Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

Minutes of EDSC meeting held on 5 December 2016
Principal’s Meeting Room, Level 4, Gilbert Scott Building

Present: Principal Anton Muscatelli (Convener), Prof Anne Anderson, Mrs Christine Barr, Prof John Briggs, Prof Frank Coton, Prof Neal Juster, Mrs Margaret-Ann McParland, Mr David Newall, Miss Erin Ross, Miss Rachel Sandison, Ms Lesley Sutherland, Mhairi Taylor

Apologies: Prof James Conroy, Mr Ameer Ibrahim, Mrs Christine Lowther, Dr Helen Stoddart

Attending: Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk)

1 Welcome and Apologies
The Convener welcomed E Ross, in her new role as SRC VP Student Support and noted the new SRC President had sent his apologies. The Convener noted a number of other apologies.

The Convener advised a number of members would be attending later or had to leave early for other University business and the agenda would be reordered accordingly.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – EDSC/20160525/Minutes1.0
The minutes were approved as an accurate record, subject to the correction of a formatting error.

ACTION: EDU

3 Matters arising from meeting held on 25 May 2016 – Paper 1
Action Point 1 – Staff Equality Monitoring
M Taylor reported on the work undertaken to try to address low disclosure rates. This included an email sent to all staff who had either not provided any disability or ethnicity information or had chosen the ‘Prefer not to say’ option in the HR System, along with an article in both the normal digital and the hardcopy version of Campus e-News targeting Operational staff. A small increase in completion rates had been seen.

Action Point 3 – Historic maternity leave and pension contributions
M Taylor reported she and K Adams, who had been covering her role whilst on maternity leave, had previously requested the information from Jim Ross, Head of Pay and Pensions. However, this information is yet to be received. C Barr agreed to assist with securing a response.

ACTION: EDU/C Barr

Action Point 5 – Gender representation on Senate and Court
J Briggs reported the proposed new structure of the Council of Senate would result in 40% female membership and whilst progress had been made, there are still some positions where difficulties achieving a gender balance may still be experienced. These issues are being looked at by the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 Working Group and the recently established Court-Senate Working Group.

D Newall reported, following recommendation from the Court Governance Working Group, Court had made a commitment to gender balance but this relied on the correct mechanisms to be in
place to achieve this. He reminded members some positions are not decided by Court itself. For example, those positions held by the Students’ Representative Council (SRC) may sometimes not allow for a gender balance. L Sutherland requested the SRC look at how best to ensure a gender balance for their two roles on Court.

**ACTION: SRC**

Members welcomed the positive steps taken by both Senate and Court on this.

**Action Point 10 – Race Equality in Sports Clubs and Student Unions**

M Taylor reported she had raised the lack of diversity shown in the University sports clubs images displayed in the Stevenson Building with Euan Smith, Director of University of Glasgow Sport. J Briggs noted there are a number of sports clubs which have diverse or predominantly BME students but these had not been chosen for display. M Taylor noted Sports and GUSA had agreed this taken into consideration for future visual displays.

### 4 Annual Review of EDSC Terms of Reference and Membership – Paper 2

Members agreed to amend the wording within the Membership section relating to the gender balance of the membership. This should be amended to 40% of either gender as the minimum.

**ACTION: EDU**

Members confirmed the Role and Remit sections, as shown in Paper 2, continues to be appropriate but agreed this would be reviewed again next year, once more is known about the requirements in relation to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Gender Action Plan.

**ACTION: EDU**

### 5 2016 Staff Survey Results – E&D Perspective - Paper 3a & 3b

M Taylor referred members to Paper 3a which provided an overview of the main University overall results, together with a breakdown by respondents who declared their protected characteristics, by key performance questions and areas of concern.

M Taylor reminded members figures shown in Paper 3b highlighted in red denotes a negative difference from the University’s overall results by 10% or more, however there may still have been an improvement since 2014. She confirmed all the Equality Groups had been presented with their own breakdown of results.

Members noted:
- 2016 survey had a 68% response; up 8% on 2014
- Whilst there had been an overall improvement in responses as a whole, Disabled staff were the most dissatisfied, across all the Protected Characteristics, with their experience of the University as an employer. This mirrored the results from 2014 survey
- An increase in awareness of the Dignity at Work and Study Policy (up by 27%)

M Taylor reminded members following the 2014 results she, F Coton and Gillian Shaw, HR Manager in College of Arts, had conducted Focus Groups with Disabled staff. This revealed the lack of effective support mechanisms. She advised a funding bid for a new case officer post to support Disabled staff had been unsuccessful, due to competing priorities at the time, however work to gather evidence base and to review the full end to end process, from application, recruitment to in work support, continues to allow this as a possible solution to be revisited.

