



# DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

2021 - 2024  
Q1 2021

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



**Joanna Coates**

CEO, UK Athletics

2020 presented many challenges across the sports sector and as the new CEO to athletics, I was faced with managing the impact of the global pandemic, learning the role and building relationships virtually.

Despite the challenges in 2020, there were many things for us to celebrate which has given the sport confidence into 2021 and beyond. In collaboration with the Home Countries, we developed the Athletics Unified strategy which is the UK wide strategy for the sport; recognising the areas of focus to ensure our sport thrives from playground to podium. Our ED&I programme has continued to excel and we've captured the hearts and minds of our diverse athletics family through innovative activities, but there is more to be done. We have new leadership in Performance, led by Sara Symington as Performance Director and Christian Malcolm as Head Coach, diversity never seen in athletics before and I will continue to champion equality, diversity and inclusion through positive actions. This year is an exciting year, with the Olympic and Paralympic Games planned and we will launch our British Athletics strategy which again offer direction for the sport with the ED&I golden thread throughout.

No doubt 2021 will bring its own challenges, however I am confident that the culture of UKA will embrace them and we will keep moving forward. Unfortunately due to the current restrictions, I have not had an opportunity to engage fully with the athletics community in person but I aim to do so as soon as we are permitted to get out and about.

We recognise that there are areas we were not able to achieve in our Diversity Action Plan 2017-2020, therefore these have been carried forward into this plan accompanied by new actions for the next three years and will involve all those in athletics to work together. I am very much looking forward to seeing our Diversity Action Plan come to life and will be fully committed to make it happen.

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



**Nic Coward**  
Chair, UK Athletics

It is a great honour to be Chair of UK Athletics, particularly at a time when we are looking to create considerable change for the best future of the sport, and for all that it can be for people and communities.

I see it as a significant part of my role, together with Joanna and all of the Board, to ensure we and all involved at UK Athletics are approaching each and every issue with the right mindset. The Athletics Unified (2020-2032) strategy for the sport was launched in late 2020, created through hard work and collaboration between the five governing bodies of athletics and running in the UK. Our sport offers the foundation for a lifetime of activity, from playground to podium, and we have set ourselves the clear objective of being a sport for everyone. That is a serious statement, by which we will judge ourselves, and be judged.

We are committed to driving positive change within our sport, with a demand that all involved are open and collaborative, and have a mindset of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Diversity Action Plan is an important tool by which we will hold ourselves to account. It sets out a wide range of individual issues. Behind it all is a commitment to use data and insight, with a mindset that welcomes challenge and open debate wherever there is any question that we are not acting to the standards we have set. 2020 saw considerable engagement with our staff and across the sport on a wide range of issues, all of which are intended to show that anyone can raise any issue at any time, and will be listened to. This is how we are.

We have a number of commitments we have set ourselves through being a Disability Confident Leader, signatories of the Time to Change Employer Pledge which focuses on supporting our workforce with mental health, and the Race at Work Charter which addresses race inequality in the workplace. Our 'Let's Talk About Race' programme created impactful conversation across a large number of athletics people, and have led to commitments we have made in the Diversity Action Plan. The Athletics Pride Network has developed since its launch in April 2020, sharing experiences, and creating a route for issues to be raised.

Recruitment into the organisation and the sport as a whole, including volunteers is hugely important: our partnership with Vercida gives us data on how we are perceived as a organisation, and who is applying for roles at UKA; this will give us useful insight as to how we are seen, and whether people in the job market are believing us. We are also determined to ensure that the athlete and coach community sees us as we want to be seen.

# RACE AT WORK CHARTER

The UK Athletics Diversity Action Plan 2021-2024 incorporates incomplete actions from the Diversity Action Plan 2017-2020 and the actions from the Let's Talk About Race Programme in line with the commitment to the Business in the Community (BiTC) Race at Work Charter (RaWC) which we signed in 2019. Each priority will have a colour code which identifies one or more of the Race at Work calls to action it is associated with.

The UK Athletics ED&I pillars; Influence, Inclusive, Inspire and Impact are aligned to the Code for Sports Governance criteria.

