

DISABILITY STAFF NETWORK - Minutes

Monday, 11 March 2019 - 13.00 to 14.00

Present		
Apologies		
Agenda item	Action Owner	Due Date
1. Introductions		
Those attending the meet introduced themselves.		
2. Need for a Disability Staff Network		
<p>NA said that it was important for staff voice to be heard and difficult to do anything unless senior staff hear about what staff find challenging. The recently revised Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy includes staff groups made of participants who come under the characteristics of the Equality Act. The staff voice can be heard through the EDI Committee which has new terms of reference, headed by one of the prop-vice chancellors and head of HR. Heads of departments are also involved to make sure there is adequate senior input when responding to issues raised by groups and if that isn't the case, decisions don't get made.</p> <p>Discussions in this group will be taken to decision making meetings of senior management, making it easier to get things done. Naseer made the point that it gives weight to matters discussed if there is a formal meeting group and process for action.</p> <p>HP & LS mentioned the Disabled Students' Forum being launched next week with meetings on all campuses. Students will also be represented by the SU in the EDI Committee.</p> <p>CD said that she is often approached as Union Rep and asked about a support group for neurodiverse staff; MF felt this would be useful to raise issues for staff with less visible conditions such as dyspraxia and mental health problems. LS, CD & MF will meet separately to discuss this: NA said that smaller groups will be able to feed into the EDI Committee and be more powerful in this way.</p> <p>CD asked for a note in the minutes to reflect the news of the death of Professor Mike Oliver. He was the first person to teach Disabilities Studies in the UK at UoG. It is important to remember</p>		

<p>that link and to consider the global impact his research and work had on the field and also on the many individuals he helped.</p> <p>Melanie Thorley is putting together a collection of tributes and memories and will welcome contributions which can be sent directly to her.</p>		
<p>3. Terms of reference</p> <p>MF made the point that awareness raising should be an important function of this group, in particular positive awareness.</p> <p>CD said that research shows that raising awareness can have a negative effect which is why awareness campaigns should focus on the positives.</p> <p>There was some discussion about who the group's membership should include: those with disability/disabilities, those with a disability they don't want to disclose, those with an interest. CD asked that a majority of the membership should be disabled people and that roles be protected for disabled people. HP said it's important to have representation from staff with decision making responsibility and who will be responsible for taking action. MF suggested giving examples to encourage people with indirect interest in the group. NA felt it would be better to leave the wording as it is and let staff choose whether they are interested.</p> <p>The suggestion had been for bi-monthly meetings (6X 1 year) and it was decided that 4x1 year was more appropriate as it fits the schedule of EDIC meetings. Smaller support groups could meet outside of these meetings and feed into EDIC meetings. Additional 'special' meetings could be called for input into planning and it was felt that staff would be happy to have the opportunity to have input into any planning and decision making about what is needed. CD felt people would be happy to be asked to have input and MF agreed it is important to have a voice. However, people have to prioritise teaching and also some disabled staff work part-time. MA suggested using Skype so that staff could join meetings remotely.</p> <p>It was agreed that there would be meetings 4 meetings per year, Tues/Thurs lunchtimes and next meeting Tuesday 4th June with an additional meeting in April (Naseer will send invite for week beginning 29th) to vote in roles.</p> <p>Action: NA will update Terms of reference as necessary following this meeting.</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>Mar.19</p>
<p>4. AOB: None</p>		
<p>5. Date of next meeting: 30 April 2019</p>		

