

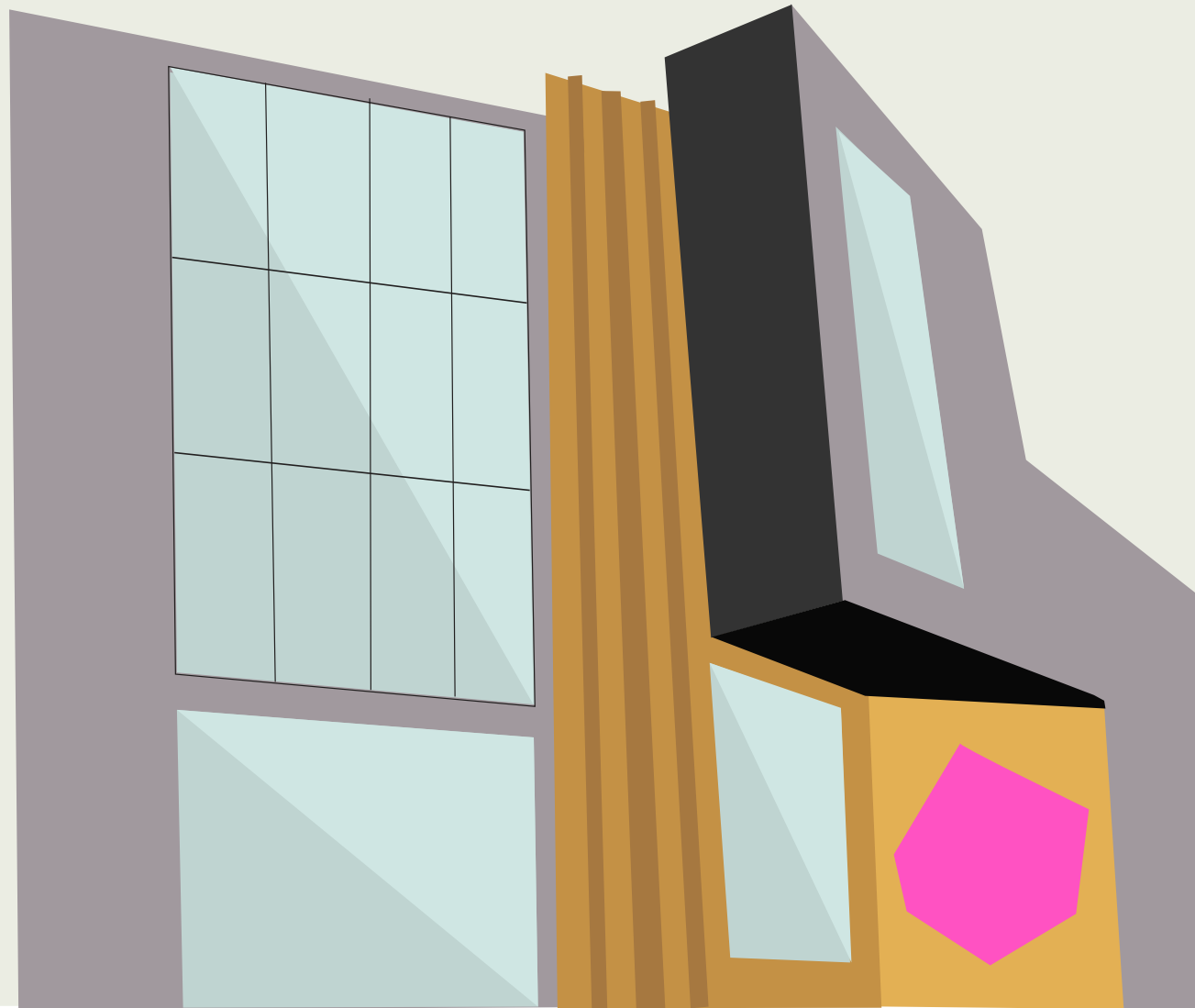


2024—25

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REPORT

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03	Introduction
04	About Our Students
06	About Our Staff
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# 03. INTRODUCTION

At Leeds Arts University, we work collaboratively with our creative students and Students' Union to provide an environment where all have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

This report provides an overview of our community and outlines staff and student data according to protected characteristics including age, ethnicity, disability, gender, religion and belief.

It also highlights some of the initiatives and activities that were part of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion over the year.

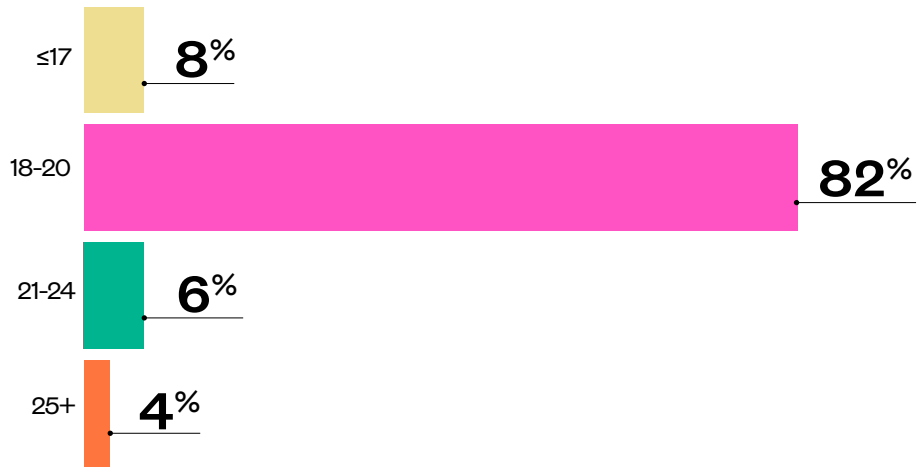
We remain committed as ever to identifying, monitoring and reducing inequities, with further detail in our new Access and Participation Plan 2025/26 - 2028/29.



