure information on roles, recruitment materials and your website are clear, and use formats that are accessible. Ensure materials can be used effectively by as many people as possible, including those with impaired vision, motor difficulties, and other disabilities. (See resources for government accessibility regulations).

**Resources**

- ✎ Diversity impact statement: A good statement will help you attract top talent. The statement is an expression of your organisation’s commitment to an equal and inclusive workplace, ideally developed in consultation with your workforce.
- ✎ See other insights on inclusive recruitment and selection including key definitions, positive action, combating unconscious bias, accessibility etc. from the [National Ambulance BME Forum](#).
- ✎ Familiarise yourself with [Government Accessibility Regulations](#).

3

Address bias at all stages of recruitment

- 3.01.** Implement anonymous recruiting techniques such as removing any biographical information from the initial hiring stages. This will help address any shortlisting bias. Monitor and track any improvements this is making over time. (See resources below for sample tools and guidance).
- 3.02.** Prepare and train diverse recruitment panels to signal to candidates that you embrace and empower people from different backgrounds.
- 3.03.** Use “recruitment champions” or change makers that participate throughout the recruitment campaign, and can provide critical feedback to tackle any problem areas.
- 3.04.** Vet any resources, recruitment tools and procedures including work-sample tests, presentations, interview questions, psychometrics etc., to ensure they have the least adverse impact on minority groups.
- 3.05.** Consider positive action e.g., the “Rooney Rule” – this rule requires at least one woman and one underrepresented minority to be considered within the final pool of candidates for either every open position or every open senior position. The “rule” must comply with Positive Action requirements under the Equality Act 2010 e.g., candidates must equally meet the job requirements (See resources for guidance).

Resources

- ✎ Unbiasify Chrome Extension: You can use this Google Chrome extension to remove candidate names, photos or other identifying information from social media sites, to mitigate unconscious bias.
- ✎ Data people provide a job description software for guidance on language, requirements, and other important content. Textio works similarly.
- ✎ Gender Decoder provides free screening for job description to attract more females to your application pipeline.
- ✎ Sample guidance for the “Rooney Rule” and what to watch out for when applying this rule. Specific illustration in line with UK law.
- ✎ A guide for inclusive recruitment for managers covers most of the points outlined here and provides additional in-depth guidance including advice on diverse recruitment panels.

Industry example 2

Diverse panels can also be a great tool for staff engagement

In this example, a provider describes how they have trained and adapted the use of diverse panels to include more junior staff. This approach has strengthened their organisational culture leading to greater engagement and retention of more junior staff aspiring for senior roles. Knowing that underrepresented groups tend to be found in more junior roles, this approach can work in any organisation regardless of size or type.

This practitioner described how one of their receptionists was a member of a panel set up to recruit for an Assistant Principal role. They noticed that bringing different perspectives around the table creates a clear added value. It enables those who have “been around the table for so long” to recognise certain things that they may no longer see. A new voice in the room can raise questions that allow panels to probe more, and notice things that they would otherwise take for granted.

The provider got feedback that junior staff involved in this process found it valuable, realising what recruitment at that level looks like, and some of the skills required. The initiative helped this provider to address what would have remained a “senior echo chamber” that keeps perpetuating itself through homogenous decision-making. In addition, it also helped junior staff in terms of their own personal development, and is a means of supporting a potential pipeline of leaders. The initiative had a word-of-mouth ripple effect, and is demonstrating to the

workforce that the provider is committed to more than just a tick box exercise.

“

One of the things we did at a local level for the Adult Education service is the use of diverse panels. We weren't just looking at it in terms of ethnicity, and gender only, we were also looking at it from the perspective position in the organisation. So, if a senior role was being recruited, we were trying to avoid senior people who are recruiting in their own likeness, sitting on the panels, and making homogenous unchallenged decisions. We asked for volunteers across the organisation, and trained them on good recruitment practices so that they could feel that they had an equal voice at the table. ”

AE provider example



Reflection/Discussion Guide

1. What areas of your organisation may have challenges attracting certain underrepresented groups?
2. What might the specific challenges be, and how will you address them?
3. Which of the 3 actions recommended will you find easiest or most challenging to implement and why?
4. How will you address these challenges based on the recommended actions and resources provided?

