



Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 13 June 2022 at 14:00

Zoom Meeting

- Present:** Prof Sir Anton Muscatelli (Convener), Mrs Christine Barr, Dr David Duncan, Prof Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Mrs Emma Gilmartin, Ms Uzma Khan, Miss Ella McCabe, Dr June Milligan, Prof Jill Morrison, Prof Roibeard O Maolalaigh, Dr Robert Partridge, Ms Eva Simmons, Ms Mhairi Taylor, Dr Dania Thomas
- Apologies:** Prof Muffy Calder, Prof Iain McInnes, Miss Rachel Sandison, Ms Lesley Sutherland
- Attending:** Dr Katie Farrell, Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk)

Welcome and apologies

The Convener welcomed members and acknowledged the apologies received. The Convener noted Dr Farrell, from the Equality and Diversity Unit, was observing the meeting.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting – EDSC/20220321/Minutes1.1

The minutes were approved.

2. Matters arising – Paper 1

Members acknowledged a number of actions had not yet progressed. The following updates were provided.

Action 1 - Dignity at Work and Study Policy

M Taylor confirmed the Policy review will be undertaken later in this year.

ACTION: EDU

Action 2 – Estates Related Items

D Duncan confirmed work is progressing to provide the Accessible/Changing Places Toilet facilities in the Gilbert Scott Building however the restricted lift access to the Committee Rooms area may mean that area is now not suitable. The other work remains ongoing and he will provide a further update at the next meeting.

ACTION: D Duncan

Action 3 - UofG Awarding Gap Data Analysis

M Taylor advised this would be discussed at a future meeting once the further analysis has been completed.

ACTION: S Naeem/T Scotto

Action 4 - QC-Led Investigation

Members noted the investigation by Morag Ross QC was still under way, and no update was available yet.

ACTION: D Duncan/Convener

Action 5 - College Engagement Survey – Diversity Results

M Taylor confirmed a review of the engagement survey results by Grade and Job Function highlighted Grades 2, 3 and 9 and in Facilities, Security and Technicians job families appeared to report higher levels of

bullying and harassment. She confirmed she would discuss with colleagues in People and Organisational Development on how to address these areas of concern. **ACTION: EDU**

Action 6 - Wellbeing Framework for Students

Members noted a progress report, to include evaluations following the introduction of the Student Experience Strategy and the introduction of the Student Support Network. This is expected to be available for the next EDSC. **ACTION: R Partridge**

Action 7 - UUK Tackling Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred report

M Taylor confirmed the updated action plan had been circulated to members recently and noted further detailed conversations had been held with Estates. U Khan confirmed she would take forward the action plan with Estates and will provide EDSC with an update at the next meeting. **ACTION: U Khan**

Action 9 – Refugee and Asylum Seekers

Members agreed the proposed new title for the expanded Champion's role will be 'Sanctuary Champion'. A further update on the University of Sanctuary application will be provided under the Equality Champions item on the agenda.

Members noted the outstanding items for Actions 10 and 11 remain ongoing.

Action 12 – URTUC – data analysis to include entry qualifications

M Taylor confirmed PI&A colleagues will be able to include entry qualifications into the QlikSense data sets for further analysis however this will some take time to complete. She confirmed this would be looked at as part of future URTUC related reports.

Action 16 – UCAS and Stonewall report

M Taylor confirmed EDU's N Riaz and the LGBT+ Equality Group member, Dr Emily Nordmann, met with colleagues in the Transitions Working Group to discuss how to address the report's findings. Progress would be reported through the LGBT+ Equality Group and Transitions Working Group.

3. Anti-Racism Campaign – Presentation

M Taylor and E Gilmartin updated members on the University's planned anti-racism campaign; a key action from the URTUC Action Plan. E Gilmartin stressed the current campaign 'assets' had been developed through focus groups and discussions with staff and students from the beginning. Members noted a further focus group including members of Jewish students' society and staff Global Majority Network is due to be held.

M Taylor confirmed feedback from the Race Equality Group (REG) had highlighted some concerns that the current 'assets' could reinforce both a victim mentality and damaging stereotypes and discussions are underway with the designer. She confirmed the 'assets' shown in the presentation had not yet been revised as a result of that feedback.

Members provided feedback on the suggested campaign straplines and discussed the potential of addressing the structural dimension of racism within the campaign materials. Members welcomed the use of #OneTeamUofG to promote allyship for this and future inclusion-based campaigns.

Members endorsed the aim of the campaign and noted the progress detailed on other supporting initiatives designed to deliver structural changes and address racial inequality across the University. M Taylor and E Gilmartin confirmed the planned internal communications and accompanying webpages will highlight all the actions already undertaken, those currently in progress and also those planned.

M Taylor and E Gilmartin to work with relevant partners to develop complimentary teaching/educational materials and line manager guides. **ACTION: E Gilmartin/M Taylor**

4. Gender Based Violence

4.1 Action Plan Update – Paper 2

M Taylor referred members to Paper 2 set out the significant progress over the last six months. Members welcomed the contents and noted the Action Plan would only be further revised once recommendations from the investigation by Morag Ross QC were known.

M Taylor confirmed First Responders (FR) have access to peer support. As a result of the recent successful recruitment drive, the large pool of Respect Advisers (RA) meant individual staff were not overburdened. She requested D Thomas provide more details in relation to her request for guidance around evidentiary ‘grey areas’ in relation to disciplinary cases to allow P&OD colleagues to consider this. **ACTION: D Thomas**

E McCabe highlighted the recent changes to the Student Code of Conduct had included a commitment to Student Liaison Officers and asked if those positions had been filed. R Partridge clarified the Student Liaison Officer role had not intended to be a new role; existing staff, depending on the type of case, would provide that point of contact. He agreed to investigate and confirming to both the Convener and SRC whether all students with current ‘cases’ had been assigned a Student Liaison Officer. **ACTION: R Partridge**

4.2 Code of Professional Conduct – Paper 3

K Farrell highlighted all College Management Groups (CMGs) and the Professional Services Group (PSG) had already engaged positively, providing very considered and useful feedback, resulting in the current version of the proposed new Code shown in Paper 3. She noted discussions earlier in this meeting were echoed in the feedback and highlighted an implementation, communications plan and toolkits will be developed to ensure the context is fully understood and to ensure all staff understand what is unacceptable behaviour.

E Simmons emphasised the need for toolkits to include specific examples to help understanding of the definitions/language within the Code and called for students to be included in the awareness raising campaign so they know how it relates to them and their experiences while at the University.

D Thomas called for the proposed related training to be delivered face to face, rather than online, as this has been known to have a greater impact on participants. She also suggested the Code could try to encapsulate the new remote/hybrid working environment where University business meetings may be held outside the normal University environment.

J Milligan strongly supported the Code but suggested alternative wording be developed to replace the current ‘*minimal* standards and expectations’ shown in paragraph 5 on the Code’s Introduction section.

ACTION: K Farrell

The Convener and members strongly endorsed the new Code and noted, following further consultation and feedback, it will be reviewed by SMG during the summer period with the intention of a launch early in the new academic year.

5. Menopause and Hormonal Change Policy – Paper 4

K Farrell highlighted the University's development of this proposed new policy preceded the recent national publicity around the issues of menopause, through colleagues engagement in menopause cafes, and a number of webinars with experts in the area. She noted the Policy will compliment those ongoing initiatives to help reduce the stigma around discussing menopause and hormonal changes in general.

K Farrell stated the policy will provide a supportive framework for people seeking adjustments to help manage the impact of symptoms on their work life. K Farrell emphasised the need for the University to retain its female talent and to ensure they thrive. In doing so this will help meet the University's stated KPI of 50% in our professoriate and senior professional roles and contribute to achieving the University's strategic ambitions and tackle the gender pay gap.

K Farrell confirmed the intention is to launch the policy, working with colleagues in P&OD and Communications and invited members' comments. While C Barr suggested more emphasis could be placed on andropause and highlight the trans inclusive nature of the policy, the Convener and members expressed their strong support for the policy's introduction.

6. ED&I Training Paper – Paper 5

M Taylor reminded members of initial discussions at the last EDSC meeting and noted Paper 5 included an overview of all mandatory training across the University, how this is tracked and current completion rates. M Taylor highlighted the E&D related courses were amongst the highest completion rates of the non-role dependent courses but acknowledged this had only been achieved through proactive work by EDU, Schools and University Services.

Members agreed while the number of courses currently deemed 'mandatory' for all staff had increased over the years, these have been categorised as mandatory for a reason and must be completed. Members acknowledged tracking of course completions against an area's workforce is currently predominantly a manual process but noted a more automated process may become available soon.

Members agreed a number of the current mandatory courses, with the potential inclusion of the 'Let's Talk about Race in the Workplace' course, speak to the heart of the University's values and its expectations of our staff. E McCabe stated the 'behaviours' based mandatory courses would complement the soon to be introduced mandatory pre-entry student courses.