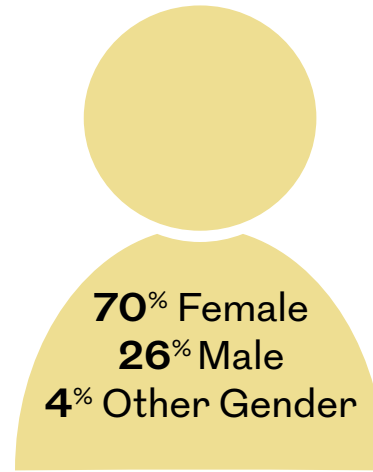
**PROFESSOR DAVE RUSSELL**  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education

# 04. ABOUT OUR STUDENTS

## Age



## Gender

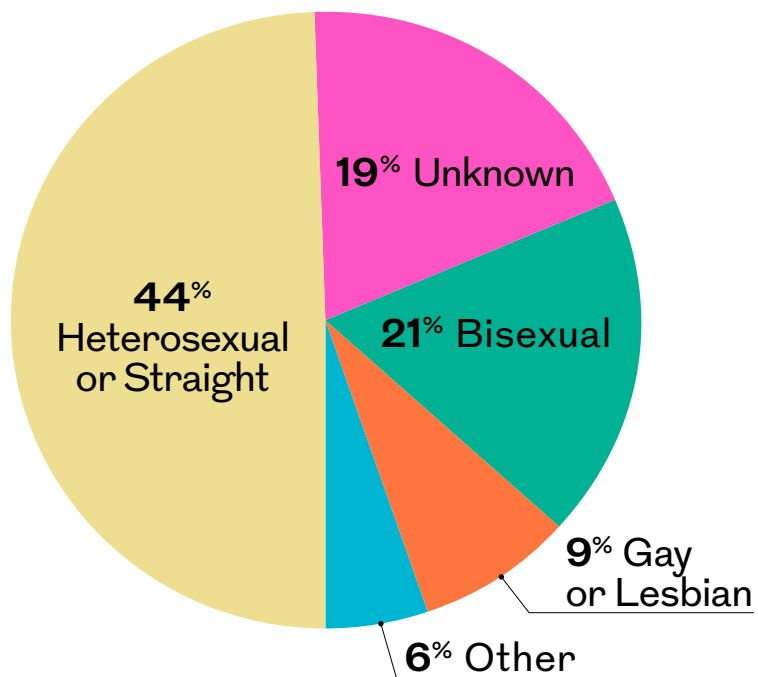


## Ethnicity

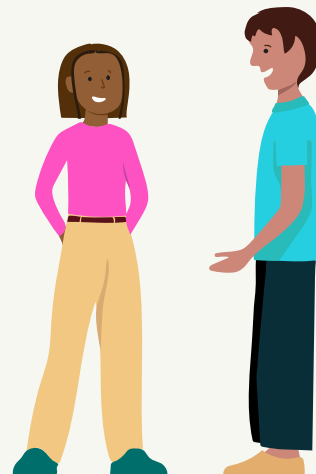


# 05. ABOUT OUR STUDENTS

## Sexual Orientation\*

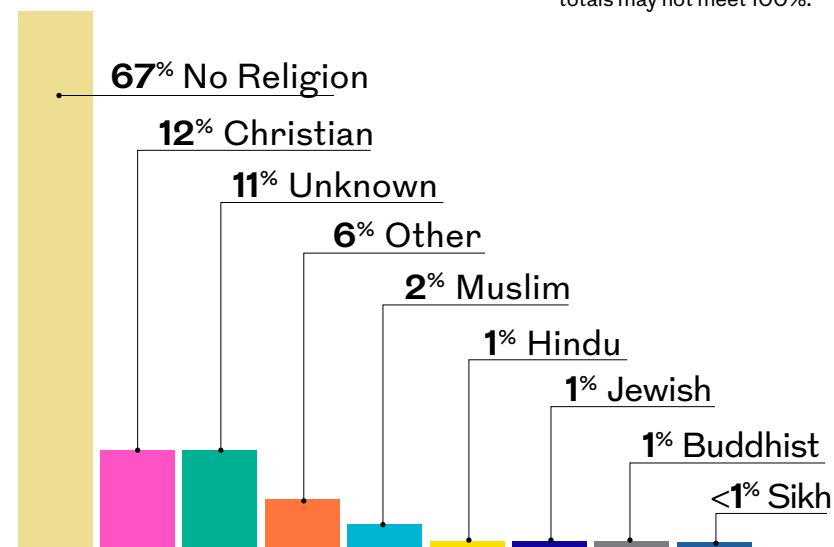


\*Terminology is based on Higher Education Statistics Agency categories. Rounding has been applied therefore totals may not meet 100%.

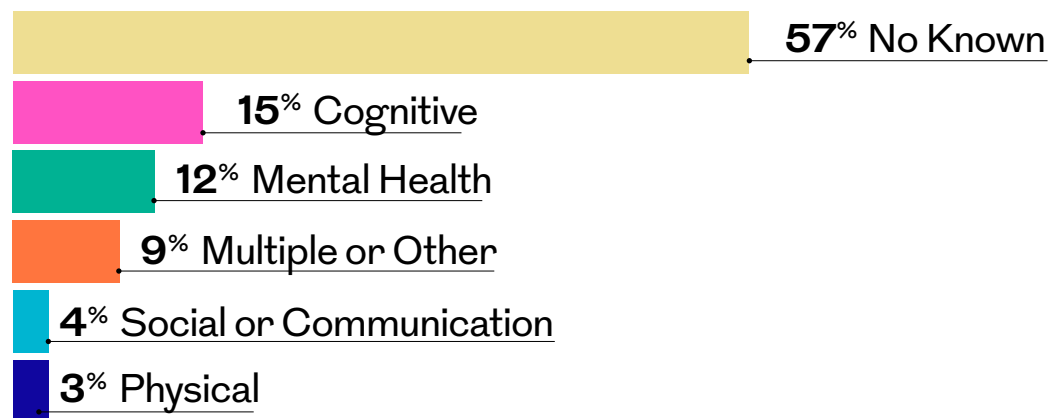


## Religion or Belief\*\*

\*\* Data relates to higher education students only  
Rounding has been applied therefore totals may not meet 100%.



