



## Understanding Ramadan: A Guide for Our College Community

Many of our students and staff will soon begin observing Ramadan, a holy month in the Islamic calendar. During this time, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. This year, Ramadan is from the 17th February until 18th March. Ramadan is a time for reflection, gratitude and community. It is about self-discipline and thinking of those less fortunate. It ends with a big celebration called Eid.

Since fasting can be physically demanding, here is how we can help our peers:

- **Be mindful:** you don't need to hide your lunch, but try to avoid eating or drinking right next to someone who is fasting
- **Include your peers:** fasting students might skip the canteen, but they still value being part of the group
- **Be patient:** fasting can make people tired, especially in the afternoon



## EDI Annual Report 2024-25: Summary of achievements

The 2024-25 academic year marked significant progress in our mission to foster an inclusive learning environment. Following the signing of the Association of Colleges EDI Charter, the college successfully implemented key initiatives across the college community and we are doubling our efforts to support underrepresented students to ensure every student feels heard and supported.

### Key Successes & Progress

- **Staff Inclusivity:** Disability disclosure rose significantly from 6.6% to 10.1%, exceeding the FE sector average. The workforce also saw a positive shift toward a younger demographic in the 25-34 age bracket.
- **Learner Excellence:** Overall achievement rates climbed to 84.4%, with retention holding strong at 94.5%. Notably, learners with High Needs (EHCPs) outperformed the college average with a 95.8% achievement rate.
- **Diversity Growth:** The adult learner cohort grew by 10.7%, seeing increased representation from Asian and Arab backgrounds. Apprenticeships also became more diverse, with higher participation from Black, Asian and Mixed-race students.
- **Engagement:** The College launched a monthly EDI newsletter, a dedicated celebration week and renewed its Disability Committed status.
- **Innovation:** The new "Weighbridge" data dashboard was introduced to better track and support the performance of diverse student groups.

[You can view the full report here.](#)

Looking ahead, BTC is investing in a new EDI Coordinator role to further embed these positive cultural shifts.



## LGBT+ History Month

February is LGBT+ History Month and this year's theme is Science and Innovation. With our deep roots in aviation and automotive history, we are spoiled for choice when it comes to celebrating LGBT+ pioneers. Here are a few who shaped our local heritage:

**Roberta Cowell** (1918-2011) fighter pilot, racing driver, war hero and the first British person to undergo gender reassignment surgery.

**Hugh Hunter** (1911-1990) one of Brooklands most successful racing drivers who openly lived with his partner Derek.

This year we are focusing on local legend, **Janet Gulland** (1933–2018).

Janet was a trailblazer in aviation. In the 1950s, she became the first female graduate apprentice at Vickers-Armstrongs on the Brooklands site. She was a key aerodynamicist involved in developing new aircrafts. Her expertise eventually earned her the prestigious

title 'Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society'. By 1976, Janet had progressed to Research Engineer at the BAC headquarters in Weybridge. She eventually moved into management, where she was responsible for overseeing market research and long-term forecasts.

She reached the height of her career as the Director of Market Research for British Aerospace Defence Marketing. In this senior role, she led a specialist team of analysts and intelligence officers, monitoring global markets for military and commercial aircraft.

Beyond her professional success, Janet lived an authentic life at a time when society was far less accepting. She shared her life with her partner, Sue, for over 50 years. After retiring, she remained a dedicated advocate for women in engineering and donated her extensive archives to the Brooklands Museum. Janet's legacy serves as a powerful reminder of the diverse talent that has shaped our local history.

## Celebrate National Reading Year 2026!

To celebrate National Reading Year 2026, we are looking for students and staff to share reviews of books that explore Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. We want to hear about books that feature:

- Authors from ethnic minority backgrounds
- Protagonists with disabilities or neurodiversity
- LGBTQ+ themes and identities
- Books that put underrepresented voices in the spotlight

Your review can be published on the college website exactly how you feel comfortable:

- Anonymously (just the review).
- With your name as the author.
- With a photo and "fanfare" if you want the full spotlight!



### Win a Prize

The author of the best review will receive a £10 Amazon voucher to spend on even more inclusive books for their collection.

**How to enter:** Send your review (max 300 words) to Equity Diversity and Inclusion

[EDI@brooklands.ac.uk](mailto:EDI@brooklands.ac.uk).

## An update from our Safeguarding Team

Our team has worked tirelessly to strengthen our inclusive environment to ensure every learner feels seen, supported and valued.

With our ongoing collaboration with the SEND team, we can ensure learners receive consistent support across the college.

Our ESOL learners have also been a major focus. Many arrive with emotional trauma or financial insecurity when moving to this country. To help support these students, we help to connect them with charities and access financial support, creating a safe environment where they can share their harrowing experiences of war, separation and loss.

We have also strengthened our partnerships with external agencies to help students navigate complex challenges, from grooming

or exploitation to financial inequality. We have worked proactively to identify concerns and advocate for our vulnerable learners.

Promoting equality and respect remains central to everything we do. We continue to challenge racist behaviour whenever it appears and we champion gender equality and create safe spaces for students without fear of judgement. This collective effort reflects our belief that inclusion is a continuous process of listening, understanding and acting. By giving learners the tools, confidence and support they need, we are building a community where every student has the opportunity to succeed.

So far this academic year we have worked on **678** reported concerns.

