

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STAFF FORUM HELD ON TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 0930 VIA TEAMS

### **M01/22 Minutes of Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 were accepted as a correct record.

### **M02/22 Matters Arising from the meeting held on 2 November 2021**

#### *02.1 Include Menopause Date in Reports*

A request for reporting data in relation to menopause and informed the Forum that this data isn't collected but as a way forward could use data relating to age etc. It was also suggested including the menopause network and to seek their thoughts as to what could be included within the reporting.

A concern relating to the recording and asked what the data is being asked for. It was noted data being referred to was to support the application for accreditation as a menopause friendly employer scheme. It was agreed a steer would be sought from the group.

#### *02.2 Draft Audit Report - circulated*

Completed

#### *02.3 Union Black in Partnership with Santander – what to do with the information*

A working group has been established looking at how the training can be taken forward. The data from the first cohort show predominant engagement from staff and the second cohort, staff is lower with the majority being students. Intention is to take forward the context and plan for Action Learning Sets which will impact on service delivery.

It was confirmed that an initial group of 5 academic staff had come forward to take the learning forward and the first meeting is scheduled for later this week.

Reported of an ongoing issue with staff accessing the programme, but this has been fed back to the supplier.

#### *02.4 Northamptonshire Black Communities Together (NBCT) – circulate presentation*

Completed.

### **M03/22 Staff Equality Rolling Action Plan 2020-2025**

#### *Workstreams Update*

#### *03.1 Governance and Accountability*

It was noted the workstream was currently looking at several actions that would be included within the Action Plan.

Clarified that the focus of the workstream was looking at what the group needs to identify to inform the annual report to Governors – and how the work of the EDI Forum is captured and reported. This includes ensuring all actions are up to date and being reported on regularly and activities such as EIAs are being completed, staff are trained, and the process is embedded. Questions were raised around if the EIAs were being stored appropriately and if there should be a standard approach to undertaking approval process for policies across the institution and how would this be monitored.

In terms of accessibility a lot of work is being done to ensure the creation of accessible documents. Questions were raised about the need for guidelines, training and support to ensure we create accessible documents for the web and readable documents.

It was suggested the use of Internal Auditors to assist to see where we are and how appropriate our current approach is.

In relation to accountability, Together@UON was raised – do these remain appropriate? It was suggested the Forum revisit these for the next meeting.

Agreed to circulate the current pledges to the Forum, the Forum to review and feedback comments and for a paper to be prepared for next meeting.

Workstream leads were asked to update the Rolling Action Plan on the shared drive with current actions ASAP

Update in terms of actions relating to accessibility. Attempts has been made to recruit an Accessibility Officer. Funding was only available for a fixed term post and attempts had been unsuccessful. As an alternative, looking to secure additional external training.

It was reported that that the DSG are also discussing challenges relating to accessibility training and EIAs. Currently looking at a team's training for EIA and noted over the last week the apprenticeships scheme has asked for appropriate EIAs to be completed.

Clarification was sought on governance of the Staff Forum – it was clarified that this related to the Staff EDI Forum and not the Staff Networks which remain purely voluntary and informal. The Staff EDI Forum seeks to hold the university accountable for EDI issues.

### *03.2 Workforce Development*

The workstream were reviewing current plans for the year and prepare for the next 4 years in line with the action rolling plan and to identify what is achievable. There is a concern with regard to managers engaging with EDI SD and also a desire to see a commitment from senior managers to complete Union Black.

Noted the DELTA group hadn't yet met but actions are going ahead supporting the development of staff.

An action to identify training needs for development and career progression for GEM colleagues and offering further provision for leadership development.

Several aspects within research highlighting several SD sessions available for staff undertaking research; it was asked how external SD could be tracked and captured? It was further highlighted the work of two new PhD researchers focusing on;

'The impact of late diagnosis of dyslexia in African and Caribbean women in education'

And

'Global literature within the neoliberal paradigm of alienation, loss, and excess'

Members agreed to speak about recording external SD outside the meeting.

This was an action to ensure we capture all SD ongoing in the University including where our staff are undertaking SD outside of the University. This will give a more comprehensive picture of the scale of SD going on across University staff.

A question was asked about the student attainment gap and if there was any further update. The analysis shows there is a 2:1 benchmark and data supporting the evidence which is easily reportable.

Workstream leads were asked to update the Rolling Action Plan on the shared drive with current actions ASAP

### *03.3 Workforce Diversity and Inclusions*

Reported the general workforce report are produced in July and she will be looking at how to encourage disclosures so we can maximise the data.

Other actions from this Workstream are on the Agenda

Workstream lead were asked to update the Rolling Action Plan on the shared drive with current actions ASAP

### *04.4 Staff Engagement*

Reported that as the lead had left the institution the role has been picked up by another colleague.

[The University is marking Mental Health Day 2022 on Thursday 3 March.](#)

[A UON-backed project to help harder-to-reach groups of people back into work has been thriving, despite the pandemic.](#)

[UON has joined the Living Wage Foundation's directory.](#)

[The Student Equality Diversity and Inclusion Forum announced a series of events for](#)

[2022 which staff are welcome to attend.](#)

[The Security and Community Safety Team at the University is part of a county-wide effort to make the streets safer for women and girls.](#)

[During Leadership Learning Week, colleagues from the Disability Staff Network led an excellent session aimed at Supporting Neurodiversity in the Workplace.](#)

Workstream lead were asked to update the Rolling Action Plan on the shared drive with current actions ASAP.

## **M04/22 Gender Pay Gap Working Group**

### *04.1 Gender Pay Gap Working Group – Recommendations for Action*

Colleagues who had met to look at the gender pay gap and to identify actions for the upcoming year were thanked. A really good conversation had been held and discussion relating to barriers had been highlighted for women in research. The draft report had been circulated which included the proposed actions. Members were asked for any comments.

