Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in the 2017-18 Academic Session, held on 17 May 2018, at 2.00 pm, in Room G104, Grey Building, Avery Hill Campus

Present:

Gail Brindley	Director of Human Resources (Chair)
Chris Shelley	Director of Student and Academic Services (CS)
Clifton Kandler	Head of Digital Services (CK)
Luke Ellis	Student Union Vice-President (Welfare) (LE)
Simone Murch	Senior EDI Officer (SM)

In attendance:

Christine Couper	Director of Strategic Planning (CC)
Henry Setter	Student Union Vice-President (Welfare) Elect (HS)
Melanie Thorley	AccessAbility Co-ordinator (MT)
Neil Cormack-Bissett	Head of Research Services (NCB)
Liz Laurence	Secretary (LL)

Apologies:

Tariq Effendi	Faculty of Architecture, Computing & Humanities Representative
Tim Barry	Faculty of Engineering and Science Representative

EDIC/17.12 Welcome and Introduction

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

EDIC/17.13 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 October 2017 were **agreed** as an accurate record.

EDIC/17.14 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

EDIC/17.15   HEFCE BAME Attainment Project

Received:

A verbal report by CC on the history, background and the university's involvement in the HEFCE project led by Kingston University for the benefit of new members of the Committee and an update of the current situation.

Reported:

a)   that there are inclusive curriculum facilitators in every department;

b)   that the inclusive curriculum facilitators have a role descriptor;

c)   that a '10 recommendations' document had been produced to support the roll out of inclusive learning and teaching practices;

d)   that 2 curriculum champions had been trained to look at the curriculum to make it more inclusive;

e)   that a successful event had been held on 15 May 'Community in Practice' for all the participants and it was hoped to continue to develop other activities and events;

f)   that the project runs until February 2019 and it was hoped that it would carry on to systematically embed good practice within the University after that date.

g)   that it had been a received well by the Student Union and they were happy to treat it as a priority.

Action:

CC to send the role descriptor for circulation.

This item to be on the agenda for the next meeting.

EDIC/17.16   Affirmation Model of Disability

Received:

A presentation and verbal report by MT on the Affirmation Model of Disability.

Reported:

a)   that the model was explained as affirming the individual for who they are and the skills and attributes they bring by recognising, celebrating and valuing the contribution of disabled people;

b)   that MT was looking to gain approval by the Committee to pursue introducing this model to the university;

c)   that the disability declaration rate was low and that this model would potentially encourage students and staff to do this;

d)   that the current policy on ECs is one of the biggest barriers to adopting the model, along with the university branding. More students should declare if they are aware of the softer deadlines. If they are not registered with the wellbeing team, soft deadlines would not apply to them.

e)   that the new branding fails accessibility audits and prospective students with disabilities are alienated at Open Days by the new presentation style;

f)   that MT's work could be linked into supporting the TEF and NSS;

g)   that the committee supported the concept but thought it needed to be clear on how to deliver the model

Agreed:

It was agreed that the practicalities of implementing the affirmation model needed to be discussed further before any other action could be taken

Action:

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

EDIC/17.17   Sexual Violence and Hate Crime Reporting and Monitoring Overview

Received:

A verbal report/overview from CS on Sexual Violence and Hate Crime monitoring.

Reported:

a)   that CS will be reviewing and rewording the Terms of Reference for the Safeguarding and Compliance Working Group to reflect the issue of receiving reports on sexual violence and hate crime;

b)   that CS will working with colleagues to create a Safeguarding Policy;

c)   that the student policy was a year old and steps would be taken to publicise it and provide training;

d)   that a webpage had been launched providing support and CS was working on an online training module for staff and updating the module for students;

e)   that the Student Charter would be reworded to be made more values based;

f)   that CS was in contact with local groups working on Hate Crime and recognised this as a separate agenda requiring attention:

g)   that Safeguarding and Compliance Working Group would be responsible for reviewing and implementing any

recommendations made by the EDI Committee and CS would report into EDI Committee on this subject on a regular basis.

Agreed:

That CS would feedback from Safeguarding and Compliance Working Group into EDI Committee.

Action:

This issue to be on the agenda of the next meeting.

EDIC/17.18   EDI Focussed Priorities\Review of Corporate Equality Objectives and Related KPIs

Received:

A verbal report from SM combining agenda items 7 and 8 together.

Reported:

a)   that the 4 yearly annual review was now overdue;

b)   that objectives 1 and 2 were achievable but 3 needed reviewing and redefining;

c)   that the equality objectives need KPIs attached to them;

d)   that SM was concerned about the accreditations which were in a state of flux and it was for the university to decide how to progress these;

e)   that the Stonewall submission might be deferred for a year;

f)   that the university was not in a position to move to the next level of Disability Confident currently;

g)   that the university was not in a financial position to embark on achieving the Race Equality Charter;

h)   that the university intends to resubmit next year for Athena Swan institutional award;

i)   that moving forward the EDI strategy will be linked with the University Strategic Plan priorities other university strategies/plans such as the People Strategy and Access and Participation Plan

j)   that the EDI Committee need to agree the strategic Equality objectives;

Action:

The EDI strategy will be aligned to the University Strategic Plan and other associated strategic documents to enable clearer EDI strategic direction and the related equality objectives will be reviewed.

The Chair/SM to circulate equality objective suggestions for comment.

EDIC/17.19   EDI Accreditation Updates

EDIC/17.19.1 Stonewall WEI Submission Feedback

Received:

A presentation and report from NCB providing feedback on the Stonewall WEI submission.

Reported:

a)   that on the whole the University was doing well in relation to the Index but was poor in a number of areas that included senior leadership;

b)   that although the picture was positive and in a good space NCB questioned whether the university still needed to be part of the Index and thought that it might be time to refocus on supporting LGBT+staff and network priorities.

c)   that the university had done well to stay in the Top 100 this year but this is unlikely to be the case if the university submits next year, as the University would need to demonstrate progress in systematic approaches in relation to the components of the Index across the University.

Action:

The Chair to consider the situation and comeback to NCB\SM.

EDIC/17.19.2 Disability Confident

Reported:

That the current accreditation was valid until 2019.

EDIC/17.19.3 Race Equality Charter

Reported:

That currently there had been no progress on the accreditation.

EDIC/17.19.4 Athena Swan

Reported:

The University bronze award renewal is due for submission in April 2019

Action:

The Chair to review the current position regarding the accreditations and comeback to the committee.

EDIC/17.20 HR Policy and Compliance Updates

EDIC/17.20.1 Gender Pay Gap Report

Reported:

That the report had been published in March and was available on line.

EDIC/17.20.2 EDI Annual Report

Reported:

That it was hoped to publish the report as soon as possible.

EDIC/17.21 Any Other Business

EDIC/17.21.1 Committee Membership

Received:

The current Committee membership list was circulated for discussion, to see whether the Committee thought the membership was right.

Reported:

a)   that following discussion on the membership and number of committee meetings several changes were suggested and agreed.

Agreed:

To have one Student Union representative plus a Liberation Officer;

To make CC a committee member instead of 'Agreed Attendee';

Actions:

The Chair to consider the idea of rotating representatives from protected characteristic groups at each meeting;

The Chair to consider the idea of permanent membership of the Athena Swan representative at each meeting;

The Chair to look at the Terms of Reference with a view to seeing how to deal with Committee business outside of the 3 agreed meetings.

The membership list to be amended as agreed.

EDIC/17.21.2 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed at 18 October 2018.

Action:

LL to send Outlook Diary invites to the Committee members.

Secretary: Liz Laurence
Tel: 8982
Email: e.laurence@gre.ac.uk