UNIVERSITY OF FORWARD THINKING WESTMINSTER

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2025 AT 2PM IN ROOM 201, 309 REGENT STREET

PRESENT:	Professor D Anand (Co-Chair) Dr D Husbands (Co-Chair) J Boston D Caldron D de Silva Professor M Dwek[1] (up to Minute 24.50) Dr K Juddoo	M Jula (from Minute 24.50.3) Y Kaplan E Lees C Peterson S Razzaq R Shah J Smith (from Minute 24.47.7)
IN ATTENDANCE:	I Adnan F Kolyda	E McMillan (Minute taker) R Thomas Val
APOLOGIES:	C Benyon S Bunbury M Chan (Secretary) Professor V Gillies C Lloyd P Mashumba	C Molloy A Musani S Owen Dr C Robertson Dr C Smith Dr N Weingarten

24.45. ANNOUNCEMENTS

24.45.1. **Welcome:** The Co-Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, including

- Imsal Adnan, UWSU Vice-President (Welfare) representing Adil Musani, UWSU President
- Frantzeska Kolyda, School EDI Lead representing Caroline Smith, School EDI Lead representative.
- Eduardo Lees, new Co-Chair of the Q+ Network.
- Rhiannon Thomas Val, representing Maria Jula, Q+ Network Co-Chair.

24.45.2. Members noted that Caroline Smith is no longer a School EDI Lead and a new representative will join the Committee next academic year.

24.45.3. **Apologies:** Members noted apologies as recorded above.

24.45.4. **AOB and starred items:** Members did not request to add any items to the agenda or to discuss the starred items.

24.45.5. **Declarations of interest:** The Co-Chair confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.

24.46. CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

24.46.1. The Co-Chairs provided an update on key activities and discussions since the last meeting:

- The Court of Governors approved the refreshed EDI Strategy.
- A successful EDI programme sponsored by the Quintin Hogg Trust ends on 31 July 2025. Thank you to those who ran the World in Westminster cafes, Westminster conversations, empowerment programmes and to the Student Champions.
- Partnered with London Higher for an EDI conference in June 2025 and with the Universities UK for an EDI Conference and Summit on community cohesion in June 2025.

[1] Attended via Teams.

- From next year there will not be an EDI strand in the QHT funded programme; responsibility for previously funded work transfers to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Employability).
- The University was awarded University of the Year in the Queer Student Awards. The Co-Chair encouraged members to highlight awards that might be suitable for submissions.
- The fourth annual Challenging Racisms conference was held on 8 May 2025; the Co-Chair confirmed there will be a fifth in May 2026.
- The third annual Queering Academia conference was held on 4 July 2025.
- The fifth annual EDI Forum was held on 11 June 2025 and was the biggest and most exciting yet. The Co-Chair thanked Clare Peterson, EDI Manager for hosting and all who contributed.
- The Black History Year (BHY) partnered with the Paul Canoville Foundation for an event at the Regent Street Cinema and delivered the first BHY Researchers Network conference about amplifying Black scholarship. The Co-Chair reported that there has been a lot of governor interest in the empowerment programmes and confirmed they will involve governors in the rollout of programmes in the future.
- Co-Chair Deborah Husbands has been formally inducted as new Chair for The Psychologist publication and as a member of the British Psychological Society's Research Strategy Board. The Co-Chair encouraged members to inform the Co-Chairs if they are part of something that can be celebrated.

24.46.2. The Co-Chair thanked members for their feedback on the Diversity at Work and Study Policy, which was approved by the University Executive Board (UEB) and will take effect from 1 August 2025.

24.46.3. The EDI Manager provided an update to members including:

- Recruitment to replace School and Professional Services EDI Leads.
- A request to be a co-owner of the EDI Leads SharePoint site.
- Co-delivery, with the Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation, an induction for EDI School Leads and School Champions on 10 September 2025.
- The first development session focusing on the Access and Participation Plan will be held on 8 October 2025.
- A programme of events for School EDI Leads is in development.

24.46.3.1. **ACTION** **EDI Manager** to circulate information on EDI Lead appointments when confirmed.

24.46.4. A member noted that there is also a BlackBoard site for EDI Leads with lots of resources.

24.46.5. The EDI Accreditations Project Lead provided an update to members including:

- Reviewing the 2015 Athena Swan Charter action plan.
- Work stream activities are ongoing to support the Charter application and development of the new action plan.
- Aim to submit by July 2026 with a mid-term review scheduled for October 2025.
- Responses to the CEDAR (Culture, Employment and Development of Academic Researchers) survey) will inform the new action plan.
- EDI Committee and other colleagues will have an opportunity to feedback on the draft action plan.

24.47. END-OF-YEAR EDI REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE EDI STRATEGY FOR NEXT YEAR

24.47.1. The EDI Manager informed members that the implementation plan (Document EDI 250723B) will drive progress for the new EDI Strategy and progress against the key performance indicators will be reported annually.

