



## **EDI COMMITTEE**

### **Open Minutes Of the meeting held on Thursday 6 October 2022 on MS Teams**

#### **Present:**

Professor Nick Braisby (Vice Chancellor [Chair])  
Charlotte Stewart (Inclusion, Diversity and Disability Manager [Deputy Chair])  
Karla Inniss (HRBP - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [Secretary])  
Rachael Cornwall (Director of Human Resources)  
Sarah Jackson (Students' Union HR & Development Manager)  
Louise Harvey (Head of Communications)  
Professor Rachel Cragg (Pro Vice-Chancellor and Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team Chair)  
Anthony Murphy (Independent Member of Council)  
Kavita Panwar Seth (School of Business and Law)  
Dr Paulette Morris (PSE Representative)  
Katie Collins (PSE Representative)  
Dr Simon Lee-Price (UCU Representative)  
Hilary Mullen (UCU Representative)  
Associate Professor Margaret Rioga (BAME Steering Group Chair)  
Jess Bradbury (Student Union: Vice President Student Involvement)  
Dr Ben Brabon (Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement)  
Jill Austen (Student Wellbeing and Engagement Manager (Designated Safeguarding))  
Annice Thomas (Safeguarding Officer)  
Anna Buckett (Head of Policy and Strategy)  
Shilpa Manek (Minute Secretary)

## **16. Welcome / Apologies for Absence**

16.1 The Chair welcomed Committee Members to the meeting and noted the apologies from independent Council member Anthony Murphy, UNISON representative, Oliver Facey, PSE representative, Dr Paulette Morris and Pia Carnegie, School of Business and Law. The Chair welcomed Kavita Panwar Seth who was for substituting for Pia Carnegie.

## **17. Declaration of conflicts of interest**

17.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

## **18. Terms of Reference/Membership**

18.1 A discussion took place about the diversity of the membership of the Committee. The Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner, Karla Inniss, informed the Committee that an invitation to the Committee had been extended to others and there may be a change of the PSE representative. It was also highlighted that the union representatives also represented different groups.

18.2 The UCU representative in attendance, Dr Carlo Lusuardi, requested that he alternated with Hilary Mullen to attend committee meetings and the Chair was in agreement with this suggestion.

18.3 The Director of Human Resources (HR) Rachael Cornwall commented that the balance of the committee was very female, and this needed to be balanced. Committee members were also reminded that as members of the committee, the terms of reference needed to be absorbed and promoted with the community.

18.4 The Committee approved the Terms of Reference and Membership.

## **19. Minutes of the previous meeting**

19.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record subject to gender-based titles being removed.

## **20. Matters Arising/Status of Actions**

20.1 There were three ongoing actions which were in hand and in the process of being completed and therefore the Committee agreed that they be taken off the action table. The Committee needed to be further promoted.

**ACTION: Director of Human Resources/Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner**

## **21. Chair's Actions Report**

21.1 The Chair commented on suicide risk and the UUK further guidance on how to manage the risk. It was suggested in the guidance that details be taken of a trusted person who could be contacted in a crisis. The Chair proposed that in future Health and Wellbeing for students and staff might sit with the Committee. The following points were considered:

- EDI committee should be about tackling inequality across the spectrum, health and wellbeing should sit under the Health & Safety Committee.
- health and wellbeing should not sit under the EDI Committee or the H & S Committee. In a recent audit that had taken place, a recommendation had been made to create a Safeguarding Committee and then it would be part of that Committee's remit.
- There had been a Health and Wellbeing working group, but it was having the same discussions as the EDI Committee, so the working group was disbanded.
- If a new Committee was set up, the terms of reference would need to be very clear to avoid duplication.
- There were many working groups across DfSS and a new one could be created to consider the strategic oversight and the operational side which could then report back to the EDI Committee.

