Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the 2016-17 Academic Session, held on 18 May 2017, at 2.00 pm, in Room G104, Grey Building, Avery Hill Campus

Present:

Frances Hewison	Director of Human Resources (Chair)

Christopher Hallas	Director of Student Affairs (CH)
Clifton Kandler	Head of Digital Services (CK)
Simone Murch	Senior EDI Officer (SM)
Will Calver	Access and Partnerships Manager (WC)

In attendance:

Christine Couper	Director of Strategic Planning (CC)
Kate Dawson	Student Union Membership Officer (KD)
Kirsten Wynn	Chaplain
Rachel Flood	Athena SWAN Project Officer (RF)
Robert Hartley	Head of Estates Strategy and Programme Delivery (RH)
Liz Laurence	Secretary

Apologies:

Luke Ellis	Student Union President
Patrick McGurk	Faculty of Business Representative
Tariq Effendi	Faculty of Architecture, Computing & Humanities Representative
Tim Barry	Faculty of Engineering and Science Representative

EDIC/16.10   Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

EDIC/16.11   Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2016 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

EDIC/16.12   Matters Arising from the Minutes

EDIC/16.5   EDI Accreditations

16.5.1 Stonewall WEI Submission and LGBT Report

Agreed:

a) That the Chair would write to the International Office to ask whether there is any briefing provided to students on the culture of a country they are visiting ahead of a placement.

In relation to the above action from the last meeting, the Chair reported that she had contacted the International Office who confirmed that they provide full briefings for students on the Erasmus and Chile projects. They were not sure about smaller trips. The Chair had received a copy of the presentation which she offered to share with CH.

Agreed:

The Chair to send CH the student overseas briefing presentation.

EDIC/16.13   Estates and Facilities – Supporting Disability Confident, Disability Access and Inclusive Learning Spaces

Received:

A verbal report from RH on how the Estates and Facilities Directorate is supporting Disability Confident, Disability Access and Inclusive Learning Spaces.

Reported:

a)   That the last Access Audits were 3 years ago and actions are completed. The next Access Audits were due to begin on 23 May.

b)   That work needed to be done to improve the condition of buildings and that access would be embedded in the work plans.

c)   That space would be made for bringing staff together as a community.

d)   That improved connectivity and communications within the buildings would provide different options for staff and students.

e)   That buildings would be of a higher inclusive design, in particular Halls of Residence with an emphasis on supporting good mental health.

f) That there would be investment in access audits, a masterplan and then a programme of works.

g) That the Chair was keen to be involved with the mental health activities as next year this would be an area of combined work with SAS.

h) That it would be possible for the Committee to have a tour of building work if wanted. The Committee agreed this would be a good idea.

Agreed:

For a tour to be arranged in the future.

EDIC/16.14   EDI Committee Terms of Reference

Received:

A draft revised Committee Terms of Reference (EDIC16.P01).

Reported:

a) That attention was drawn to the new point 3 'To monitor and report on incidents of Sexual Violence and Hate Crime'.

b) That the University had approved a Sexual Violence Policy at Executive Committee which included a requirement to monitor sexual violence and hate crime to support staff and students and therefore this needed to be added to the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

c) That it would be difficult to monitor any figures in the first year as we would need to establish a baseline. However every effort would be made to understand the position in the sector and a baseline would be presented to committee in October. The Chair mentioned that a change to the membership of the Committee might be needed in light of the new monitoring requirement.

d) That information might be available in the NUS and the Chair asked KD to provide if possible.

e) That WC asked for clarification of the requirement at Point 2 relating to Action Plans. It was confirmed that this related to assuring EDI work was taking place in faculties and directorates for which the PVC was accountable as mentioned in the EDI Strategy.

f) That it was felt that re-establishing the idea of faculty\directorate reports to Committee would be a good idea, with the provision of a template to keep the reports short. The Chair was concerned that some faculties and directorates had responsibilities under accreditations and did not want them overburdened. KD suggested linking the idea to Point 6 of the Terms of reference relating to 'sharing good practice'.

Actions:

a) To look at the sector over the summer and present a baseline to Committee in October.

b) KD to source information available at the NUS.

c) The Chair to circulate the PVC EDI responsibility to the next meeting.

