



Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

Minutes of EDSC meeting held on 7 June 2018

Principal's Meeting Room, Level 4, Gilbert Scott Building

Present: Prof Neal Juster (Convener, vice Principal Anton Muscatelli), Mrs Christine Barr, Dr David Duncan, Miss Lauren McDougall, Mrs Margaret-Ann McParland, Mr Robert Partridge, Miss Kate Powell, Miss Rachel Sandison, Ms Mhairi Taylor

Apologies: Prof Anne Anderson, Prof John Briggs, Prof James Conroy, Prof Frank Coton, Principal Anton Muscatelli, Prof Roibeard O Maolalaigh, Dr Helen Stoddart, Ms Lesley Sutherland

Attending: Prof Michele Burman, Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk)

1 Welcome and Apologies

Professor Juster advised he had been invited to convene this meeting, as the Principal had been called away on other University business. He noted the other apologies received.

The Convener welcomed Prof Michele Burman, who was joining the meeting to provide the committee with an update on the work relating to the Preventing Gender Based Violence Strategy Group.

2 Preventing Gender Based Violence Strategy Group (GBVSG)

M Burman provided members with an update on Workstream 1 of the GBVSG: Research, Survey and Perception.

She reported, following on from recommendations from the UUK report 'Changing the Culture', the University has established a Gender Based Violence Research Network. The Network includes researchers from School of Law, School of Social and Political Sciences, School of Education and Institute of Health and Wellbeing and will act as a conduit to the GBVSG.

Other work includes:

- Mapping and utilising previous research in this area, as well as collaborating with external partners such as Rape Crisis Scotland who, as part of a Europe-wide group, aim to develop a toolkit for universities.
- Consultations with staff and students into experiences of signposting and support services.
- Evaluation of the 'Let's Talk' train the trainer sessions, which were jointly delivered to University of Glasgow and Glasgow Caledonian University.

M Burman stated, with so much work underway in this area, there was a need for a longitudinal research project, utilising our expertise and partnerships, to create a bespoke model for use in the Scottish sector which would be more credible and authentic.

Members discussed the under reporting of incidents to the University and asked what more could be done. M Burman advised a Memorandum of Understanding with Police Scotland would allow

a two-way dialogue, allowing them to advise the University and vice versa when incidents occur, in order to support our duty of care for staff and students.

M Burman expressed support for an anonymous reporting system. She noted however, before encouraging additional reporting routes, it was essential sufficient resources and effective support procedures are put in place to ensure the capacity to deal with any increased reporting.

D Duncan advised the Memorandum of Understanding with Police Scotland was already being investigated through the University's Head of Security.

The Convener and members welcomed the breadth of work underway in this area and thanked M Burman for attending and updating EDSC.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – EDSC/20180308/Minutes1.0

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

4 Matters arising from meeting held on 8 March 2018 – Paper 1

The Convener noted most actions from the previous meeting were marked as complete, with a number of items on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting. He noted updates under Action 7 were not due until future meetings. Updates on the remaining items were provided as follows:

Action Point 6 – Mature Students' Association

L McDougall confirmed J Conroy now has the contact details of the new MSA President.

Action Point 8 – International Partnerships where homosexuality is illegal

D Duncan confirmed text regarding safe international travel for students and staff has been drafted. The University's positioning statement is still to be finalised but will be brought to the next meeting.

ACTION: D Duncan/J Conroy

5 Policies for Review and Approval

5.1 – Student Parents' Policy - Paper 2

M Taylor advised the current version of the Student Parents' Policy, shown in Paper 2, had been developed in collaboration with the SRC, Senate Office and further revised, following review by the Chief Adviser of Studies Committee (CASC) in April.

Members discussed the need for effective communication of the policy, once fully approved, to ensure students are aware of the need to make early declarations via their Advisers of Study. They also noted the IT and GDPR requirements surrounding the secure capture of a parental declaration within the University's MyCampus system still needed to be fully explored and implemented.

Members approved the policy, subject to satisfactory resolution of the technical issues.

5.2 – Safeguarding Policy - Paper 10

D Duncan reported discussions at Court had identified a gap in University policy around safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Paper 10 detailed the current draft version of this new policy.

J Briggs highlighted there is no mention of disciplinary procedures within the draft policy and, while these are mentioned within the Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Student Code of Conduct referenced with this policy, suggested there may be an expectation from funding bodies that explicit mention of disciplinary procedures is made within the policy.

Members approved the draft policy, subject to the addition of reference to the University's disciplinary procedures.

ACTION: D Duncan

6 Dignity at Work and Study

6.1 – Respect Advisers Network – 2017-18 Report - Paper 3

M Taylor presented the latest annual report on the Respect Advisers Network, which outlines the current Network resources, training undertaken by members and provides an overview of the Network's 'casework'. Members welcomed the increase in Network advisers, noting the increased number of cases. M Taylor stated there was still a need to recruit more advisers, particularly from outside the main campus and from the academic job families.

