

UPDATE ON ACTIONS TAKEN FOLLOWING THE ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE SLADE SCHOOL OF ART AT UCL

January 2024

Following concerns raised by staff and students about the working and learning environment in the Slade, we commissioned an external organisation, Nous, in February 2022 to carry out an independent investigation into the School's culture.

The report's findings, which can be accessed [here](#), made clear that genuine and meaningful change was needed to create a School in which everyone feels respected and valued. Committed to making that change, the following was implemented to action all the recommendations from the report:

1. The Slade established internal action groups that together have worked to create change and reimagine the education experience and environment at the Slade, based on the key themes of the report.
2. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities, in which the Slade sits, has worked with UCL HR colleagues to address those actions pertaining to broader issues.
3. An external HR Consultant was brought in to focus on three specific issues raised.

The work of all these groups has now significantly advanced, or in most cases been completed, and it is therefore an ideal time for us to update on actions taken. Please therefore see a summary of all of those below. It is worth noting that this type of work will always be ongoing as ideas, policies, priorities, and available information evolves and we are committed to ensuring that we evolve alongside this.

We know that the actions taken following the Environmental Investigation will enable us to look forward to a new era for the Slade, and UCL, and would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has engaged with what we appreciate was at times a difficult undertaking.

Professor Stella Bruzzi
Executive Dean of Arts and Humanities

Please note that that staff and student support lines are available as follow:

- [Report + Support](#) is UCL's online tool for current and former students and staff to report bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct, and it includes the option to report anonymously or on the record.
- Current and former students and staff including PhD students can receive free, confidential support 365 days a year via the [UCL 24/7 Student Support Line](#) and the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) supported by Spectrum Life.

Recommendation	Owner	Action taken	Status (as at Sept 2023)	Status (as at Jan 2024) - following the arrival of the new Slade Director
1. Strengthen the Leadership Team's ability to establish a professional and inclusive culture				
1.1 Release communications that commit to change in response to the Environmental Investigation				
1.1 A - Disseminate an initial response to the Environmental Investigation that acknowledges the experiences of participants in the review and communicate next steps	UCL Vice Provost	Published 3 November 2022	Completed	Completed
1.1 B - Publish a summary of the independent review on the Slade website that conveys the Slade's commitment to advancing racial equality and strengthening the Slade's broader culture	Slade Director	Published 3 November 2022	Completed	Completed
1.1. C - Issue protocol setting out Slade's commitment to EDI and academic freedom	Slade Director, Slade EDI Committee	Published 14 December 2022	Completed	Completed
1.2 Provide reports that enable the Slade Leadership Team to succeed				
1.2 A - Provide Leadership Training for leadership team over an intensive period	UCL HR	In place with training to be undertaken in academic year 23/24	Completed	Completed
1.2 B - Clarify roles and responsibilities of leadership team	Slade Leadership Team	A Slade Working Group has reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Slade Leadership Team, as well as the wider School Structure. The outcomes were communicated to all staff prior to the start of Term 1, 23/24 and are now in operation. With this, and the new Director, in place, the foundation has been laid for work to continue on 1.3A - Develop a shared vision, cultural values and strategy.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	Completed - see 1.3 A
1.2 C - Enhance operational and administrative support to leadership team	UCL HR	Review of support available carried out by new Slade Director and the School Manager. The work to be undertaken will be continued with the incoming Teaching and Learning Manager, supported by UCL HR, the Slade Director and School Manager.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	Completed - work to continue with UCL HR and the new T&L Manager, who will join the Slade at the end of January 2024.
1.3 Develop a shared vision, cultural values and strategy				
1.3 A - Develop a shared vision, cultural values and strategy	Slade Leadership Team	Following work undertaken for 1.1 B and 1.2 B above, the Slade is now well-placed to begin work on Values, Vision and Strategy. Two All Staff Meetings will be held to discuss the first two in the Spring and Summer Terms of 23/24, whilst the key Slade Committees of EDI, Teaching and Research will develop the strategy.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	Development is now embedded into the Slade's plans and work is to continue across the Slade community, under the direction of the new Slade Director.

