

## Confirmed Minutes

**Meeting:** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)  
**Date:** 8 February 2023  
**Time:** 2 pm to 4 pm  
**Venue:** Room 202, Euston Road

Maria Jackson <b>[Chair]</b>	Head of Governance and Company Secretary
Antony Charles	People, Talent and Culture Manager
Rebecca Collins	Disability and Wellbeing Advisor
Nadia Michail	Disability and Wellbeing Manager
Andreea Turculeț	Academic Administration and Assessment Executive
Arif Zaman	Enterprise Outreach Manager and Senior Lecturer Business
Dominic Bailey <b>[Secretary]</b>	Quality Executive

### No. Item

#### 1.0 Welcome and Apologies

M Jackson welcomed all members to the meeting and began by outlining the new membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee following amendments made to our Corporate Academic Governance Framework (effective from 1 January 2023).

A Zaman asked whether there would be any student representation on the Committee. M Jackson explained that there is provision for up to 6 student members and added that unfortunately, only one student expressed an interest in joining - Anudi Rasulima Ponnampuruma. N Michail asked whether having up to 6 student representatives was appropriate given the reduced number of staff members on the Committee. M Jackson said that this was a point that had been discussed previously and one which could be explored further as part of the second phase of the internal review of our Corporate and Academic Governance Framework.

#### 2.0 Meeting for approval and Action Tracker/Matters Arising:

##### 2.1 Minutes from the previous meeting: 14 December 2022

The minutes of the 14 December 2022 meeting were agreed to be a true record and were approved by the Committee.

##### 2.2 Action Tracker/Matters Arising

###### 2.2.1 Item 8 refers.

**Update:** A Zaman has agreed with the Chair that he will submit his summary report on the UNESCO Gender Equality report for consideration at the April 2023 EDIC meeting. A Zaman reported that one issue that drives international thinking on gender and equality is the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. He added that on International Women's Day (8 March 2023) the Commission would be celebrating under the theme "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". M Jackson noted that the Director of SEWS had recently hosted two Let's Grow external speaker events at which two innovative female leaders had spoken about women in technology.

###### 2.2.2 Item 4 refers.

**Update:** A Charles and N Michail asked that the completion date for the staff disability policy/guidance document be moved to June 2023 and agreed to provide the committee with an update in April. This was agreed by the committee.

2.2.3 Item 5a refers.

**Completed.** J O'Mahony provided the Chair with the text on the Breaking Down Barriers Speakers' Programme for inclusion within the EDI Annual Report 2021-22.

2.2.4 Item 5b refers.

**Completed.** EDIC members provided the Chair with information for inclusion within the EDI Annual Report 2021-22.

2.2.4 Item 8 refers.

**Update:** M Jackson to report back on student attendance at EDIC meetings at the April 2023 meeting.

### **3.0 Chair's action**

*No actions were taken.*

### **4.0 Dignity and Respect Policy**

[No further approval required]

#### 4.1 Dignity and Respect Policy – Summary of Changes

#### 4.2 Dignity and Respect Policy

The Chair presented the above documents, explaining that the policy applies to both staff and students and is one of the key company documents that all staff are required to read. It also appears on the online Quality and Enhancement Manual for easy access by both staff and students.

M Jackson confirmed that the amendments made were all minor in nature, but explained that some discussion was required in relation to Appendix A which outlines the members of the Committee with whom staff and students can raise (in confidence) any issues relating to dignity and respect, the purpose being for them to provide a listening ear and signpost to the appropriate areas. The details of former members of the Committee have now been removed from the list and M Jackson asked if there were any other Committee members who would be happy to have their details added in their place.

The Disability and Wellbeing Advisor, Academic Administration and Assessment Executive, and People, Talent and Culture Manager all agreed to be on the list.

N Michail suggested asking the Guild Manager if she would be happy to be listed. M Jackson explained that the Appendix was designed to capture members from the Committee only. Section 8 of the Policy makes it clear that students can talk to the Guild Manager either informally or formally. N Michail recommended that M Jackson check which email address the Guild Manager would like included in Section 8.

The Dignity and Respect Policy was **approved** by the committee subject to the above amendment.

