



### Equality and Diversity Strategy Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on 13 March 2023 at 10:00

Zoom Meeting

- Present:** Prof Sir Anton Muscatelli (Convener), Mrs Christine Barr, Prof Sara Carter, Prof Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Ms Kirsteen Fraser, Mrs Emma Gilmartin, Ms Uzma Khan, Prof Iain McInnes, Dr June Milligan, Ms Hailie Pentleton-Owens, Miss Rachel Sandison, Ms Mhairi Taylor
- Apologies:** Prof Muffy Calder, Dr David Duncan, Dr Robert Partridge, Ms Rinna Vare
- Attending:** Dr Katie Farrell, Prof Jo Gill, Mrs Janell Kelly (clerk), Dr Nighet Riaz

#### Welcome and apologies

The Convener welcomed existing and new members and acknowledged the apologies received. He advised Prof Gill, along with Dr Farrell and Dr Riaz from the Equality and Diversity Unit, were observing the meeting.

#### 1. Minutes of the previous meeting – EDSC/20221125/Minutes 1.0

The minutes were approved.

#### 2. Matters arising – Paper 1

Members acknowledged several actions had not yet progressed. The following updates were provided.

##### Action 1 - Dignity at Work and Study Policy

M Taylor advised discussions have commenced with Student Conduct and other colleagues on whether any changes to the Policy will be required following the recommendations from the Ross Report. She confirmed if any changes were required, EDSC would receive details of those at the June meeting.

**ACTION: EDU**

##### Action 3 – Ross Report

Members noted this would be discussed as an agenda item later in this meeting.

##### Action 4 - Wellbeing Framework for Students

M Taylor noted R Partridge had sent apologies and no update was made available.

##### Action 5 - Non-academic student misconduct

M Taylor noted some progress has been made on this which would be covered within the Ross Report Update item later in the agenda but had not further update from R Partridge.

The Convener asked that R Partridge be requested to provide a written update on both these actions. EDU to circulate to members, once received.

**ACTION: R Partridge/EDU**

Action 7 – Evidentiary ‘grey areas’ in relation to disciplinary cases

K Fraser will raise with JULC colleagues what guidance around evidentiary ‘grey areas’ in relation to disciplinary cases the Unions would like.

**ACTION: K Fraser**

Actions 8 & 9 – Mainstreaming Report and SFC’s ‘Persistent Inequalities’

M Taylor confirmed both these items would be covered later in the agenda.

The Convener requested D Duncan be requested to provide a written update for Action Point 2. EDU to circulate to members, once received.

**ACTION: D Duncan/EDU**

The Convener requested a change in the agenda in order, to allow for the Equality Champion’s updates next.

### **3. Equality Champions Updates**

#### **3.1 Race**

U Khan advised Police Scotland, which had recently declared itself as an anti-racist organisation, had been hosted by the University as they wished to learn from the University’s ‘Together Against Racism’ campaign. Members noted a further session may held with Police Scotland’s Senior Chief Constables.

Members welcomed the recent work to produce a ‘Voices for Change’ video with three Student Union Presidents where they spoke of their own reactions to the campaign and their positive feedback on it.

#### **3.2 Religion and Belief**

I McInnes reported on recent a successful visit by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland. He advised discussions continue with the Glasgow University Muslim Students Association (GUMSA) around suitable accommodation for Friday prayers, in particular during Ramadan; these remain positive.

I McInnes noted the University Chaplain, Dr Rev Carolyn Kelly, has put forward a proposal on how the Chaplaincy can play a wider role across the whole University community. He noted the proposal would be discussed with both Prof Martin Hendry, Clerk of Senate and C Barr and, if appropriate, would bring this to the next EDSC meeting.

K Fraser asked what support Chaplaincy staff and Honorary Chaplains had access to, given the sensitive and distressing situations they deal with on a regular basis. C Barr offered to meet with K Fraser to confirm all the support available to those in Chaplaincy.

#### **3.3 Age**

M Taylor reported the SFC’s ‘Tackling Persistent Inequalities Together’ report (Paper 4) includes a National Outcome for older/mature students. The University will investigate whether there is a need to implement any actions to address this.

#### **3.4 Disability**

C Barr reported it had been a very busy period since the last meeting. She highlighted the Heads of School Forum had hosted a ‘Hidden Disability’ session, where disabled colleagues shared their lived experiences in the workplace. Members noted the event was so well received, a further event is planned for a wider

audience. C Barr reported work continues following completion of focus groups with disabled (and ethnic minority) academics in relation to their experiences of the promotion processes.