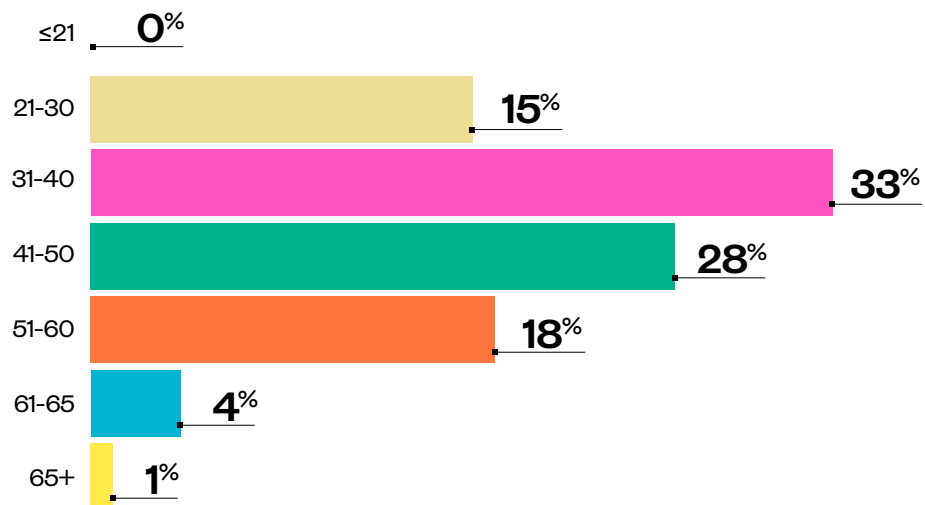
## Disability\*\*\*



\*\*\* Terminology is based on Office for Students categories. Rounding has been applied therefore totals may not meet 100%.

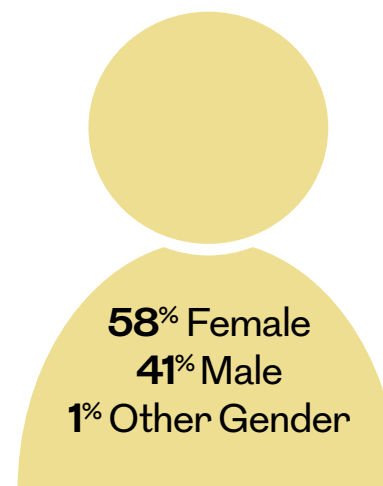
# 06. ABOUT OUR STAFF

## Age\*



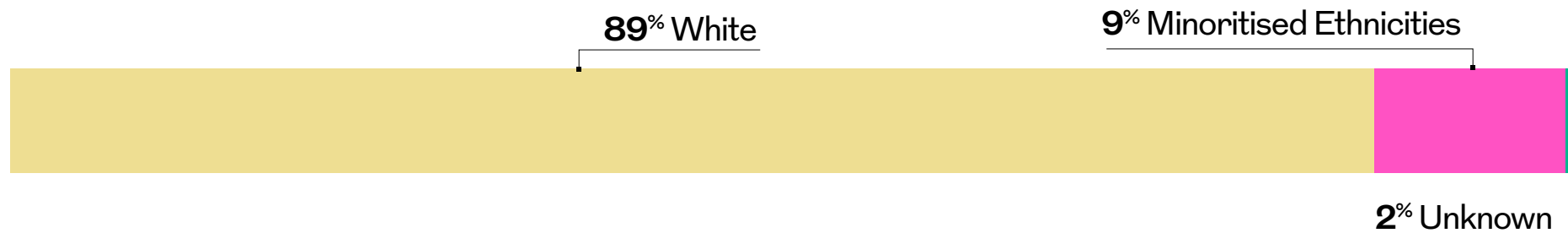
\*Rounding has been applied therefore totals may not meet 100%.

## Gender



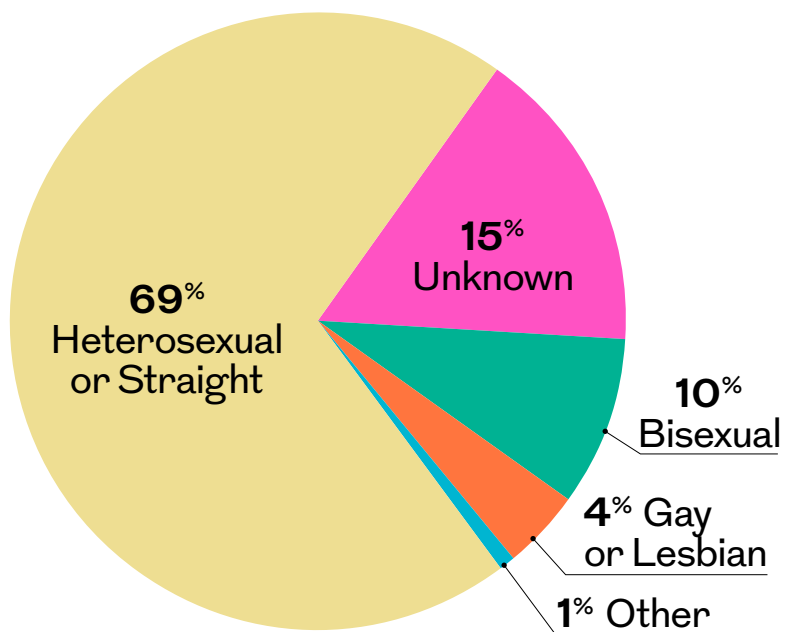
Our Board of Governors actively reviews its constitution and considers protected characteristics of the Board through the work of its Governance and Nominations Committee.