### **5.0 Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes**

#### 5.1 Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes – Summary of Changes

## 5.2 Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes

M Jackson presented the above documents, explaining that the Unconscious Bias Guidance Notes are for staff only and that the document is one of the documents that all staff are required to read on an annual basis and in advance of any panel on which they might sit on in the course of the year (eg. Interview panel, complaints panel, appeal panel).

M Jackson explained that the amendments made were minor in nature.

The document was **approved** by the Committee.

### **For consideration or consideration and action**

## **6.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report** [For consideration and action]

### 6.1 January 2023 EDI Update Report for SMT Cover Paper

### 6.2 January 2023 EDI Update Report for SMT

M Jackson presented the above documents and highlighted the following key points:

- The Head of EDI's ongoing involvement with Advance HE's Race Equality Charter for Small and Specialist Institutions Design Group.
- UCAS End of Cycle Data 2022 which shows an increased demand from international students of all ages with record numbers of accepted applicants from China (+13.4% on 2021), India (+43.7%) and Nigeria (+32.7%); and a continuing increase in the number of applicants with a disability.
- The publication by the University of the Arts London (UAL) of its first report from the [Ethnic Representation Index \(ERI\)](https://www.arts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0030/375735/ERI_Ethnic-Representation-Index.pdf)<sup>1</sup>. The ERI is an attempt to collectively measure the university's progress in tackling systemic racism.

### 6.3 February 2023 Update Report for SMT Cover Paper

### 6.4 February 2023 Update Report for SMT

M Jackson presented the above documents and highlighted the following key areas.

- The publication of LSE Consulting's Final Report for the OfS on Working in partnership to improve international student integration and experience.

M Jackson explained that the report focuses on ways to prevent and tackle harassment and sexual misconduct as international students are more likely to be the target of sexual violence because of sociocultural insecurity, different norms and cultures in socialisation patterns, and little knowledge of reporting procedures.

A Zaman asked about Bloomsbury Institute's approach in the area of harassment and sexual misconduct given its growing number of international students. M Jackson reminded the committee that we have several policies in this area including our Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy (introduced in 2021) and our Staff Relationships Policy, and explained that the recommendations from LSE Consulting's

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.arts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0030/375735/ERI\\_Ethnic-Representation-Index.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0030/375735/ERI_Ethnic-Representation-Index.pdf)

Report would be used to inform the next review of our Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy (due July 2023). M Jackson also reminded the Committee that dignity and respect are covered at Student Induction by the Director of the Centre for Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success, and that there is a requirement for academics to develop with their students within the first week of the module delivery a Student Charter for the classroom.

A Zaman asked whether we could introduce compulsory training in this area. M Jackson said that she had been keen to introduce bystander training for staff and students the previous year and explained that whilst this would be relatively easy to do at a staff level, it would be more problematic for students. She added that when working with student representatives to develop our Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy, the students had been very much in favour of compulsory training for students, but the Working Group had struggled to see how we could enforce completion of the training at a student level. M Jackson also reminded the Committee that staff training falls within the remit of the People, Talent and Culture Manager and so the latter would need to consider any recommendations for staff.

A Zaman suggested that consideration be given to using Bloomsbury Radio and our external speaker programme to flag important conversations around harassment and sexual misconduct. The Committee agreed.

R Collins suggested that we make use of the useful resources produced by Lean In and promised to share a link to the same outside of the meeting.

- The Westminster Higher Education Forum conference on priorities for tackling drug use in higher education.

M Jackson explained that the conference follows the publication of the first phase report from a Universities UK taskforce, led by Professor Nic Beech, and asked Committee members for their initial thoughts on Bloomsbury Institute's approach to drug use given the zero-tolerance approach taken by some providers. Committee members all advised against a zero-tolerance approach as it would not eliminate the problem but merely push it underground. They advocated instead a supportive community as this was more in line with our institutional values. The Committee also noted that whilst drug use is not a problem at Bloomsbury Institute, we do signpost support organisations on our Self-help and Online Resources webpage. In the circumstances, the Committee did not feel that any work was required in this area, but it agreed to revisit the topic in due course.