M Taylor advised other Russell Group institutions had reported similar survey results for Disabled staff. Members welcomed the proposals to address the issues and asked for a full report of the current situation for support, processes and planned activities at the next EDSC meeting.

**ACTION: EDU/F Coton**
J Briggs reflected on the negative responses from BME staff relating to whether the University respects people regardless of their ethnicity and suggested this may in part be as a consequence of a lack of BME role models in senior management positions across the University.

Members commented on the increase in the numbers of staff choosing the ‘Prefer not to say’ option when completing their equality information. M Taylor stated she was comfortable with people choosing this option over not providing information at all but acknowledged there was some way to go with alleviating concerns over the uses made of such personal information.

In order to address staff concerns over this, members supported the suggestion of creating a short interview piece for Campus e-News to explain the uses made of the information, the benefits from disclosing and the security of the information when provided.

**ACTION: EDU/CB/Equality Champions**

**6 Athena SWAN Charter Update – Awards Held and Timeline – Paper 7**

M Taylor referred members to Paper 7 and highlighted the recent 100% success rate for the April 2016 submission round, which saw the University renew its Bronze award, under the new extended Charter, and saw 6 departmental awards; two at Silver award status.

M Taylor advised the University is now one of the first universities to have successfully gone through the expanded institutional submission process, and other institutions had approached EDU for guidance and sight of our application.

Members congratulated the EDU, the Gender Equality Steering Group and the individual ‘departmental’ Self-Assessment Teams and noted the next step for the Institutional award would be to submit an application for a Silver award. This would ensure momentum and the related activity across the University is kept high on agendas.

It was also noted the College of MVLS had convened their own internal review committee, with senior College management membership. This has helped to increase the strategic positioning of Athena SWAN within the College and created a clear review process for their prospective applications.

**7 Equality Champions – Current Developments/Updates**

**7.1 Gender Equality**

A Anderson reminded members of the University’s KPI to grow the proportion of women in senior managerial, professional and professorial roles to 33% by 2020 and referred members to page 28 of Paper 4 (Staff Equality Monitoring Report) which showed an encouraging and steady increase in this area; currently shown as 26.9%. She suggested the 33% target was achievable given the ongoing Athena SWAN agenda, through the range of leadership development programmes and promotions support and guidance.

A Anderson advised members she expected the Higher Education sector may be expected to approach the SFC’s Gender Action Plan in a similar way to the targets and reporting for Widening Participation. Whilst she noted the proposed targets may prove challenging for a number of subject areas, where there are stark gender imbalances in the student populations, she highlighted a recent positive meeting held with the School of Education on possible approaches for tackling gender stereotyping in subject areas.
7.2 Disability Equality
F Coton noted the disability related staff survey results had already been discussed earlier in this meeting and confirmed he would be directly involved in further work to address the concerns raised by these results.

He advised members the Disability Equality Group had requested he raise their concerns regarding the lack of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) being undertaking at the initial stages when introducing new or revising policies, commissioning new projects, and when new procedures, services or ‘products’ are introduced. He cited a number of recent examples where the lack of EIAs had meant Disabled students or staff being initially disadvantaged. He called on EDSC members on an ongoing basis to challenge any such projects in their own area to ensure EIAs are or have been undertaken.

**ACTION: All**

M Taylor agreed more could be done to assist committee chairs, those preparing committee papers on equality implications, and for Heads of Colleges and Services and their managers on the requirements to undertake EIAs.

**ACTION: EDU**

The Convener agreed this should be raised at an upcoming Principal’s Advisory Group (PAG) meeting. He requested a paper with both good and bad examples which explore the consequences for students and staff.

**ACTION: Convener/F Coton/N Juster**

7.3 Race Equality and Refugee Equality
J Briggs advised members the Race Equality Group had recently reviewed the only successful submission to the last round of the Race Equality Chartermark. He advised a huge amount of student and staff data and analysis would be required before a University of Glasgow submission could be contemplated.

M Taylor advised members of the very low participation rate for this last submission round and the subsequent low success rate, with only Abertay University received an award.

J Briggs was pleased to advise members one of the eight refugee students supported by the University had recently graduated. He advised he was chairing a group with the Scottish Refugee Council to develop and take forward a sector-wide response on how best to support refugee students.

R Sandison advised she had recently attended the Universities Scotland International Committee and advised support, or the lack of it, for refugee students is seen as an important issue for the Scottish HE sector and suggested now would be an ideal opportunity to fully review what support the University has in place.

**ACTION: J Briggs**

7.4 Religion and Belief Equality
N Juster advised members a decision had been made to suspend the equality group due to a lack of meaningful agenda items. He reassured members activity in this area continued and confirmed working groups would be convened to look at specific issues.