## Ethnicity



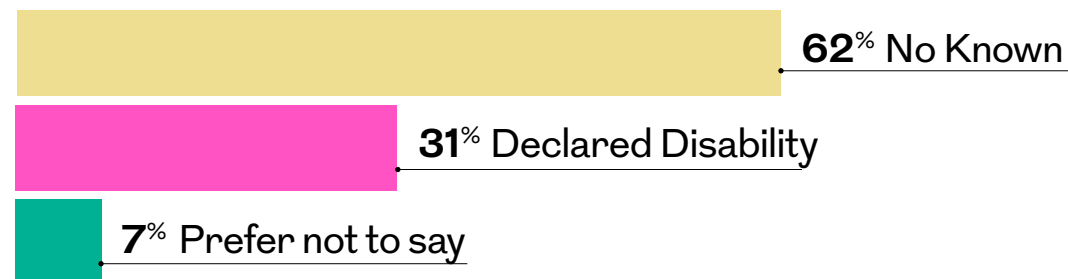
# 07 ABOUT OUR STAFF

## Sexual Orientation\*



\*Terminology is based on Higher Education Statistics Agency categories. Rounding has been applied therefore totals may not meet 100%.

## Disability

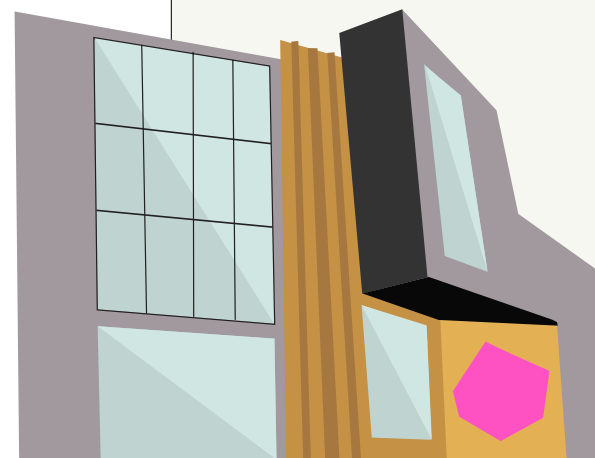


## Staff Training

**663** training entries were recorded University-wide relating to equality, diversity and inclusion during 2024/25.

Some themes were:

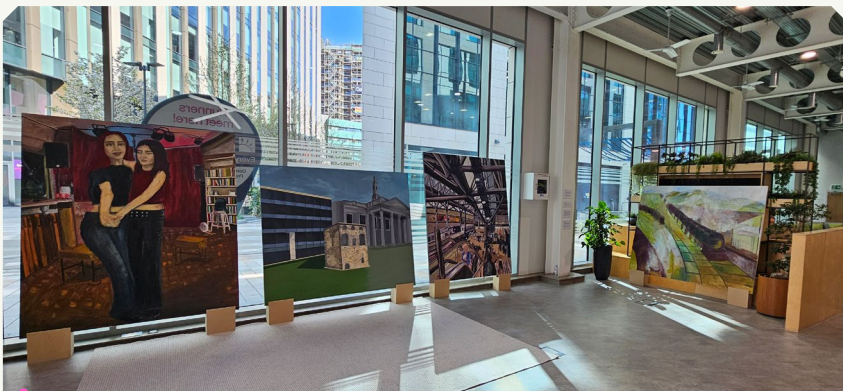
- Safeguarding
- Supporting Student Mental Health
- Staff Resilience
- EDI Refresher
- Active Bystander
- Neurodiversity Awareness



# 08. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

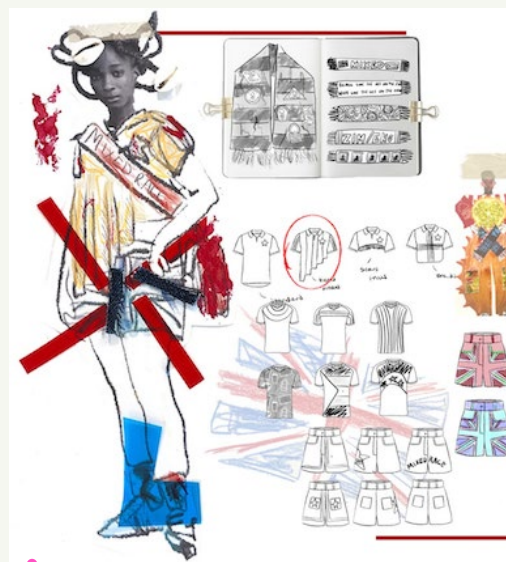
Over the 2024/25 academic year, students and staff at Leeds Arts University continued to foreground equality, diversity and inclusion in their work. Alongside the case studies included in our annual Sustainability Report, here are selected highlights from the year.

## Higher Education



**BA (Hons) Fine Art** students Ellie Brown, Megan Burnell, Ava Sorboen, Kian Nutbrown, Hannah Jones, and Tafsia Dana made large painting works inspired by the historical site of Wellington Place, as part of CANVAS, a month-long community arts festival. At its heart, the festival

aimed to encourage belonging through preserving historical sites and engage with a variety of generations in local communities showing that a career in art is within reach. One of the festival highlights was Megan Burnell's interactive painting that passersby could draw onto.



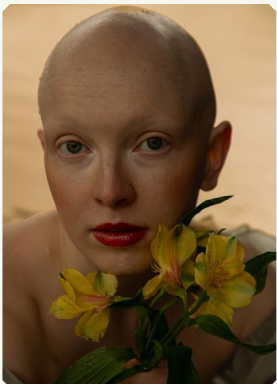
From **BA (Hons) Fashion Design**, Alicia Glen was shortlisted for the Graduate Fashion Foundation Culture & Heritage Award and a FACE (Fashion and the Arts Creating Equity) Excellence Prize Finalist at Graduate Fashion Week, with a collection exploring the experience of growing up mixed-race in the UK, blending African heritage with British identity.



Fellow **BA (Hons) Fashion Design** student Sam Brown was selected as one of four winners of the British Fashion Council x Net-a-Porter & MR PORTER Education Fund on the strength of “Metamorphosis”, a graduate collection which explored a fictional world in which humans undergo a moth-like metamorphosis, a narrative mirroring Sam’s own gender transition.