#### **Actions:**

- **R Collins to share with the Committee (via M Jackson) a link to the resources available from Lean In.**

### **7.0 London Higher EDI Showcase**

M Jackson explained that London Higher brings together HE providers within London through a number of Network groups including their EDI Network Group of which she is a member. She said that the EDI Network's Showcase aims to mark where the sector stands in its journey towards more equal, diverse, and inclusive practices and covers a number of areas including decolonising the curriculum, disability, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and intersectionality. [Bloomsbury Institute features in the Showcase for its work around Ban the Box.]

M Jackson explained that she had circulated the Showcase document for the Committee to see whether there are any initiatives we should/could replicate here at Bloomsbury Institute. By way of example, she flagged the University Mental Health Charter and suggested that N Michail and R Collins consider whether this is Charter we should aim to sign up to. N Michail said she had considered this Charter previously but at that time such a commitment would not have been manageable. However, she said she would have another look at the Charter and the commitment required. M Jackson thanked N Michail for this noting that whilst we are a Mindful Employer, that particular initiative relates to staff.

**Actions:**

- **N Michail to research the requirements for signing up to the University Mental Health Charter and report back to the Committee.**

## **8.0 Activities for the year ahead**

M Jackson asked members whether there were any particular topics that they would like to discuss within the Committee for future meetings.

R Collins said she would be keen to discuss the additional support (e.g. financial, support with accommodation or support more broadly) that we might be able to put in place for care leavers. M Jackson agreed that this would be an interesting area to explore and reminded the Committee that care experienced students are one of the OfS' Access and Participation Plan target groups. M Jackson added that even if we were not to include them within our next Access and Participation Plan, it would be good to discuss possible initiatives in this area.

A Charles suggested sharing with the Committee at some stage the proposed structure and content for the Staff webpage around wellbeing that he is currently developing.

M Jackson said she was keen for the Committee to consider whether there are any additional initiatives we might be able to introduce around suicide prevention. N Michail and R Collins both felt that this was an area well covered at Bloomsbury Institute, but R Collins said she would be happy to deliver training to staff on suicide prevention if need be. M Jackson acknowledged the work of the SEWS team and the Disability team in particular in this area, but said she was keen to look at the whole institution recommendations, guidance around best practice etc following recent high-profile cases such as that of Natasha Abrahart at Bristol University.

It was agreed that M Jackson, R Collins and A Charles would lead discussions on the above areas at a future EDIC meeting. Dates to be agreed.

### **For information**

## **9.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee**

### **9.1 Terms of Reference and Membership**

This particular agenda item was covered under Agenda Item 1.

## **10.0 Update from the Disability and Wellbeing Manager**

N Michail and R Collins flagged that International Women's Day is on 8 March and encouraged members to submit their 'inspirational woman story' to help mark the event.

## **11.0 Any Other Business**

A Zaman reported that Lord Shawcross' Independent Review of the Prevent duty had been published earlier in the day, adding that it had concluded that that great a focus has been placed on preventing right-wing extremism rather than Islamic extremism. A Zaman said that the report's findings and recommendations (all accepted by the government) have not been welcomed by a number of community groups and are serving to fuel Islamophobia. M Jackson thanked A Zaman for raising this matter and said that she would be reporting on the matter to both the SMT and Board at their March meetings.

A Zaman mentioned the Encourage initiative that C Courtney had developed and implemented when he was Director of SEWS and asked about the current status of the initiative and suggested it be relaunched or its teaching materials be used in some format. A Zaman said he would explore this with C Courtney and report back.

A Zaman also suggested that the Committee maximise opportunities to engage with such Institutional partners as UN PRME (an organisation that works closely with UN Global Compact to have management schools and business collaborate on common aspirations and create collective impact) and the London Chamber of Commerce.

A Zaman said that through its Asian Business Association and its Black Business Association, the London Chamber of Commerce could provide our students with valuable opportunities and support to network. He suggested the possibility of having someone from the London Chamber of Commerce come and speak to the Committee at a future meeting, and inviting also the Student President and Guild Manager.

M Jackson said that the networking opportunities offered by the London Chamber of Commerce would be invaluable to our students and recommended that A Zaman explore possibilities in this space with the Director of SEWS and the Employability Lead as this sat within their remit rather than that of the Committee.

### **Date and venue of next meeting**

**12.0** 26 April 2023: 12 – 2 pm @ TBC