

Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

24 June 2020 at 14:00 – 16:00

- Present:** Prof Neal Juster (Convener, vice Principal Anton Muscatelli), Ms Bonnie Dean, Mrs Elise Gallagher (vice Mrs Christine Barr), Mrs Emma Gilmartin, Mr Scott Kirby, Mr Thomas McFerran, Dr Sylvia Morgan, Prof Jill Morrison, Miss Rachel Sandison, Ms Lesley Sutherland, Ms Mhairi Taylor
- Apologies:** Principal Anton Muscatelli, Mrs Christine Barr, Prof Muffy Calder, Prof Frank Coton, Dr David Duncan, Dr Robert Partridge, Prof Roibeard O Maolalaigh, Dr Helen Stoddart
- Attending:** Dr Katie Farrell, Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk), Ms Cassie Masterton, Miss Ella McCabe, Dr Dania Thomas, Prof Satnam Virdee, Miss Leanne Whiteside

1 Welcome, apologies and introductions

The Convener welcomed members and acknowledged the apologies received.

The Convener welcomed Ms Cassie Masterton and Prof Satnam Virdee, attending to speak to Agenda Item 5. He noted Dr Dania Thomas, the next JULC nominated Trades Union representative, and Miss Ella McCabe, SRC Vice President Student Support Elect, would be observing the full meeting. Members noted Miss Leanne Whiteside would join the meeting later for Agenda Item 6 along with Dr Katie Farrell, to observe that item.

Members noted R Sandison, Refugee and Asylum Seekers Champion, had another meeting to attend and the agenda has been arranged to allow for this.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – EDSC/20200319/Minutes1.0

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3 Matters arising from previous meeting – Paper 1

The Convener referred members to Paper 1, noting most were marked complete with written updates provided. He noted Actions 5 and 6 were ongoing.

4 Refugee and Asylum Seekers – Champion's update

R Sandison updated members on the recent activity relating to Refugees and Asylum Seekers:

- The University celebrated Refugee Week and World Refugee Day on social media.
<https://twitter.com/UofGlasgow/status/1274265230155984897?s=20>
<https://twitter.com/RachelSandison/status/1272486073189445632?s=20>
- Prof Alison Phipps delivered the 4th Annual UNESCO RILA lecture for World Refugee Day.
- University of Sanctuary will be running a session for Widening Participation colleagues.
- Creation of a working group with City of Sanctuary, to conduct a full audit of procedures and review our current offerings for asylum seekers and refugees. Details to be circulated.

ACTION: R Sandison

T McFerran stated, following the recent incidents in George Square, during a peaceful refugee rally, the SRC had received a number of enquiries from prospective students who were now worried for their safety. He asked if there were any plans to allay their concerns.

R Sandison confirmed colleagues in Widening Participation were working with Communications to put together a message. She confirmed the SRC could feed into that work and agreed to share the work so far.

ACTION: R Sandison

5 EHRC Tackling Racial Harassment Working Group/Race Equality Project Update – Paper 2

C Masterton took members through the content of Paper 2, which provided an overview of the key investigations completed to date, along with outcomes, conclusions and proposed next actions.

Conclusions so far:

- Severe under-reporting of harassment at UoG by both staff and students; with preliminary analysis showing:
 - lack of awareness of reporting mechanisms
 - lack of confidence in the University's ability to effectively deal with harassment
 - fear of victimisation, from both the University (in terms of how it would affect their studies/research/employment) and from fellow students/colleagues.
- Racial harassment needs greater focus within both Equality and Diversity Policy and Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
- Need for greater BAME representation in the UoG workforce, particularly in higher grade roles and University Services.
- Disparities in BAME recruitment require further investigation.
- Staff members interviewed stressed the need for better race related training and education and the establishment of an ethnic minority community.