24.47.2. The Co-Chairs suggested that it would be helpful for the EDI Team to add some entries as examples and noted that senior colleagues in the People, Culture and Wellbeing Department (PCW) have already contributed some entries.

24.47.3. The EDI Manager offered to run briefings or discussions with senior leadership teams. The EDI Manager commented that the University will only achieve progress if actions are delivered locally.

24.47.3.1. **ACTION EDI Manager** to email a link to an editable version of the implementation plan to all EDI Leads.

24.47.4. In response to concerns raised by an attendee about consistent implementation in all Schools, the EDI Manager informed members that the EDI Team will work with People Partners to seek invitations to College Executive Group meetings and will discuss with senior leadership teams what is included in operational plans. The EDI Manager informed members that the Professors and Readers Awarding (PRA) Committee will consider a paper on academic career progression at their next meeting and assured members that the EDI Team will oversee monitoring and evaluation of the plan. She also noted that the EDI Committee can hold individual leads accountable for not delivering on activities.

24.47.5. In response to a member's comment about including EDI in the Professional Development Review process, the EDI Manager commented that the EDI Team can work with managers to get a better understanding of what their team is doing and to work together on relevant objectives for the team. The EDI Manager informed members that she is exploring development of a progression framework for Professional Services in partnership with colleagues in PCW.

24.47.6. A Network Co-Chair commented that Network members had queried how the EDI Team works with the Procurement Team. The EDI Manager confirmed she would share the implementation plan with Procurement and other colleagues after this meeting.

24.47.7. In response to a query about next steps for the empowerment programmes, the EDI Manager commented that it is for the Empowerment Leads to embed the programmes as part of the five-year Strategy.

24.47.8. The Co-Chair commented that there should be student input to the final implementation plan and noted that the EDI Committee is asked to focus on the colleague elements as another committee will oversee the student elements.

24.47.9. The EDI Manager informed members that the plan should be aligned with and link to, but not replicate, other documents such as the Access and Participation Plan, the Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) Strategy, the Athena Swan Charter action plan etc.

24.47.10. A member queried how a lead would be identified for objectives that are the responsibility of everyone, such as strengthening the safe, supportive and inclusive environments. The EDI Manager explained that an overall lead will be identified and there may be leads for specific supportive elements of a broader objective.

24.47.10.1. **ACTION Members** to add additional information, comments and queries to the implementation plan by the end of August 2025.

24.47.11. Members noted that the Committee will consider the full EDI Strategy implementation plan in the next meeting on 1 October 2025.

24.48. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

24.48.1. The EDI Manager introduced the current equality impact assessment (EIA) checklist (Document EDI 250723B), primarily used by PCW when reviewing policies, and invited comments from members.

24.48.2. A member supported the suggestion that it is updated and includes cultural humility and commented there is an absence of criticality in terms of external assessment/a critical friend. The EDI Manager will discuss the suggestion of a critical friend with the London Higher EDI Network and the HE institutions the University has engaged with around the Athena Swan Charter submission.

24.48.3. The member also queried what happens to the checklist once it is completed and how its use is documented. The EDI Manager suggested that completed checklists are published on the new EDI SharePoint site when it is launched and are submitted to committees alongside policy proposals.

24.48.4. In response to a member's query, the EDI Manager explained that the role of EIA is to support decision-making process therefore the audience is those involved in policy review and approval and it also enables the University to capture where there is a positive impact on particular groups of colleagues or students.

24.48.5. A member suggested that the EIA should go beyond the limitations of the Equality Act and include things like social background.

24.48.6. **AGREED** Members supported a review of the EIA with a revised tool to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

24.48.6.1. **ACTION Members** to contact the EDI Manager if they would like to be involved in the review or if they have further comments on the current checklist.

24.49. YEARLY REPORT ON EDI AND SENIOR PROMOTIONS

24.49.1. The EDI Manager introduced the annual report on EDI and senior promotions (Document EDI 250723C), which is produced by PCW colleagues.

24.49.2. A member asked what positive action is being taken to address lack of progress or a decline for some colleague groups. The EDI Manager referred to the paper on academic career progression being considered by the PRA Committee and informed members that she is discussing with external colleagues what progression opportunities the University could create for Professional Services colleagues (eg secondments or shadowing). A member expressed concern about lack of equality of opportunity if line manager approval is needed for opportunities that support progression.

24.49.2.1. **ACTION Director of PCW** to report the decision of the PRA Committee to members and confirm that EDI was considered in that process.

24.49.3. A member commented that there is a lot of work around Reader to Professor promotions and they would like to see similar work around Lecturer to Senior Lecturer transition.

24.49.4. The EDI Manager assured members that there are entries in the implementation plan about both academic career progression and Lecturer to Senior Lecturer transition.

24.49.5. A member requested greater clarity in the report about academic and Professional Services progression and explanations of the different levels in the 'Size of Senior Colleague Group' table. The EDI Manager noted that she is working with the Head of Strategic Resourcing, Reward and Insight on meaningful data reports for the Athena Swan Charter and the EDI Committee and introducing intersectional data reporting.

