


Voices of Inclusion: Experiences and Initiatives within UCL Computer Science

Matthew Grech-Sollars

Chair of the UCL Computer Science Gender Equality & Mental Health Groups

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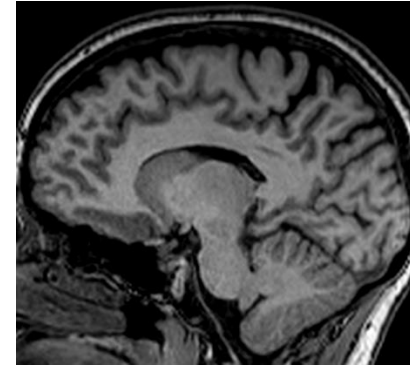
Outline of talk

- About me
- About the department
- Athena Swan (Gender Equality Charter) action plan
- Annual culture survey
- Six initiatives
- Concluding thoughts

About me

Education

- Graduated in Electrical Engineering, University of Malta
- MSc and PhD in London, UK – Medical Physics



Current Role:

- Associate Professor in Quantitative Neuroradiology at UCL Computer Science, London UK
- Clinical Scientist (MRI Physics) at National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery, London UK

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) activity:

- Established the Mental Health Working Group in UCL CS
- Chair of the Gender Equality Group
- Mental Health First Aider



Quantitative Imaging Group
matthew-grech-sollars

About the Department



Daniel Alexander
Head of Department



Karin Alderson
Department Manager



Kiran Ahmed
EDI Officer



Engineering Front Building
Staff: 21
12 mins



Malet Place Engineering Building
Staff: 12
12 mins

Off-Site Staff: 19



UCL-Here East (One Pool St and Marshgate)
Staff: 9
36 mins



Gower St
Staff: 154
13 mins 9 mins



Charles Bell House
Staff: 5
18 mins 12 mins



Darwin Building
Staff: 4
10 mins



High Holborn
Staff: 137
30 mins 13 mins

Travelling Times from Euston Station

- Walking
- Underground Tube Train



Euston Rd
Staff: 125
5 mins



Francis Crick Institute
Staff: 3
10 mins

≈numbers:

140 Academics

120 Post-docs

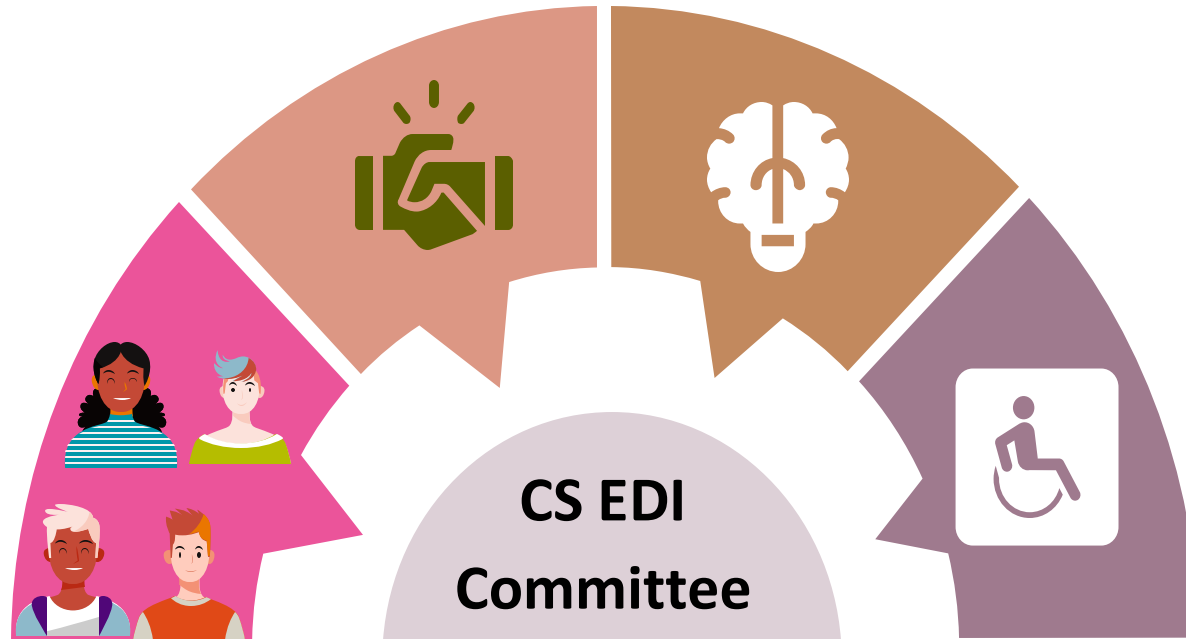
170 Teaching staff

70 Professional services

600 Undergraduate students

800 Postgraduate students

EDI at UCL Computer Science



Disability Support



LGBTQ+



Race Equality



Gender Equality



Mental Health

Our 5 Athena Swan initiatives

- **ARRIVE:** Changing perceptions of CS in girls and boys aged 9–18.
- **ASPIRE:** Showcasing UCL-CS role models and presenting diverse career paths.
- **ACHIEVE:** Providing training and support to women in UCL-CS to realise their potential.
- **ADVANCE:** Introduction of structures/processes to make career progression easier for Academic and PS Staff.
- **AMPLIFY:** An active programme that seeks opportunities to share best practices for gender equality, scaling up and broadening our outreach for National/International impact.



Annual culture survey

- Two surveys:
 - Staff & PhD students
 - Undergrad and Masters students

- Themes:
 - belonging and inclusion
 - gender equality
 - work-life balance
 - bullying and harassment
 - career development
 - Wellbeing
 - accessibility

1. ARRIVE: A-COMPS Mentoring Programme

- A-COMPS: Apply Competitively into STEM
- 18-month programme
- London-based A-level students
- Under-represented backgrounds
- Partnered with 4 state schools

- One to one mentoring
- Summer work experience placement
- Guidance on university application

- 94% Students from cohort one, and 100% of cohort two received university offers



2. ASPIRE: Athena Swan Circle



- Organised by Elaine Pimentel
- Termly meetings
- Open to students and staff
- Talks and networking event



3. ACHIEVE: Minerva's Hack

- A student-led and department supported event (co-led by Sindi Gjonaj and Savani Sawaikar)
- Around 100 students participating from >10 universities
- An opportunity for training and networking with 12 industry partners



4. CS Away Day

- Biannual event for professional services and academics
- Importance of getting to know each other
- Shaping the department's culture



5. Mindful Conversations Lunch & seminar series



Seminars Past

- Tackling Impostor syndrome
- Anxiety and uncertainty in academia
- Navigating toxic work relationships in academia
- Dealing with rejection, and giving effective, constructive feedback



Seminars Future

- Recognising and responding to microaggressions
- Boundaries without guilt: saying no to stay well
- Is cancel culture silencing academia? A conversation on free speech and inclusion



6. Experiencing cultural diversity

- Pot luck lunches
- Eid
- Diwali
- Chinese New Year
- Black History Month



Concluding thoughts

When done in the right way, equality, diversity and inclusion activities give us the ability to:

1. Learn from each other
2. Create a positive and supportive working environment
3. Enable professional and personal growth

Thank you!



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