

## MINUTES OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) STEERING GROUP

18 January 2017

- Present: Tracy Brunnock (Equality & Diversity Manager), Samantha Budd (Chief Executive, Bristol SU), Nishan Canagarajah (Chair) (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research & Enterprise), Lucy Collins (Head of UK Student Recruitment), Paula Coonerty (Academic Registrar), Esther Dermott (Faculty Research Director), Hannah Dualeh (Equality, Liberation and Access Officer), Guy Gregory (HR Director), Susan Harrow (Head of School of Modern Languages), Rashi Jain (Senior University Lawyer), Jonathan Sandy (Dean of Health Sciences).
- In attendance Richard Boyce (Resourcing Manager), Jamie Cross (Union Affairs Officer), Christina Harris (Secretary to Group).
- Apologies: Mark Ames (Director of Student Services), Alvin Birdi (Academic Director of Undergraduate Studies).

### 1. Welcome and introductions

NOTED.

### 2. Apologies

NOTED.

### 3. Chair's Report

- 3.1 Timetabling Constraints – The Group were asked for feedback on the tension between constructing an effective timetable and flexible teaching requests. A paper will go to UPARC at the end of the January 2017.

NOTED:

- Equality between professional services and academic colleagues is important with both areas being offered the same degree of flexibility.
- Concerns were raised around formalising the process, collegiality between colleagues can be higher when local arrangements are made.
- A justifiable and defensible process is necessary that highlights the problems and allows them to be addressed. Transparency is important.
- Training on managing flexible teaching requests for Head of Schools (HoS) would be beneficial and particular Schools that have a higher level of pinch points should be given additional support to manage the process.
- The differences between flexible working requests and flexible teaching requests should be acknowledged.

- 3.2 AGREED: A form to record flexible teaching requests is a sensible approach and the fairest to all. Workshops for HoS on managing the application and implementation are needed. In Schools that have a higher level of requests there needs to be an understanding on why this is the case.

**ACTION: The Group to have sight of the final recommendation to UPARC.**

- 3.3 NOTED: The Chair informed the Group that items related to EDI will be reviewed by the Group before they go to other committees.

- 3.4 UPARC Code of Conduct – The Group was asked for feedback regarding a compact code of conduct for meetings of UPARC.

- There was a general feeling that this was a positive introduction and could be valid for most meetings.
  - Discussion took place on whether it should be a formal roll out starting with senior committees or whether committees could choose to adopt the practice.
- 3.5 AGREED: The use of this framework by UPARC was welcomed. The guidelines will be adapted to cover general meetings and sent to Chairs of Committees to implement. The document will also be online so that others can chose to adopt them.  
**ACTION: Secretary.**
- 3.6 NOTED: There was discussion on making changes to all committee meetings to embed EDI issues within the agenda. Suggestions were to move EDI issues to the top of the agenda or at the end of each item discuss possible EDI implications.  
**ACTION: Secretary to request a list of committees from the Governance Team.**
- 3.7 NOTED: The Chair informed the Group that Faculty EDI committees will report items to this Group as appropriate. The one page report created for UPARC after each meeting will be sent to them and we will ask them to submit their reports to us.  
**Action: Secretary.**
- 4. Minutes of the last meeting**  
AGREED.
- 5. Action Register**
- 5.1 The action register was provided to members and updates on progress discussed where appropriate. It was noted that a crèche facility will be trialled at the next 2 Open Days (June and September) and uptake will be monitored. The Chair thanked Lucy Collins for making these arrangements.
- 6. Key EDI Challenges from the perspective of the Students' Union**
- 6.1 RECEIVED: paper reference **EDI/16-17/05 and EDI/16-17/06**
- 6.2 The trans student experience was discussed and key issues highlighted.  
NOTED:
- There is a lack of gender neutral toilets in most of our buildings. Students are potentially walking across site to find toilet facilities that they feel comfortable and safe using.
  - For Halls of Residence that have gendered areas clearer information at application stage is needed so that students can decide if they would feel comfortable in that block.
  - Trans students may feel that an en-suite bathroom would make them more comfortable but might have a financial barrier. The Trans Experience Plan suggests that Bursaries and priority booking of en-suites for students in this position would be beneficial.
  - The redevelopment of changing facilities within the gym was highlighted as an issue.
  - The ability for students to update their own gender within the student portal would be beneficial.
  - The extenuating circumstances procedure should include the impact of transitioning as a legitimate reason and training given to staff who are decision makers in the process.
  - The vulnerable student service is taking forward training for student facing roles on trans issues. HR and other key roles received training on staff facing areas in November 2016.
  - Training for students was also discussed as they might not fully understand the issues for trans students.
  - The SU have adopted the use of preferred pro nouns in their email signatures and the University is asked to consider if staff could include this if they wish.