EDIC/16.15 Progression of Interfaith Developments

Reported:

a) That the KW was working with SM to progress interfaith developments; to highlight faith at the university and to explore the possibility of a staff interfaith forum.

b) That discussions had highlighted the issues of getting support from senior management and identifying faith groups.

c) That the idea was to start with staff and then students.

d) That a network/forum would provide an expertise base for the university; would be a point of contact for questions and would help develop strategy and policy and improve student and staff experience.

e) That the next steps were:

- to get senior management opinion;
- to gauge staff enthusiasm;
- to stakeholders involved in developing framework;
- to have a proactive approach to religion;
- to have senior faith sponsors.

f) The Chair welcomed the idea of the network/forum and the measured approach suggested.

Agreed:

a)   The EDI Committee to give full support to progress the issue;

b)   The Chair take to senior management team;

c)   KW/SM to update when ready.

EDIC/16.16   Access Agreement Targets Update

Received:

2017/18 Access Agreement targets.

Reported:

a)   That the paper had been circulated to raise awareness of new targets.

b)   That the figures for 2018/19 had been submitted.

c)   That WC was aware that the Retention Group would have similar targets and that the focus on retention would bring all the groups up.

d)   CC explained the Kingston Methodology Project and that it might roll out to other universities.

Agreed:

That CC would report back on the Kingston Project to the next Committee meeting with details.

EDIC/16.17   Overview of Current Progress of the EDI Strategy

Reported:

a)   That there was a need to delve deeper into disability, religion and belief and BME, as last year's discussions on the Action Plan were more broadly focussed, which did not allow for any particular progress to be made in these protected characteristic areas.

b)   That any work should be done in partnership with the Student's Union.

c)   That a disability network/forum was being considered again as there was no vehicle for staff concerns and discussions were being held on how to progress.

d)   That the re-accreditation for Disability Confident was in hand.

EDIC/16.18   Director's Report

EDIC/16.18.1 Key Performance Indicator – Widening Access

Reported:

a)   That a Widening Access KPI had been proposed for the new Strategic Plan.

b)   That the Court was particularly interested in this KPI.

EDIC/16/18.2 Prevent Strategy Implications

Reported:

a)   That the University was approaching this as a safeguarding issue.

b)   That the University was taking a measured approach to ensure there was an understanding of the duty and how to report issues.

c)   That training would be rolled out in May 2017.

EDIC/16.19   EDI Accreditation Updates

EDIC/16.19.1 Stonewall Submission and LGBT+ Report

Received:

A report on the LGBT+ Staff Network (EDIC16/P2)

Reported:

a)   That since winning Stonewall Network of the Year Award they had been contacted by outside organisations for advice.

b)   That the Network is preparing for the next WEI and that this year transgender and non binary staff would be scored for the first time.

c) The Chair offered formal congratulations to the LGBT+ Staff Network on the receipt of their recent award and for all their achievements this year.

EDIC/16.19.2 Disability Confident

An update on this issue was given at EDIC/16.17.

EDIC/16.19.3 Race Equality Charter

Received:

An REC Action Plan and Budget Proposal (EDIC16/P3 & P4).

Reported:

a) That a bid had been submitted for funds but the Chair did not want to give false hope of success.

b) That there were concerns about the deadline for submission and that the date needed to be made clear.

c) That it was recognised that the REC would create a bigger profile for the university.

EDIC/16.19.4 Athena Swan

Reported:

a) That Athena Swan was without a senior lead.

b) That the accreditation renewal was due in 2018.

c) That the Project Officer only had 2 months left of her secondment and would continue focus on the two departments in FEH who were applying for accreditation.

d) That the next Athena Swan Working Group will review the action plan and produce an update. This will be put to the institution so a decision can be made on how they wish to proceed with the accreditation.

EDIC/16.20   HR Policy Updates – Bullying and Harassment/Transitioning at Work

       Reported:

       That this item had been tabled for information to inform the Committee that these policies had been formally agreed and were now in use.

EDIC/16.21   Any Other Business

       EDIC/16.21.1 HR Restructure and Embedding of EDI

       Reported:

       That that the current HR restructure would embed EDI into normal practice.

       EDIC/16.21.2 Annual Report

       Reported:

       That the Annual Report would be on the agenda of the next meeting.

       EDIC/16.21.3 Christopher Hallas

       Reported:

       The Chair thanked CH for all his hard work with the LGBT+ network and the EDI Committee and wished him well for his retirement.

       EDIC/16.21.4 Date of Next Meeting

       Reported:

       The date of the next meeting was to be confirmed.

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