



Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

Minutes of EDSC meeting held on 8 March 2018
Melville Room, Level 4, Gilbert Scott Building

- Present:** Principal Anton Muscatelli (Convener), Mrs Christine Barr, Prof Frank Coton, Dr David Duncan, Miss Lauren McDougall, Mrs Margaret-Ann McParland, Miss Kate Powell, Ms Lesley Sutherland, Ms Mhairi Taylor
- Apologies:** Prof Anne Anderson, Prof John Briggs, Prof James Conroy, Prof Neal Juster, Prof Roibeard O Maolalaigh, Mr Robert Partridge, Miss Rachel Sandison, Dr Helen Stoddart
- Attending:** Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk)

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Convener welcomed members and noted the apologies received.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – EDSC/20171120/Minutes1.0

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3 Matters arising from meeting held on 20 November 2017 – Paper 1

The Convener noted a number of the actions from the previous meeting were marked as complete. He advised updates on Actions 7 and 8 were on the agenda for later in the meeting. Further updates on the remaining items were provided as follows:

Action Point 1 – Student Parents’ Policy

M Taylor advised development of Student Parents’ Policy had been delayed, due to other policy development work taking precedent. She confirmed EDU, SRC and Senate Office continue to work together with the intention to take a draft version to the April 2018 meeting of the Chief Adviser of Studies Committee (CASC), with EDSC being able to review it at the next meeting in June 2018.

ACTION: EDU

Action Point 4 –Disability Confident

M Taylor confirmed the University was granted Disability Confident Employer status on 15 January 2018. She noted work had begun on the associated Action Plan.

Action Point 5 – Stonewall Scotland

M Taylor advised Stonewall Scotland’s Programme Manager has accepted an invitation to the next Gender and Sexual Diversity Group meeting to discuss how the University can make better use of the annual membership and how best to engage with Stonewall’s ‘Come Out for LGBT’ campaign. An update will be provided at the next EDSC meeting.

ACTION: EDU

Action Point 6 – Mature Students’ Association (MSA) Contact Details

L McDougall confirmed the correct contact details of the recently elected MSA President will be provided to J Conroy.

ACTION: SRC

4 **Sexual Harassment – University of Glasgow Response – Paper 2**

M Taylor reminded members, whilst EDU is reporting on progress in this area, responsibilities are spread across a number of areas and working groups within the University. Paper 2 brings together an overview of the ongoing work across those different areas relating to sexual harassment.

Members welcomed the outputs, training developments and progress to date shown but agreed more needed to be done around support for anyone wishing to come forward in relation to sexual harassment. Members noted that although the University has the Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Respect Advisers Network in place, sexual harassment required more specialised training.

L Sutherland stated there was a lack of a visible, strong, clear message of support from the University for a change in culture around this issue.

Members discussed the proposal for a 'Report and Support' mechanism similar to that used by University of Manchester. Concerns were expressed about not being able to take action when an incident is reported anonymously. Members noted L McDougall's comments that research has shown that having an anonymous reporting system, along with comprehensive support procedures and information has increased the numbers of non-anonymous reports.

Members requested:

- Prof Michele Burman to be invited to attend a future EDSC to report on progress in relation to the Preventing Gender Based Violence Strategy Group's Work stream One - Research, Survey and Perception.
- UUK's 'Changing the Culture – Directory of Case Studies' report to be provided at next EDSC meeting.
- Extensive and engaging communications programme to be devised to ensure both students and staff are fully aware of the University's commitment, which highlights supporting processes and procedures in place. Discussions to include the possibility of all staff and student emails and possible interactive Facebook live sessions, ensuring cross – campus involvement.
- EDU to consider further expansion of and publicity for the Respect Advisers Network.
- EDU to further investigate the University of Manchester's 'Report and Support' system and any possible 'in house' version of this and provide a full report at the next EDSC meeting.

ACTION: EDU

5 **Policy Development**

5.1 – Personal Relationships Policy – Paper 3

M Taylor presented members with the latest draft of the Personal Relationships Policy, noting this was being developed in collaboration with Senate Office. This version results from comments and feedback from Trades Unions, SRC, Chief Advisers of Study, those involved with Postgraduate Researcher support as well as HR Managers across the University. She added other University committees had recently reviewed this draft and it will be further developed and refined as a result.

M Taylor acknowledged this is a sensitive subject and the introduction of the Policy will impact many people across the University, both staff and students, but clarified the University will respect people's right to privacy if a 'relationship' does not involve any form of conflict of interest or power imbalance.