# 09 CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

[1]



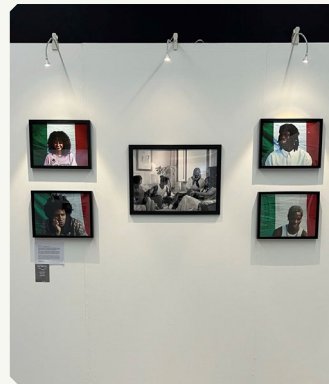
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[3]



[4]



[5]



[6]

On **BA (Hons) Fashion Photography**, Nell McGarry recreated paintings using disabled, queer or otherwise unrepresented models in fine art and fashion photography through “FashionAble: A Contemporary Study of Art History” with the inclusive model agency, ZBD [1]; Fathia Fategbe’s work was featured in a Noctis magazine issue centred on ‘Unity’ [2]; Jack Garrod explored themes of identity, sexuality, fantasy and the definition of camp [3]; Franco Royal’s “Unseen and Unheard: The Black Experience” captured the beauty, strength and resilience of Black individuals in Italy and beyond [4]; Helän Hussein Rustam’s photographic portraits honoured Kurdish heritage, reclaimed space and preserved culture [5]; and Tyler Noon’s work highlighted queer and trans bodies and stories [6].

Recent **BA (Hons) Animation** and **MA Animation** graduate, Kieran Leppington, was commissioned by Y-PERN (Yorkshire and Humber Policy Engagement and Research Network), after winning a cross-institutional brief with the Careers, Employability and Enterprise team at Leeds Arts University, Leeds Beckett University, and the University of Leeds, to create an animation infographic that tells the story of the devolution of Yorkshire.

Y-PERN commissioned Kieran to create a three-minute engaging and dynamic animation outlining devolution in Yorkshire which is now being used as a tool to demystify the region’s complex political landscape on Y-PERN’s site. Kieran’s animation facilitates understanding of how local authorities are pooling resources and leveraging devolved powers to drive regional growth and address unique local challenges, such as coastal erosion in Hull, to integrated transport across West Yorkshire.



# 10. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY



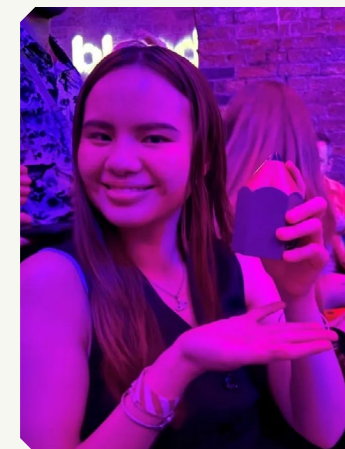
'Silent Shake' by final year **BA (Hons) Graphic Design** student Katie Charlesworth and **BA (Hons) Marketing Communications** students Hollie Spooner and Lizzie Day won a Black Pencil at the D&AD New Blood awards, the highest accolade given to any project. 'Silent Shake' is a Monotype campaign designed to reflect the handwriting changes often seen in the early stages of Parkinson's disease. It is intended to work as an educational tool, highlighting common irregularities in handwriting which can be early indicators of the disease.

Nadya Girendroheru, graduate of **MA Animation, BA (Hons) Illustration, and Foundation Diploma in Art and Design**, was commissioned by the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership to create a music video for All Star Bradford in celebration of World Autism Awareness Day. Nadya animated the 'Every Mind is Different' track, written by the Healthy Minds Apprentice team 2022/23 who wanted to share their own lived experience of autism and neurodivergence in the hope of spreading awareness across West Yorkshire and beyond.



Second year **BA (Hons) Marketing Communications** student Yesser Alkazaz was awarded a Wood Pencil for 'Knowledge is Protection', a campaign using innovative technology and storytelling to empower people with

Down's syndrome to access conversations around consent, sex, and relationships in a way that isn't rooted in fear or shame.



Graphite Pencil winner **BA (Hons) Marketing Communications** graduate Sarah Heng Xinyuan responded to the 21GRAMS brief 'What Feels Right', a choice-driven narrative game empowering players with intellectual disabilities to navigate real-life situations and themes.

# 11. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## Extended Diploma in Creative Practice

Huda Voller's "Material Connection" mapped the interdependence of community and relationships amongst peers [1].

"I can never get it back..." by Penny Brepri reflected on coming of age through photography and mixed media [2].

John East's "Home away from home: Exploring the English Coast" captured the economic decline of the English seaside [3].

Shiffah Hanif's mural concept celebrated the diversity of the Leeds Kirkgate Market community [4].

Frankie Wallace's "Barbie in a Box" explored feeling on display under the male gaze [5].

Through linoprint on textile, Reggie Ellison intuitively documented creative practice with ADHD [6].

Izzy Proudlock's stickers aimed to raise awareness about the food crisis and publicly available resources through Leeds Food Aid Network [7].

[1]



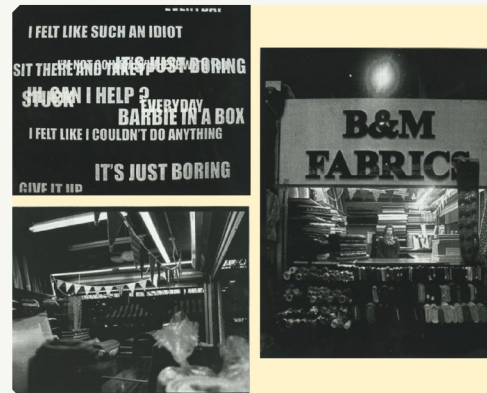
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[3]



[4]



[5]



[6]



[7]

# 12. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## Foundation Diploma in Art and Design

Abby Walker's "I am Completely and Utterly Overwhelmed" promoted sensory regulation and mindfulness through the use and interaction of textile pieces [1].

Florence Marston-Bolton's "Our House or Theirs?" reflected on social sustainability and the relationships between live-in volunteers, staff and guests in an art hostel [2].

Exposure, restriction and penalties for women within trampolining were the subject of Martha Surman's "We are focusing on the wrong thing" [3].

Hannah Warrington-Wells communicated the experience of dementia through spatial design [4].