21.2 The Chair concluded that further discussion on this issue was needed.

#### **ACTION: VC**

## **22. Revised Equality Approach**

22.1 The Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner presented the paper to the Committee. The paper had been presented to the Committee at the previous meeting and had asked for a more succinct approach as there was a lot of detail. The following points were made by the Committee:

- The revised equality approach was excellent and very thorough.
- Priority 3 on page 23 needed to relate back to the KPI's in Thrive 2028.
- There were no timescales in the document showing what was being done and by when.
- The Committee all agreed that communication was key, and it was ok not to know and ask.
- The Communications team was fully supportive of the revised Equality Approach.
- The Approach was a corporate 'One University' approach, involving collaborative working with the Students' Union and BNU partnerships.

22.2 The Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner commented that the delivery of the document would be agreed by working closely with UMG who would agree the next steps. The annual report would be presented to the EDI Committee.

22.3 The Chair commented that very good progress had been made and now the aim was to develop it as an explicit strategy with clear objectives. The revised Approach would be presented to UMG for information and to consider how best to implement it approval.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner**

22.4 The Committee approved the revised Equality Approach, which could now be shared with UMG..

### **23. Respect, Fairness and Inclusion Policy (Formally Dignity at Work Policy)**

23.1 The Committee received a paper from the Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner outlining the amendments made to the Respect, Fairness and Inclusion Policy. The Committee were presented with the background and the key changes.

23.2 The main comments that came from the discussion of the Committee included looking again at paragraph 5 and making it clearer; to add further detail to paragraph 12 on who should go to whom, for example, students should go to the SU and staff to HR; and to add more context to the purpose explaining why this policy was so important, who it applied to and where, e.g., would it be just on campus or outside too and was it for Partners.

23.3 The Committee recommended the amended policy should proceed to UMG for approval.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner**

### **24. Islamophobia Definition**

24.0 The Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner informed the Committee that the draft definition in paragraph 6 had been tailored specifically for BNU after working with the community and consulting with experts to understand how best to define and challenge islamophobia.

24.1 The UCU Representative commented that the regional representative of UCU had been really impressed with the BNU definition of Islamophobia and that they had requested a presentation at a national level, thus endorsing BNU's approach as sector leading.

24.2 The Chair suggested that the term 'ethnocentric' should be unpacked and described in more accessible language, since the definition would be a working document that might be used and referred to by any of our students or staff.

24.3 The Committee were very supportive of the tailored definition and approved it and recommended to Senate for endorsement, subject to the above amendment.

24.4 Special thanks were given to all that assisted including the two Alumni and the local activists who had given up their time to assist. The Chair would like to thank the alumni personally by writing to them, and asked that he be provided with their contact details.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner and Chair**

## **25. Inclusion Passport/Card**

25.1 The Inclusion, Diversity and Disability Manager presented an implementation plan for the inclusion passport/card. It was reported that the inclusion card was being designed and it would be beneficial to issue the card and passport together if it was approved as it tied in with other policies. The implementation plan suggests that this be implemented with other work going on to highlight engagement. It was suggested that the Students' Union be involved with the plan and students asked about implementation and the name. The Students' Union could assist with training.

25.2 The workload issues for staff were highlighted but reassurance was given that the training would be combined with the Reasonable Adjustments Assessments training where there would be a few live sessions that would be recorded so staff could attend or watch later. There would also be a drop-in session with the Inclusion, Diversity and Disability Manager on the first Wednesday of each month.

25.3 The Committee approved the implementation plan and asked that it receive a further report in semester 2 providing an update on the progress and success of the implementation.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner**

## **26. Students' Union EDI Committee Update**

26.1 The Committee received a summary of work of the Students' Union EDI Committee for 2021-2022 and the priorities for 2022-2023. Some of the points that were highlighted included:

- If the equality of staff in the SU had been monitored.

- How was the frequency of engagement measured in relation to demographic proportions?
- What was the SU doing to get the high level of satisfaction?
- What plans were made for Black History Month?

26.2 It was reported that the recruitment of staff and diversity was monitored, and this could be reported in future updates and the frequency of data was recorded on a departmental basis every month.