Proceed to Action Template

Using your adapted version of the Action Template ([Appendix 1](#)), set out your actions and timelines for Theme 2.



THEME 3:

**Workforce planning,
retention, and progression**

This theme provides guidance on workforce planning, retention, and progression. The process of retaining and progressing staff to senior levels is most successful if inclusive recruitment efforts are creating the desired change at all levels together with progressive use of data. Workforce planning can enable providers to understand any vacancies that may arise in upcoming forecasting periods. Planning can also help providers to build requirements for a more diverse workforce into their planning efforts given a majority of the sector's workforce are within the age band of 50-54 with the median age being 47.

Retention and progression

Research shows that across England, retention figures in the Adult Education sector remain in line with other sectors. With longer tenures in some roles, a key challenge for the sector may become a lack of clear data to break down retention rates by underrepresented characteristics, and the lack of diversity in senior management roles.

Similarly, retention can be strengthened by a robust consideration for reasonable adjustments where needed. Reasonable

adjustments refer to accommodations employers can make to enable employees with disabilities or other needs to continue to work effectively. Adjustments range from provision of specialist equipment and environments, to flexible work arrangements. They also include finding alternatives to the usual ways of accomplishing tasks.

Inclusive workplaces are those that are safe enough for employees to fully share their adjustment needs without fear of being stereotyped or disadvantaged in any way, impacting their retention and progression. Inclusive workplaces clearly signpost effective adjustments that are available in a way that employees immediately know how to access them.

Recommended actions

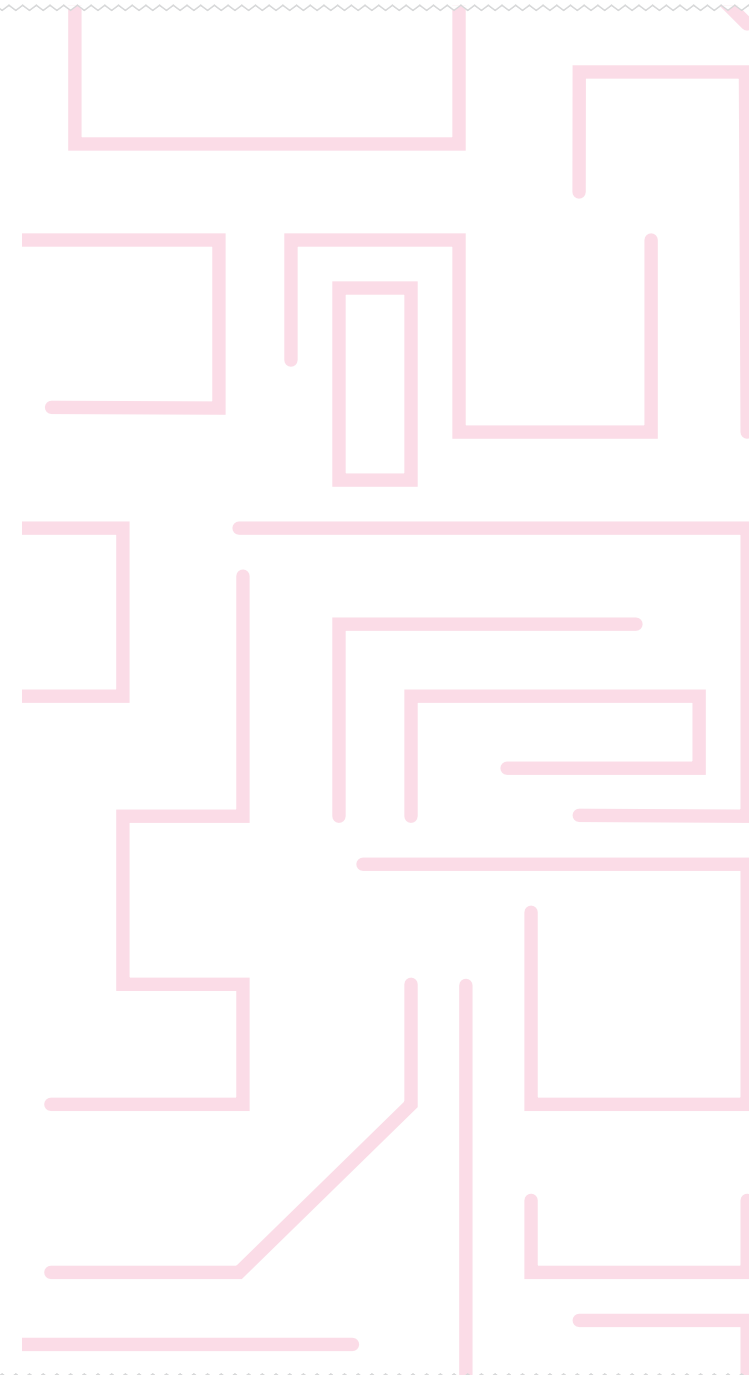
Thematic Area 3	Summary of actions
Workforce planning, retention, and progression	1 Publish career pathways as part of workforce planning.
	2 Support the growth and development of underrepresented groups.
	3 Offer reasonable adjustments.
	4 Embed EDI principles into staff appraisal, complaints & discipline procedures.