Through "From the plant to the plate", Chandni Patel delved into the world of spices used in Indian cuisine [5].

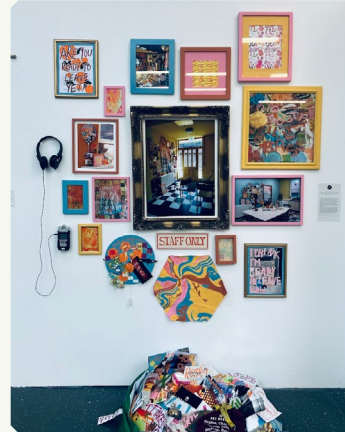
Subcultures and queer fashion influenced Ivy Cooper's exploration of personal style [6].

Aniela Heeley's "My expression of mixedness" appreciated the richness of possessing both Sri Lankan and Yorkshire roots [7].

[1]



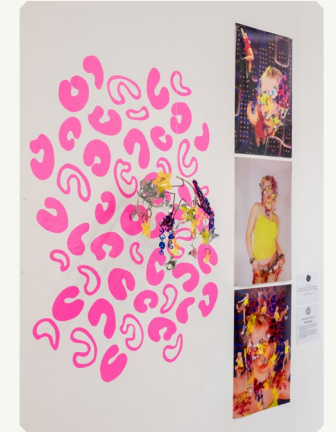
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[7]

# 13. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## Wider University Activity

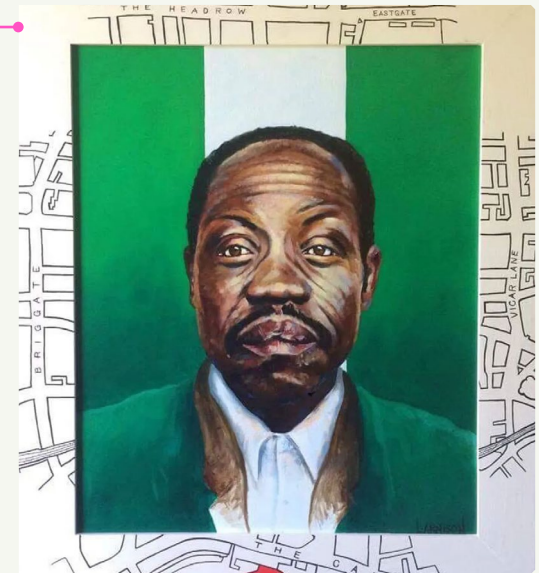


Ribbons, a sculpture celebrating nearly 400 inspirational Leeds women voted for by members of the public, was unveiled in the heart of the city's cultural quarter. Created by artist Pippa Hale, developed by Rt Hon Rachel Reeves, and led by Leeds Arts University in partnership with Leeds City Council and Leeds City College (member of Luminate

Education Group), the project aimed to celebrate women, past and present, who have contributed to the city. Ribbons went on to win the 2025 Marsh Award for Excellence in Public Sculpture by the Public Statues and Sculpture Association (PSSA), which champions the historical, artistic and social context of public statues and sculpture.

A portrait of David Oluwale by Lynne Arnison, alumna of the **Foundation Diploma in Art and Design**, was unveiled to mark the opening of the David Oluwale Room at Leeds City Museum as part of 'The Leeds Story' exhibition. The painting, on permanent display, features David Oluwale, a Nigerian-British citizen who had migrated to help rebuild post-war Britain. Oluwale later faced poor mental health, destitution, racism and police persecution. It is believed the latter led to his drowning in the River Aire, near Leeds Bridge, at the hands of two policemen in 1969.

Leeds City Museum and Art Gallery also purchased Arnison's portrait of Albert Johanneson, one of the first Black men of any nationality to play top-flight football in England. Based in Scarborough, Arnison is interested in social history and the documentation of working-class Leeds and Yorkshire-based stories.



**BA (Hons) Filmmaking Acting Course** Leader Tom Chimiak started the NSPKU Podcast, talking to families and medical professionals about the metabolic liver condition, phenylketonuria (PKU). Tom, who has the liver condition, is a trustee and on the Council of Management for the National Society for Phenylketonuria (NSPKU) charity.

# 14. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

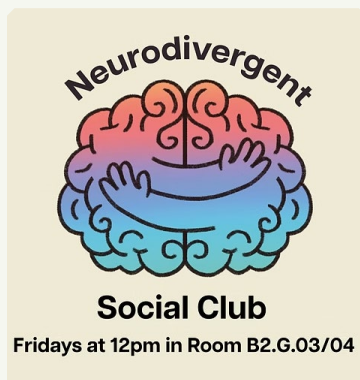
## Students' Union

The Neurodivergent Social Club, a collaboration between the Students' Union and Academic Support Team, was launched to provide a regular social space for neurodivergent students to come together [1].

During Ramadan, the Union hosted regular Iftar meet-ups for the Islamic Society so students could break their fast together, alongside facilitating space for prayer and quiet reflection, and hosted an Eid party [2].

In collaboration with My/Your/Our Space, a community for students of minoritised ethnicities to come together, the Students' Union President Jyot Trivedi co-curated the Wealth exhibition, inspired by Tara J. Yosso's model of community cultural wealth and the question – whose culture has capital?

The Union also invited TransLeeds to host a Binder Library on site, facilitating students' access to free binders that fit [3].



[1]



[2]



[3]



## Widening Participation

The University commenced a new collaboration with local charity Community Learning Partnerships on the Let's Read Programme, an established Leeds-based school reading programme, that aims to address the link between deprivation and poor educational attainment. Acting as reading ambassadors, students visit local schools weekly to support children with their literacy and language skills to become more confident and able readers.

As part of its ongoing regional collaboration with thirteen higher education providers, Go Higher West Yorkshire, the University also contributed to an attainment-raising programme which reached ten schools, alongside campus visits, guidance sessions, careers fairs, digital skills sessions, and a podcasting programme for pupils of minoritised ethnicities from schools in the region.