She noted the Disability Equality Group reviewed the most recent Colleague Engagement survey and the Disability Extract of the latest Staff Equality Monitoring report. Members noted Clare Craig, Head of Student Wellbeing & Inclusion and colleagues within Service have been working to implement the improvements required resulting from Student Disability Review report. Members noted Ian Campbell, Executive Director of Estates, had attended the meeting, at the invitation of C Barr.

C Barr expressed colleagues' long-held concern about the ability of the University to meet the disability related needs of our students, citing both lack of understanding, willingness and investment in the Estate and some support functions, which have resulted in serious detrimental effects to some student's studies. She confirmed she will continue to work with all areas involved, but called for members on this and other relevant committees to attend those meetings, or send suitably senior deputies to ensure decisions can be made timeously, and then to take reported issues forward as a matter of urgency.

The Convener confirmed he had met with C Barr and D Duncan to discuss ongoing disability and accessibility related issues. The Convener acknowledged the University's historic estate may make building accessibility adjustments difficult. He noted the lack of early knowledge on students' needs will also affect the University's ability to react in a timely manner to make any required changes to timetables or buildings.

M Fischbacher-Smith welcomed C Barr's comments. She clarified, as Chair of the Refurbishment Working Group, the University has strict principles for accessibility but noted a perceived lack of connected or forward thinking within Estates on these issues and called for a 'senior' named contact for this. M Fischbacher-Smith reported approximately 300 students have physical accessibility requirements and highlighted the ongoing project with Timetabling and Disability Services looking to improve the planning of room allocations for those with the most complex needs.

J Milligan noted the potential reputational risks and called for a programme of works from Estates on some of the main accessibility issues, particularly around the Gilbert Scott building which is used for high profile events, to address our legal responsibilities for ensuring students, staff and visitors can fully participate in the life of the University.

The Convener requested C Barr continue her discussions with Estates colleagues and for EDSC receive a written report on progress in, or reasons for not, addressing all the issues at the next meeting and to ensure Estates to confirm a 'senior' point of contact for this work. **ACTION: C Barr**

R Sandison clarified Admissions colleagues have been working with the Disability Service to improve IT systems in order to provide the ability for applicants to declare a disability much earlier, thus enabling early supportive conversations with the Disability Service about potential adjustments. Members also welcomed a call for a culture change around attitudes to disability across all aspects and areas of the University.

### 3.5 Gender (Sex)

S Carter reported on the University's programme to celebrate International Women's Day. The Convener highlighted the opening of the Emma Ritch Law Clinic, which will focus on supporting victims of gender

based violence.

S Carter reported the Gender Equality Group (GEG) met to review and discuss the Ross Report and the progress on the related Action Plan. GEG members also discussed the importance of those areas within the report where actions were required but were not official recommendations.

Members supported the University signing up to [The Guild's 'Call to Action on Gender Based Violence'](#) noting some work would be required to meet the full requirements.

### 3.6 Mental Health

M Taylor reported on discussions on whether the University would participate in the Student Minds Mental Health Charter. Members noted it was felt this would not be appropriate at this time.

Members welcomed discussions with the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival organisers with a view to hosting or sponsoring events on campus.

### 3.7 LGBT+

M Fischbacher-Smith noted the equality group met in early February, following the first ever [rainbow light-up of the Gilbert Scott Building to mark the start of LGBT+ History Month](#), stating it had been a powerful statement. She provided members with an overview of the items discussed and advised a meeting had been held with Stonewall to ensure the University is making the most of its membership.

### 3.8 Sanctuary

R Sandison reported a new oversight group has been established to review and update the University of Sanctuary Action Plan. She advised the University hopes to offer free 2-year English ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) courses and confirmed work continues through Prof Alison Phipps on the New Scots refugee integration strategy. Members welcomed the training delivered to External Relations colleagues by Scottish Refugee Council.

Members welcomed the vigil held to mark the 1-year anniversary event for the war in Ukraine. R Sandison advised, as part of twinning programme with three Ukrainian universities, over 120 Ukrainian students have joined the University during the year and confirmed the same level of financial support will be provided during the 2023/24 academic year. Members welcomed the recent funding bid submitted to Universities UK International (UUKI) to support research collaboration with those University.

Members also welcomed the support being provided for those affected by the Turkish/Syrian earthquake.

## 4. **Ross Report Update – Presentation**

M Taylor provided an overview of the Ross Report and updated members on progress towards addressing the recommendations. Members noted the progress made on recommendations 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 & 16.

M Taylor provided a detailed update on actions relating to recommendation 9: (non-academic) Student Conduct.

The Convener advised, following a restructure, Alistair Wilson, Deputy Secretary & Head of Legal, will have oversight of the new Non-academic Student Conduct team, now based within Court Office.