1

Publish career pathways as part of workforce planning

- 1.01.** Publish career pathways with simplified illustrations so that staff can clearly see their potential next steps and all the career pathways your organisation offers at all levels. This can be done by reviewing or updating your existing organisational chart and making this available to all staff.
- 1.02.** Align organisational charts with your business strategy and upcoming plans to determine any future resourcing needs that will be necessary to deliver your strategy. You can take into account your predicted attrition rates, retirement rates and any other roles that may become vacant, and through which you can therefore create better representation.
- 1.03.** Regularly review and analyse data on the employee life cycle to identify any trends that may indicate bias in how staff are encouraged and supported to apply for promotions, secondments or lateral moves.
- 1.04.** Collect feedback through surveys and focus groups from staff on their experiences of being supported for promotions and secondments and act on this feedback.





2

Support the growth and development of underrepresented groups

- 2.01.** Identify and support relevant learning and development needs that may lead to greater retention, progression and development. You can start by documenting the inhouse and outsourced training and development programs you have, their intended objectives and the impact this is having on your retention and progression goals.
- 2.02.** Ensure career development programmes are delivered by a diverse selection of facilitators who bring different lived experiences.
- 2.03.** Offer reverse mentoring, mentoring, sponsorship or/and coaching for underrepresented groups to build relationships and exchange learning between senior leaders and underrepresented groups. This is particularly important for smaller organisations who may not have large enough numbers of underrepresented staff to put together a focused diversity career progression program.
- 2.04.** Provide secondment and job shadowing schemes for underrepresented groups and train senior leaders on how to safely engage in mentorship or shadowing relationships with better EDI awareness.
- 2.05.** Managers and mentors should support underrepresented groups to improve their visibility, for example, finding opportunities for them to represent the senior leader at senior meetings, or promoting and sharing positive feedback about them and their work in senior leadership spaces.



Resources

-  [Example of leadership programs from the NHS](#)
-  [How to improve EDI through mentoring](#)

3

Offer reasonable adjustments

- 3.01.** Develop reasonable adjustment systems such as the use of Workplace Adjustment Passports, promptly providing staff with reasonable adjustments following discussions and assessments, or as soon as need is identified.
- 3.02.** Consult with individuals on what reasonable adjustment they need, and respond appropriately e.g., by providing assistive technology for conditions such as Dyslexia or ADHD.
- 3.03.** Address physical accessibility needs including wheelchair accessible parking, level entrance to facilities, lifts, wheelchair accessible toilets, appropriate signage etc.
- 3.04.** Where possible, offer additional quiet spaces in offices for staff that might need time out due to sensory overload, or quieter zones to concentrate on specific tasks.

