



Learning & Development *at Accent*



In our ever-evolving professional landscape, personal growth and skill enhancement are crucial for both individual and organisational success.

We're thrilled to introduce you to an array of development opportunities designed to nurture your talents, fuel your passions, and support your career development and aspirations.

Discover the comprehensive resources available to you, ranging from interactive workshops and online courses to valuable mentorship programmes and wellness activities.

Whether you aim to sharpen your technical skills, dive into personal development, or explore new areas of knowledge, this guide is here to help you navigate your journey.

This guide aims to provide you with an overview of the support and resources the Organisational Development team can provide to leaders and their teams across Accent.

It also outlines the role that individuals can take to enrich their careers and personal and professional lives and the opportunities gained when we work together.

For more information about how we can support and work with you, please contact a member of the team or talk to your line manager.

Let's work together

In today's rapidly evolving workplace, taking control of your career and accepting responsibility for your personal development is more important than ever. The journey to career success is not solely the responsibility of your manager, the Organisational Development team, or Accent; it is a shared commitment and a collaborative effort. By actively engaging in your personal and professional growth, you can unlock new opportunities, enhance your skills, and achieve your career aspirations.

Why Take Control of Your Development?

- **Empowerment:** Taking charge of your development empowers you to make informed decisions about your professional path.
- **Adaptability:** Continuous learning and development prepares you to adapt to changes in Accent, the industry and the sector.
- **Growth Opportunities:** Proactively seeking development opportunities can lead to promotions, new roles, and increased job satisfaction.
- **Fulfilment:** Personal development aligns your career with your passions and interests, leading to a more fulfilling and thriving professional life.
- **Life Enhancing:** So many skills are transferrable to our personal lives and relationships, use the skills outside of Accent and enhance your personal experiences.

*Who's writing the story
book of your life?*

Steps to Take Control of Your Development

Self-Assessment

- **Evaluate Your Skills and Interests:** Reflect on your strengths, weaknesses, and areas of interest.
- **Set Development Goals:** Define short-term and long-term development goals that align with your personal and professional aspirations.

Create a Personal Development Plan

- **Identify Learning Opportunities:** Look for courses, workshops, certifications, and other learning opportunities that can help you achieve your career goals.
- **Consider experiences:** as well as the above consider the critical experiences you might need that will support your development
- **Develop a Timeline:** Create a realistic timeline for accomplishing your development activities.

Seek Feedback and Mentorship

- **Ask for Feedback:** Regularly seek feedback from colleagues, managers, and mentors to identify areas for improvement.
- **Find a Mentor:** A mentor can provide guidance, support, and insights to help you navigate your career path (see page 16 for Accent's **mentor programme**).