M A McParland again commented the average time spent by advisers assisting staff and students in this role does not reflect her experience of dealing with similar cases, in her capacity as a Trades Union representative.

Members recognised Respect Advisers only assist at the informal resolution stage and, as cases go forward via formal procedures, it was to be expected these would become more involved and time consuming.

6.2 – Online Reporting for Harassment and Bullying – Paper 4

M Taylor presented Paper 4, which looks at the case for developing an online reporting system for incidences of harassment and bullying. She reminded members of the current processes and routes for reporting and highlighted the relatively low numbers of cases seen by the Respect Advisers across the years, shown in Section 2, which do not correlate with statistics from previous staff surveys results. M Taylor referred members of previous discussions at this meeting around the recognition of the underreporting of such cases and reminded members M Burman has supported some form of anonymous reporting system.

D Duncan advised he had reviewed and discussed University of Manchester's online reporting tool with their Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. He noted there were some drawbacks to including an anonymous reporting option but on balance, there was a case for including this.

Members debated the pros and cons of including an opportunity to report cases on an anonymous basis, recognising the importance of ensuring supporting processes and systems are in place before any proposed launch. Members agreed any system should allow for reporting of all forms of harassment and bullying. Members welcomed and strongly supported the overall proposal.

The Convener asked M Taylor and D Duncan to establish a working group with representatives from Senate Office, SRC, Human Resources, IT Services, Respect Advisers and Trades Unions to look at options for implementing an online reporting system for the University

ACTION: D Duncan/EDU

6.3 – Grievance & Disciplinary Stats – Paper 5 (tabled)

Members discussed the statistics presented in Paper 5.

M A McParland stated many staff members who approach her, in her capacity as a Trades Union representative, choose not to take cases forward formally as they do not have faith in the procedures or that the University will not deal with them effectively. She suggested the University's grievance and disciplinary procedures be reviewed to ensure investigating officers are independent of those involved in the case. C Barr confirmed it was very common for case investigations to be dealt out with the areas involved.

D Duncan agreed there was a need to ensure investigations were seen to carried out independently and were trustworthy. He noted the statistics provided appeared to show all bar one of the grievance cases were upheld to some extent, which seemed to suggest the procedures were working.

7 Gender Equality and Athena SWAN – Paper 6

In A Anderson's absence, M Taylor presented Paper 6 which highlights some of the recent discussions on how, or indeed if, the Athena SWAN Charter is contributing to gender equality at the University.

She noted Athena SWAN had been embraced by the STEMM areas of the University. However following the expansion of the Charter into arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law areas, there has been more debate about the level of statistical analysis/bureaucratic nature, the increasing level of expectation for submissions and the impact on the Self-Assessment Team Chair's research and workload during the submission process.

Noting all of this, M Taylor advised the University's Gender Equality Steering Group does view Athena SWAN as a positive mechanism for addressing gender inequality. Members noted and welcomed the review of the Athena SWAN Charter announced by Advance HE, formed following the recent merger of Equality Challenge Unit, the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, and the Higher Education Academy.

Members discussed Section 6, and noted the following:

- While the SAT Chair role is significant, EDSC does not agree the role is equivalent to that of a REF UoA Champion.
- EDSC agrees the SAT Chair role should be highlighted in the criteria as a leadership/management role in PDR/Promotion processes.
- EDSC supports the implementation of the full workload model allocation for SAT Chair hours however does not think it would then be appropriate to also have research leave (or equivalent) following a submission.
- EDSC supports the view that Colleges should review their current administrative support for areas submitting Athena SWAN applications, recognising that, due to the number and scale of applications, support cannot solely be provided centrally through EDU's Gender Equality Officer.
- EDSC supports the view that Schools/RIs would be supported if they identified a clear, evidenced process outwith Athena SWAN to support and promote gender equality.

The Convener expressed the opinion that these issues did not require further discussion by SMG. Members agreed.

8 Race Equality and Translated Information – Paper 7

J Briggs referred members to Paper 7, which sets out concerns around the increasing instances of information and signage being translated solely into Mandarin.

R Partridge noted there would be instances where it would be appropriate to have a single language translation, such as recruitment videos or for health and safety considerations. M Taylor agreed, highlighting the recommendation within the paper, which allows for proportionate and justifiable use following an Equality Impact Assessment.

Members agreed many such instructional and directional information could be portrayed pictorially, rather than translated into a single language. This would in turn assist other international campus users.

D Duncan and M Taylor agreed to take forward communications, regarding the appropriate use of translated materials, with all Schools, Research Institutes and Services.

ACTION: D Duncan/EDU

9 Student Items

K Powell and L McDougall confirmed there were no new student items to be discussed.

10 Equality Champions Updates

Equality Champions in attendance provided the following updates:

10.1 Religion and Belief Equality

The Convener advised of recent discussions about the preparations for when Ramadan falls during the examination period. J Briggs noted the Eid al Fitr celebrations, at the end of Ramadan, may pose more of an issue, as this 3 day celebration has an equivalency to Christmas in the Islamic faith. Members noted it would be too problematic to fully recognise this festival, without then having to recognise all other major faith festivals.