- 3.05.** Work with line managers to prevent back-to-back meetings which can be a source of stress, sensory overload, and undermine focus or deeper concentration on tasks.
- 3.06.** Allow employees time off during working hours for training, rehabilitation, or assessment.
- 3.07.** As much as possible, provide flexible working options.
- 3.08.** Offer phased return to work after sickness and develop an individualised plan to get staff back on track with adequate support.
- 3.09.** Encourage sponsorship behaviours by senior leadership teams to enhance visibility and sharing of disability experiences to mitigate stigma.
- 3.10.** Encourage colleagues to use the government's Access to Work Grant scheme to support overcoming barriers in the workplace.

- 3.11.** Do not make assumptions about what individuals need. Use a consultative approach to find out how their health condition or disability might be affecting them, recognising that their needs might change over time.

**Resources**





- ✍ The Disability Inclusion Institutional Framework (DIIF) & reasonable adjustments
- ✍ Reasonable Adjustments at Work - Acas

4

Embed EDI principles into staff appraisal, complaints & discipline procedures

- 4.01.** You may start by training managers on how to write appraisal reviews of similar lengths and similar quality for all employees, paying attention to how biased evaluations may occur.
- 4.02.** Monitor discipline and grievance processes, documenting for example any groups that are consistently subjected to unfair treatment or more consistently perpetrators. Use this data to offer relevant training and policy guidance for all your staff.
- 4.03.** Develop a policy on bullying & harassment, ensuring that it is easily accessible and understood by all.
- 4.04.** Provide a variety of ways to report bullying & harassment e.g., using anonymous forms, suggestion boxes, using external HR support or having a reporting system that bypasses the line management chain to create a better sense of safety and impartiality.
- 4.05.** Designate staff advisors who can provide support or help for those who have experienced bullying & harassment. These can be the aforementioned EDI champions, fair treatment advisors or harassment & bullying advisors, making sure advisors are fully supported too.
- 4.06.** Through internal comms, increase transparency about how HR are tackling harassment to build trust in reporting mechanisms.
- 4.07.** Offer formal and informal exit interviews for staff so that the organisation can continually reflect and improve experiences.

**Resources**

-  Video: [How to overcome biases](#) – Verna Myers
-  The Government's [Workplace bullying and harassment guidance](#)
-  Giving Feedback: [5 Elements Of A More Inclusive Approach](#) – Forbes
-  Acas guides: [Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment](#)

Industry example 3

Illustrative approaches for organisations who have made progress with representation

In this example, a provider who has managed to establish a more diverse workforce including at senior levels describes their current approach to recruitment. The provider describes how promoting a culture of openness and inclusion among stakeholders is enabling diversity at senior levels, and a culture that embraces diversity of opinions across the organisation.

Having established a diverse board, this provider explained how they continue to attract diverse candidates. The provider illustrated how they promote themselves through their networks as an open, welcoming and inclusive culture. They encourage a culture where people can be openly different, be able to challenge and evolve the current culture. They have continued to push beyond requirements of diversity targets. They have also capitalised on building momentum by bringing together different perspectives and thinking styles into the organisation, as well as a culture where leaders accept to be challenged by staff.

“

Out of 15 board members, four are from ethnic minority backgrounds. We have people from the LGBTQ+ community, and people with disabilities represented. And that may be because of the way we continue to recruit. We no longer tend to advertise on the job boards. We put things out through our networks.

”

AE provider example



Reflection/Discussion Guide

1. How diverse is your senior leadership team? And what can you do to increase diversity at this level?
2. Which of the 4 actions recommended will you find easiest or most challenging to implement straight away and why?
3. How will you address these challenges based on the recommended actions and resources provided?