- 6.3 AGREED: All agreed that gender neutral toilet and changing facilities should be supported unless there is a justifiable reason that they cannot be provided. There was particular support for investigating whether the Tyndall Place project can include gender neutral changing facilities within the refurbished gym.
- 6.4 The issues facing students in financial hardship were raised. The SU are having discussions with students in this area and will report recommendations to a later meeting.
- 6.5 Disabled students have a lower satisfaction rate. Access to buildings and poor pavements around site were highlighted. The SU are having discussions with students in this area and will report recommendations to a later meeting.
- 6.6 Student parents and carers are not currently allowed access to the staff maternity rooms within certain buildings.
- 6.7 Nursery opening hours were discussed and the feeling was that likely uptake should be reviewed before we approach the nursery about extending their offering. A crèche facility may also be useful for both staff and students.
- ACTION: HR Director.**
- 6.8 AGREED: Students should be given access to the maternity rooms and policies changed to reflect this. A more general piece on breastfeeding on site will be considered.
- ACTION: Equality and Diversity Team.**
- 6.9 Student sex workers are less likely to discuss their problems with staff as there is no decriminalisation policy. If one were developed this might help students to talk about the issues.
- 6.10 The SU and University will be working together on research surrounding the BME attainment Gap, this Group will be informed of progress in this area.
- 6.11 AGREED: The results of the BME attainment gap research would be shared with this Group before going to other committees.

**ACTION: SU Equality, Liberation and Access Officer.**

## **7. Inclusive staff recruitment practices**

- 7.1 It was reported that there is a lot to discuss in this area but as a starting point the Group were asked for their opinion on advertising all future roles as potential job shares and part time as opposed to the current default of full time.
- 7.2 NOTED:
- As it stands at the moment responsibility for flexible working conversations is on the applicant, rather than the University.
  - In some cases, desirable candidates are not applying for roles due to other commitments. This is also an issue for internal staff.
  - New staff are potentially submitting flexible working requests very soon after starting.
  - The practicalities of which jobs can realistically be job shares or part time would need to be investigated and a robust system in place in order to be transparent.
  - Buy in from senior management was essential.
  - If staff with these needs are recruited then we also need to have internal systems in place to support them.
  - It was suggested that a working group be set up to identify and address the issues.

- 7.3 AGREED: A move towards more roles being advertised as possible job shares or part time is something that the Group supports. The implementation would need to be carefully considered.

**ACTION: The Resourcing Manager to provide a framework for implementation.**

## **8. Strategic Appointments Procedure/Recruitment to senior leadership positions**

- 8.1 RECEIVED: Paper reference: **EDI/16-17/07**

- 8.2 The Group was asked to consider whether a reworked Exceptional Talent procedure could be used to address issues of under-representation of certain staff groups.

- 8.3 NOTED:

- A change to the policy could mean that Professional Services roles are included going forward, but the committee noted that academic and professional services environments are very different in this regard.
- The legality and transparency of including EDI opportunities in the new procedure was discussed. Clear evidence that a particular area is underrepresented would be needed in order to justify the decision.

- 8.4 AGREED: The draft policy to be reworked considering the issues discussed.

**ACTION: HR Director.**

## **9. University Policy on IT Usernames**

- 9.1 RECEIVED: Paper reference: **EDI/16-17/08**

- 9.2 The Group were asked to consider changes to IT usernames. Currently all new staff and students are given a log in that corresponds to their initials and this can be problematic for people that change names.

- 9.3 AGREED: All new staff and students should be given a random selection of numbers and letters. A solution for current staff and students will continue to be sought if possible.

## **10. SWAN – update on progress**

- 10.1 RECEIVED: Paper reference: **EDI/16-17/09**

- 10.2 The Chair informed the Group that the SWAN Working Group will be a subset of this Group going forward and will be added as a standing item on the agenda.

- 10.3 The Swan Working Group covers all areas of gender equality and from that The University Swan assessment team (USAT) is a task and finish group. USAT are working towards the University submission in April.

- 10.4 AGREED: The Swan Working Group will change its name to the Gender Equality Group with Jonathan Sandy continuing as Chair. The TOR and membership of that Group will be reviewed.

**ACTION: Chair and Equality and Diversity Manager.**

## **11. Any Other Business, including future items for discussion**

- 11.1 Stonewall Update – We have come 219<sup>th</sup> out of 420 organisations for the 2017 Workplace Equality Index. Rising from 347<sup>th</sup> out of 400 in our 2015 submission. The Stonewall Steering Group will have a personal feedback session with our Stonewall

Account Manager on 22 March and all members of this Group will be invited. An action plan will be developed after the feedback.

**ACTION: Secretary to invite members.**

**12. Communications and consultation**

12.1 There were no communications and consultation issues not already discussed.

**13. Matters to bring to the attention of UPARC**

13.1 A one page report outlining the business of the meeting will be taken to UPARC.

**14. Date of next meeting**

14.1 Monday 20 March 1.00 – 3.00pm  
Room 3.15 Senate House

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02 February 2017