M Taylor and R Partridge advised discussions will continue and recommendations will be brought to a future EDSC meeting.

ACTION: R Partridge/EDU

10.2 Race Equality Group – Paper 8

J Briggs advised preparations are underway for the University's Black History Month events programme. He noted M Taylor and Marylise Tate, staff representative on the Race Equality Group, had attended a new 2 day 'Achieving Race Equality' course delivered by Advance HE.

J Briggs stated the Group had also been considering a number of recent reports and reviews and referred members to Paper 8, 'Race in the workplace - The McGregor-Smith Review'. He highlighted the lengthy list of recommendations (pg. 32) and best practice examples (pg. 34), a number of which are FE/HE related. He suggested these could inform future initiatives at the University. He stated one important area for future work on Race at the University should be to interrogate the recruitment and shortlisting data.

R Partridge noted the University of Birmingham's local mentoring scheme BME students.

10.3 Mental Health Working Group

D Duncan reported a number of recent outcomes:

- SRC's successful Lottery funding bid to roll out more 'Mind your Mate' training.
- Mental Health First Aider training has been completed.

- Counselling & Psychological Services (CAPS) is now fully staffed and has new consulting rooms.
- CAPS are also looking at options for additional phone/online counselling provision.

10.4 - Gender, Disability and Gender and Sexual Diversity

M Taylor provided short verbal updates on the main issues discussed by the Equality Groups chaired by the Champions who were unable to attend this meeting. She highlighted the following individual items:

Gender Equality Steering Group (GESG)

- GESG recently reviewed statistics relating to the University's 'Gender Equality KPI' - to achieve 33% female representation in Professorial and Senior Professional roles by 2020. GESG noted good progress, through the wide range of internal initiatives, has being made to address barriers to progression. However, the data showed the external recruitment process was an area where further work will be required to ensure equality of opportunity.

Disability Equality Group (DEG)

- DEG reviewed the latest annual Disability Service Survey. Despite mainly positive responses, the survey response rate continues to be very low at 19%.
- Issues remain for both teaching staff and students with mobility issues when consecutive classes are held in distant venues.
- DEG also discussed the implications for sharing student disability information in light of the recent GDPR legislation.
- Concerns were raised by staff representatives about the lack of progress in agreeing a clear internal, integrated support processes for disabled staff.

Gender and Sexual Diversity Group (GSDG)

- Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champion Programme Manager attended the latest GSDG meeting to outline the support available to both the University and the staff LGBT+ Network.
- Plans to produce a University branded rainbow badge are at an advanced stage. EDU will purchase a number of these and all EDSC members will receive one, once available. They will then be publicly available to purchase via the University Gift Shop.
- A bid has been submitted to the Learning and Teaching Development Fund entitled 'Embedding LGBT equality into the curriculum and classroom' to develop a clear set of guidelines to enable staff to embed equality and diversity principles within their curriculum and teaching practices. This project will focus on the educational experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) students specifically but the principles will be transferable to all protected characteristics. The outcome of the bid is expected in July 2018.
- This year's Glasgow Pride March will be jointly coordinated with the SRC, staff network and student society to ensure a good University representation. M Taylor invited EDSC members to join the group on the day, July 14.

11 Items for Information

11.1 – Equality and Diversity Essentials Training Statistics Update – Paper 9

M Taylor presented Paper 9, showing the latest completion rates for 'all staff' at 77% and 'core staff' at 85%, both below the 90% success measure set as part of the PSED Equality Outcomes.

She noted previous steady improvements in completion rates have not continued, highlighting the College of Science and Engineering and College of Social Sciences continue to have significantly lower completion rates than the other areas.

M Taylor confirmed EDU would continue to provide reports, detailing complete/incomplete information, to each of the College/University Services HR teams to allow them to discuss how best to address this within their own areas. R Sandison asked for her own area's reports to be sent to her direct.

ACTION: EDU

11.2 – Review of Provision for New Parents – Paper 9

M Taylor reported improvements to the support for new parents via the University's Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Leave Policies have been supported by SMG and will proceed through the required approval processes.

12 Any Other Business

12.1 – British Sign Language (BSL) Working Group

M Taylor advised a short-term working group had been convened, in response to the Scottish Government's BSL National Plan (2017-2023), to agree the University's own BSL Action Plan. The group will meet 3 times prior to the October 2018 publishing deadline. Due to the publishing deadline, DEG will review the draft Action Plan and EDSC will then have sight of the finalised Plan.

ACTION: EDU

12.2 – Vote of Thanks

Members noted this would be the last EDSC meeting for K Powell as she would be leaving the University at the end of her year as SRC President. Members expressed their good wishes for the future.

The Convener noted J Briggs would be retiring from the University at the end of July 2018. Members thanked him for his work in both Race and Refugee areas and expressed their best wishes for the future. M Taylor confirmed discussions were already underway to find new Champions.

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

13 Date of Next Meeting

Dates to be confirmed over the summer.