Take Initiative

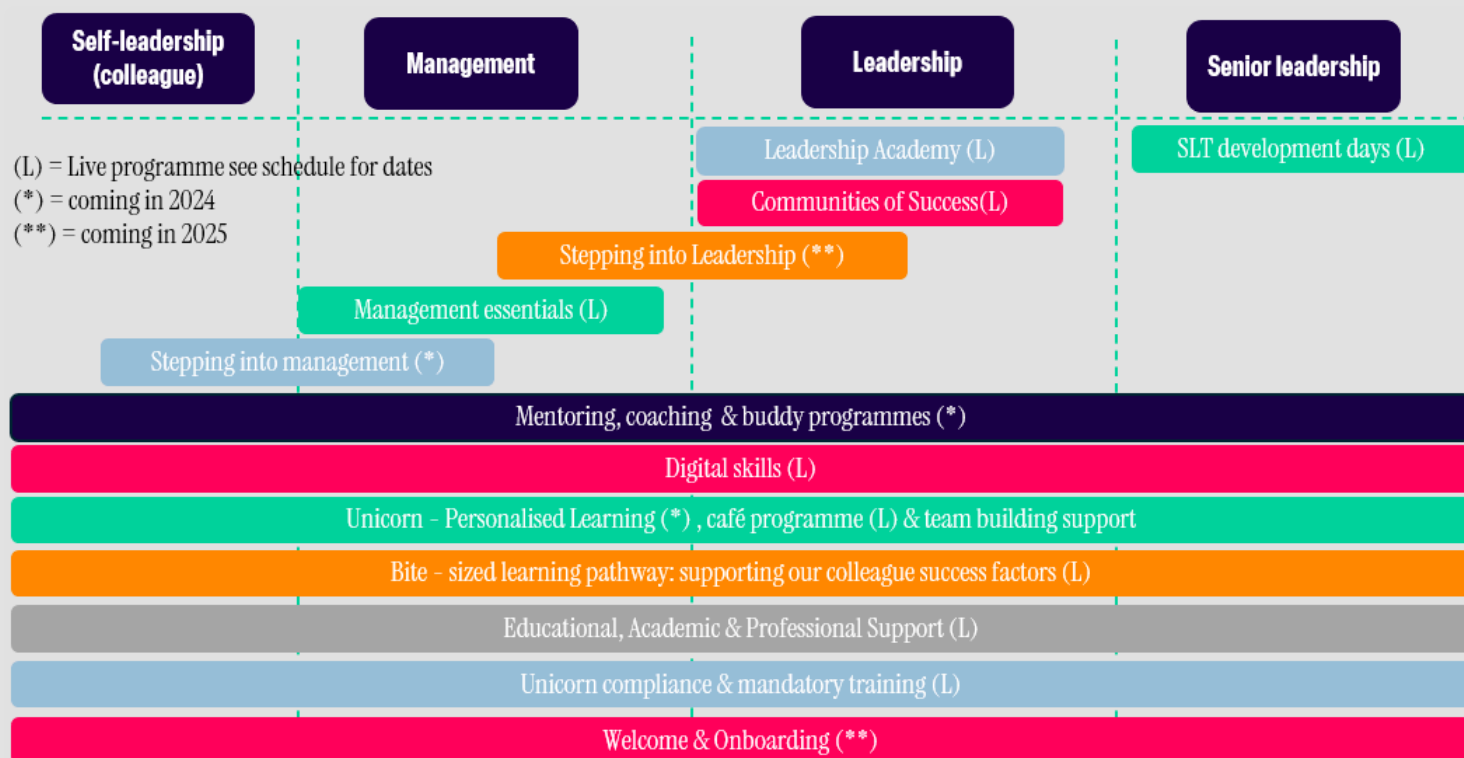
- **Proactive Learning:** Enrol in relevant training programmes and take advantage of the tools and resources available on Unicorn – Personalised Learning
- **Professional Networking:** Attend industry events, join professional organisations, and network with peers to expand your professional connections.
- **Give others the benefit of your wisdom:** share your knowledge, skills and expertise with new colleagues to Accent and join the **Buddy programme**.

Monitor and Reflect

- **Track Your Progress:** Regularly review your development plan and track your progress against your goals.
- **Reflect on Achievements:** Celebrate your achievements and reflect on the lessons learned from any setbacks.

What's on offer?

Our comprehensive offer aims to support all colleagues to grow & thrive



Explore



Learn



Imagine



Know

Find out more on the coming pages

Invest in your Success

Introducing Unicorn

Supporting you to take your career in the direction you want!



Unicorn is our internal learning management system and is a core feature of our offer.

Unicorn has two key areas:

Unicorn - Learning

Learning events:

search find and book training and learning events taking place across Accent.

Certification and Compliance Training:

complete courses and assessments needed to meet job-specific certifications and regulatory requirements.

Training records:

review your Accent learning and development record.

Continuing professional development:

record and track your CPD

Unicorn - Personalised Learning

Personalised Learning Paths:

Tailored learning programmes to meet individual career goals and skill levels.

On demand Learning:

Access to 500+ learning bites anytime and anywhere, allowing for flexible learning schedules.

Interactive Content:

Engaging learning materials like videos, quizzes, and interactive simulations to support your learning.

Personalised Assessments:

Assessments to help identify areas for improvement.

You can access Unicorn through ‘Workspace’



Our offer *in detail*



Explore



Imagine



Learn



Know

Welcome & Onboarding

We want you to settle into your new role as quickly and as seamlessly as possible. We are currently in the process of developing a comprehensive and dynamic onboarding programme that will provide you with all the tools, knowledge, and support you need to thrive in your new role. Here's what you can expect as we refine and enhance our onboarding offer:

Onboarding Plans & Guides

- **Personalised Experience:** We are working on creating onboarding plans & guides to support you in your early days.
- **Department-Specific Training:** You will receive customised training that is relevant to your department and aligned with your day-to-day tasks from your line manager.

Comprehensive Corporate Induction

- **Company Overview:** We are developing a new comprehensive corporate induction to help new starters gain insights into Accent's history, mission, values, and culture.
- **Introduction to Key Teams:** Meet and connect with key teams and stakeholders across the organisation to understand how your role fits into the bigger picture.
- In the meantime, you will get access to our online programme.

