

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 2022 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT:	Professor A Hughes (Co-Chair)	Professor M Kirkup
	D Barratt	M F Larsen
	C Benyon	C Lloyd
	Z Butt	A Norris
	H Doon	S Razzaq
	Dr D Husbands	Dr C Robertson
	D Hirani	J Smith
	Dr K Juddoo	

IN ATTENDANCE: Z Williams (Minute 20.88)

APOLOGIES:	Professor D Anand (Co-Chair)	C Hendricks
	Professor P Catterall	D de Silva

20.85 ANNOUNCEMENTS

20.85.1 **Welcome:** The Co-chairs welcomed members to the meeting

20.85.2 **Apologies:** Apologies were noted as above.

20.85.3 **Declarations of interest:** There were no interests declared.

20.85.4 **Requests to discuss starred items and notification of AOB:** There were no starred items to discuss.

CO-CHAIR'S REPORT

20.85.5 Professor Hughes updated members on recent activities and progress made since the last meeting. They included:

- World in Westminster: Professor Hughes thanked everyone who participated in the event and the hard work put into making it a success. It will now continue to run as an annual event from next year.
- Colleagues continue to work on the wider equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) Quintin Hogg Trust (QHT) programme event including Westminster Conversations. Meeting due to take place with QHT next week to talk through the continuation bid, request for a new post in UWSU, and rollover of funding.

20.86 EDI STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN MID-YEAR REVIEW

Presented by the Head of Culture and Inclusion

20.86.1 Key highlights presented:

- First of two updates, next update due to be presented in September 2022.
- Most actions are in progress or completed, these are indicated by green or amber ratings.
- One action currently outstanding is the development and implementation of the new recruitment system.
- Actions have been mapped against the 15 commitments to identify synergies.

- 20.86.2 Comments:
- Good to see the progress of work being done, RAG status helps to keep a track of actions moving forward.
 - Equity is key moving forward. Encouraging colleague diversity at senior level will be a key focus for next year.
 - Concerns raised regarding current level of administrative support in the absence of an EDI Officer and impact of this on EDI work.
 - Recommendations made to look into temporary support in the interim.
 - Head of Learning and Development provided an update on the status of recruitment for the EDI Officer post following recent interviews.

20.86.3.1 **ACTION Head of Learning and Development** to work with the Co-Chairs and the Director of HR to investigate options for temporary support whilst recruitment for permanent post is ongoing.

20.87 REPORT AND SUPPORT PLATFORM UPDATE
Presented by Head of Culture and Inclusion

- 20.87.1 Update:
- Use of the platform has been very low. We have received two anonymous reports to date. This mirrors the progress of the student platform where engagement grew following further promotion and consistent communication.
 - There will be further communication via internal channels, Colleague Networks and Unions
 - We have updated the support article for colleagues, in light of guidance/input from Safety Health and Wellbeing on work related violence.

- 20.87.2 Comments:
- Concerns raised with disability colleague network co-chairs with regards to confidentiality with logging issues on the platform, this deterred the individual from reporting.
 - The Head of Culture and Inclusion confirmed and reassured members the platform is confidential and the system only reports on statistical data and numbers. Also, the data would not be shared with parties outside of the process.
 - A member reported the experience was similar with students when the platform was initially launched. Trust and engagement was established through regular communication and raising awareness.
 - Need to reinforce confidentiality and establish trust through clearer communication and regular promoting.
 - Difference between grievance and what's raised via report and support needs clarifying.

20.87.2.1 **ACTION Head of Culture and Inclusion** to continue find ways to promote and raise awareness of the platform; add a link to the platform to the Intranet on the HR page.

20.87.2.2 **ACTION Head of Culture and Inclusion** to consider formulating FAQs to address concerns regarding confidentiality and process and reassure colleagues on how information reported is used.

20.88 EDI COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE AND DISCUSSION
Presented by the Communications Officer (Colleagues)

- 20.88.1 Update:
- Presented an overview of internal communications team and role
 - Provided an overview of the marketing and promotional support provided to date to EDI communications and work including Black History Year, Black Lives Matter (BLM), EDI Strategy, EDI training and colleague networks.
 - EDI communications developments moving forward include developing templates to support future communications planning, clarifying responsibilities of ownership across Communications Officer, EDI Officer and EDI Programme Co-ordinators roles, and development of colleague network pages including dedicated branding.

- Current challenges included inconsistencies in formats, lack of join up with student communications, ensuring there's a balance with other colleague communications, having joined up platforms, trained content creators within Professional Services teams to support, and centralised support from the EDI Officer to support and coordinate.
- Recommendations were provided to improve EDI communications in the future. These included more planning to create stories of the journey, providing correct copies and images to ensure the communications team have the right information needed, and providing key dates for planning for the year i.e., BLM, World in Westminster – EDI Officer to coordinate when in post.

