

## Equality and Diversity Committee

### Minutes of the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 2nd October 2017

#### (Minutes 17.01 – 17.24)

**Present:** Ms Jan Hulme (Chair), Dr Morag Ferguson, Professor Toni Hilton, Mr Alex Killick, Mr Adrian Lui, Professor Stephanie Young, Professor Valerie Webster.

**Apologies:** Professor Iain Cameron, Ms Alison Campbell, Professor Cam Donaldson, Mr Tom Halpin, Mr Vincent McKay, Professor Antony Morgan, Ms Rachel Simpson.

**In attendance:** Ms Deborah Donnet, Assistant Head of Governance (Secretary)

### Minutes of the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017

17.01 Approved The unconfirmed draft minutes of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 (**DocED16/19**).

#### Matters Arising

17.01 Approved The Matters Arising Briefing Note (**DocED17/01**).

#### Equality Outcomes 2017-2021 reporting:- GCU Action Plan Progress

17.02 Received A report detailing the Equality Outcomes 2017-2021, GCU Action Plan Progress (**DocED17/02**).

17.03 Reported By the Equality and Diversity Advisor that the Committee had responsibility to monitor and check the progress of the Equality Outcomes agreed at its meeting in April 2017. The report was presented in the same format as the Athena SWAN action plan tracker document, giving the Committee an overview of the complete set of actions and their current status in the form of a RAG report. Whilst some actions were categorised as “grey” within the RAG report, meaning that work had not yet started, it was confirmed that all was on track and there were no issues that required flagging.

17.04 Discussed

- i. It was noted that the action in relation to the accessibility of student wellbeing services was further developed than detailed in the report. In relation to the general accessibility of teaching materials, it was raised that there was a need to have more video and audio tracks transcribed. The DVC Academic informed the Committee that a software solution that would allow documents to be transferred into other formats e.g. braille or audio was currently being tested and discussions were underway with the supplier. This was welcomed by the Committee.
- ii. It was further noted that a British Sign Language Plan was being developed by the Scottish Government and more information on this was awaited before developing the university’s own Plan, which is required to be published by October 2018.

- 17.05 Agreed
- a) To note the report; and
  - b) Include an additional section in the plan to pick up new issues that emerge.

**Equality Outcomes 2017-2021 reporting:- School and Department activities**

- 17.06 Received An update on the Equality Outcomes 2017-2021, School and Department activities **(DocED17/03)**.
- 17.07 Reported By the Equality and Diversity Advisor that the methodology for capturing the work undertaken at local level by schools and departments in relation to the work being done to support the Equality Outcomes, had been revised based on feedback and as a consequence, a more streamlined template had been developed. This had resulted in better engagement across the university, with templates being signed off by senior management teams. Whilst there was still some work required in some areas, it was expected that there would be full compliance by early in the new year and this would feed into the preparation of the annual report by April.
- 17.08 Discussed Committee members confirmed that the new template was working well. The importance of being able to provide evidence for the Equality and Diversity annual report (published annually each April) was stressed and the Equality and Diversity Advisor indicated that the template would facilitate this. Evidence from the templates would be collated and used to identify strong examples for inclusion in the annual report, either as part of the main narrative, or developed further into more detailed case studies.
- 17.09 Agreed To note the report.

**Update on Athena SWAN Action Plan Implementation**

- 17.10 Received A report informing the Committee of the progress of the Athena SWAN Action Plan Implementation **(DocED17/04)**.
- 17.11 Reported By the DVC Academic, that implementation of the Athena SWAN Action Plan was overseen by the Advancing Gender Equality Group (AGEG) which had identified 6 priority actions for 2017/18. Once implementation of individual actions was complete, they would then be considered to be business as usual. A key action this year was the development of a Gender Equality information pack which would be delivered at a local level by colleagues.
- 17.12 Discussed i. In response to a question about the status of individual applications by SEBE, SHLS and GSBS, the Committee was informed SHLS and GSBS were preparing for Bronze applications, but were waiting on additional guidance as Athena SWAN was in the middle of moving from one process to another. In relation to SEBE application for reaccreditation for Athena SWAN Bronze, it was noted that, whilst consideration had been given to applying for Silver, and overall progress had been made since Bronze had been awarded, it was considered that there were areas where further work was required and at this stage, Silver was too ambitious. The timing of the SEBE application was discussed, and it was noted that the School had gathered considerable data that would have to be scrapped if they did not submit in April. It was noted that there would be no penalty to the department if an April submission was not successful, and in addition helpful feedback would be received. As such, an April submission should be given consideration.