Learn at your own pace:

- **eLearning** to guide you through regulatory and compliance training that is relevant to all Accent colleagues

Supportive Environment

- **Buddy System:** Benefit from our buddy system, where a fellow colleague will help you navigate your first few weeks, answer questions, and provide valuable insights.

Feedback and Improvement

- **Your Input Matters:** As we continue to enhance our onboarding programme, your feedback is invaluable. We encourage you to share your thoughts and experiences to help us create an exceptional onboarding journey for future employees – please do come along to one of our regular new starter listening sessions.
- **Iterative Updates:** Based on feedback, we will make iterative updates to ensure our onboarding process remains effective, engaging, and relevant.

Welcome and Onboarding

What to expect during your onboarding

Day One:

Welcome session with the team, introduction to your onboarding plan, and a tour of our facilities (or virtual orientation if working remotely).

First Week:

Department-specific training, meetings with your team, and participation in initial learning activities.

First Month:

Continued training, regular check-ins with your manager, and integration into ongoing projects and initiatives.

Ongoing:

Access to continuous learning resources, development programs, and opportunities for feedback and improvement.

Face to Face training with our Organisational Development Team to introduce you to **Accent's Mindset; Language and Actions toolkit**. Learning which improves performance, employee engagement and customer satisfaction.

Buddy Programme: dedicated 'buddy' support. An existing Accent colleague who will partner with you in your first few weeks with Accent. They'll provide insight into the structure and culture of Accent and help you to fit in more quickly.



Compliance & mandatory training



At Accent, we are committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical behaviour and regulatory compliance.

Compliance training is an essential part of our organisational culture, ensuring that all colleagues understand and adhere to the laws, regulations, and policies that govern our business operations. By participating in compliance training, you play a crucial role in safeguarding Accent's reputation, protecting our stakeholders, and fostering a culture of integrity and accountability.

The following courses are mandatory for all colleagues at Accent:

- Health & Safety Induction
- Safeguarding
- GDPR
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Anti - money laundering

You will also be invited to complete role specific mandatory training.

To find out what compliance training you have been assigned, visit the Learning page in Unicorn.

Your role in compliance

As a colleague at Accent, you have a responsibility to uphold our standards of compliance and integrity. We ask you to fully engage in all compliance training sessions and complete required assessments by the defined due dates.





At Accent, we believe that continuous learning and professional development are key to both personal and organisational success.

Educational & Academic

As a non-profit housing association, our primary goal is to ensure that we use our resources in the most effective and responsible manner to benefit our customers and for **Professional and Academic Support** we take an Apprenticeship levy first approach. This is where, wherever possible academic courses will be completed through an apprenticeship.

This decision has been made to ensure that we are using our customers' money wisely. However, we recognise that the levy doesn't cover everything, so we also have our **Academic & Educational Assistance Scheme** which is designed to support your educational pursuits and career growth by providing financial assistance for approved courses and programmes.

Professional development

Many roles at Accent have a professional body, which people with the appropriate experience or qualifications can join. The benefit of doing so includes access to information and advice, networking opportunities and career development.

We support this as a key part of development by reimbursing **professional membership and subscription** for one professional body which is related to your current role.

Personal development



Supporting our colleague success factors

To support you in developing the competencies needed to excel in your roles, we are excited to tell you about our Bite-Sized Learning Pathway for colleagues.

This training is designed to deliver targeted, easily digestible learning modules that fit seamlessly into your busy schedule.

Active Listening - The Secret Superpower

Not all superheroes wear capes and one of the best kept superhero powers is active listening. Stop hearing and start listening – what are you waiting for?

Join us for this bite-sized **45-minute session** to enhance your superpower and start you on your journey to greatness.

SMART objectives

‘If you don’t know the destination you can’t plan your journey’.

SMART objectives are an essential element of our Performance Development process. Not sure how to do this? Then join us for this bite-sized **45-minute session** to write effective objectives which will:

- Introduce you to the SMART model.
- Propose a simple formula: verb + object + outcome.

Feedback is a gift

‘I’m sure we’ve all heard that at some point and maybe we’ve not always been in agreement with the sentiment!