Members provided the following comments and suggestions:

- Further clarification required around:
 - Historic relationships
 - What happens if a current or previous student becomes a staff member, or staff member becomes a student, and placement /role /area of study then becomes a 'conflict of interest' situation.
- Rephrasing of Section 4.2 to avoid the use of 'such relationships'.
- Conflict of interest situations need to be highlighted/foregrounded more.
- Structure for upward reporting needs to be clear, particularly for those in senior /managerial positions in relationships.
- Include an Appendix with illustrations of the examples of relationships and when they should be disclosed/not disclosed to assist with 'grey' areas and historic relationships.
- Include mention of 'nepotism' and add example of this in illustrations.
- Include 'grooming' within definitions.
- Clarify, once Privacy Statement agreed, details of records access and control and how information is reported and stored on systems to reassure all involved and avoid 'outing' people without 'clearance'.
- Ensure policy reviewed relatively soon after implementation to develop further.

K Powell stated the SRC fully support and welcome the development of this Policy and welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the development of the required communications activity.

Members agreed communication of the policy:

- should be University wide;
- to include acknowledgment of seriousness and sensitivity of the issues;
- to include wording of support from SRC, Trade Unions;
- be via all-staff/all-student emails, MyGlasgow articles, possible Facebook live discussions;
- be cascaded to both staff and students via SMG, CMGs, Head of School/Service, Subject areas.

M Taylor agreed to update the policy in line with members' comments and suggestions and to contact Peter Aitchison, Director of Communications and Public Affairs to discuss a communication plan.

ACTION: EDU

CLERK'S NOTE – The legal definition of 'grooming' only relates to children under the age of 16 – Therefore grooming will not be included within the policy definitions.

5.2 – Dignity at Work and Study Policy – Paper 4

M Taylor advised the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy review has fallen timeously to allow the previously discussed agenda items to be incorporated in the update.

M Taylor drew members' attention to the inclusion of elements from the Code of Practice on Unacceptable Behaviour which, as it is embedded as it is in the University Calendar, is more focussed on students and as a result is rarely used to address staff related issues. She also highlighted the embedded examples throughout the policy for ease of reading and understanding, as well as the explicit mention and examples of sexual harassment.

Members discussed the merits, or otherwise, of this joint policy for staff and students. There was general agreement that the current policy structure met the complex needs of the University community.

M Taylor noted the policy would be taken forward through the normal policy review and approval processes before the final version is published.

ACTION: EDU

Following discussion the Convener agreed EDSC should have sight of the numbers of cases where staff have taken forward a formal Grievance case and how many of these have resulted in action against either the University or member(s) of staff.

ACTION: EDU/HR

6 Scottish Government and SFC Race Equality Framework and Action Plan – Paper 5

M Taylor presented Paper 5, which detailed the Further and Higher Education related actions extracted from the full Scottish Government Race Equality Framework Action Plan <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/12/8700>.

M Taylor drew members' attention to the three highlighted actions that show the SFC's increased recognition of the Race Equality Charter mark (REC), along with their intention to monitor and subsequently report on its uptake through university Outcome Agreements.

She advised that of the 41 HEI members of the REC UK wide, only nine hold an award with only one held in Scotland. She stated there has been a high proportion of unsuccessful submissions.

M Taylor reported although the REC is awarded at institutional level only and more focussed on students, a submission would be challenging and as resource intensive as Athena SWAN. It also requires payment of a substantial annual membership fee. She confirmed the University's Race Equality Group, chaired by Prof Briggs, which would likely form the basis of the required Self-Assessment Team, had discussed the possibility of submitting a REC application in the next few years.

D Duncan reminded members the Equality Challenge Unit, the REC awarding body, was about to merge with the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and Higher Education Academy to form a new agency, AdvanceHE. He advised a review and consultation process would be undertaken. As such, he suggested any decision about participating in the Race Equality Charter would be best delayed until this review was complete.

Members recognised the need to ensure the University makes progress in this area and requested EDU seek comments from the one successful Scottish HEI on their experience of the REC but also agreed to wait until the completion of the AdvanceHE review before taking any further decisions about a future REC submission.

ACTION: EDU

The Convener requested EDSC receive an update on the AdvanceHE merge review once this available.