# 15. CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## Careers, Employability & Enterprise

The Leeds Arts University Enterprise & Employability Fund awarded fifteen home degree-level students and recent graduates funding to help overcome financial barriers to career development. CEE further supported fifteen graduates with funded studio spaces to develop their business or creative practice at Dock Street, Patrick Studios and Aire Street.

**BA (Hons) Graphic Design** graduate Fizah Afzal was selected for a paid commission by eco-friendly brand Green Traffic Light to update their logo and branding for use on skincare and candle products.

**BA (Hons) Fine Art** graduate Adina Wykes was commissioned to create a mural for a newly refurbished office building in the centre of Leeds, winning a brief set by We are Spaces [1].

Erin Nicholson, **BA (Hons) Textile Design** graduate, was commissioned to create digital images for use across the platform and in print by British Film Institute-supported WorkWise for Screen, which provides screen businesses with practical resources and guidance to support equity, inclusion, dignity and respect in the workplace [2].



[1]



[2]

# 16. OUR EXHIBITIONS



Sheila Gaffney, *Embodied Dreaming*, 4 October 2024 – 11 January 2025, Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds Arts University, Photo: Jules Lister

*Embodied Dreaming*, a solo exhibition by Professor Sheila Gaffney, presented work developed over four decades of feminist artistic research. Bringing together sculpture, drawing, video installation, and archival material, the exhibition foregrounded embodied, process-led approaches to making, informed by feminist theory and psychoanalytic thought. The exhibition challenged hierarchical distinctions between theory and practice, positioning sculptural work as a form of embodied knowledge production.

Through sustained attention to materiality, memory, and the lived body, Gaffney's practice addressed gendered subjectivity and made visible the long-term labour and intellectual contribution of women artists within historically male-dominated sculptural traditions. A limited-edition publication accompanied the exhibition, featuring a newly commissioned essay by Professor Griselda Pollock and a curatorial text by Associate Professor Dr Marianna Tsonki, situating the work within a broader feminist genealogy.

*Still. Stray. Stowaway.* was a solo exhibition by Associate Professor Dr Paula Chambers, curated by Associate Professor Dr Marianna Tsonki. The exhibition presented a sculptural practice grounded in feminist critique of domestic space, gendered labour, and material displacement. Through assemblage, intervention, and installation, the exhibition examined the domestic sphere as a contested site of resistance, precarity, and negotiation.

Chambers' practice-led research foregrounds feminist and domestic materialities, combining new works

with pieces developed through a nomadic methodology of transporting artworks in a suitcase. This approach challenged fixed institutional frameworks and proposed adaptive, mobile, and non-hierarchical modes of making and display.

A publication accompanied the exhibition, featuring a newly commissioned text by Marxist feminist theorist Professor Angela Dimitrakaki, alongside a public conversation between Chambers, Tsonki and feminist art historian Dr Alexandra Kokoli.



Paula Chambers, *Still. Stray. Stowaway.* 23 May – 27 September 2025, Blenheim Walk Gallery, Leeds Arts University, Photo: Jules Lister

# 17. OUR EXHIBITIONS

The APP Commissions Programme forms part of the University's 2020–25 Access and Participation Plan and is designed to increase the visibility and engagement of practitioners of minoritised ethnicities within the University community. The programme supports commissioned artists to develop substantial new work through production budgets, artist fees, and curatorial guidance, fostering inclusive dialogue and critical experimentation within contemporary art practice.

This year's commissions presented newly developed works by artist Hardeep Pandhal and Leeds Arts University **BA (Hons) Fine Art** graduate Corissa Duhra. Pandhal exhibited two large-scale wall-based drawings that explored racialisation, class, and diasporic identity through mythic narrative, humour, and subcultural aesthetics. Duhra's installation boundaries/bounded transformed the gallery through repurposed construction materials and atta dough, a staple of domestic life, addressing care, constraint, and intergenerational inheritance.



[1]



[2]

Hardeep Pandhal, *Quest Quest and Humble Beginnings*, Corissa Duhra, *boundaries/bounded*, photos by Jules Lister.

# 18. OUR RESEARCH

## Age

### Publications

- Broadhead, S. & Hooper, S. 2024. Learning Returns: Experiences of mature students in art and design captured through YouTube. Adult education in times of crisis and change: perspectives on access, learning careers and identities. Universidade do Algarve Editora, Faro, pp. 113-136. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34623/w45h-kg09>
- Broadhead, S., Hooper, S., & Gonnet, H. 2025. Learning Returns: The limitations and benefits of 'snowballing recruitment' as a process when researching the learning journeys of adults returning to education. Change and continuity in post-compulsory education: Thirty years of FACE. FACE, Peterborough. ISBN 978-0-9954922-7-1
- Norton, F. A. 2025. Thinking through doing: what is the potential for developing critical thinking through arts-based research competences with adult learners in HE in the UK, Germany and Spain. Research in Post-Compulsory Education, pp. 142-164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2025.2469016>

### Presentations

- Barker, G. 2024. Drawing Age: Visualising the lives of older people and the development of wellbeing activities. Presentation and poster. Reimagine Ageing Interdisciplinary Research Network, 11 September 2024, University of Leeds. [1]
- Barker, G. 2025. An aging artist in an aging community. The Lifespan: Perspectives on Ageing & the Life Course from the Medical Humanities, the Health Sciences & Age Studies, 4-5 June 2025, King's College London.
- Broadhead, S. & Hooper, S. 2024. Learning Returns: Revealing the entanglements of cultural ecologies and adult learning journeys within the city of Leeds. Engaging Communities in City-making: West Yorkshire-based Socially Engaged Arts Practice Symposium, Leeds Arts University, 21 September 2024.
- Norton, F. 2024. Three Lecturers, Three Universities, Three Countries: Can Facilitating Connecting Art Practice Pedagogic Workshop in International Educational Contexts Create Connection and Criticality? Practitioner Research Special Interest Group, BERA.
- Norton, F. 2024. Three Countries, one Method: A Comparativistic Study of how SDG Awareness is Developed in Adult Education in the UK, Germany, and Spain. International Society for Comparative Adult Education, 9-10 November 2024, Florence Innovation Centre.