Race at Work Charter Five Calls to Action	Key
<p><b>1. Appoint an Executive Sponsor for race</b> Executive Sponsors for Race provide visible leadership on race and ethnicity in their organisation and can drive key actions such as setting targets for ethnic minority representation, briefing recruitment agencies and supporting mentoring and sponsorship.</p>	1
<p><b>2. Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress</b> Capturing ethnicity data is important to establishing a baseline and measuring progress. It is also a crucial step towards an organisation being able to report on ethnicity pay.</p>	2
<p><b>3. Commit at Board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying</b> The Race at Work Survey revealed that 25% ethnic minority employees reported that they had witnessed or experienced racial harassment or bullying from managers. Commitment from the top is needed to achieve change.</p>	3
<p><b>4. Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers</b> Actions can include ensuring that performance objectives for leaders and managers cover their responsibilities to support fairness for all staff.</p>	4
<p><b>5. Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression</b> Actions can include embedding mentoring, reverse mentoring and sponsorship in their organisations.</p>	5

**Short Term** < 2 Months

**Medium Term** 2 Months - 3 Years

**Long Term** 3 Years +

# ENGAGEMENT

<p><b>Influence:</b> As an NGB we must lead the way and demonstrate the behaviours we want in athletics.</p> <p><b>Impact:</b> Our protocols and policies will have a positive impact on our sport.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Embed organisational behaviours to create a culture of inclusion and exercise a vocal commitment to address inequality in athletics.</p>	CODE FOR SPORTS GOVERNANCE					
	Ensuring that your organisation's commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally.					
	Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGBT&T and socio-economic)	Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1	The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)	The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2
						

## SHORT TERM

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Achieve the Equality Standard in Sport Advanced Level with England Athletics	Submit the Equality Standard final report.	ED&I Lead and England Athletics Inclusion Manager	Q1 2021	
Create and roll out new UKA behaviours	Engage with staff to develop behaviours for UKA to support the development of the UKA strategy.	UKA CEO & ED&I Lead	Q1 2021	2
Zero Tolerance commitment	Communicate the 'zero tolerance' message on racism, harassment or bullying in athletics with a clear disciplinary process in place.	UKA & HCAF CEO's	Q1 2021	2
Supporting the athletics family	<p>Appoint an independent person/platform for coaches, athletes and Officials to get support with any racial or other issues they have encountered.</p> <p>Develop clear protocols for Officials, Coaches, Athletes and staff to report any racial or discriminatory behaviour.</p>	Executive Race Champion	Q1 2021	4

# ENGAGEMENT (CONT)

## SHORT TERM

Execute an inclusive Communications Strategy	<p>Embed ED&amp;I in the Communications Strategy, capturing the diversity of the sport at all levels;</p> <p>a. shows a cross-section of athletes with different athletic ability, bodies – showcase based upon skill rather than looks.</p> <p>b. showcase the complete journey of athletes – ‘from playground to podium’ and behind the scenes individuals i.e. coaches and support staff</p> <p>c. increase the visibility of ethnically diverse staff and athletes across all athletics disciplines, from grass roots level to elite</p> <p>d. work with media organisations to enable amplification of the story of black field event athletes</p> <p>e. develop and take ownership of diverse messaging across digital platforms.</p>	Commercial Director and Head of Corporate Communications	Q1 2021	4
ED&I training & development for workforce and stakeholders	Develop a standard UKA ED&I Workshop which can be rolled out to staff, sponsors and stakeholders.	ED&I Lead / ED&I Advocates	Q1 2021	
Build on ‘Let’s Talk about Race’ programme	Create a ‘LTAR Network’ of individuals who can support and inform UKA and HCAF’s around racial issues as well as support the DAP and LTAR actions.	ED&I Advocates and RaceEquality Network	Q1 2021	5
Policies & Procedures	Review existing policies and procedures through an ED&I lens on an annual basis utilising the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) tool.	Executive Team	Ongoing	3
Employee engagement survey	Conduct an employee engagement survey every other year to understand the culture of the organisation and create an employee action plan.	Head of HR/ED&I Lead	Ongoing	
HCAF ED&I Leads collaboration	Work collaboratively with the HCAF ED&I Leads to deliver the ED&I elements of the Athletics Unified strategy.	ED&I Lead	Ongoing	
Benchmark against organisations who are sector leading in ED&I	Continue membership with Vercida, Business in the Community and other organisations outside of sport.	ED&I Lead	Q1 2021	
Supplier diversity	Develop a robust process to review and monitor supplier diversity for new, existing and potential suppliers to ensure alignment with UKA’s culture and behaviours.	ED&I Lead and Procurement Manager	Q1 2021	4