- ii. In relation to the Gender Action Plan, the DVC Academic advised that it was intended to review 17/18 admissions data to get an understanding of gender balance and to see if any progress had been made. It was noted that the University could look at the figures from application to conversion to admission to identify changes or areas where further action was required, but there may also be external factors that were beyond the University's control. An update would be provided to the next meeting.

- 17.13 Agreed
- a) To note the report
  - b) That a Gender Action Plan update on admissions be submitted to the next meeting.

### **Preventing and Responding to Gender Based Violence Policy and Action Plan**

- 17.14 Received
- The Preventing and Responding to Gender Based Violence Policy and Action Plan **(DocED17/05)**.

- 17.15 Reported
- i. By the DVC Academic that the Policy and Action Plan had been prepared by the Gender Based Violence Working Group (GBVWG). The GBVWG had been working with the University of Glasgow in developing how to approach preventing and responding to gender based violence, and research expertise within GCU had been used to inform the development of the strategy and action plan.

- ii. A number of staff had undergone First Responder training and the Students' Association were taking forward peer to peer training for students. Overall the approach had been very well received by both staff and students.

- 17.16 Agreed
- a) To endorse the report for approval by Senate on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and
  - b) To note that the Committee would have responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the action plan.

### **Equality and Diversity Communications and Campaigns Update**

- 17.15 Received
- An update on Equality and Diversity Communications and Campaign **(DocED17/06)**.

- 17.16 Reported
- i. By the Equality and Diversity Advisor that the report outlined the approach to taking forward the Equality Outcome theme of "implementing equality and diversity awareness through events, campaigns and communications". Consultation was a key element of this and the overwhelming feedback had been that the challenging part of the E&D agenda was ensuring that all staff were involved. This linked closely with the GCU Values.

- ii. A more consultative approach using the E&D Champions and Harassment Contacts was being taken and more creative ways of engagement were being explored, such as using digital media.

- iii. Some ideas for key messages linked to the GCU Values were presented and the Committee supported these and suggested that if these could be personalised it would create a stronger sense of ownership.

- 17.17 Discussed
- The report detailed a calendar of events and activities to include in campaigns and

communications. It was noted that there would be events running in October for Black History Month, and that the University had recently supported the Students' Association participation in Pride Glasgow. Some additions to the calendar were suggested.

17.18 Agreed To note the report and endorse the approach being taken.

#### **Equality and Diversity Committee Annual Report 2016/2017**

17.19 Approved Equality and Diversity Committee Annual Report 2016/2017 subject to clarification in the section relating to sub-committees and sub-groups. **(DocED17/07)**.

*Secretary's Note: The Chair left the meeting and Professor Valerie Webster took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.*

#### **Equality and Diversity Composition and Terms of Reference 2017/18**

17.20 Received Equality and Diversity Composition and Terms of Reference **(DocED17/08)**.

17.21 Discussed i. In response to a question regarding the role of the Committee it was confirmed that the Committee had responsibility for endorsing strategy and policy, and monitoring action that was being taken elsewhere. The operational element of implementing E&D activities was the responsibility of School E&D Committees and other fora.

ii. It was raised that there terms of reference of School E&D Committees were not all the same, and whilst it was recognised that it may be appropriate to have variations, there should be a common core to them. It was further noted that whilst School Board Annual Reports contained very brief information on the work of School E&D Committees, a more detailed account of activities would be welcomed.

17.22 Agreed a) To approve the E&D Committee Composition and Terms of Reference;  
b) Review the terms of reference of the School based E&D Committees; and  
c) Request that School E&D Committees submit an annual report to this Committee.

#### **AOCB: Dignity at Work and Study Policy – Care Experienced Young People**

17.23 Received A briefing on care experienced young people (CEYP) was tabled. This advised that the University was named as a Corporate Parent under legislation and had responsibility to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of CEYP. Whilst not a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it was requested CEYP be included as a ground for non-discrimination in the same way as the university included socio-economic background and TU membership.

17.24 Agreed To recommend that CEYP be included in the list of characteristics detailed in the Dignity at Work and Study Policy.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will be held at **2.00pm on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018**.