20.88.2

Comments:

- Professor Hughes highlighted the importance of correct copies to be provided.
- Members raised concerns around planning of exams and the importance of avoiding key religious events that disadvantage students and colleagues.
- A member confirmed a process is currently in place to consider this and highlighted it's difficult it can be difficult to accommodate in consideration of logistical planning and all religious events.
- EDI events tab will be added to the main website page to archive and reference all EDI events taken place to help showcase and share the journey of EDI work at the university. This work is currently in progress.
- Concerns were raised in relation to the communications getting through to the right people, this is reflecting attendance on events, a large number of colleagues are not engaging with EDI events.
- Colleagues' concerns have also been raised with network co-chairs regarding capacity to attend events – colleagues being told by line managers they need to make up hours or attend outside of work hours.

20.88.2.1

ACTION Director of Student and Academic Services to feedback concerns back to the Deputy Registrar (Student Administration) and report back to the Committee.

20.88.2.2

ACTION Co-Chair WoW Network (Sobia Razzaq) and the Unison EDI representative to send an outline of the concerns to Committee Co-Chairs, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (People and Culture) and the Head of Learning and Development to raise at next meeting of the Executive and Operational Leaders Forum (EOLF).

20.88.2.3

ACTION Head of Learning and Development to liaise with the EOLF Secretary to arrange for item to be added to the next EOLF meeting agenda.

20.89

KEY EDI ISSUES

Student Community Experiences of EDI

Presented by the UWSU President, UWSU Head of Student Voice and Engagement and the UWSU Belonging and Inclusion Advisor

20.89.1

Members presented on the student community experiences at the University and highlighted key issues and current challenges.

Key highlights presented were:

- Students value diversity at Westminster; a common theme emerges amongst students – they are choosing Westminster as the community because it is reflective of them.
- However, intention isn't linking with impact and local experiences shared by students.
- Case study examples were presented to committee members to reflect and consider.
- Key barriers/challenges highlighted included:
 - Lack of intercultural mixing amongst students and students feeling dismissed when raising the matter with their personal tutor.
 - Cultural barriers to support for students i.e., mental health
 - Experience of micro and macro aggressive behaviour in the classroom and committees

- 20.89.2 Committee members were asked to reflect on their own personal experiences and backgrounds, and further consider the following in terms of reflective practice:
- Consider where you could make individual adjustments to your practice of cultural competence and humility.
 - Consider how you could have conversations within your immediate team and share the learning from this article and presentation.
- 20.89.3 Members raised the following concerns in discussions:
- The current personal tutoring system is broken, not delivered consistently. Students do not have anywhere to go where they feel they can speak to a Personal Tutor.
 - “Multicultural but not inclusive” – students have been saying this for a long time. Cultural sensitivity is what we need at the university amongst colleagues and students.
 - We need colleagues to attend events and address the issue of lack of participation.
 - EDI training for personal tutors is needed to better support students.
 - Issues around micro aggressions and inappropriate behaviours need to be addressed.
- 20.89.4 Recommendations for consideration were made by members on the following:
- To further explore report and support (students) to assess what’s coming through and identify gaps.
 - To use case study scenarios/examples to raise awareness of issues and encourage participation and engagement with events and training.
- 20.89.4.1 **ACTION UWSU Head of Student Voice and Engagement** to add item for discussion to the ‘Blue Skies Thinking’ session agenda to discuss further.
- 20.89.4.2 **ACTION UWSU President** to consider integration of topic into future Westminster Conversation series.
- 20.89.4.3 **ACTION UWSU President and Professor Hughes** to discuss presentation to be delivered to University Executive Board for discussion.
- 20.89.4.4 **ACTION Director of Student and Academic Services** to review EDI training for Personal Tutors and raise at the next Senior Tutor network meeting.
- 20.89.4.5 **ACTION Co-Chairs, Pro Vice-Chancellor (People and Culture) and Head of Learning and Development** to discuss issues to be highlighted at the EOLF session in June.
- 20.90 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**
- 20.90.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2022 are an accurate record.
- 20.91 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**
- 20.91.1 1 June 2022
17 July 2022
- All meetings take place between 14.00 and 17.00 via Microsoft Teams
- 20.91.2 Six meetings will be scheduled for next academic year, dates to be advised.
- 20.92 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 20.92.1 Dr Robertson, Co-Chair of the Colleague Disability Network, provided members with an update on developments from the Network:

- The Network's first event was held this week and was well attended, received positive feedback, large attendance from graduates.
- Co-Chairs are currently working with HR colleagues to address issues highlighted through the recent launch survey on processes. Head of Culture and Inclusion and Head of Learning and Development have been supporting this work as part of a small working group. Co-Chairs are due to meet with the HR Advisory team in May to further explore issues with HR processes and find opportunities for improvement.
- Overall, the Network is making good progress so far with membership growing.