Proceed to Action Template

Using your adapted version of the Action Template ([Appendix 1](#)), set out your actions and timelines for Theme 3.



THEME 4:

Creating a sense of belonging in the workforce

This theme addresses how the day-to-day practices, spaces, people, experiences, and activities can create a positive culture that enables all groups to thrive. It addresses how providers can create a greater sense of belonging in the workplace. A culture of belonging ensures people feel recognised and appreciated for who they are, and what they bring to the workplace. It also creates room for meaningful relationships and a celebration of diversity. Communication is key in creating a culture of belonging. Well planned communication showcases the importance of EDI activities and behaviours across the organisation. A culture of belonging empowers employee voices by creating spaces for staff to celebrate and share their experiences. In addition, staff develop a healthy curiosity and willingness to learn about other people's cultures, experiences, and identities. Initiatives must go beyond surface level celebrations into deeper understanding of backgrounds and issues that matter and impact underrepresented colleagues.

Recommended actions

Thematic Area 4	Summary of actions
Creating a sense of belonging in the workforce	1 Engage staff through internal and external communication.
	2 Celebrate diversity in the workplace.
	3 Create spaces for staff to connect, share and learn.



1

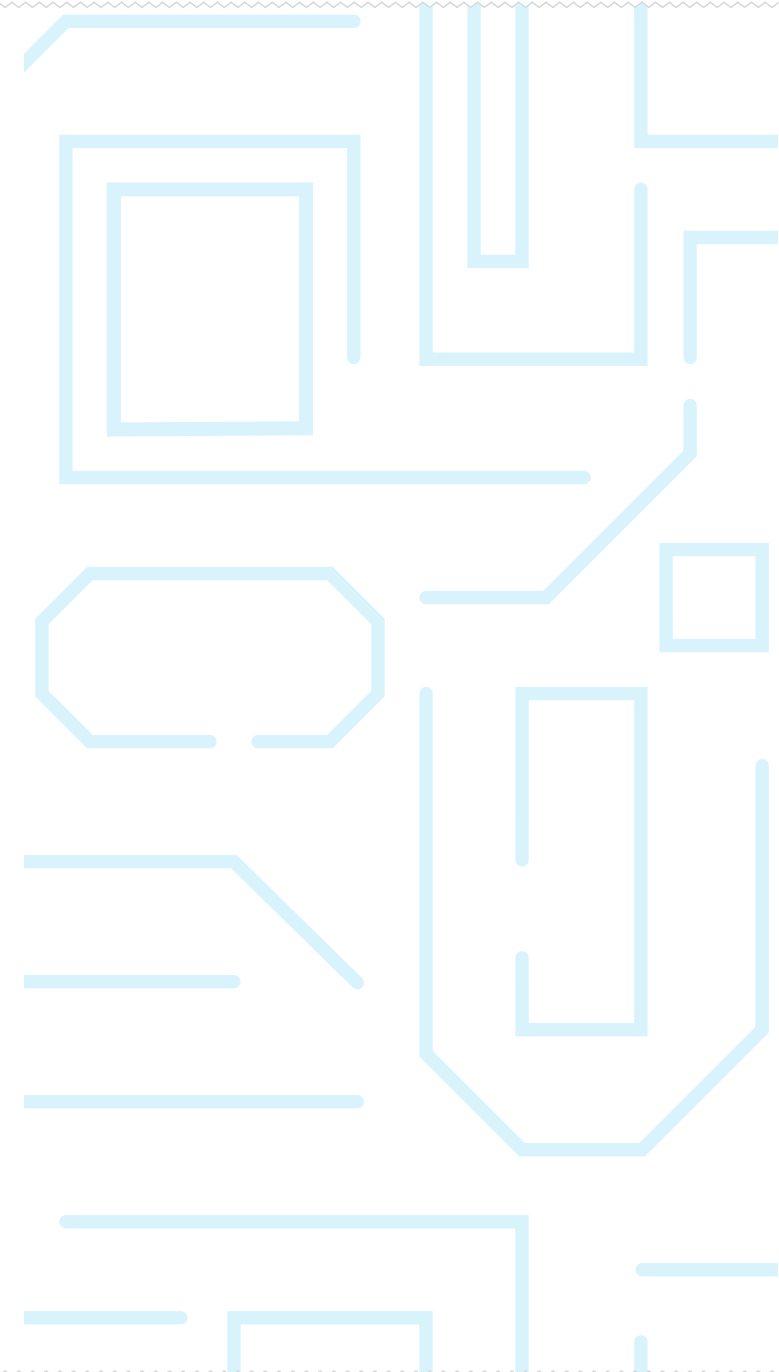
Engage staff through internal and external communication