Proposed Initial Actions:

- Direct and clear messaging, from the Principal and SMG down, that racial harassment in all forms is unacceptable, and the University takes an anti-racism approach to this work. A campaign focused on racial harassment would be highly beneficial.
- Formation of a BAME staff network to create a sense of community and support as well as influence decision making with regards to matters of race.
- Update the Equality and Diversity Policy and Dignity at Work and Study Policy.
- Review of the online reporting system for students to ensure it is fit for purpose and create a seamless link with other reporting mechanisms used to report racial harassment.
- Development of a staff online reporting tool to encourage staff to report racial harassment and to understand the scale of racial harassment in the professional context.
- Staff specific training on matters of racial diversity, such as recruitment staff, line managers and others responsible for dealing with racial harassment.
- Greater visibility of the reporting mechanisms and ensure students and staff know where to seek support and give confidence that their complaint will be dealt with effectively.

C Masterton highlighted many positive reactions and experiences had also been conveyed during the staff interviews but for many the impacts of their negative experiences, such as micro-aggressions/micro-incivilities, took a toll on their mental health, affected their feelings of safety and security and their self-confidence, which in turn negatively affected their career progression.

The Convener stated the report made for uncomfortable reading. Members agreed and fully endorsed the urgent need for effective and connected reporting systems to be put in place and for this work to continue with a fully visible and vocal anti-racist stance, noting proper resourcing from the University was required.

S Virdee welcomed members support for improved reporting solutions but reminded members incidents of racism are usually only reported as a last resort. He suggested even the best reporting tools can often only deal with individual incidents and individual perpetrators. In order to truly affect change, the University must address the culture which fosters such incidents in the first place.

L Sutherland highlighted, although the current focus is on harassment, all forms of racial discrimination must also be addressed. She suggested the wording of Conclusion (iv) on pg 5 be amended as, if taken out of context, it could be problematic.

ACTION: EDU

R Sandison and M Taylor noted L Sutherland's statement about her difficulty in finding useful support information in relation to harassment within the University's webpages and agreed to look at improving search results as well as the EDU's navigation pane for the E&D Policy. M Taylor also agreed to look at returning the Dignity at Work and Study Policy to its original name or renaming it altogether.

ACTION: R Sandison/EDU

S Virdee referred members to C Masterton's analysis of the increases seen in the University's BAME staff population, noting this has mainly been through international recruitment. Members noted the practice of aggregating staff into one category title, BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), as currently used by the University and many other organisations, masks the low levels of British-born People of Colour (POC) and the even smaller level of representation within that of people from Black Caribbean or African backgrounds. M Taylor agreed to look at this for future staff monitoring reports.

ACTION: EDU

M Taylor advised the EHRC Working Group would next meet on 30 June and would consider the full versions of the two interim reports. M Taylor advised she and S Virdee will continue this work over the summer as C Masterton was leaving the University to take up a new position. The next Ambitious Futures Graduate will join the EDU in the Autumn and their focus will be the implementation of any actions identified and agreed by the working group.

Members supported S Kirby's call to publish the resulting reports, thus ensuring the University is being open and transparent with both the staff and student communities on the scale of the issue and that it is committed to tackling it.

ACTION: EDU/Communications

E Gilmartin noted Aine Allardyce had recently drafted a campus campaign document on this area and requested Aine Allardyce, Communications Manager, is invited to join the EHRC Working Group to assist with planning any communications about the outputs.

ACTION: EDU

On behalf of members the Convener thanked C Masterton for the work done on this and wished her well in her new position.

6 QlikSense – Student Equality Data Tool – Presentation

Leanne Whiteside from Planning, Insight and Analytics took members through a demonstration of the new 'QlikSense' portal, developed to look at data, by declared protected characteristic, at key points on the student 'journey'. She highlighted the current portal is still in the final development stage.

L Whiteside advised the current data set is derived from HESA defined fields with further data, such as Admissions information, possibly being incorporated later.

Members noted the reporting will focus on:

- Active Students Registered
- Continuation
- Good Honours
- Positive Graduate Destinations

While reminding members this was not the final product, L Whiteside demonstrated the Good Honour data which showed a significant disparity in the attainment levels between Black and White students.