# ENGAGEMENT (CONT)

## MEDIUM TERM

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Engage Athletes with the Athlete Appearance process	Develop a robust Athlete Appearance plan and process for schools and organisations have access to a wide range of athletes to book appearances in advance while developing the athlete and raising their profile and in turn potentially create new partnerships/sponsors.	Commercial Director and ED&I Athlete Advocates	Q2 2021	5
Review overseas competition processes	Include specific cultural background knowledge in the team management/ athlete information, including cultural background knowledge.  Implement an athlete and team staff pre-departure for overseas competition team 'icebreaker' to support an inclusive team culture.	Performance Director & Performance Operations Manager	Q2 2021	
Review Code of Conducts	Review and amend the Officials Licence Terms and Conditions [4. Professional Standards: Code of Conduct for Technical Officials] to ensure this is explicit to behaviours of racial or any other forms of discrimination.  Develop and implement a Race Equality Code of Conduct agreement to be signed by all officials and anyone working for, or in partnership with UKA.	Officials Manager & Head of HR	Q2 2021	2
Engage with World Athletics and European Athletics	Collaborate with WA and EA ED&I leads to work in partnership to address inequality in athletics and development opportunities.	ED&I Lead	Q3 2021	
Increase partner and stakeholder collaboration on ED&I	Work collaboratively with existing partners and stakeholders on diversity and inclusion plans.	ED&I Lead	Ongoing	
Accessible Website	Implement accessible software to the British Athletics website	Head of IT	Q2 2022	

## LONG TERM

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Sport wide Strategy	Embed ED&I in the 'Athletics United' sport wide strategy.	UKA & HCAF's CEO's	Q4 2032	1
Diverse recruitment panel members	Identify individuals with diverse backgrounds on all interview panels; ethnicity, gender, independent and knowledge of the role.	Head of HR and Hiring Managers	Ongoing	4

# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

<p><b>Inclusive:</b> Our sport is diverse; therefore we must reflect the sport at all levels of the organisation so everyone is included and valued.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Attract, retain and engage the widest talent pool to achieve diverse representation at all levels in athletics.</p>	<b>CODE FOR SPORTS GOVERNANCE</b>					
	<b>How the organisation will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates.</b>					
	<p>Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board</p> <p><small>*World Athletics have set a target to achieve 50% female representation on the World Athletics Council by 2027.</small></p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGBT and socio-economic)</p>	<p>Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1</p>	<p>The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)</p>	<p>The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2</p>
						

## SHORT TERM

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RdWC
Executive representation for race and ethnicity	Appoint an Executive Champion to address race inequalities and support race and ethnicity initiatives.	UKA CEO	Completed	1
Recruitment processes through an ED&I lens	<p>Diverse recruitment panel members - identify individuals with diverse backgrounds on all interview panels; ethnicity, gender, independent and knowledge of the role.</p> <p>Implement a policy for diversity within team staff selection i.e. experience, ethnicity, gender and inexperienced.</p> <p>Provide unconscious bias training and guidance for hiring managers</p>	Head of HR, Hiring Managers and Performance Director and Performance Operations Manager	Ongoing	4
Retain newly qualified Officials in athletics	Create a 'meet and greet' role within the Officials competition selected team; dedicated personnel to welcome new Officials.	Officials Manager	Ongoing	

# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Review staff Induction	Give a real life experience for a new starter by:  Utilising athletes, coaches, officials' and staff experiences to expand and embed staff understanding of UKA.  Introducing a staff buddy system for new starters, so they have support to raise any concerns/uncertainties during their first 6 months.  Engaging with our ED&I Athlete Advocates with pre-recorded messages to be embedded into the induction pack – messages to include the importance of ED&I within UKA.	Head of HR & ED&I Advocates	Q1 2021	
Disability Confident Leader	Maintain our Disability Confident Leader status.	ED&I Lead/Head of HR	Ongoing	
UKA to be the inclusive NGB employer of choice	Develop and execute a comprehensive ED&I programme of events and initiatives internally and external.	ED&I, Athletics Pride Network and the Race Equality Network	Ongoing	

## MEDIUM TERM

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Research and insight	Adopt the findings from the Female Coaching Network research outcomes; addressing the barriers female coaches face in athletics and take positive action.	ED&I Lead & Female Coaching Network	Q3 2021	5
Work experience opportunities	Each department to offer at least one work experience/shadowing opportunity per year for former/current athletes.	ED&I Lead and Line Managers	Ongoing	5
Code for Sports Governance	At any given time in order to achieve a diverse Board, recruitment processes will be adopted to achieve the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate diversity of skills, experience and knowledge (including recent and relevant experience in the sport as athlete, coach, administrator, technical official) to best address the roles and responsibilities of the organisation</li> <li>• at least 25% (minimum of 3)* Independent NEDs</li> <li>• at least 30% (minimum of 4)* either gender on the Board</li> <li>• at least 20% (minimum of 2)* people from an ethnically diverse community on the Board</li> </ul>	Head of HR and Board	Ongoing <b>NOTE:</b> These criteria to be met on the basis also that Chair and CEO will always be recruited from the widest possible talent pool, and to ensure organisational stability and succession planning, including where the 6 Board Appointed Directors serve up to two 4-year terms. *There are 12 members of the Board, therefore, where percentages are quoted this figure has been rounded up or down.	2
Diversity targets for Coaches, Officials and staff	Capture data on ethnicity, gender and disability then set realistic targets for these areas by 2024.	ED&I Lead & Head of HR	Q2 2021	2