Join our **45- minute** bite size session on giving feedback where we will look at some useful frameworks and models to help you structure your feedback, they will help you to be specific and constructive whether you are delivering motivational or developmental feedback. We’ll also take a look at some do’s and don’ts to ensure we all know how to get the best out of our conversations and the hazards to avoid.

Personal development

Supporting our colleague success factors



Pop the question!

Unlock the power of effective communication with our bite-sized **45 minute session** on questioning techniques!

Whatever your role, mastering the art of asking the right questions can transform your interactions. Discover how to use open questions to spark dialogue, closed questions to get precise answers, and TED questions to dive deeper into the heart of any topic. Join us to learn these simple yet powerful techniques and take your conversations from good to great!

GROW & Personal development

Personal development is the process of taking control of your life and connecting with yourself to progress in your overall well-being. It involves developing yourself, understanding yourself and finding ways to reach your potential.

Join us for this bite-sized **45-minute** session which will:

- Identify the importance of coaching peers and colleagues for personal development.
- Introduce the GROW model in support of robust personal development objectives.
- Provide practice and discussion time.

Resilience - Coming soon in 2025!

‘Resilience: the ability to cope with and recover from setbacks’

This event will provide you with the tools needed to build resilience to better manage challenges and maintain good personal wellbeing in the face of adversity.

This event will cover a range of tools and topics including:

- why customers and colleagues may be more ‘emotional / volatile / angry in today’s world’
- the qualities and behaviours of resilient people
- a range of tools and techniques that enable you to recover from emotive situations, build a personal network of support and mentally switch off from challenging days
- an opportunity to build a robust personal action plan to help you build and maintain your personal resilience

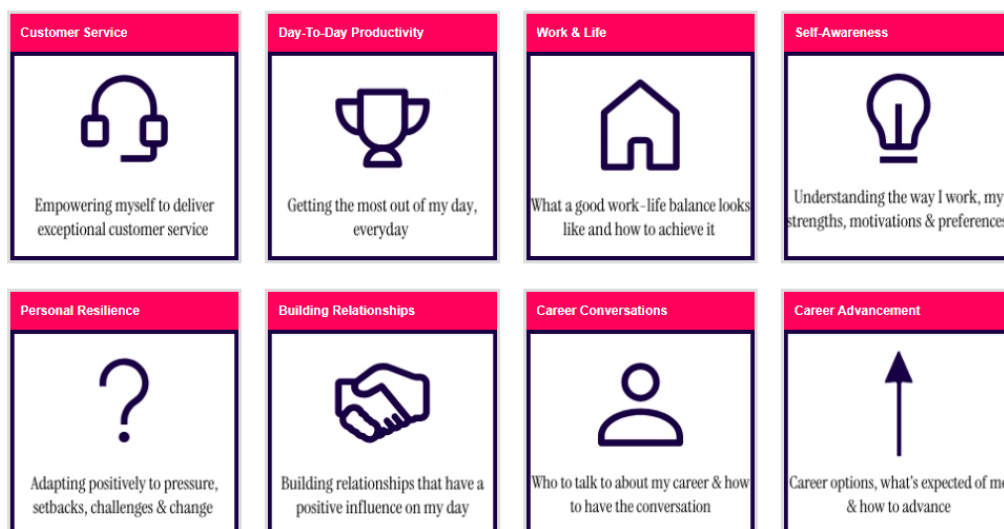
Unicorn - Personalised Learning



Your *personalised learning hub* for you to explore, use and take ownership of your own personal development.

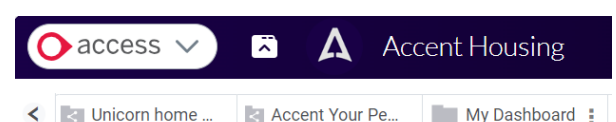
With more than **500** CPD (Continuing Professional Development) learning bites, including animations, expert-led videos and other interactive e-learning, you'll be able to get to grips with key career and personal skills and develop them at your own pace.

Visit Unicorn-Personalised Learning regularly to take advantage of personalised recommendations and new content as it lands.






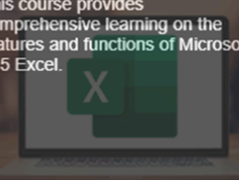





To access:

- From Sharepoint, go to Useful Links
- Select Unicorn Learning System from the dropdown menu
- From your workspace, click on the 'Unicorn Home Page' tab



Living in a digital world, we recognise that being digital 'savvy' is more important than ever; but finding time to 'brush up' on your skills, develop your skills or find the right level of learning for you can be tricky.