J Morrison noted students may not continue in their studies for a number of different reasons and asked if it was possible to look at data intersectionally. L Whiteside confirmed it should be possible; by incorporating data from this tool with other analysis tools. She advised it may be possible to add further data, such as Widening Participation information.

M Taylor confirmed she, L Whiteside and Robert Partridge will take this work forward with Prof Moira Fischbacher-Smith and the Learning and Teaching Committee's Retention and Success Committee. Members welcomed the new tool and agreed it should play a key role in future strategic decisions. The Convener requested EDSC receive an annual update, based on the analysis from QlikSense.

ACTION: EDU/PI&A

7 Protected Characteristics and COVID-19 Support

Members noted, in addition to the support provided by the University, EDU had curated external resources on COVID-19 related support for people who identify with the various protected characteristics.

M Taylor reported work had since moved to developing guidance for the return of staff and students to campus with amendments and updates made to the related Managers Guidance. She reported discussions had also been held with B Dean, S Virdee and the SRC on specific support for BAME staff and students.

Members noted the current situation may also have long term impact on women, in terms of reduced research publications and the possible effect on promotion/progression. E Gallagher confirmed the Senior Leadership Forum were already discussing how to mitigate and avoid inequalities.

In response to L Sutherland's question, E Gallagher confirmed transport/travel arrangements have also been included in the updated Managers Guidance, along with considerations on flexing the working day to avoid peak times on public transport.

8 Staff Items

8.1 – UCU Report ‘The Realities of Casualisation at the University of Glasgow’ – Paper 3

The Convener noted the UCU report had been discussed previously in a number of other committees and forums.

S Morgan advised she was not part of the UCU committee who produced the report and referred members to the papers coversheet which outlines UCU’s requests of EDSC. She stated, although the report is imperfect, it represents the first investigation into these complex issues which now merit further investigation by the University.

E Gallagher reassured members the University welcomed the report and had already agreed, at the report’s initial launch, to work with UCU on proposals 1, 3 & 6; confirming a working group had already been formed to take this work forward.

E Gallagher committed to undertake an equality impact assessment on fixed term contracts, as per proposal 5, noting the University already retains 80% of staff when they come to the end of a fixed term contract. She conceded the working group would first need to undertake some data analysis and would prepare a report which would then be shared with EDSC.

ACTION: E Gallagher/EDU

8.2 – Athena SWAN progress update – Paper 3

J Morrison provided members with an overview of the 2019/2020 Athena SWAN cycle.

November 2019 Submissions Results

Two successful **Bronze** awards for School of Critical Studies and School of Modern Languages and Cultures. The School of Culture and Creative Arts are appealing an unsuccessful Bronze submission.

Three successful **Silver** awards for Institute of Biodiversity, Animal Health and Comparative Medicine; Institute of Immunity, Infection and Inflammation and School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing. The James Watt School of Engineering were unsuccessful in their Silver submission but will be reapplying.

May 2020 Submissions

University’s Institutional Award – Silver

Institute of Molecular, Cell and Systems Biology – Silver

Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology and School of Psychology – Silver (joint)

November 2020 Submissions expect to submit

School of Computing Science – applying for upgraded Bronze

James Watt School of Engineering – re-applying for Silver

J Morrison paid tribute to Dr Katie Farrell, who continued to provide support to all the Schools and Research Institutes while also working on the Institutional Silver submission.

Members noted the Advance HE review of the Athena SWAN Charter is ongoing, following the publication of the Steering Group’s report and recommendations.

9 Student Items

The Convener noted there were no items for discussion that had not already been discussed here or at the various Equality Groups.

10 Digital Accessibility Regulations

M Taylor advised the University had approved the purchase of a new software package, Blackboard Ally, which will integrate with Moodle. This provides course owners with details of how accessible their content is and if required, guidance on making it more accessible. For students it will automatically provide content in a range of alternative formats, on request.

