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School of Government  
 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Monday 22 April 2024 at 14:00 hours, via Teams

Members Present:

Mwita Chacha	(MC)	School Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Chair)
Licia Cianetti	(LC)	Academic
Abena Dadze-Arthur	(AD-A)	Academic
Niheer Dasandi	(ND)	Academic
George Kyris	(GK)	Academic
Ash Stokoe	(AS)	Academic
Dee Pettifer	(DP)	Professional Services (ED&I Committee Administrator)
Stefan Wolff	(SW)	Academic

Summary of actions for ED&I Committee

Agenda item	Action	Owner	Timescale
3 – 19.03.24	To provide a summary of needs for PG students for 10 <sup>th</sup> floor by email and send to MC and DP.	YL	Next EDI meeting on 20 May
6 – 19.03.24	To present the ‘Decolonising the curriculum’ report at the SMT meeting in May, and report the outcome to the EDI Committee by email (last EDI meeting is on 20 May; SMT meeting is on 22 May).	LC / AD-A via HoE	For SMT on 22 May, and outcome / feedback to be emailed to EDI Committee
Action tracker review – 22.04.24	To seek further clarification in respect of financial support of visas for currently engaged colleagues within the School from HoS, ahead of the University’s release of its new policy.	MC	Next EDI meeting on 20 May
5 – 22.04.24	To raise noted suggestions and concerns with DVPC for Equalities in respect of the University Equality Strategy 2025-28.	MC	Next EDI meeting on 20 May
6 – 22.04.24	To seek suggestions from SMT and SAT in respect of how to conduct a School-led survey with measuring Athena Swan objectives in mind.	MC	Next EDI meeting on 20 May

Agenda Item	Agenda Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Sobia Baig – Professional Services</p> <p>Yuxiang Lin – PG student representative</p> <p>Fatima Madani – UG EDI Student Ambassador</p> <p>Tatheenah Mukulu - UG EDI Student Ambassador</p> <p>Bizuneh Yimenu – Academic</p> <p>Nicholas Cheeseman – Athena Swan Co-Lead</p> <p>Emeka Njoku – Athena Swan Co-Lead</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p><b>Noted:</b> minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2024 were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>Action tracker review – those items not addressed elsewhere on the agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted</b> from meeting between HoC and POLSIS women re promotions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workload allocation – tasks not currently included in WAM are to be looked at further.</li> <li>○ Academic development – concerns raised were noted and are to be addressed further by new HoC.</li> <li>○ Visa policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There appear to be some inconsistencies regarding agreed process:</li> <li>▪ AD-A has been informed by HR that the onus is on the employee to arrange and pay for visas, which can be negotiated with College. This could lead to inconsistencies in treatment across the University.</li> <li>▪ HoDs do not have discretion over decisions as this lies with the University.</li> <li>▪ A new policy is due for release via the VC, but this will only affect future staff and not those currently employed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Approved:</b> SAT Terms of Reference. MC will take this to the first Athena Swan SAT meeting due to take place later in the week.</li> <li>• ‘Decolonising the curriculum’ report: Sameen Ali has provided feedback from IDD, and forwarded the names of colleagues to approach to represent IDD with this initiative, alongside AD-A for DPAP and LC for POLSIS. The report will be presented at the SMT meeting in May.</li> <li>• EDI Forum date is confirmed as 15 May – calendar invitation (Zoom) has been sent to all School colleagues. Agenda focus will be updating colleagues in respect of Athena Swan SAT and priorities against the action tracker; alongside the reapplication process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support of visas: MC to seek further clarification for current staff from HoS re a decision at School-level ahead of the University’s new policy being released.</li> </ul>	MC

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3.	<p>Standing item: UG EDI Student Ambassadors and PG Rep updates</p> <p>None to report – student reps not in attendance, apologies received.</p>	
4.	<p>Standing item: Athena Swan update</p> <p><u>MC noted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although not yet fully formed, representation is adequate enough to hold the first meeting of the Athena Swan SAT, which will take place this week.</li> <li>• The current membership of the SAT is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>René Lindstädt (HoS)</li> <li>Danielle Beswick (DHoS)</li> <li>David Hudson (IDD HoD)</li> <li>Jason Lowther (DPAP HoD)</li> <li>Stefan Wolff (POLSIS HoD)</li> <li>Mwita Chacha (School Head of EDI)</li> <li>Nic Cheeseman (Athena SWAN Lead)</li> <li>Emeka Njoku (Athena SWAN Lead)</li> <li>Kerrie Myers (Student Engagement Officer)</li> <li>Marcela Avila (PS Staff rep)</li> <li>Columba-Isabella Achilleos-Sarll (Academic Staff rep – POLSIS)</li> <li>Verena Brandle (Academic Staff rep - POLSIS)</li> <li>Lipika Kamra (Academic Staff rep – POLSIS)</li> <li>Sevasti-Eleni Vezirgiannidou (Academic Staff rep – POLSIS)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A further call has been made to encourage representatives from PS, PGRs, DPAP and IDD to join the SAT.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p>University Equality Strategy 2025-28</p> <p><i>Document on Teams.</i></p> <p>MC sought feedback from EDI Committee members. Strategy is due for release in November 2024. Previous strategy focused on aspirations, this strategy aims to address these in more depth.</p> <p><u>Noted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More context is needed in order for EDI Committee colleagues to engage and feedback fully and in a meaningful way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Insight is needed in respect of the evaluation process that was undertaken to identify what needs to be built on from the old strategy leading to the objectives proposed in the new strategy. A forum for EDI Committee members to attend from across the University was proposed as a suggestion for this to be achieved.</li> <li>○ Measurable objectives are needed.</li> <li>○ EDB or EDI: clear and consistent use of ‘Equity’ rather than ‘Equality’; and ‘Belonging’ rather than ‘Inclusion’ is important and should be addressed.</li> <li>○ Transgender considerations have not been looked at in detail (beyond the provision of facilities), especially in light of the recently released CASS report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<p>and how this may potentially affect our staff and students currently, and in the future.</p> <p><u>Action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MC to raise these suggestions and concerns with Catherine Mangan, DPVC, and report outcome at next EDI meeting in May.</li> </ul>	MC
6.	<p>EDI Annual Survey</p> <p><u>MC noted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been no EDI survey this year to date.</li> <li>The School's Athena Swan commitment is to have regular surveys as a way of measuring achievements.</li> <li>College will run a survey every other year, and the School can run its own during years where there isn't a College-led one.</li> <li>Eleni Vezirgiannidou, who ran the last School-led survey, reported that many of the questions were drawn from the previous survey and this was before the School's Athena Swan accreditation.</li> </ul> <p><u>Noted</u> in respect of the School running its own survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask Athena Swan relevant questions in the School's survey, as the College-led survey is limited to a certain number.</li> <li>Consider a different approach to attaining feedback, as a low response rate will not provide the diverse responses needed for Athena Swan-based analysis.</li> <li>Use EDI budget funds to engage a PGR to analyse the data from the survey, as this is time-consuming and work-heavy.</li> </ul> <p><u>Action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MC to seek suggestions from SMT and SAT and report at next EDI Committee meeting.</li> </ul>	MC
7.	<p>Standing item: budget overview</p> <p>Current spend is £1.8k from an overall budget of £7.65k. This is mainly in respect of casual staff payments.</p> <p>Future spends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strawberry Words training – race equity. Estimated at £1.5k</li> <li>Engaging a PGR for School survey analysis. Costs unknown.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Monday 20 May, 10:00-12:00 via Teams.</p>	