Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the 2018–19 Academic Session, held on 16 May 2019, at 2.00 pm, in Room G104, Grey Building, Avery Hill Campus

Present:

Gail Brindley Director of Human Resources (Co-Chair) (GB)
Mark O’Thomas Pro Vice-Chancellor FLAS (Co-Chair) (MO)

Naseer Ahmad Interim EDI Officer (NA)
Rachel Ashton Interim Faculty Operating Officer Business (RA)
Christine Couper Director of Strategic Planning (CC)
Ciara Doyle Disability Staff Network Chair (CD)
Paul Nicholson Lewis LGBT+ Staff Network Chair (PNL)
Dave Puplett Head of Library Services (DP)
Nana Reynier Head of Organisation and People Development (NR)
Henry Setter Student Union Vice-President (Welfare) (HS)
Chris Shelley Director of Student and Academic Services (CS)

In Attendance:

Javier Bonet Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) (JB)
Rania Hafez BAME Staff Network Secretary (RH)

Liz Laurence Secretary (LL)

Apologies:

Tim Barry FES Representative (TB)
Will Calver Widening Access Consultant (WC)
Simone Murch Senior EDI Officer (SM)
Sandhiran Patchay BAME Staff Network Chair (SP)
Clare Saunders Director of Teaching and Learning (CLS)
Mandy Stevenson Deputy Head of Department - Family Care & Mental Health (MS)

EDIC/18.25 Welcome and Introduction

Members were welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

It was explained that the Chair for the meetings would rotate between GB and MO, the Co-Chairs, and this meeting would be chaired by MO.
EDIC/18.26 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 February 2019 were agreed with an amendment to EDIC/18.12 adding in the word ‘be’ in the first sentence.

EDIC/18.27 Matters Arising from the Minutes

It was confirmed that all the actions from the previous meeting had been completed except for:

‘EDIC/17.16 Affirmation Model of Disability

Action:

The Chair to meet with CS and SM to explore the issue more and bring back to committee at the next meeting.

In respect of the above action it was agreed that it would roll over to the next meeting.’

There had been no progress on this action and it was agreed that GB/CS/HS/NA/CD would meet to discuss and report back at the next meeting.

Action:

Committee members to meet as above and report back at the next meeting.

‘EDIC/18.22.2 Disability Confident

Action:

SM to provide a further report on Disability Confident at the next meeting.’

It was agreed that this action would carry forward to the next meeting.

Action:

This action point to carry forward to the next meeting.
EDIC/18.28 Ref Code of Practice and EIA

Received:

Copies of the Code of Practice for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Submission, the Equality Analysis and a verbal report by JB.

Reported:

a) the submission process was explained and the date for submission was confirmed as 7 June;
b) it was explained that the submission must comply with Equality Legislation and that an EIA had been produced;
c) that the submission had already been through 5 workshops, Academic Council and JNC.
d) that the composition of the REF E&D Panel would be carefully considered and this committee would be asked to confirm the panel.
e) the EIA was circulated and it was reported that there was a slight bias (5%) towards males but this was not considered substantial enough to concern Research England;
d) discussions were held on the documents and suggestions made as follows:

data relating to gender reassignment was considered too small to include and it was thought that a footnote to this effect should be used;

that the narrative in the document should be more nuanced and more engaging;

that more work needed to be done in relation to the declaration of disabilities and sexuality;

that the creating of the staff networks could help with improving the capture of data

that staff who don’t declare should not be forgotten and sensitivity should be shown to those who do not wish to do so;

e) comments would be received and changes made as appropriate.
EDIC/18.29 EDI Strategy

Received:

A verbal update.

Reported:

a) that the strategy was agreed having had the final approval from the Governing Body;

b) that it would have a rolling launch starting on 17 May into the following week, via various forms of communication including video;

c) that the document had been uploaded to the EDI page of the HR website;

d) that the next steps were to deliver the action plan and support staff to implement the strategy;

e) GB apologised for the delay which was due to the length of time it takes for approval and the number of committees it needs to be agreed by before final sign off by the Governing Body. She explained that the only amendment the Governing Body required was an additional objective around ensuring the composition of the Governing Body was as representative as possible of all the protected groups.

EDIC/18.30 EDI Network Updates

Received:

Verbal reports were provided on each network

Reported:

a) that all the networks had the same structure and terms of reference;

b) that NA would be working to develop a programme of activities and projects for the year for each network;

c) that the BAME Network had elected its officers and had 80 members so far;

d) that the Disability Network was established and had elected the officers;

e) that the Women’s Network had had one meeting so far, that there had been more interest and the next meeting was on 10 June to elect officers;

f) NA confirmed that he was working with the Chaplaincy on the Faith Network but the response and the numbers were low, however there was a meeting in June to elect officers.

g) that the LGBT+ network had met and a further meeting was next week. The Terms of Reference had been adopted with a
working party philosophy and they would be working on an experiences survey for staff.

h) that information on the networks were available on the EDI pages of the HR Website.

i) GB expressed thanks for the work achieved so far. She also mentioned that she had asked for some budget to support the networks but could not guarantee this.

j) HS suggested that the networks could link up with the student networks when appropriate and to let him know if this was required.

EDIC/18.31 HR Policy and Compliance Updates

GB noted that there were no updates to provide at this meeting but the item would stand on the agenda.

CD wished to thank the university for the speed in which the guidance on Assistance Dogs in the Workplace was provided.

EDIC/18.32 Any Other Business

EDIC/18.32.1 International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

PNL mentioned for information that 17 May 2019 was International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia and that communications would be sent around the university.

EDIC/18.32.2 Gender Pay Gap Report

DP wanted to mention the improvement in the Gender Pay Gap. GB confirmed that the EDI Strategy was revised to 8% difference and that the recent recruitment of senior female staff and academic promotions would make an improvement.

EDIC/18.32.3 Sconul Report

DP mentioned that Sconul (The Society of College, National and University Libraries) were commissioning research into the experiences of BAME library staff which would be published in the Summer. He agreed to circulate the report to committee members.

Action:

DP to circulate the report.
EDIC/18.32.4 Attainment Gap Project

CC mentioned the progress of the Attainment Gap Project and that there was to be a meeting on 30 May relating to student experience and on 28 June a Community in Practice talk relating to unconscious bias in conjunction with Wolverhampton and UCL.

EDIC/18.32.5 Faith Days and Festivals

RH mentioned the fact that the university does not highlight any faith days or festivals and that it would be nice to have them acknowledged. CD suggested that they were put in the academic calendar to make academic staff aware. HS said he had a calendar of faith days that he could circulate.

Action: HS to circulate the faith day calendar

EDIC/18.32.6 Aurora

GB reported that the Aurora Leadership Programme for Women was running this year, that it had attracted 30 applications for 15 spaces and there was agreement for it to run next year again with 15 spaces.

RH asked whether it was possible to use existing female staff with leadership experience and NR suggested that the Coaching network would be a good idea, which, although successful, needed more people to apply.

EDIC/18.32.7 Date of Next Meeting

A provisional date of 14 November 2019 was to be confirmed.

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