T McFerran stated the purchase of Blackboard Ally is a massive step forward for the University and advised the SRC, as part of the working group, will be assisting with the ongoing communications plan by developing a video which will go out to all staff, explaining the regulations, what they mean in terms of teaching materials and the benefits to all students of making course content as accessible as possible.

M Taylor noted, along with a dedicated communication plan, the existing [Digital Accessibility Guidance](#) webpages will continue to be developed over the summer, in advance of the main regulations implementation in September.

11 Equality Champions Updates

11.1 – Religion and Belief

The Convener reported the new University Chaplain, Rev Carolyn Kelly, had now arrived and taken up their role.

11.2 – Gender

J Morrison reported the following updates and activities:

- University's Gender Based Violence Working Group met recently.
- University has signposted to domestic abuse resources, as there was an expectation of an increase in incidents during lockdown.
- Scottish Funding Council have delayed the reporting on the Institutional Gender Action Plan (iGAP). It is expected this will become more linked to the Outcome Agreements but we have yet to be advised of any new date for reporting.

11.3 – Race

B Dean and S Kirby advised members of the proposal, which has backing from the SRC and both the School of Geographical and Earth Sciences and the School of Humanities, to rename the Gregory Building, named for Professor John W Gregory, who had publicly held racist views.

S Kirby agreed to circulate the renaming proposal noting, with the building's proximity to the new James McCune Smith Learning Hub, there was a need for action before the beginning of the new academic session.

ACTION: SRC

Clerk's Note: Dr David Duncan, Chair of the Renaming Committee, confirmed the University has committed to renaming the building.

11.4 – Age, Disability and LGBT+

M Taylor noted she was not aware of any recent work or reports specifically relating to Age.

M Taylor reported on behalf of R O Maolalaigh (LGBT+):

- The LGBT+ Network are, following agreement with External Relations, working with the University Gift Shop to produce branded rainbow lanyards.
- The SRC and student societies hosted a full programme of virtual/online events during June as Pride Month.

- The LGBT+ Network hosted a virtual research sharing event.
- The SRC produced a virtual Pride march video, which was shared across social media feeds.

M Taylor reported on behalf of F Coton (Disability):

- Disability Service provided the Disability Equality Group (DEG) with statistics which showed, over a 3 and half year period, only 7 of the 133 people who were referred to an Educational Psychologist were not found to have a Specific Learning Difficulty (SLD). Those assessed as not having a SLD then have to bear the full cost of the assessment (£400). Given the small numbers involved and the financial impact for the students, DEG has asked Student Services to discuss with Registry if there is a way to mitigate the costs involved.
- Estates are undertaking a feasibility study for the creation of a much needed accessible toilet facility in the Committee Rooms area of the main building.
- DEG fed back to the Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee on the proposed introduction of a policy on Assistance Dogs and Dogs on Campus; DEG's preference was to have strong guidance based on individual risk assessments, rather a strict policy.

11.5 – Mental Health – Paper 4

Members noted the update provided in advance by Dr D Duncan.

12 Any Other Business

12.1 – Sanitary Products

T McFerran advised due to the current COVID restrictions, Estates and Student Services are looking at a way to provide students with free sanitary products via an online order. It is hoped this will become the normal process for supply and distribution.

12.2 – Social Media Update

E Gilmartin advised members the Social Media team will be running extensive virtual celebrations and stories from the 2020 graduates. She noted, as part of the many stories, one will be by a student who was sexually assaulted and has used her experience to support other survivors – this will be accompanied by suitable content warnings.

12.3 – Vote of Thanks

Members echoed the Convener's thanks to S Kirby and T McFerran for their commitment to promoting equality and inclusion during their time as SRC President and SRC Vice President Student Support and wished them both well for the future.

Members noted S Morgan was stepping down from her role on EDSC, with D Thomas taking over the role in the next academic session.

13 Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed