

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY 2024 AT 2PM IN ROOM C1.18 (PAVILION), 115 NEW CAVENDISH STREET, W1W 6UW

PRESENT:	Professor D Anand (Co-Chair)	P Mashumba
	Dr D Husbands (Co-Chair)	C Molloy
	T Bangia	S Razzaq
	C Benyon	Dr C Robertson
	S Bunbury	R Shah
	Professor P Catterall	Dr C Smith
	D de Silva	J Smith
	Dr K Juddoo	Dr N Weingarten
IN ATTENDANCE:	M Chan (Secretary)	E Johnson
	L Cole (for item 23.32)	Dr A Pitchford
	M Deshpande (for item 23.32)	S Thomas
APOLOGIES:	H Doon	C Lloyd
	Professor V Gillies	A Norris
	M Linfoot	
ABSENT:	T Mills	

23.26. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 23.26.1. **Welcome:** The Co-Chairs welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.
- 23.26.2. Members welcomed Dr Deborah Husbands, nominated by the Co-Chairs of the colleague networks, as the new Co-Chair of the Committee.
- 23.26.3. Members welcomed Dr Caroline Smith, new School EDI Lead representative and Pelagia Mashumba, interim Head of Organisational Development to their first meeting of the Committee.
- 23.26.4. Members also welcomed Sarah Thomas and Edna Johnson, new Professional Services EDI Leads as observers of this meeting.
- 23.26.5. **Apologies:** Apologies and absences were noted as above.
- 23.26.6. **Declaration of Interest:** The Co-Chair confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.
- 23.26.7. **AOB and starred items:** Members did not request to add any items to the agenda or to discuss the starred items.

23.27. CO-CHAIR'S REPORT

- 23.27.1. Members heard the following updates on the recent activities and progress made since the last meeting from the Co-Chairs:
- 2024/25 meeting dates set and invites to follow.
 - Sign up on Decision Time for future agendas and papers.
 - Feedback on the Religion, Belief and Study Policy by 5 February 2024.
 - Various EDI events were held or planned, including World in Westminster Cafes and celebration of cultural festivals.

- Co-Chair, Professor Dibyesh Anand, along with Fiona Ross (a member of University's Court of Governors), discussed Research Excellence Framework and EDI at the Institute of Government and Public Policy (IGPP) and is promoting global EDI to international students via events with the Universities UK.
- Professor Miriam Dwek, the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will lead the Athena SWAN accreditation assessment team. Members were assured that there will be full University support for the application.
- Professor Anand reiterated University's support for the implementation of Menopause report published by WOW and colleagues in the School of Social Sciences.

23.27.1.1. ACTION Secretary to follow up on the meeting invites for 2024/25.

23.28. EDI ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

- 23.28.1. The Co-Chairs reported that comments received before the meeting were incorporated into this latest report (Document EDI 240131A).
- 23.28.2. Members noted that a standardised template for future feedback could help streamline process.
- 23.28.3. A member suggested including the Public Community Engagement (PCE) event in the report.

23.28.3.1. ACTION EDI Officer to include the PCE event in the annual report for 2022/23.

- 23.28.4. **AGREED** The EDI annual report 2022/23 to be submitted to the University Executive Board (UEB), subject to the addition of the PCE event.

23.29. PEOPLE STRATEGY DIVERSITY PAY GAP KPI UPDATE AND ANALYSIS OF 2023 DATA

- 23.29.1. The Director of People, Culture and Wellbeing (PCW) reported that whilst there are no major changes in the overall diversity pay gap indicators, there is some entry-level academic diversity enabled by the Voluntary Release Scheme. Members noted that improvements are expected in the longer term through promotion of entry-level academics and other recent University initiatives.
- 23.29.2. Members noted that a simpler format for the report would make it more readable and meaningful.
- 23.29.3. A member raised a concern on the collection of colleagues' protected characteristics. The Director (PCW) welcomed suggestions to inform the development of the new recruitment and onboarding system to capture relevant data.
- 23.29.4. Co-Chair, Professor Dibyesh Anand shared with members a discussion at the London Higher EDI Network regarding the choice between using 'sharing' and 'disclosing' when referring to EDI characteristics (including those relating to disabilities).
- 23.29.5. Members noted that the University will join the Disabled Student Commitment to raise awareness about this challenge.

23.30. KEY ISSUES IN EDI: DIVERSITY AND THE WORKFORCE, EDI COLLEAGUE DEVELOPMENT AND SENIOR PROMOTIONS

- 23.30.1. Members received the report on senior colleague promotions (Document EDI 240131B).
- 23.30.2. The Director (PCW) explained that there is increasing diversity at the entry-level colleague group. Progress at the senior colleague group, however, was not notable in the past year.
- 23.30.3. Members had some vigorous discussion on the issue that covered:
- **Diversity:** timescale of the long-term positive actions; targeted actions to better address specific issues faced by certain groups of colleagues.

- **Appointment and selection process:** minimise network-related challenges; PCW representative in selection panels; weighting of stakeholders' group feedback; composition of the decision-making bodies; clear and well-defined job requirements (including EDI requirements and characteristics) for fair and open process; consistency and transparency in the processes among Colleges/Schools.
- **Others:** Professional Development Review (PDR); role rotation; support for internal colleagues with protected characteristics to compete with external applicants; policy on prioritising appointment of internal part-time colleagues over external hiring.