He advised he had recently held an open meeting for all the SRC affiliated faith societies and planning work had begun to address concerns/issues around Ramadan and Eid celebrations falling during examination periods.
M Taylor agreed with J Briggs comments on the sensitive and challenging nature of this work and confirmed she would be meeting with Senate Office, Registry and the Chaplaincy in early 2017 to agree a way forward.

**ACTION: EDU**

7.5 Sexual Orientation Equality

D Newall advised members at the last meeting of the Sexual Orientation Equality Group it was agreed the group’s name should be changed to reflect the full nature of the group’s business and the broader range of agenda items. The group is now known as the Gender and Sexual Diversity Group. E Ross advised the SRC’s related welfare officer title had also been changed to reflect the new name.

D Newall advised the new process which makes it easier for transitioning students to change their name on the University’s systems had been very well received by both students and staff supporting them in Schools and Services.

D Newall highlighted and welcomed the steady increase in the percentage of staff choosing to disclose their sexual orientation, both within the HR system, as shown in Paper 4 (Staff Equality Monitoring Report) and within the 2016 Staff Survey; 2.6% and 4.7% respectively.

7.6 Age Equality

M Taylor advised she and J Conroy had twice met with the President of the Mature Students’ Association (MSA) to discuss a number of issues. Another meeting is planned for February 2017, which the QMU’s President will also attend.

She noted the University’s significantly low retention rates for mature students would be considered within the SFC Outcome Agreement. Members acknowledged mature students’ routes into, and experience of, Higher Education vastly differ from those entering directly from secondary education.

8 Staff Equality Monitoring Report 2015-16 – Paper 4

M Taylor presented the 5th annual staff monitoring report. M Taylor highlighted the primary role of this report was to provide staff data for the purposes of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). She drew member’s attention to the Executive Summary and noted the report contained information on Maternity Leave and Regrading for the first time.

Members noted low BME applicant success rate had also been seen in the four previous reports and agreed there was now a real need to fully review at what points in the application/interview process BME applicants fail. M Taylor confirmed future work will involve looking at the ethnicity and recruitment success rates. C Barr advised some initial monitoring work has been done which showed the majority of unsuccessful BME applicants failed to meet the essential criteria within job specifications and as such dropped out at the initial stages.

J Briggs requested a change to the Executive Summary section relating to the Scottish and Glasgow BME population figures. M Taylor confirmed she make contact to agree the wording.

**ACTION: EDU**

9 Equality and Diversity Essentials Training Statistics – Paper 5

Members noted the updated statistics/completion rates across the University provided by EDU in Paper 5 and welcomed the new process now in place for obtaining this information. M Taylor
confirmed, following previous discussions at EDSC, all categories of staff contract types were included in these figures.

Members noted the figures showed some areas needed to do more work to increase their completion rates. Members discussed the low completion rates for newly appointed staff, methods employed in some areas for encouraging completions and the difficulties in ensuring part time and fractional contract staff undertake the training.

C Barr stated the University wanted to instil a values base for all its staff. As Top-up Tutors and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) have regular direct contact with students, these groups should be required to undertake the training. F Coton echoed this; citing feedback from recent student surveys which showed the need to better equip and prepare all Tutors and GTAs for their roles.

M Taylor advised previous completion information had been cascaded through Heads of School, Directors of Institute and Heads of Service and suggested this method, along with a strong message of support from senior management, should continue. D Newall confirmed he would be happy to help draft a suitable email.

ACTION: EDU/D Newall

10 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and Equality Outcomes Consultation – Paper 6

M Taylor presented Paper 6 which outlined the University’s requirements in relation to the PSED, the consultation process already undertaken and work still required to meet these.

M Taylor notified members of the additional requirement to publish statements on equal pay relating to race and disability, in addition to the current reporting on gender.

In response to M Taylor’s request for comments on the themes emerging from the consultation process, F Coton suggested she contact Dr Jack Aitken, Director of Senate Office to discuss the current work being done on the curriculum and how this could be reflected in the PSED outputs.

ACTION: EDU

Members were requested to direct any further comments or suggestions on Paper 6 to EDU.

ACTION: All

11 Items for Information

11.1 – Equality related awards

M Taylor advised members the University’s FullStop campaign had been shortlisted for three different awards (Herald Diversity Awards, HEIST Internal Campaign and CIPR’s Scotland Pride Awards) and had won a Silver award at the CIPR event in October.

M Taylor also reported Dr Charlotte McCarroll had won 2 separate diversity related awards earlier this year; Herald Diversity Hero of the Year and the Herald Society’s Worker of the Year award.

Members congratulated the EDU and Dr McCarroll.

12 Any Other Business

No other business was raised and the meeting was closed.

13 Date of Next Meeting

28 February 2016 at 14:00 – 16:00, Melville Room