Members welcomed the additional activities which have been taking place, including discussions on embedding 'care and support' throughout processes for all involved, and discussions on activities relating to the 'spirit' of the Report.

R Sandison and E Gilmartin confirmed External Relations continue to review Gender Based Violence (GBV) information on the University's website and advised discussions have begun on developing a related University campaign.

K Fraser welcomed the recruitment of Safeguarding roles but called for all staff, especially Advisers of Study, to be reminded of or receive training in their wider safeguarding responsibilities for both colleagues and students. M Taylor agreed and confirmed the Policy and communication of it will be fully reviewed with the new Safeguarding team, once they are in place. Members emphasised the need to resource the Safeguarding Team properly and for the SMG Working Group to discuss this matter further.

**ACTION: S Carter/M Taylor**

M Taylor agreed to provide the wider SMG audience with an update on all the current activities. M Taylor also noted a further progress report will be brought to the next EDSC meeting.

**ACTION: EDU**

## **5. Public Sector Equality Duty**

### **5.1 University of Glasgow – Equality Mainstreaming Report 2021-23 – Paper 2**

Members welcomed all the activities and progress shown within the University's Mainstreaming Report, noting the report only captures a snapshot of the extensive work done across the University. Members endorsed and approved the Mainstreaming Report for publication as part of the University's requirements of Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED).

### **5.2 Gender and Equal Pay Gap Report 2022 – Paper 3**

K Farrell thanked People and Organisational Development (POD) colleagues for their input and support in producing Paper 3. She highlighted the pay gap analysis report is based on 'roles' and as such differs from the University's Staff Equality Monitoring report which reports on 'headcount'.

Members welcomed the narrowing of the gender pay gap, especially the median gender pay gap (at 8.4%) which compares favourably with the sector overall. Members noted the continuing higher gap at Grade 10 in Professional Service may be adversely affected by those women who hold Executive Director roles in Professional Services but are included within the SMG pay gap data. Members also noted the median Ethnicity Pay gap had grown by nearly 5% but sits below the sector's median gap of 3.8%.

K Farrell drew members attention to Section 5 which detailed ongoing and future activities designed to address both the pay gaps themselves and the low levels of disclosure for disability and ethnicity. Members agreed the report for publication as part of the University's PSED requirements.

### **5.3 SFC's 'Tackling Persistent Inequalities Together' – Paper 4**

M Taylor presented on the SFC's report which sets out their 'persistent inequalities', known as National Equality Outcomes (NEO), and advised the University must now address these in our PSED Equality Outcomes. Members noted those NEOs which are already covered in the University's current PSED Equality Outcomes, and the five areas, under Age, Disability and Sex, which are not. Members agreed the proposed actions for addressing those.

The Convener suggested M Taylor and C Barr meet with Planning, Insight & Analytics and Gregor Caldwell, Executive Director of Finance, on the potential to include NEO reporting within the University's Annual Report but acknowledged the current PSED reporting may still prove the most effective route to address these reporting requirements.

**ACTION: M Taylor/C Barr**

## **6. Staff Related Items**

No additional staff issues were raised.

## **7. Student Related Items**

No student related issues were raised.

## **8. Anti-Racism Campaign Update – Paper 5**

N Riaz thanked External Relations and POD colleagues and those colleagues and students who took part in the development of the ongoing 'Together Against Racism' campaign. Members noted the extensive resources developed to complement the campaign and welcomed the predominantly positive feedback received.

N Riaz highlighted that while students and colleagues were given numerous opportunities to engage at the design stage, some had subsequently expressed concerns that the final posters would be triggering for those who had been victims of such racial microaggressions. She noted the ['Voices for Change' video](#), with the Student Union, Presidents directly addressed those concerns. Members noted the need to improve engagement with the different groups when developing the next stages of the campaign and endorsed the planned actions. K Fraser suggested the campus Unions could be involved in future campaigns developments and agreed to contact EDU.

**ACTION: K Fraser**

## **9. Items for Information**

### **9.1 Legal Update Sex/Gender Reassignment – Single Sex Provision – Paper 6**

M Taylor reported both the Gender and the LGBT+ Equality Groups had discussed the issues covered in Paper 6 and noted they would be informed of future changes in case law. She noted the only area where reassurance will be needed relates to the University's current locker-room style changing facilities. She confirmed discussions will be held with Sport and Estates to review requirement/potential for single sex changing facilities provision (both changing and prayer facilities) in light of the guidance.

## **10. Any Other Business**

No further items were raised.

**Date of Scheduled Next Meeting:** 21 June 2023 at 14:00