- 1.01.** Guided by your action plan created in Theme 1, work with your Internal Comms teams and Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or staff networks to create a comms plan. The plan may include details of your planned actions, EDI strategy and all the activities you plan to deliver on.
- 1.02.** Make a clear ask of your staff and senior leaders e.g., by calling on people to attend or volunteer for events, use channels including staff newsletters, social media platforms, staff town-halls, blogs, podcasts, notice boards, team away days or regular team meetings, ensuring all comms meet [accessibility requirements](#).
- 1.03.** Train senior leaders and managers on how to develop, reward, recognise and role-model [inclusive behaviours](#) in their teams and in the organisation.

2

Celebrate diversity in the workplace

- 2.01.** Again, working with your ERGs, compile an [annual inclusion calendar](#). This calendar should include significant diversity events, holidays, and culture events that your staff wish to recognise and celebrate across the year.
- 2.02.** These events should showcase and celebrate the representation, experiences and backgrounds of your workforce. Events should centre and amplify lived experiences of your staff. For example, consult with Muslim colleagues on how you could celebrate Ramadan, LGBTQ+ community members for ideas on LGBTQ+ History Month, or different ethnicities during Race Equality Week.
- 2.03.** Sponsor or collaborate with activities that support underrepresented groups in your community.






3

Create spaces for staff to connect, share and learn

- 3.01.** Create spaces to talk about the different diversity topics such as Race, Menopause, Parenthood, LGBTQ+, Neurodiversity or Disability. Such spaces can be supported by your ERGs, internal or external speakers, depending on your budget, resources, or expertise available within the organisation.
- 3.02.** Establish listening circles. Circles can be for colleagues to share their experiences, or where junior staff can talk about their experiences and senior management can listen and implement suggestions. Such circles could also utilise anonymous channels to gather staff insights and feedback. Anonymous channels may include anonymised suggestion boxes or surveys.
- 3.03.** Offer other diversity and inclusion training, for example, cultural competence workshops, managing and mentoring across differences, and addressing microaggressions.
- 3.04.** Ensure all training goes beyond creating overall awareness into helping your workforce to develop a sense of urgency towards change. It is crucial that organisations specify clear change actions and skills to deliver on any commitments made during training.



Resources

-  [Video: Why microaggressions are like a mosquito](#)
-  [7 Tips for Empathic Listening to support your staff and leaders.](#)
-  [Download a free guide for measuring employee belonging](#)

Industry example 4

Building a sense of belonging in the workplace

In this example, a provider with fewer than 50 employees explains how they leverage internal comms, forums, spaces and social media to celebrate diversity and create a sense of belonging in their organisation. This provider has also successfully weaved in mechanisms for listening and receiving feedback from their staff. Larger organisations can adapt their spaces by listening and collecting feedback by departments or teams.

This provider also holds weekly Monday morning calls giving updates on EDI progress alongside other key company information. They take advantage of their size to get everyone together regularly. They also use other forums such as staff away days to communicate EDI progress. New joiners are provided with induction and starter packs which include links to company handbooks, and resources on diversity. They also use social media, to recognise and celebrate diversity history months such as the Black History Month, or the LGBTQ+ History Month. They ensure their approach goes beyond just celebrations to include creating awareness and understanding of the roots of why these events are so important. These efforts are to ensure all their staff can experience a greater sense of belonging.