**LONG TERM**

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
University Partnerships	Engage with universities with diverse candidates to identify and develop a talent pool of individuals studying sport, so we create a pipeline of diverse potential employees at UKA.	ED&I Lead & Female Coaching Network	Q4 2022	5

## PROGRESSING TALENT FROM WITHIN

<p><b>Inspire:</b> We need inspire diverse generations to want to be part of our sport and retain our existing talent.</p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Create and deliver Individual and team development and educational opportunities so that our workforce can reach their full potential.</p>	<b>CODE FOR SPORTS GOVERNANCE</b>					
	<b>A focus on developing a strong pipeline of diverse talent to populate decision making and other structures.</b>					
	Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board.	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board	Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGB&T and socio-economic)	Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1	The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)	The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2
						

**SHORT TERM**

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Board Training	Monitor Board ED&I training impact on a 6 monthly basis.	ED&I Lead	Ongoing	1

# PROGRESSING TALENT FROM WITHIN

**MEDIUM TERM**

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE	RaWC
Provide external Mentoring Programmes for staff	Develop partnerships with external sports/organisations to offer 12 month mentoring programmes for nominated staff mentees	ED&I Lead	Q2 2021	5
Introduce structured mentoring/shadowing programme for the athletics family	Develop three mentoring/shadowing programmes: 1) involving ethnically diverse coaches; utilise their skills and knowledge for future coaches [refer to 'COACH' photographic project concept]; 2) engage retired ethnically diverse athletes to support existing black athletes while developing personal skills so the sport can retain their expertise; 3) for ethnically diverse officials to encourage the next generation of officials to better reflect UK society.	ED&I Lead and Development Director	Q3 2021	5
ED& Training within Coaching and Officials qualifications	Create a bespoke ED&I module for all coaching and Officials qualification including mandatory unconscious bias training.	ED&I Lead and Development Director	Q3 2021	
Board & Athlete Development	Deliver a series of development sessions based on skills and competency required for roles within UKA led by;  Board members delivering 1-2 sessions per year to the athletics family on their journey to the Board(s) and the skills required.  UKA to athletes so they understand the background of UKA and inspire them to pursue a career in the sport.	Head of HR and UKA Board Members	Q3 2021	5
Staff Training	Source e-learning training for harassment discrimination, inclusive leadership and management, unconscious bias and disability awareness	ED&I Lead & Head of HR	Q3 2021	3
Succession Planning/Talent ID	Identify training and development requirements based on employee engagement survey results to support career progression.	ED&I Lead & Head of HR	Q3 2021	5
Bespoke Performance Management system for UKA	Create and deliver a robust performance management system incorporating UKA's established core behaviours.	Head of HR	Q4 2021	5
Provide opportunities for existing workforce	Create and deliver an inhouse team management/athlete support liaison programme for current staff/non staff coaches to learn the skills required for team management roles.	Performance Director and ED&I Advocates	Q4 2021	5

# KEY QUESTIONS

## HOW DOES THIS FEED INTO OUR BROADER GOVERNANCE PLAN?

ED&I is interweaved through other requirements within governance and is prominent within the new strategy, policies and procedures and our training and development plan to achieve the long term plan of diverse talent in the organisation.

## WHO ARE THE KEY PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DELIVERY OF THIS PLAN?

Joanna Coates, CEO, Nic Coward, Chair and Mark Draisey, Chief Financial Offer/Executive Race Champion  
Sarah Symmington, Performance Director  
Ralph Knibbs, Head of HR  
Donna Fraser, Equality, Diversity and Engagement Lead  
UKA ED&I Advocates  
Athletics Pride Network

## HOW WILL WE MEASURE OVERALL SUCCESS?

Evidence an overall increase in diversity across the Board, Senior Leadership, Staff, Coaches and Officials within the sport, measured on an annual basis and evidence an increase in the diversity of candidates applying for UK Athletics roles at all levels and monitor the gaps in skills of unsuccessful candidates.

## HOW DOES YOUR DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (DAP) CROSS REFERENCE OTHER PARTS OF THE CODE OR OTHER RELEVANT EQUALITY OR DIVERSITY MONITORING STANDARDS / FRAMEWORK?

The UKA Operational Plan is currently in development, due to be delivered by Q3 2021.

The DAP supports requirement 1.1 through Progressing Talent from within with the training approach for the Board around inclusive decision making.

The DAP cross references requirement 3.1 and 3.4 to communicate activities internally and externally aligned with the strategy. We are currently working with the Home Countries to achieve the Equality Standard in Sport Advanced Level in 2021.



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