ACTION: EDU

7 Student Items

7.1 – International Partnerships where homosexuality is illegal

L McDougall reported concerns had been raised by the SRC Council over the University's silence on Human Rights issues within countries where the University has satellite campuses or working partnerships, such as Singapore and China, in particular where being LGBT

remains illegal and there is a lack of privacy laws. She noted the SRC's concern was not only for students but also for University staff required to work in these countries.

Members noted that whilst EDU had recently worked with the Study Abroad team to strengthen the advice contained in the publications and guidance documents for students who opt to go abroad, there remain issues for language students who are required to undertake part of their studies in such countries. Russia is the main concern for this area.

The Convener assured L McDougall when new trans-national educational (TNE) partnerships are proposed, cultural and social issues are discussed at the highest level.

F Coton advised when the partnership in Singapore was originally looked at, there was a public conversation around these considerations but acknowledged there had not been anything issued recently.

D Duncan agreed to raise the SRC's concerns with J Conroy, Vice Principal Internationalisation and request some form of wording that would set out how such issues are considered by the University and clearly state our principles around Human Rights and personal privacy in relation to TNE partnerships.

ACTION: D Duncan/J Conroy

8 Equality Champions Updates – Paper 6

M Taylor referred members to Paper 6 which provided written updates relating to the main issues discussed by groups chaired by the Equality Champions who were unable to attend today's meeting.

She highlighted a number of individual items:

- Institute of Health and Wellbeing had been awarded, on appeal, the University's first Gold departmental Athena SWAN award.
- 50% of the participants in the latest CRER (Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights) Political Shadowing Scheme for BAME individuals are studying at the University of Glasgow.
- Recent discussions with Senate Office and Chaplaincy about Ramadan, which this year falls during the last 3 days of the main exam diet, have determined there will be no special considerations made around assessments. Members noted Eid al-Fitr, the major Muslim celebration at the end of Ramadan would, at some point in the future, coincide with exams. M Taylor noted the University would benefit from the experiences of English HEIs due to their earlier exam timetabling.
- LGBT History Month in February was again a successful celebration, with many student led events, with lots of social media coverage. She noted the staff LGBT+ Network was experiencing a resurgence in membership and activity.
- EDU is currently assisting with an age related indirect discrimination complaint in relation to University of Glasgow Sport membership fees.

Equality Champions in attendance provided the following updates:

Disability Equality Group

F Coton reported the Group continues to consider a large number of concerns and issues, many of which are Estates related items. He acknowledged colleagues from Estates and Commercial Services have been very responsive and proactive when addressing the issues.

F Coton advised the University's Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy, developed to support disabled students' learning experience, will be updated/improved following additional comments and improvement suggestions, building on experiences since its introduction in July 2017.

He highlighted the Group regularly discusses parking on campus, with recent issues relating to parking provision for those with temporary mobility issues and persistent abuse of disabled parking bays outside the St Andrews Building.

D Duncan stated the new Parking Management Scheme, which will come into force in August 2018, would address both these issues. Members noted enforcement of the new Scheme would be key to ensuring such concerns are minimised and addressed timeously.

The Convener advised members of praise received from a number of parents about the proactive support received from across the University for their children.

F Coton noted work continues to review the University's support model for disabled staff.

Mental Health Working Group

D Duncan reported the working group will meet for the first time in late March. Discussion topics will include:

- Professional support for staff.
- Training Interventions led by the SRC (Mind your Mate and Mental Health First Aid).
- Awareness raising.
- Funding for related initiatives.

9 Items for Information– Paper 6

9.1 – Equality and Diversity Essentials Training Statistics Update

M Taylor highlighted the previous steady improvement in completion rates, however the cyclical recruitment of Extended Workforce staff and an increase in Core staff numbers had adversely affected this most recent set of figures.

The Convener, whilst recognising the factors involved, expressed his disappointment in the lowered completion percentages. He requested EDU continue to monitor completions rates and work with local HR teams and appropriate areas to ensure there is no further reduction in completion rates.

ACTION: EDU

10 Any Other Business

10.1 – International Women's Day (IWD)

M Taylor reminded members EDU has collaborated with The Hunterian and the Kelvin Hall to stage this year's main University IWD event this evening. This is a screening of 'Hidden Figures' followed by a panel discussion. M Taylor noted the event is fully subscribed.

The Convener expressed his regret at not being able to attend the event and wished EDU well for this evening.

As there was no further business the Convener closed the meeting.

11 Date of Next Meeting

7 June 2018 at 09:00 – 11:00 in the Principal's Meeting Room