23.30.4. The Director (PCW) confirmed the importance of transparency in the process and gave some responses to members' feedback:

- Addressing diversity through three strands: selection process, career planning (PDR) and development.
- PDR is vital in driving University changes. A professional development academy is now underway for more transparent career planning.
- Diverse representation in selection panels with PCW involvement in panels for very senior positions.
- Stakeholders' group feedback is valued. The Director (PCW) will try to enhance its visibility in the process.

23.31. EDI POLICY REVIEW

23.31.1. The Co-Chairs briefed members on the changes to the EDI Policy (Document EDI 240131C), including the addition of our commitment to academic freedom.

23.31.2. **AGREED** The refreshed EDI Policy to be submitted to UEB.

23.32. EMPLOYABILITY AND EDI

23.32.1. The Co-Chairs welcomed Linsey Cole, Director of Business Engagement (BE) and Monica Deshpande, Head of Employability and Graduate Success (EGS) to join the discussion.

23.32.2. In response to the queries on the questions shared before the meeting (Document EDI 240131D), the Head (EGS) and Director (BE) clarified the targeted student/graduate groups and the purpose for reaching out to academic colleagues.

23.32.3. A member asked about student demographic data for mentoring, suggesting it could guide Personal Tutors in encouraging relevant student groups to participate.

23.32.3.1. **ACTION Director (BE)** to share the available student data on mentoring with members after the meeting.

23.32.4. Members made some suggestions for enhancing engagement with student/recent graduate groups, which have gaps in graduate outcome performances:

- **Enhance visibility:** through on-campus engagement representative, sharing of engagement events via campus TV screens.
- **Platforms and websites:** more user-friendly engagement platforms, employability Blackboard website, a one-stop shop resource hub for all employability initiatives to be shared at welcome week through Blackboard/news bulletins.
- **EDI and employability:** integrate employability with EDI events to address the challenge of reaching underrepresented student groups, collaborate with the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) to ensure inclusivity.
- **Proactively reaching out** to those students who are not aware they are in need.

- 23.32.5. On engaging academic colleagues effectively, one member highlighted the challenge of navigating vast information. Another member suggested introducing employability programme details during academic colleagues' induction and arrival talks.
- 23.32.6. A member suggested the team could approach Citizens UK to help achieve employability objectives.
- 23.32.7. The Director, Global Recruitment, Admissions, Marketing and Communications (GRAMC) explained the current usage of the campus TV screens. The Director (GRAMC) noted members' feedback and would further review the usage.
- 23.32.7.1. **ACTION Director (GRAMC)** to review the usage of the campus TV screens and report back to the Committee.
- 23.32.8. The Head (EGS) shared that the team is now working with an external agency to enhance employability and engagement with students.

23.33. KEY ISSUES IN EDI: THE ROLE OF THE STUDENTS' UNION AND EDI STUDENT CHAMPIONS

Role of the Students' Union in EDI

- 23.33.1. The UWSU President highlighted a range of EDI-related activities that are organised by UWSU, ranging from awareness raising campaigns, diversity celebrations, workshops and festivals to collaborations with internal and external stakeholders.
- 23.33.2. Members commended the work of UWSU and thanked the hard work of the UWSU President.
- 23.33.3. Members suggested UWSU and colleague networks could work together to promote the EDI agenda more effectively across the University and the EDI Officer could help in steering and facilitating this collaborative process.

EDI Student Champions

- 23.33.4. The Head, Centre for Education Technology and Innovation (CETI) informed members the scheme is on its third year of operation. Some Schools have good project outcomes, but others have not yet started the scheme.
- 23.33.5. Members discussed the challenges faced by the scheme:
- Shortage and uncertainty of funding.
 - Contribution and commitment across the board – Schools, School EDI Leads and the Student Champions.
 - Logistical barriers on student recruitment.
 - Student continuity issue.
 - Linking up School EDI Leads with the Student Champions.
- 23.33.6. Members made the following suggestions:
- Include EDI Student Champions in the School EDI Leadership programme to help School EDI Leads to further understand the scheme.
 - All EDI Student Champions to undergo the same training.
- 23.33.7. Members noted that the role of CETI is to provide a scaffolding for the scheme while Schools are responsible for implementation.

- 23.33.7.1. **ACTION Co-Chairs and Head (CETI)** to invite School EDI Leads to update on the scheme progress before the summer break and collectively identify projects for the upcoming academic year.

23.34. UPDATES ON MEMBERS' EDI ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE COMMITTEE

- 23.34.1. Members shared the activities that they have recently conducted or are currently working on to strengthen EDI work in the wider University community, either on work-related or personal basis.

23.35. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 23.35.1. **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 22 November 2023 (Document EDI 240131E) as an accurate record.
- 23.35.2. Members noted a summary of progress in actions from previous meetings (Document EDI 240131F) and confirmed the completed actions.

23.36. SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS

- 23.36.1. Members noted the updated schedule of business 2023/24 (Document EDI 240131G).

23.37. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

20 March 2024
29 May 2024
24 July 2024
9 October 2024
20 November 2024
5 February 2025
19 March 2025
4 June 2025
23 July 2025

All meetings take place between 2.00pm and 5.00pm and are held in person.

23.38. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 23.38.1. Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.