Garry Barker (2025), drawing from collaboration with Pinderfields Hospital

[1]



- Broadhead, S., Gonnet, H., & Hooper, S. 2025. Learning returns: Revealing the entanglements of cultural ecologies and adult learning journeys within the City of Leeds and surrounding areas. 3rd Artist-Teacher in ACL Conference, 22 March 2025, online.
- Broadhead, S., Gonnet, H., & Hooper, S. 2025. Disrupting the pipeline: Employability skills and adult learning in the creative arts. Learning careers, higher education and workplaces: Supporting transitions in times of complexity, ESREA Access, Learning Careers and Identities Network, 27-30 March 2025, University Rennes 2.

# 19. OUR RESEARCH

## Gender and Sexuality

### Publications

- Woolley, D. 2025. #Rebel Selves: queer selfies as practices of care. *photographies*, 18(1), 137-158.

### Presentations

- Chambers, P. 2025. Nomadic Objects and Material Migrants. International Visual Methods Conference, 18-21 June 2025, Bahçeşehir University Istanbul.
- Hooper, S. 2024. Amateur women filmmakers: Civic film making and exhibition. Engaging Communities in City-making: West Yorkshire-based Socially Engaged Arts Practice Symposium, Leeds Arts University, 21 September 2024.
- Woolley, D. 2024. #Rebel Selves: Exploring LGBTQI+ identities through playful activities. Engaging Communities in City-making: West Yorkshire-based Socially Engaged Arts Practice Symposium, Leeds Arts University, 21 September 2024.
- Woolley, D. 2025. Visual Representations of Queer Joy in Digital Spaces. International Visual Methods Conference, 18-21 June 2025, Bahçeşehir University Istanbul.

## Performance and Exhibition

- Woolley, D. 2024. Rebel Moves on the Sales Floor. Castlefield Gallery New Art Spaces, Warrington. 7 November 2024. [1]

A specially devised contemporary dance intervention, Rebel Moves on the Sales Floor, was choreographed by Miriam Levy in collaboration with Dawn Woolley, and performed by Miriam Levy, Jay Yule, Andrea Callaghan and Lizzy Tan. Taking place in the #Rebel Selves installation, the dance played with notions of gender, gesture and masquerade on social media and in selfie cultures.

- Woolley, D. #RebelSelves. Castlefield Gallery New Art Spaces, Warrington. 4 October – 23 November 2024.



[1]

Still from Rebel Moves on the Sales Floor



[2]

Hidden exhibition.



[3]

Liminal Ecologies exhibition, photo by isonative.

## Ethnicity

### Exhibition

- Fox, C. 2025. Hidden. Angkor Photo Festival, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 7 - 16 February 2025. [2]
- TSIONKI, M., & CUNHA, M. 2025. Liminal Ecologies: Thresholds of Transition and Entanglement. tranzit sk, Bratislava, Slovakia. 27 March – 11 July 2025. [3]

### Public engagement

- Fox, C. 2025. Evening Talk: Hidden. Millennium Gallery, Sheffield Museums, Sheffield, 21 January 2025.

In a special event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, Charles Fox shared his current project Hidden, exploring one family's photography and journey during the Cambodian genocide. He was joined by artist Dayanny So and Dr Mark Rawlinson from the University of Nottingham.

# 20. OUR RESEARCH

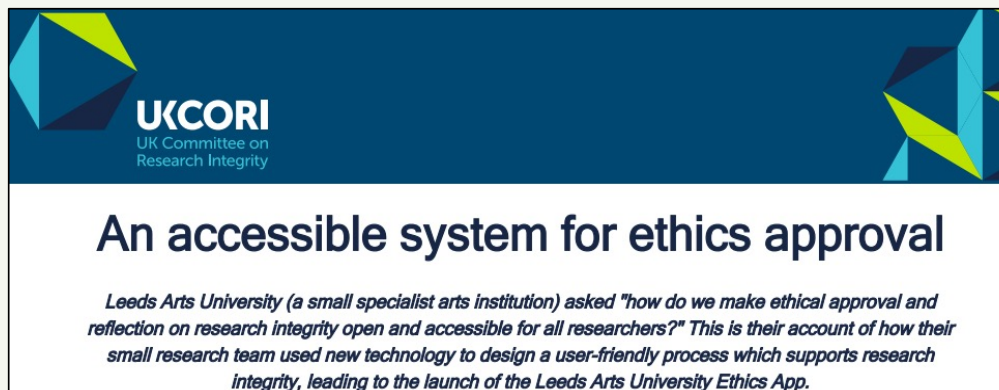
## Parenthood

### Presentations

- Duggleby, B. 2025. Soft comics and compassion: Turning towards suffering through the 'palatable' tone. Joint Conference of the International Bande Dessinée Society and the International Graphic Novel and Comics Conference, Belgium Center for Bande Desinee, Brussels, 30 June - 4 July 2025.
- Duggleby, B. 2025. Awakening the Compassionate Mother: A Gentle Reckoning for the Illustrated caregiver. The Illustrated Woman: Symposium on Illustration Research and Practise in Relation to Notions of Womanhood, University of Leeds, 19 May 2025.

## Community and Accessibility

- Barker, G. 2024. Chapelton Stories: The Individual within the Social. Engaging Communities in City-making: West Yorkshire-based Socially Engaged Arts Practice Symposium, Leeds Arts University, 21 September 2024.
- Broadhead, S. 2024. Guidance for turning a thesis into a journal article. Available at: <https://university.open.ac.uk/widening-participation/external-events-and-publications/wpj-journal/guidance-turning-thesis-journal-article> (accessed 26 January 2026).
- Broadhead, S. & Gonnet, H. 2024. An accessible system for ethics approval. Available at: <https://ukcori.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Leeds-Art-An-accessible-system-for-ethics-approval.pdf> (accessed 26 January 2026). [1]



[1]

Broadhead and  
Gonnet's Ethics  
App.