Unicorn – personalised learning has more than 30 learning bites to improve your I.T. and Microsoft Skills with a broad range of courses designed for those who are beginners, intermediate or advanced.

<p>This course provides learning on the basic features and functions of Microsoft PowerPoint 2016.</p>  <p>MS PowerPoint 2016: Beginners</p>	 <p>MS PowerPoint 2016: Intermediate</p>	 <p>MS PowerPoint 2013: Beginners</p>
<p>This course provides comprehensive learning on the features and functions of Microsoft 365 Excel.</p>  <p>MS 365 Excel</p>	 <p>MS Excel 2019: Getting Started</p>	 <p>MS Excel 2019: Tools to get you going</p>
 <p>MS 365 Word</p>	 <p>MS Word 2016: Beginners</p>	 <p>MS Word 2016: Intermediate</p>

Growth Programmes

Stepping into management



Our **Stepping into Management Programme** is meticulously designed to equip aspiring managers with the essential skills and knowledge required to transition smoothly into management roles. This comprehensive programme aims to develop the competencies necessary for effective management and to prepare participants for the challenges and responsibilities that come with managing teams and resources.

This is a **18-month program** of learning which culminates in a **Level 3 Excelling in Team Leadership** qualification.

We run one cohort per year.

Participation in the programme is part of a competitive process. Interested colleagues need to apply and demonstrate their potential and readiness for management roles.

NB. Successful completion of the programme does not guarantee a management or leadership position.

Management Essentials

Our **management essentials** programme is a **12-month** modular programme consisting of face-to-face & virtual workshops focussed on key aspects of technical people management, Accent's people policies and procedures and employment law. It aims to provide a valuable and useable management 'toolkit' based on the latest thinking in employee relations and employment law.

We run one cohort per year.

Participation in the programme is part of a nomination process. Interested colleagues need to speak to their line manager in the first instance.

Topics include:

- **Employment law**
- **Fierce conversations**
- **Managing absence**
- **Wellbeing, stress and mental health**
- **Discipline and Grievance**
- **Tackling Unacceptable Behaviours**
- **Recruitment & Selection**



Improving Your Personal Impact through Insights Discovery

What Is Insights Discovery?

There's a buzz about the organisation. Leaders talking about **Fiery Red**, **Sunshine Yellow**, **Cool Blue** and **Earth Green**. But what does that mean?

Insights Discovery is a powerful tool that uses a simple and accessible colour system to help individuals understand their own unique preferences and those of their others. By understanding these preferences, you can **improve communication, collaboration, and overall team performance**.

In this programme, we explore who you are, how you may be seen by others and what you can do to improve performance, team relationships and dynamics through increased levels of self-awareness and appreciation of colleagues (and customers too!).

This workshop is currently available for line managers only and we will be running **sessions monthly** rotating between Bradford and Peterborough and whilst optional for all leaders, they are **highly recommended**.

Why You Should Attend

- **Enhance Leadership Skills:** Gain deeper insights into your leadership style and how to adapt it to better support your team
- **Improve Team Dynamics:** Learn how to leverage the diverse strengths and preferences within your team to foster a more collaborative and productive environment
- **Personal Development:** Develop a better understanding of your own strengths and areas for improvement

Head to Unicorn to **book your place**

Growth Programmes

Leadership Academy



Strong leadership is fundamental to achieving our aspiration of being a high-performance organisation and delivering our corporate strategy. This is why we have introduced the Leadership Academy.

Starting with the wider leadership group in 2024 and expanding to other leaders in 2025. This is an 18-month development journey, designed to enhance our leadership skills and personal development.

The academy is structured into nine modules, with each module focusing on pivotal aspects of leadership and organisational excellence.

The journey commences with the **Discovery Insights module**.

This foundational module is aimed at self-awareness and understanding, setting the stage for the rich learning that follows.

The subsequent modules will build on this and include content that is developed around the renowned principles of **Franklin Covey**, ensuring a high standard of leadership practices and principles.

The programme includes re-enforcement tasks, application challenges as well as microlearning articles relevant to what you learn in the workshops.

We run one cohort per year.

Participation in the programme is part of a nomination process. Interested colleagues need to speak to their line manager in the first instance.

Personal development

Mentoring



The mentorship programme provides great development opportunities for both mentors and mentees.

