THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

**Equality and Inclusion Delivery Group**

Via Teams: Friday 30 October 2020, 10:00am -12:00 noon

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| **Attendees:** Stephen Scott (SKS), Robert Adams (RA), Dima Barakat Chami (DBC), Yoselin Benitez Alfonso (YBA), Lilith Brouwers (LB), Rachael Brown (RB), John Cheseldine (JC), Clare Coleman (CC), Vania Dimitrova (VD), Laila Fletcher (LF), Daisy Forster (DF), Lisa Hill (LH), Ceilan Hunter-Green (CH-G), Sue Kilminster (SK), Linda Mortimer Pine (LMP), Kate Nash (KN), Gillian Neild (GN), Claire Owen (CO), Kate Pangbourne (KP), Shereen Robinson (SR), Greig Sharman (GS), Iyiola Solanke (IS) Paul Taylor (PT), Emily Towler (ET), Lucinda Walker (LW), Sarah Ward (SW), Chris Warrington (CW), Luke Windsor (LW) Laura York (LY). |
| **Apologies received:** Caroline Ackroyd, Louise Banahene, Ruth Buller, Louise Bryant, Antonia Frezza, Kate Hardy, Ghazala Mir, Ian Robertson, Shereen Robinson, Anne Tallontire, Kerri Woods |
| **Introductory Business** |
| **Welcome**  SKS welcomed all to the meeting. |
| **Notes of previous meeting and actions**  The notes and action points from the last meeting were agreed and confirmed. |
| **Feedback from the E&I Board meeting 22/10/2020**  SKS provided feedback from the E&I Board meeting which took place on 22 October 2020. SKS informed the group that it was the first board meeting chaired by the new VC. She expressed her personal interest in and commitment to equality and the importance of supporting E&I work across the University. The VC indicated she was impressed by the progress the University has made in its work on E&I compared to other institutions.  It was noted that the E&I Board will define the overall E&I priorities for the University.  The Board wanted to ensure the E&IDG focused on:   * priorities engaging a wide range of staff; * delivering fewer priorities to completion at a high standard rather than trying to do too much; * demonstrable impact of actions the E&IDG takes forward. |
| **E&I Budget Report**  LMP provided a report on the potential sources of funding for E&I activity across the University. It was noted that budgeting at the University is a devolved matter.  In light of the pandemic and the changing financial landscape, expenditure at the University has been significantly impacted. There is limited funding across the University and it will be important to consider how E&I activity is supported in the coming years. Staff recruitment is now being considered more closely. Heads of Schools and Services are being asked to look more prudently at their non-staff expenditure.  The University’s annual IPE exercise is where faculties and services set out what they are seeking to achieve over the coming year and how they hope to achieve it. It is also the place where additional funding can be requested. It will be important to position E&I as an integral part of University business to ensure its inclusion in IPE plans. |
| **Strategy and delivery** |
| **E&I Communications plan (EIDG/20/11)**  GN introduced their paper on the E&I Communications Plan. The aim of the Communications Plan is to increase awareness and embedded E&I into the daily fabric of University life. This will require the delivery of timely E&I related messages through known and used communication channels. It will also provide the opportunity to demonstrate externally that the University is driving change in the sector.  The communications plan highlighted opportunities for sharing useful content such as the use of personal pronouns and how the University is striving to be a more inclusive environment.  The group was asked to provide feedback on the plan at a later date. It was noted that GN will be setting up a working group and asked for expressions of interest to join.  **Action:** DG members were asked to provide feedback on the Communications Plan  **Action**: DG members were asked to contact Gillian if they were interested in participating in the Communications Plan working group. |
| **Incident Reporting project – group work** Notes from the group work can be found at Appendix 1. |
| **Institutional Athena SWAN submission: Action Plan (EIDG/20/12)**  In Louise Bryant’s absence, SKS provided a progress report on the Institutional Athena SWAN submission and action plan. It was noted that the application is due in on 27 November although a further short extension has been applied for. The University is applying for a bronze award and the associated actions would primarily focus on academic staff. The action plan has been written in consultation with staff across the University and brings together other E&I related frameworks and action plans. The impacts of COVID-19 would also be included in the action plan.  RB commented that after taking the action plan to the E&I Board additional actions had been suggested by the VC.  SKS asked the group for feedback on the action plan. A member of the group suggested that the Professional Services E&I Committee membership should be open to all levels and both part-time and full-time staff. |
| **Other items** |
| **Items for next meeting**   * Helena Brown asked that the University consider joining the group Black British Academics in STEM. * VD suggested that OD&PL and the Doctoral College are invited to deliver an agenda item on the research Concordat. * IS asked that the group discuss the additional stress and workload adjustments on women at the University. * It was also requested that the Disability Framework should be discussed at the next meeting. |