24.50. THE IMPACT RANKINGS 2025

24.50.1. The Co-Chair, who is also Co-Chair of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Coordinating Group, presented a summary of the 2025 THE (Times Higher Education) impact ranking results and year-on-year analysis (Document EDI 250723D).

24.50.2. The Co-Chair explained that the THE rejected some evidence as it was not published publicly or was not presented in the required format due to the University's intersectional approach and that the University would appeal, where allowed, if errors in the scoring are identified.

24.50.3. Members discussed SDG 3 Health care and wellbeing, noting that universities with a medical or nursing school score higher.

24.50.4. Members discussed a suggestion at a previous meeting about flagging research that is relevant for specific SDGs and the Co-Chair confirmed that the SDG Coordinating Group will plan SDG-RKE workshops for next year.

24.50.5. The Co-Chair confirmed that there is no direct action plan from the exercise; however, it informs other activities and how to improve.

24.51. KEY ISSUES IN EDI: EXPERIENCES AND KEY ISSUES FOR SCHOOL EDI LEADS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES EDI LEADS

24.51.1. The Professional Services EDI Lead representative reported:

- The newsletter was a highlight of her term of office, noting the challenge of identifying who is reading it and how to disseminate it.
- The EDI Team is more established and will provide guidance for the new EDI Leads.
- The current EDI Leads see their work as a beginning.

24.51.2. Members discussed how best to disseminate an EDI newsletter and noted the need to continue discussions with the Internal Communications Team on this point without duplicating the content of Westminster Weekly.

24.51.2.1. **ACTION Professional Services EDI Lead representative** to share both issues of the newsletter with members via the Secretary and in the EDI Leads chat groups.

24.51.3. Frantzeska Kolyda, representing School EDI Leads confirmed she had not been asked by the School EDI Lead representative to report any specific issues to the committee.

24.52. MEMBERS' UPDATES

24.52.1. Members and attendees shared updates on recent or on-going activities aimed at strengthening EDI efforts in the wider University community, through both work-related and personal initiatives.

24.52.1.1. **ACTION Co-Chair Dibyesh Anand** to follow up with the EDI (Education) Steering Group about a suggestion that the module assessment report includes EDI data for each Module Leader.

24.52.1.2. **ACTION EDI Manager and the Women of Westminster Menopause Group lead** to discuss the requirement of the Employment Rights Bill 2025 to have a menopause action plan as part of the broader EDI action plan.

24.52.2. The Co-Chair commended members for all their work and reminded members that they are all expected to participate in EDI activities both within and outside the Committee and should withdraw from the Committee if they cannot prioritise this work to avoid overburdening other members.

24.52.3. The Co-Chair reminded members to be conscious that any recordings of EDI events may be the subject of a Freedom of Information request; however, this should not prevent colleagues standing up for our values.

24.52.4. The second Co-Chair also commended members for their work, acknowledged that it can feel emotionally draining and encouraged members to continue and to take comfort that there are a lot of other people that share in the struggle.

24.53. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

24.53.1. **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 19 March 2025 (Document EDI 250723E) as an accurate record.

24.53.2. Members noted progress on actions from previous meetings (Document EDI 250723F) and confirmed the completed items.

24.53.2.1. **ACTION Committee Secretary** to confirm whether the links of the annual conferences have been shared with all members.

24.54. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24.54.1. The EDI Accreditations Project Lead offered to support any colleague who wanted to write an article or feature for Westminster Weekly or to deliver a celebration of South Asian Heritage Month (held from 18 July to 17 August each year) or East and Southeast Asian Heritage Month (held in September each year).

24.54.2. The Co-Chair thanked members for their contributions over the year, with special thanks to those attending their final meeting: Caroline Lloyd, Director of Student and Academic Services; Professional Services EDI Leads Danielle Caldron, Edna Johnson, and Sarah Thomas; Kumari Juddoo and Sobia Razzaq, WoW Network Co-Chairs, and those who have resigned or changed role since the last meeting: Divanshu Airan, UWSU President and Caroline Smith, School EDI Lead representative.

24.54.3. In response to a member's query about downloading papers from the Decision Time portal to share with other colleagues, the Minute Taker confirmed that non-confidential papers are available to all colleagues via the Committees Communications SharePoint site.

24.55. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

24.55.1. **AGREED** Members recommend the updated terms of reference and membership (Document EDI 250723G) to UEB for approval.

24.56. EDI COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2024-25 TIMELINE

24.56.1. Members noted the committee effectiveness review timeline (Document EDI 250723H).

24.57. DRAFT SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS 2025-26

24.57.1. **APPROVED** Members confirmed the schedule of business for the next academic year (Document EDI 250723I).

24.58. SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS 2024-25

24.58.1. Members noted completion of the schedule of business for the current academic year (Document EDI 250723J).

24.59. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

1 October 2025
28 January 2026
8 April 2026
15 July 2026

All meetings take place between 2pm and 5pm and are held in person.