Agreed the set of proposals is a good way forward and highlighted the difference in the current gender pay gaps between academic staff and Prof Services. She would also highlighted career progression for Prof Services and workload allocation/ balance with the inadequate amount of time for staff to engage with any career progression activity. As a result, she would like to see a commitment for Prof Services to be able to do this going forward.

Members were thanked for their observations and confirmed that the difference between the pay gap for academic and Prof Services has been included in the report for the first time to highlight the challenge. The need for capacity/time to engage with SD opportunities was acknowledged and it was reported that SD engagement was higher in Prof Services than for academics. Noted there was still some further analysis to be done in terms of SD engagement as well as other training being done locally and externally from local SD budgets.

It was asked via the chat pane - do we have demographic data for which Prof Service staff are accessing training? Replied via the chat pane – it was available in terms of gender and he would have that information available for the next meeting.

Asked if there are any more specific measurements that can be used to make the actions SMARTer and also the timetable. It was noted the actions which have been agreed will be explore and focused upon but now need to look at a proper plan which will hold appropriate time frames and actions. Agreed more detailed work would follow.

Members agreed with the points made in the chat pane that we need to do more in terms of demographic data and need to capture the SD activity being undertaken across the institution to reassure all staff there is investment in staff to develop careers.

Asked the Forum for agreement to the actions and all agreed. Thanked the staff for the work undertaken thus far and highlighted the institution's pledge eradicate the GPG by 2030, which is included in the introduction to the document.

Also reminded the Forum of a recent successful application which had been submitted and approved for the University to be an Accredited Living Wage Employer which covered all staff including UNEL.

#### *04.2 Commitment to Removing other Pay Gaps by 2030*

Discussed within the item M04/22 above.

### **M05/22 Staff Networks**

Update on Staff Networks

#### *05.1 LGBT+*

Noted by the Forum that the Black History month was now coming to an end and lots of events and activities for this event had been undertaken and well received. Students' Union had also worked with the Group on this initiative.

Other events were being progressed for the remaining year and noted it was timely to review the TORs for the Network and it was disappointing to note the LGBT+ training has been cancelled due to low numbers. It was noted that engagement with Ally training had been high

#### *05.2 Disability*

Confirmed that the network is participating in University Mental Health Day on 3 March and the Network would be looking to split the work into two areas – peer support and events (with the production of a newsletter).

#### *05.3 GEM*

The Network was also looking at creating a calendar of events and having space where staff can come and address any issues of concern.

#### *05.4 Women's*

Reported of the International Women's day on 8 March and looking to welcome as many people as possible and invites to the IWD will go out today for network chairs. Taken a decision to run 4 social networks throughout the year.

Noted the University had been approached for an International Day of Peace and there will be a pageant through the town - this has been referred to the SU.

### **M06/22 EDI Data**

#### *06.1 Recruitment*

The Forum went through the EDI action produced from the work with gender pay gap and work undertaken on the recruitment process. This now needed to be included within the action rolling plan. Also noted there are several actions that overlap so they

can be identified for example where to advertised posts, disability disclosure such as neurodiversity etc.

CC asked for any comments and for volunteers to help progress the matters. It was asked if the report just focussed on the recommendations and questions raised, and confirmed it contained both.

Noted it was clear the actions emerging highlighted the need for dedicated champion to support EDI work. A request for a dedicated post will be made again in the forthcoming budget round.

Thanked colleagues for undertaking the work and is confident the work will progress, with the support of the Forum members and the wider HR team. It was noted the paper would be submitted to the HR Exec Team to prioritise resources and actions.

### *06.2 Casework Diversity*

Explained there is no paper in relation to this item due to the low numbers and the possibility of identifying individuals. It had been agreed to look at this on an annual basis and to monitor diversity so ensure there are no trends. The number of cases over the last 2 year has been reviewed and even though the number are small, the data doesn't not raise any EDI concerns.

Members asked for the headline numbers. Reported a total of 17 cases across disciplinaries, grievances, performance management and absence. the following, with a mix of male and female and the majority white.

Noted it was good the numbers were low but asked what the trends were over the last 5 years. Replied the data didn't exist for that period as only started to look at this a couple of years ago.

Members said it would be useful to see the division between academic and Prof Services. C confirmed the numbers were across the university

## **M07/22 Living Black at University**

The Living Black at University paper had been circulated for information and had been discussed widely at other forums. The institution is looking at this going forward to review practice.

Post meeting note:

Estates and Campus Services have been working to address the recommendations arising from the 'Living Black at University' research report looking at the experiences of Black students in University accommodation and social experiences. The report highlights a number of issues that could be apparent at UON and recent comments from staff and students support this. To ensure we are clear about the experiences of our students and the priorities for UON, we have approached the lead research agency, Halpin, to undertake a similar piece of work for us to inform our plan and training programme. A fuller update will be available shortly

**M08/21 Update from Student Equality Diversity and Inclusion Forum-  
minutes of meetings**

The minutes of the Student Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum dated 19 January 2022 had been circulated to the Forum for information.

**M09/22 Any Other Business**

Members asked about student disciplinary panels and the training of staff and how do we ensure a good representation. Replied there is an ongoing project looking at EDI and training for panel members and anyone wishing to undertake the training to let him know directly so they can be included.

Received an email from members this morning giving apologies but wish to raise an issue about support for Ukraine staff and students and what is available for them. It was noted that there are currently 4 students linking with partner colleges and the University has been in contact with them offering support. In terms of staff there are currently no staff from Ukraine employed at UON

**M10/22 Future Meeting Dates**

23 June 2022 at 2pm

All meetings to be virtual via teams.