“

As part of our listening initiatives, we have employee focus groups to help people share their perspectives. Any ideas that come up from the focus groups go into a platform called “Team Talk”. This is our staff newsletter that goes out with updates every 45 days.

”

AE provider example



Reflection/Discussion Guide

1. How do you celebrate diversity in your organisation?
2. Which of the 3 actions recommended will you find easiest or most challenging to implement straightaway and why?
3. How will you address these challenges based on the recommended actions and resources provided?

Proceed to Action Template

Using your adapted version of the Action Template ([Appendix 1](#)), set out your actions and timelines for Theme 4.

Bridging the gaps for better outcomes

The premise of a representative workforce is that it promotes EDI in the workplace. EDI is crucial for creating a positive and inclusive environment for all learners and staff. Within such an environment, staff are better able to understand and relate to the needs of learners from different backgrounds. They can provide role models and mentorship for students from underrepresented groups, thereby unlocking new aspirations, career pathways and opportunities for those who have historically been disadvantaged.

Additionally, better representation has been linked with higher creativity, innovation, and problem-solving within institutions. It's about opportunities for all. Having a diverse group of people brings different perspectives, ideas, and experiences to the table. This can lead to new ways of thinking and problem-solving.

Above all else, representation and inclusivity are also a legal, moral, and social justice issue, which should remain at the core of the industry's routes to addressing key skills challenges facing London.

Furthermore, initiatives such as The Mayor's Good Work Standard, provide best employment practice, resources and support from across London to help employers improve their organisations. Other GLA initiatives such as The Workforce Integration Network (WIN) provide a variety of useful resources to improve pathways for underrepresented groups in London's workplaces and can be used alongside this toolkit. The GLA's Workforce Integration and Inclusion in London's Growth Sectors provides a collection of research identifying sector specific reasons driving the underrepresentation of certain groups of Londoners in the workplace across various sectors. Insights from these resources can support better practices towards representation and inclusion in the Adult Education sector.





Appendices

Appendix 1: Action template

In the section below, we provide an Action template (Appendix 1) to help providers in developing specific actions for their organisation. We also briefly explain how the toolkit was developed (Appendix 2).

The template on this page can be used to plan specific actions towards making your organisation more inclusive and representative. Using this template, you may take into consideration your organisation's type, size and any specific contextual considerations, to enable you to adapt the

toolkit's action points across themes 1-4 for your specific organisation. This template can be used flexibly for example, you may change the layout to landscape, or add other columns and rows for comments, budgets etc.

Thematic Area	Actions	Person in charge	Estimated timeline
Using data to develop an inclusive and representative workforce			
Recruitment			
Workforce planning, retention, and progression			
Creating a sense of belonging in the workforce			

Appendix 2: How the toolkit was developed

The [Inclusive Village](#) conducted a literature review of previous GLA and industry reports and toolkits, government data, and EDI literature to build a framework for insight gathering. They then conducted six interviews with representatives of different providers, as well as GLA Officers. In addition, they consulted the sector through a survey which attracted a further five in-depth responses from key providers. They successfully worked closely with an Industry Steering Group.

The steering Group members' contributions, alongside those interviewed, were invaluable in shaping insights around challenges providers face in meeting inclusive and representative workforce objectives. The Steering Group members' insights informed the content of this toolkit through a focus group approach, and feedback on the final output.

Below is a list of organisations whose members contributed to the development of this toolkit:

Acas (The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

AELP (Association of Employment and Learning Providers)

AOC (Association of Colleges)

CIPD (The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

City Lit

Croydon Council

Greater London Authority

The Education and Training Foundation

Living Wage Foundation

London South East Colleges

Mary Ward Centre

Westminster Adult Education Service

The Inclusive Village Ltd (the toolkit's authors)

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