Mentorship is a dynamic relationship where a more experienced colleague provides guidance, support and knowledge to a less experienced colleague. The relationship is built on mutual respect, trust and open communication. Mentorship creates a dynamic environment that produces tangible results, benefitting mentors and mentees alike.

Benefits of our mentorship programme include:

- Boosting colleague engagement and productivity – we love working here
- Improving colleague retention – we're a great place to work!
- Building a culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration – we're in this together
- Developing our colleagues – supports our career development
- Building a healthy work environment – we're genuine people who care

Participation in this programme (mentor, mentee or both) is by self-enrolment using this [link](#).

Remember to speak to your line manager first so they can support you on your journey.

Coaching

Our coaching offer is designed to support colleagues at all levels in enhancing their skills, achieving their career goals, and unlocking their full potential.

Whether you're looking to develop leadership capabilities, improve performance, or navigate career transitions, our coaching programme provides the tools and support you need to succeed through one-on-one coaching sessions with experienced professionals from within or outside the organisation.

Participation in the programme is part of a nomination process. Interested colleagues need to speak to their line manager in the first instance.

Personal development

Team Building



We believe that strong teams are the foundation of our success.

Get in touch with the team for more information.

We offer team-building solutions that are designed to foster collaboration, trust, and unity among colleagues. Through a variety of activities, such as workshops, and / or team-building exercises, we can create opportunities for colleagues to connect on a personal level, improve communication, and develop a deeper understanding of each other's strengths and working styles.

These experiences not only enhance team cohesion and morale but also drive creativity, innovation, and productivity.

By investing in team building, we aim to cultivate a supportive and dynamic work environment where everyone can thrive and achieve collective goals.

Job

Shadowing

We believe that one of the most effective ways to learn is through direct observation and hands-on experience.

Job shadowing provides colleagues with the unique opportunity to observe and learn from colleagues in different roles and departments.

By participating in job shadowing, you can gain valuable insights into various job functions, understand the day-to-day responsibilities of different positions, and build a comprehensive understanding of our operations.

This immersive experience not only enhances your skill set and broadens your knowledge but also fosters cross-functional collaboration and a deeper appreciation of the diverse roles within Accent.

Take advantage of job shadowing to accelerate your professional growth and discover new career pathways.

Get in touch if this is something that is of interest and you need help arranging.

Personal development

Communities of Success



We champion the concept of Action Learning Sets as a powerful method for collaborative problem-solving and professional development; they are often built into our programme design as 'communities of success'.

Communities of success bring together small groups of colleagues from diverse backgrounds to address real workplace challenges through a structured process of inquiry, reflection, and action. Participants present issues they are facing, engage in collective problem-solving, and develop actionable solutions while learning from each other's perspectives and experiences.

This iterative process not only fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation but also enhances critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership skills. By participating in a **community of success**, you can tackle pressing challenges, gain fresh insights, and drive meaningful change within Accent.


Critical *experiences*

These pivotal moments often involve taking on challenging projects, assuming leadership roles, or navigating complex situations that push you beyond your comfort zone. By engaging in critical experiences, you develop resilience, enhance your problem-solving skills, and gain valuable insights that shape your career trajectory.

We recognise that critical experiences are essential catalysts for professional and personal growth.

Accent is committed to providing opportunities for such experiences, whether through strategic assignments, cross-functional projects, or secondments. Embrace these critical experiences as opportunities to accelerate your growth, build your capabilities, and make a significant impact within Accent.

Often these are arranged through your line manager.

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Personal development

EDI Programme



One of our organisational values is that we're inclusive, and we take this seriously. We have a dedicated Equity, Diversity and Inclusion portal that has key information about identities and experiences that are relevant to our colleagues and customers.

You'll find toolkits and hubs for self-learning on here, which are updated and added to regularly based on what is requested or suggested to the People Team.

You'll also find information about and recordings of our **People Series** - our quarterly speaker series where colleagues hold a conversation about topics from their personal lives. This includes things like ADHD and Autism, raising LGBTQ children, dementia, being a carer and islamophobia.

Throughout the year we also run our **drop-in cafés**. These give you a space to come together with colleagues, share ideas, get information and informally chat. The cafés bring us together to speak about: menopause, dementia, care work and living with cancer. You can sign up to attend any, or all, of these through Unicorn Learning.



Do you need some *support?*

If you have any questions or would like some support please get in touch with one of the team, you can meet them [here](#).

You can find our
L&D strategy
[HERE!](#)

