**EIDG\_20\_03**

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

 **Equality & Inclusion Delivery Group**

 Via Teams: Thursday 9 July 2020, 1:30-3:30pm

**Attendees:** Stephen Scott (SKS), Linda Mortimer Pine (LMP), Niamh Tooher (NT), Louise Banahene (LBa), Iyiola Solanke (IS), Ian Holdsworth (IH), Vania Dimitrova (VD), Sharif Patel (SP), Rachel Muers (RM), John Cheseldine (JC), Amy Jennings (AJ), Daniel Rosenzweig (DR), Luke Windsor (LW), Caroline Ackroyd (CA), Jo Squires (JS), Robert Adams (RA), Yoselin Benitez Alfonso (YBA), Stacey Forman (SF), Kate Hardy (KH), Kate Pangbourne (KP), Sarah Ward (SW), Claire Owen (CO), Charlotte Axon (CAx), Laura York (LY), Elizabeth Cutts (EC).

**Apologies received from:** Ruth Buller (RB), Anja Komatar (AK), Karen Tsui (KT), Kerri Woods (KW), Greig Sharman (GS) Fiona Gill (FG), Louise Bryant (LB), Antonia Frezza (AF), Helen Coop (HC), Lucinda Walker (LW), Gillian Neild (GN), Chris Warrington (CW), Paul Taylor (PT), Emily Towler (ET), Laila Fletcher (LF), Ian Robertson (IR), Dima Barakat Chami (DBC), Sue Kilminster (SK).

 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Welcome and notes from the previous meeting**

SKS updated members that recent recruitment to the Head of E&I position had not been successful. The recruitment process will be restarted later this year. In the meantime, CO will be acting up as Manager for the unit. She will be the immediate EPU contact for DG members.

Action Points from the previous meeting were agreed as completed.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Report from E&I Board**

*Equality & Inclusion Framework*

SKS reported that the E&IB had agreed the Equality & Inclusion Framework (EIDG/19/02) at its most recent meeting this included clarification on the relationship between E&IB and the Delivery Group and more general aspects of governance within the institution as well as setting overarching principles and commitments. Updated terms of reference and membership of the two groups were approved and included in the Framework documents.

RM emphasised that Delivery Group should also influence upwards to the Board. IS agreed, especially as the DG is currently the sole forum where colleagues can present and feedback on E&I issues. SKS explained that the way that individual sub-frameworks and action plans, such as the Race Equality framework and action plan, were established, originating with the DG and then progressing to the Board, demonstrated the two-way flow. LMP added that the regular report from DG to the E&IB ensures that the Board are aware of discussions and concerns within the DG and the reports back from the Board to the DG via its chair allow the DG to be assured that the Board has discussed any items raised.

*Race Equality Framework*

E&IB had also approved the general direction and priorities for the new Race Equality action plan. An updated version incorporating the changes made through these discussions had been circulated to the DG as IEDG/19/03. This document now explicitly recognises that issues of racism and racial harassment arise within the University and sets out a series of priority areas for action and some initial targets to be achieved on either a 3 – or 5-year timescale. The plan and relevant targets are aligned with the Student Access and Success strategy being developed through TSEB.

DR suggested allocating timescales to individual steps within the targets. SKS agreed that this was helpful and said that these would be developed in further consultations, especially for the larger, more complex activities.

VD highlighted the challenges in attracting diverse post-doctorate researchers (PDRAs) and suggested the establishment of a PDRA college. (There is a target of achieving the RG average for PDRAs which currently stands at 24% disclosure as BAME – the current figure of UoL is 22%.)

**ACTION**: CA agreed and will take this offline to discuss with VD – noting that a proposal might be developed to take to the DVC(R&I) and RIB and it would also be sensible to engage with the Leeds Doctoral College.

*Return to Campus Phase 1 and Working from Home – Equality Impact Assessments*

E&IB approved two EIAs (EIDG/19/04) now in place relating to University plans for responding to issues raised by Covid-19. The first EIA identified potential areas of differential impact based on protected characteristics for staff in the planned phase 1 of the return to working on campus for a small number of staff groups focussing on student recruitment, preparation for teaching delivery in the next academic session and some laboratory-based research. The second identified potential differential impacts arising from the on-going arrangements for working from home for all other staff. SKS noted that a number of ‘ad hoc’ meetings of the DG had been arranged to allow the staff networks and trades unions representatives to input to the development of these documents and that this had been very useful and contributed to ensuring all the key issues were captured. The documents also indicate where the actions introduced to counter the potential differential impacts are published.

SKS said that there are more Covid-related EIAs to come as further plans develop and will seek to arrange additional opportunities for DG members to input.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**HR specialist support action plan**

Jo Squires made a presentation to the Group on the key elements of the ‘HR Specialist Support Action Plan’ with particular focus on how the proposed activities will address issues in, and enhance, equality and inclusion in our processes, supporting our Race Equality action plan and the overall E&I Framework.