26.3 The Committee noted the update.

## **27. UUK Publication #ClosingTheGap: three years on, July 2022**

27.1 The Committee received the publication and were pleased to see the checklist being used. It was recommended that the checklist be sent to Heads of School or Directors of Education to set direction and appropriately align with the work of the Quality Enhancement Committee.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner**

27.2 The Committee noted the report.

## **28. UUK Publication Changing the culture: sharing personal data in harassment cases, July 2022**

28.1 The HR Director presented a paper to the Committee the UUK report - changing the culture: sharing personal data in harassment cases. There was both a strategic and practical guide available and several principles. It was stated that information about outcomes should be shared with reporting parties, wherever possible to do so, GDPR could no longer be the barrier to share information.

28.2 The Chair commented that policies needed to be updated to include the data sharing and risk assessment process and it was asked what the impact would be if BNU did not share.

**ACTION: Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity (EDI) HR Business Partner, HR Director, Inclusion, Diversity and Disability Manager**

28.4 The Committee noted the report.

## **29. UUK Publication Spiking: What Universities can do**

29.1 The Committee received the UUK report for drink spiking prevention from the Safeguarding Officer. The team were working closely with the Students' Union and developing relations with Thames

Valley Police (TVP). The aim was to raise awareness to keep students safe and provide information on types of spiking and actions to take. It was reported that Thames Valley Police were content that we were doing all that we could, especially during freshers' week. Work was continuing on an online reporting form and further work was in progress on the reporting side. A follow up meeting was planned with TVP. The SU requested that they be involved along with the bar managers to any follow-up meetings.

**ACTION: Safeguarding Officer**

29.2 The Chair commented that reporting was the key issue, and more communication was needed. The Safeguarding Officer reported that posters were being designed on prevention that TVP were assisting with. Work was also being done with the wider community to keep all safe. The Chair requested an update at the next meeting.

**ACTION: Safeguarding Officer**

29.3 The Committee noted the report.

### **30. Inclusion and Accessibility Hallmark with respect to C23**

30.1 The Committee were presented with the report for Curriculum 23: Inclusion & Accessible Hallmark from the Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement. It was reported that the validation process was a three-stage quality assurance and enhancement process informed by critical and constructive dialogue. The following questions were asked by the Committee:

- To what extent were the principles working, was there any feedback?
- There was reference to the EDI team, who was this reference of?
- The checklists were very useful but could decolonised ones also be used?
- What stage was the Equality Impact Assessment in the process?
- Could be linked better to race equality.

These would be responded to at the next meeting as the Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement had to leave the meeting.

**ACTION: Ben Brabon**

30.2 The Committee noted the report.

### **31. Access and Participation Plan**

31.1 The Committee received a report on the Access and Participation Plan (APP). It was reported that the APP had been in place for four years. All HEIs had been asked to revise the plan as a result of the new government priorities.

31.2 The OfS APP Consultation had been released where there was more of a risk-based approach. The Consultation needed to be considered in detail at next meeting.

**ACTION: Head of Policy and Strategy/Secretariat**

31.3 The brief update was noted by the Committee.

## **32. Academic Promotion Round**

32.1 The Director of HR presented the report to the Committee. The report provided a summary of career development and promotions broken down into equality profiles. The report made some recommendations.

32.2 The Chair asked if the correct comparisons were being made and was encouraged by the panel comments. The Chair suggested that a three-four-year average be considered for groups such as LGBTQ+ where numbers were low when reported on an annual basis.

**ACTION: Director of HR**

32.3 The Committee noted the report

## **33. Items for next meeting**

33.1 Items that were suggested for the next meeting by the Committee members included:

- APP Consultation from OfS.
- Update on the progress being made on Drink Spiking Prevention.
- Implementation on the Inclusion passport.
- An update from Communications.
- C23 progress on Inclusive and Accessible Hallmark.
- Update on suicide prevention.

## **34. Date of next meeting**

34.1 The Committee noted the dates of the next meetings.