



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting

Thursday 28 April 2021 at 2.15pm

Virtual meeting via Teams

Present:

Rajani Naidoo, Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) - *Chair*
Richard Brooks, Director of Human Resources
Meg Crossman, Students' Union (SU) Community Officer
Marion Harney, Athena SWAN Lead
Su McNab, Lay Member appointed by Council
Joel Staley, Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) Co-Chair
Cassis Reis, Elected Staff Representative (Technical & Experimental)
Liz Simmons, Elected Staff Representative (Management, Specialist & Administration)
Jane White, Elected Staff Representative (Education & Research)
Annie Willingham, SU President
Mandy Wilson-Garner, Member appointed by the Students' Union
Ania Zalewska, Member appointed by Senate

In attendance:

Aiste Zubiniene, Equality & Diversity (E&D) Officer
Abi Lyons, Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion)
Rose Stephenson, Policy & Projects Manager, Student Policy & Safeguarding – *for minute 981 and AOB*
Fiona Blackmore, Committee Officer – *observing*

Secretariat

Caroline Harris, Secretary

Apologies

Lizzi Milligan, Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) Co-Chair
Tim Ibell, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Design
Gareth Eyles, Elected Staff Representative (Operational & Facilities Support)
Ben Davis, Elected Student Representative
Paula de la Torre Jimenez, Elected Student Representative

Introductory Items

975 - Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the new members, and confirmed that a quorum was present.

976 - Declarations of Interest

No members had interests to declare.

977 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Paper EDIC21/22-015

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 and suggested the following amendments:

- Remove Ania Zalewska from the list of apologies and add to list of present members.
- Amend item 965 to report that an administrative assistant supporting the Chaplain had increased hours to support this development.

Following the above amendments, the Committee approved the minutes as a correct record.

978 - Actions and Matters Arising

The Committee noted that with the departure of the previous Chair, many actions had been suspended and an updated action log would be circulated for the June meeting.

Action: Secretary to circulate an updated EDIC action log for the June meeting.

The Committee noted the following verbal updates on actions:

Religious Inclusion/Interfaith report (minute 965)

UEB minutes extract for the Religious Inclusion/Interfaith report to be shared by Secretary. *UEB minute was circulated to EDIC. Complete.*

Accessibility Audit Group (minute 966)

A small group to take forward plans to prioritise and requesting the budget following the 2019 Condition Survey. *The EDN Co-Chair provided an update on the discussion held at the Disability Steering Group meeting on how to reduce the long list of works to a list of priorities that could be presented to UEB and the Director of Finance to secure a budget to complete. Open.*

Action: EDN Co-Chair to provide a report on priorities and securing budget to EDIC for feedback before it goes to UEB.

Action: Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) to provide an update on work undertaken around digital accessibility when this becomes available.

Gender Identity Policy (minute 969)

The Committee to recommend the University's Gender Identity Policy to UEB. *The policy was approved by Council on 21 November 2021 with the Chair and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) working on initiatives to implement. Complete*

Action: Chair to provide an update report to EDIC on implementing the Gender Identity Policy at the June 2022 meeting.

Equality Diversity Network (minute 969)

Visa payment for non-EU staff to be investigated by Director of HR and EDN Co-Chair. *A new method for paying for visas for non-EU staff had been developed and due to be launched within the next couple of months. Oversight was also transferred from department to faculty level to support equality in distribution of funds for this. Complete*

979 – Chair’s Business

The Chair introduced themselves to the Committee and outlined their role as Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) and as Chair of EDIC. The Chair explained that they intended, with the help of the Committee, to identify the structural, cultural and physical barriers as well as the gaps and address through multilevel strategic interventions and actions that could bring the greatest impact. The Chair added that whilst the operational issues were important, the role of the Committee was to focus on strategy with different groups and networks looking at specific issues.

The Committee discussed the following points:

- Addressing hidden discrimination through understanding the experiences of different groups with protected and unprotected characteristics.
- A project in the pipeline as part of Curriculum Transformation to address inherent biases in online unit evaluations and looking at alternative methods of evaluating teaching quality.

Part 1: Items for decision and/or discussion

980 – Terms of Reference and Membership - Paper EDIC21/22-016

The Committee considered the proposed changes to the committee’s Terms of Reference and membership outlined in paper EDIC21/22-016.

With regards to the Terms of Reference, the Committee discussed the following points:

- The Committee agreed that the Terms of Reference should be amended to clearly define the feedback and reporting structure.
- The Committee agreed that reference to encouraging the sharing of good practice should be added. The Committee felt that the EDN was an appropriate forum to discuss and share good practice and the Terms of Reference should be amended to provide clarity on the relationship between EDIC and EDN. The Chair agreed to look at this when carrying out a mapping exercise of the EDI networks and faculty representation across the University with the Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) and the Equality & Diversity (E&D) Officer.
- The Chair confirmed that only one of the two EDN Co-Chairs was required to attend EDIC meetings.
- The Committee agreed that clarity was needed regarding EDIC’s role in decision-making, making recommendations and advising others. The Chair agreed to confirm this and seek guidance from the Governance Team.

Action: Amend the Terms of Reference to clearly define the reporting and feedback structures with other boards, committees and networks, particularly the relationship between EDIC-EDN.

Action: Chair/Secretary to seek guidance from the Governance Team on EDIC’s role in decision making, making recommendations and advising other boards, committees and networks to be addressed in the Terms of Reference.

With regards to the membership, the Committee discussed the following points:

- The Chair explained that as part of the review of boards membership and structure carried out by the Governance Team, the membership outlined in paper EDIC21/22-016 was provisional but asked the Committee for feedback and recommendations.
- The gender balance of the current Committee tipped towards 75% female which was thought to be a result of elected representatives and ex-officio roles. The Committee agreed this should be looked at when deciding on membership.
- The Committee acknowledged that parity of membership should extend beyond gender and race to non-native British speakers but recognised the difficulties in considering both protected and unprotected characteristics in terms of membership and the risk of people feeling they have to declare.

Action: Chair/Secretary to consider the combination of elected representatives and ex-officio roles to encourage gender balance with Committee membership.

981 – Gender Neutral Toilets Review - Paper EDIC21/22-017

The Policy & Projects Manager within Student Policy & Safeguarding introduced paper EDIC21/22-017 and the Committee discussed the following points:

- The Committee noted that the toilets would be available to all genders to not create an impression of exclusion in an effort to be more inclusive.
- Whilst gender neutral changing rooms was not within the scope of the paper it was intended to be looked at if the project was expanded. One potential location for gender neutral changing rooms was The Edge building.
- The provision of a map of where gender neutral toilets were located on campus was helpful and the Committee suggested this could be extended to off-campus University buildings as well as signage letting people know where their nearest gender-neutral toilet was so they didn't have to keep referring to the map.
- Information on providing and signposting to gender neutral toilets should be included within estates guidance on fitting new buildings and refurbishments.

Action: EDN Co-Chair to take forward action on including gender neutral toilets within estates guidance as part of the work undertaken by the Accessibility Audit Group.

The Committee considered paper EDIC21/22-017 and the Chair thanked the Policy & Projects Manager (Student Policy & Safeguarding) and the Students Union Officer (Students' Union) for their work on this.

982 – Equality & Diversity Network

The EDN Co-Chair gave a verbal update on the last EDN meeting held at the beginning of 2022 and the Committee noted that the following topics were discussed:

- Physical space and accessibility as well as digital accessibility and poverty
- How equality impact assessments can be used as a mechanism for understanding the impact of new policies and how they can be taken forward more systematically.
- Available data and how it could be used to show where there are gaps and consistent responses to them across the University.

- Sharing good practice and what works/doesn't work across departments to move away from a silo mentality.
- More clarity around EDI structures, governance and decision-making coming from both EDN and EDIC.
- EDN annual objectives and using the SU Top Ten approach as a template for mapping the Network's progress across the year.

The Committee noted that the EDN would find it helpful to be given a steer by EDIC on topics and areas to discuss. The Committee also acknowledged that whilst all members of the EDN were passionate about what they were doing, finding the capacity to commit to the work sometimes posed a challenge.

The EDN Co-Chair stated that there were two areas where the EDN were seeking assurances:

- 4 west atrium portraits - the Network felt that the portraits currently hanging in the 4 west atrium were not entirely representative of the staff and student population and suggested that the University could change the portraits to be more broadly representative.
- Cashless campus – in light of the Ukraine crisis and individuals not being able to access bank accounts, the Network asked what the policy was around cashless outlets and if an equality impact assessment had been carried out on a policy if it existed.

The Chair explained that they had spoken to the Vice-Chancellor with regards to the 4 west atrium portraits and was reassured that there would be a change in this area following the summer.

The EDN Co-Chair agreed to circulate the notes of the meeting to the Committee and confirmed that updates from EDN meetings to EDIC would be presented as a report going forward.

Action: EDN Co-Chair to circulate previous network meeting to EDIC members.

Action: EDN Co-Chair to provide a report update to EDIC following the next EDN meeting.

Part 2: Items for noting without discussion

983 – Harassment Prevention Working Group – Paper EDIC21/22-018 (A-D)

The Committee noted the meeting notes from 21 October 2021, 14 December 2021, 1 February 2022 and 22 March 2022.

984 – Programme of Meetings for 2021/22

The Committee noted the programme of meetings for remainder of the current academic year:

- 9 June 2022, Thursday at 2.15pm

The Committee noted that a statement of the equality objectives and annual programme would be presented at the June meeting.

Action: Secretary to add above item to June agenda.

985 – Any Other Business

The Policy & Projects Manager within Student Policy & Safeguarding provided an update on the Be the Change campaign and explained that due to resourcing issues, progress on this was not as far as it was hoped but this was soon to change with the appointment of additional resource. However, despite the issues experienced there had been some progress, namely around; work with an external developer and amnesty group on a Be the Change module, poster communications, and amendments to the harassment prevention and dignity and respect policies due to go through the approval process imminently.

The Committee noted that this was the last meeting where Caroline Harris (Governance Manager) would be acting as secretary and thanked her for her hard work and dedication over the years in supporting EDIC and EDI across the University.

No further business was discussed.

The meeting finished at 3.30pm.

Please contact the Governance Team if you require any further assistance regarding this meeting.