She explained that to address issues with recruitment, promotion, retention, etc, HR will establish a cohesive set of actions and approaches consistently across the institution. Planned activities include:

* Recruitment and selection – there are many strands of activity in the recruitment process and we are reviewing all, starting with how to attract more diverse applicants. HEIs are working together to address how to attract local people to explore job opportunities.
* Job descriptions and person specifications are currently quite traditional and the aim is to re-frame them to focus on potential rather than proven experience, to encourage diverse applicants.
* We need to increase the percentage of people who declare their personal characteristics. This is really important as it helps us identify which parts of which processes we really need re-think (for example, reward and promotions)
* Promotions procedures need to be more clearly explained so people know what is involved and how to get more information.
* We do have good policies but they are currently inconsistently applied.

IH highlighted that some equality data would not be available yet, as more gender choices have only just been introduced on Self-Service.

LMP pointed out that equality categories changed over time. She asked the group to agree to regular communications asking people to check and amend details.

AJ pointed out that some people may feel they do not fit into any of the categories offered or wish to be categorised.

CO said the current categories are based on HESA requirements, but the University was open to including more options. Feedback can be sent to EPU.

**ACTION:** feedback on current equality data categories can be sent to equality@leeds.ac.uk

RM agreed and said a ‘quick win’ was to include the message to update equality data in regular University communications.

VD agreed about the need for accurate data. EPS have identified a need to attract diverse candidates but selection and interview processes must also be more diversity aware.

IS commented that it was very encouraging to see such progress. As well as considering where policies were inconsistently applied, it was also important to identify areas where policies could be improved. She agreed that better communications were necessary, especially around promotions process.

JS said HR would be happy to deliver a series of ‘roadshows’ to highlight the promotions process as these have previously been successful in this regard, alongside regular, planned communications.

SKS thanked JS on behalf of the Group for her presentation.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Race Equality Action Plan**

SKS introduced a discussion on the priority areas of the Race Equality Action Plan. He said it was an important step that the document does now explicitly acknowledge that racism has existed and does exist within the University. IS said it was a positive step that mainly-white, mainly-male, privileged leadership has made this acknowledgement.

IS gave a presentation which included:

* data clarifying where UoL is now, e.g.: the disparity between BAME staff (12%) and BAME students (29%) and the implications this has for the student experience; the positive recruitment outcomes for white candidates against negative for BAME candidates (based on the difference between applications and appointments);
* a view of racism as a virus, which can help to approach and tackle racism in a more nuanced way;
* suggested actions around priority areas of rebuilding trust and increasing the percentage of BAME staff within the University.

IS suggested establishing a sub-group of the DG to take forward the Race Equality Action Plan, which Leeds11 should be involved in leading. She commented that the same support be put in place for Race as currently exists for Gender and Disability. Both gender and disability have academic centres but IS was unsure whether the critical mass of scholarship currently existed at Leeds to provide a strong intellectual basis to take this forward.

DR suggested that it was important to reflect on our own investment in whiteness, and the system of power led by white people. We need to be aware of insensitive messaging, e.g. the VC’s statement made about Black Lives Matter was felt by some to be insincere.

IS commented that a co-produced statement might have been more effective.

RM said it would be good way forward to use the staff networks as partners, and also asked how we could more effectively use the scholarship and learning of DG members.

KP asked how can we encourage BAME colleagues to take part in implementing the action plan without giving them more work to do? As an E&I Co-ordinator she found it difficult to be continually raising issues, as some colleagues don’t want disruption and they see E&I issues as doing this.

IS agreed this was an important point. She also suggested that HoS’s could have appraisals based on curriculum changes, BAME staff appointments/promotions, etc. Progress is not just about increasing the number of BAME people, but also increasing the number of people aware of BAME issues. The virus analogy shows that everyone plays a role in bringing about changes.

SKS thanked IS for her presentation and said that he and CAx would be working on revisions to the Race Equality Action Plan and would bring it to the September meeting of the DG. In the meantime, the plan will be communicated to UEG members and made available to all staff via the EPU webpages and a leadership article by the VC on the ForStaff webpage

**ACTIONS**: All DG members communicate the main elements of the Race Equality Action Plan to their constituencies and consider how they can continue to take this forward. SKS and CAx to engage further with key staff networks to develop the plan to bring back to the September meeting of the E&IDG if possible.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**EIA Phase 2 Return to Campus**

SKS said that work would begin shortly on EIA: Phase 2 return to campus. Sustainability are already conducting a further EIA on transport options for people returning to campus.

DR asked if there is a mandatory individual risk assessment for all BAME colleagues. LMP replied this is not the case but a questionnaire has been produced for Heads of School/Service to disseminate to their line managers to go through with staff members returning to campus, which will identify any particular issues and concerns that individuals may have. Occupational Health will also be involved if necessary.

LW asked if the impact of Covid-19 on research submissions – particularly those from women - was being considered.

SKS said this was being looked at and would be covered by a future EIA.

SKS explained that it is important for everyone to declare circumstances to help prepare campus so it is safe and welcoming for all colleagues, students and visitors.

IS agreed saying that if was clear that the virus had particularly affected BAME communities, and that it was necessary to quickly generate trust to encourage data completion.

**ACTION**: All comments on EIAs to be sent to SKS and/or equality@leeds.ac.uk

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Closing comments and agenda for next meeting**

SKS thanked the group for attending and for their contributions. The next meeting is on Friday 18 September, 10:00-12:00 noon. Group members can forward agenda items for consideration to SKS and/or equality@leeds.ac.uk