The Convener asked that proposals on which courses should form the 'mandatory' suite, potential consequences for non-completion, how those could be enforced, along with information on automating chasing of non-completions to be developed to allow for discussion and decision by SMG over the next few months.

ACTION: P&OD/EDU

7. Student Related Items

E Simmons and E McCabe confirmed all students issues had already been raised at the individual Equality

Groups or with those Champions who do not chair a group.

8. Equality Champions Updates

8.1 Age Equality Update

M Taylor advised there were no relevant updates in this area.

8.2 Disability Equality Champion

C Barr advised at the last group meeting E Simmons presented the case to support students who had not yet received a formal diagnosis of a disability. C Barr noted Disability Service had already begun in discussions about this may been done.

She also highlighted the recent introduction of the new [Support for Disabled & Neurodivergent Colleagues](#) which allows colleagues to easily request disability related discussions with their line manager and newly designed automated workflow process ensures these are correctly recorded and followed up timeously. Accompanying the workflow process is a full toolkit and guidance for both colleague and their line manager.

8.3 Gender (Sex) Equality Champion

J Morrison the last group meeting had reviewed both the GBV Action Plan update and the Hormonal Changes policy already discussed in this meeting. She highlighted the latest Staff Equality Monitoring has shown the percentage of women in senior posts (Grade 10) was now at 33.2%.

8.4 Mental Health Champion

D Duncan reported Senate had recently received a report on Student Wellbeing and advised this showed the University is now better resourced, better organised and have a wider option of support and therapies to assist those in need. He noted waiting times have come down for face to face student support.

He highlighted the new Colleague Wellbeing Strategy is in the final stages of development by P&OD and noted the Occupational Health team would be going through some organisational changes following the retirement of colleagues in key roles. He confirmed a retendering process is underway for the Employee Assistance Programme.

8.5 LGBT+ Equality Champion

R O Maolalaigh confirmed discussions were held with Widening Participation to support trans students through a Named Contact, similar to Care-Experienced students, but due the potential numbers involved, this was not deemed a viable option. Instead, relevant staff, such as Student Support Officers, should receive the necessary training. He confirmed the Group had received updates from both Staff and Student networks and also reviewed the Staff Equality Monitoring Report.

R O Maolalaigh noted this would be his last EDSC meeting and expressed his thanks to EDU colleagues for their support during his time as Champion.

8.6 Race Equality Champion

M Taylor reported the group had discussed the launch of the James McCune Smith PhD Scholarships, which saw an additional 7 scholars appointed, over and above the 10 originally intended. Members noted the

scholarships had attracted over 700 expressions of interest, with over 230 applications received.

M Taylor advised the group had reviewed data analysis by External Relations on the recipients of their Undergraduate and PGT scholarships.

M Taylor also advised a new network for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff, the **Global Majority Network**, had been formed. The network, with initial membership of around 50, have already met discussing shared interests and ways to grow and take the network forward.

8.7 Sanctuary Update

M Taylor reported the University will support 121 Ukrainian students over the next academic year, via twinning arrangements, with 100 students from National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy joining in the new academic year. All fees will be waived, and accommodation and subsistence costs will be underwritten by the University. The Scottish Government has now confirmed 'home' fee status for Ukrainian nationals who join any Scottish university next academic year.

Members noted the judging panel for the University of Sanctuary application will visit the University in July.

8.8 Religion and Belief Update

M Taylor noted, in addition to earlier noted discussions about accommodations for Muslim prayer space, the Union of Jewish Students delivered antisemitism training to staff which was well attended and well received.

9. **Any Other Business**

The Convener noted a number of changes to the membership of EDSC would take place in the new academic year as R O Maolalaigh had come to the end of his term as Head of College, J Morrison will be retiring from the University in July and L Sutherland had come to the end of her term on Court.

The Convener also noted this would be last EDSC meeting for E McCabe and E Simmons in their role as SRC Sabbatical Officers.

On behalf of the other members, the Convener thanked them all for their valuable and considered contributions to the work of the committee.

The Convener advised Prof Moira Fischbacher-Smith had already agreed to take on the LGBT+ Champion role and Prof Sara Carter, Vice Principal & Head of College of Social Sciences, will take over the role as new Gender Champion.

CLERK'S NOTE: The Principle has since agreed EDSC membership, from the 2022-23 session, will be amended to show only one Court representative as Court's interests on EDSC will continue to be represented by June Milligan.

Date of Scheduled Next Meeting: TBC