2. Build staff capacity to create an inclusive environment				
2.1 Prioritise anti-racist initiatives and build an inclusive culture at the Slade				
2.1 A - Consolidate anti-racism bodies and appropriately prioritise this work	Slade Director	New EDI Committee and sub group, Slade Anti-racist Action Group, in place and completing actions. Next two years activity has been prioritised and allocated to individual leads. Race Equality pledges consolidated and updated. Equality Champions scheme drafted and due to be implemented. EDI action table regularly updated and shared amongst wider UCL EDI community at Faculty level.	Completed	Completed
2.1 B - Introduce mandatory diversity training for all staff	Slade Director, UCL HR	Mandatory diversity training in place. Noted that a Slade campaign, and associated engagement from Slade staff, has meant that compliance levels are above wider UCL cohort.	Completed	Completed
2.2 Improve equitable opportunities for staff and students				
2.2 A - Improve employment conditions for staff on teaching fellow contracts and staff on temporary contracts	UCL HR	Reviewed by external consultant. Conclusion: The Slade has made good progress in addressing the specific issues around contract inequity highlighted in the Nous report. The central plank of perceived inequity was attributed to the differences in terms and conditions in teaching and academic contracts, alongside the usage of fractional part time temporary contracts, both of which the Slade has taken action to address. The Slade has significantly reduced its reliance on temporary contracts and ensured that staff employed on part time teaching contracts are offered the opportunity to increase their hours where it is possible to do so. The Slade ensures that all teaching staff are given the opportunity to conduct research for up to 15% of their contracted hours, and that teaching staff are encouraged to apply to 'change track' in accordance with the academic promotions process introduced by UCL as part of the Teaching Concordat. This work by the Slade has reduced the disparity amongst different staff cohorts, and ongoing monitoring of EDI data has been recommended to ensure that progress continues.	Completed	Completed
2.2 B - Review recruitment and promotion processes to improve equitable opportunities for staff of colour	Slade Director, UCL HR	Reviewed by external consultant. Conclusion: Analysis of recruitment and promotions activity found that in general, the Slade is <u>highly</u> compliant with UCL policies, procedures and guidance that are designed to ensure equitable opportunities for all cohorts of staff including staff of colour. Statistical analysis of EDI data relating to staff employed at the Slade, demonstrates that there has been an increase in staff members recording as people of colour from 10% at the time of the review to 18% as of June 2023.	Completed	Completed
2.2 C - Identify opportunities to provide leadership opportunities for staff of colour and other diverse backgrounds	Slade Director	Work already undertaken by Slade Working Group. Will be working further with UCL HR/EDI Team in academic year 2023/4 to ensure ongoing compliance with wider UCL policy and employment legislation.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	The Slade, and its own EDI Committee, are continuing to work with the central EDI Team to embed this into common practice. Equity Champions have been introduced, and other opportunities are being explored.

2.2 D - Consider opportunities to accelerate student diversity	Slade EDI Committee	This is an ongoing piece of work, however the UG team has done a detailed review of their admissions process and amended to further encourage WP. EDI Committee fund allocated to three proposals academic year 23/24. Terminology workshops run across the school last year and set to continue as embedded within the curriculum. Notice board and display case repopulation ongoing.	Completed	Completed
3. Increase alignment between Slade and UCL systems and policies				
3.1 - Clarify Report and Support Process	UCL HR	Reviewed by external consultant. Conclusion: In relation to the report and support process, the Nous report found there were widespread negative views about the system and its effectiveness. The follow up review found that the Slade management team has been conscientious in cascading approved communications and information about the process, but that there could be some benefit in UCL updating some of the promotional content in relation to the report and support process to improve general staff and student understanding around what they can expect after making a report, including more clarity around the limitations of feedback when it comes to anonymous reporting. Noted - Communications increased and will be repeated at regular intervals.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	Will be included in Leadership Training suite to be presented by UCL HR in February Reading Week
3.2 - Assign responsibility to a senior officer to drive implementation of the environmental investigation	UCL Senior Management	Professor Stella Bruzzi, Executive Dean of Arts and Humanities assigned.	Completed	Completed
3.3 - Publicly report on progress toward creating a safe and inclusive environment on a biannual process	Slade Director	Comms plan in place. Work to be continued by incoming Slade Director.	Ongoing - Work to be continued with incoming Slade Director.	Completed. There is now a rolling programme of work, and comms attached to that, which will be presented at regular intervals across the various Slade comms channels.

Updated January 2024