The next meeting is on Wednesday 9 December, 10.00 am – 12.00 noon.

**Appendix 1**

Reporting project

Initial scoping: ‘pain points’ and ‘need to haves’.

Outcomes from discussions at E&IDG

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| Problems with current system/processes | New system/processes should have |
| **Visibility and access**  Not visible. Information not in obvious places and not clear.  Do staff and students use the same processes?  Where do PGRs fit – student or staff systems and can it vary with the complaint?  It’s not clear if individuals have both a staff and a student role, which reporting system should they use  Where is support/guidance for staff (TUs, other?)  Processes currently operated by Secretariat but this area of University not well known or understood – perhaps could ‘introduce’ Secretariat as a function (and perhaps the people involved) more effectively and explain what it does.  Onus on staff and students to go looking for information on reporting rather than it being readily available. | **Visibility and access**  Processes and information must be visible, well sign-posted from places people would expect to look for them.  Publicise that these exist and where to find and how to use them. Posters as well as web-based. Include in induction.  Advice on when/how to use from ‘trusted persons’ – Ombudsman? Could start with an informal stage to see if a complaint is the right way forward.  Clear reporting process for colleagues without computer access.  Greater training opportunities to increase awareness of inappropriate behaviour and how to report it. |
| **Process and support**  Slow. Bureaucratic. Off-putting.  Not clear that anything is happening.  Is there a process for staff to complain about students for non-academic issues? How does this relate to the Student Cases Team?  A system based heavily on tick boxes isn’t very flexible – allow for more free-form text.  What support is available to a complainant?  Not clear what support is available to the person/team collating the complaints?  Do panels give more credence to management side rather than complainant in the first instance. (It can feel like there is a built in power imbalance.) | **Process and support**  ‘First responders’ who can support individuals if mental health issue is flagged early.  Investigators should be clearly impartial, trained and should be drawn from a range of characteristics – empathy with complainant.  Investigations should be seen to be unbiased and treat complainant and respondent equally.  Processes should be transparent: complainants should be kept informed of progress etc.  Provide clear timescales and detailed information so complainants know what to expect at each step of process.  Provide flow charts of the process.  Processes should be timely.  Manage expectations.  Different mechanisms for different levels of reporting – formal but also informal route to logging ‘small’ issues just to record.  Same underpinning systems for all staff and students? But ‘user feel’ of front pages may need to be different.  Balance between anonymity but also need to provide information that allows University to follow up/investigate and to analyse and report on uptake. |
| **Outcomes**  No information about outcomes.  How can a series of small incidents be reported effectively – is a record kept if a series of complaints are filed over time against the same individual?  Concern over ‘comeback’ if someone complains against their manager/senior person in their area. | **Outcomes**  Ensure complainant feels ‘heard’ – some element of feedback at the end of the process (within GDPR).  Clear on ‘no victimisation’ whatever the outcome.  Provide information to allow annual reporting with reports broken down by complaint type and by staff/student and by characteristics.  Organisational learning from these reports to change behaviours and prevent further incidents. Some version of the reports to be made available to all staff and students for transparency.  Clarification of what would be expected from a successful reporting process, i.e. initially an increase in the number of reports due to ease of reporting and confidence in process, then a decline once issues are addressed. |