UNIVERSITY OF FORWARD THINKING WESTMINSTER

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 2PM IN C1.15/16, CAVENDISH

PRESENT:		
	Professor D Anand (Co-Chair)	C Lloyd
	Dr D Husbands (Co-Chair)	P Mashumba
	D Airan	S Owen
	C Benyon (up to Minute 24.22)	C Peterson
	J Boston	S Razzaq
	Professor M Dwek	Dr C Robertson
	Professor V Gillies	R Shah[1]
	E Johnson	Dr C Smith
	Dr K Juddoo	J Smith (up to Minute 24.28)
	M Jula	Dr N Weingarten

IN ATTENDANCE:		
	S Bacquet (Observer)	Dr S Jarvis (Minute 24.23)
	W Bakry (Minute 24.29)	N Joban (Minute 24.29)
	K Brown (Observer, up to Minute 24.28)	F Kolyda (Minute 24.29)
	M Chan (Secretary)	S Mathew (Observer)
	S Dias (Minute 24.29)	Dr A Pitchford (Minute 24.23)
	K Dodd (Minute 24.23)	L Sitkin (Minute 24.29)

APOLOGIES:		
	S Bunbury	Dr S Kehoe
	D de Silva	C Molloy

24.18. ANNOUNCEMENTS

24.18.1. **Welcome:** The Co-Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, especially

- Steven Owen, Director of Membership Services of the University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) and James Boston, EDI Accreditations Project Lead, as this is their first in person meeting of the Committee.
- Kitty Brown, Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance, and Sylvie Bacquet and Sudha Mathew, School EDI Leads, to observe the meeting.

24.18.2. Members noted that Matthew Linfoot has stepped down as a Co-Chair of the Faith Network and the Network is currently in the process of electing a new Co-Chair.

24.18.3. **Apologies:** Members noted apologies as recorded above.

24.18.4. **AOB and starred items:** Members did not request to add any items to the agenda or to discuss the starred items.

24.18.5. **Declarations of interest:** The Co-Chair confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.

24.18.6. Members suggested adding the Decision Time link to the Outlook invite to facilitate access to the agenda and papers.

24.18.6.1. **ACTION Committee Secretary** to include the Decision Time link in future Outlook invites.

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[1] Attended via Teams

24.19.   CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

24.19.1.   The Co-Chairs provided an update on key activities since the last meeting:

- Various EDI programmes and events, along with the Westminster Café events, were successfully held through collaboration between the EDI interns, School EDI Champions, International Student Champions, the EDI Officer and other colleagues.
- A two-year Quintin Hogg Trust (QHT) funding application has been submitted with a primary focus on multiple empowerment programmes as well as initiatives that will cover sustainable development goals, Zone29 and international internships. The outcome is expected by the end of April 2025.
- Potential collaborations with UUK (Universities UK) on community cohesion and London Higher on Black Lives Matter commitments.
- Upcoming events include the Challenging Racism Conference in May 2025 and the EDI Open Forum in June 2025.
- The next meeting has been rescheduled, and the 2025/26 meeting dates have been shared.

24.19.2.   A member noted that the rescheduled meeting date conflicts with the Students' Voice Forum, which may affect attendance.

24.19.3.   A member requested a list of the School EDI Champions.

24.19.3.1. **ACTION EDI Officer** to provide the School EDI Champions list to the member**.**

24.19.4.   James Boston, EDI Accreditations Project Lead, and Miriam Dwek, Chair of the Research and Knowledge Exchange EDI Subcommittee, provided an update on the Athena Swan application:

- A self-assessment team and four working groups have been established.
- A university-wide survey will be conducted, followed by interviews and focus group discussions.
- Suggestions for improving data collection to enhance the University database and support charter purposes are welcome.

24.19.5.   A member emphasised the importance of data intersectionality to identify gaps within a unified database.

24.20.   EDI ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

24.20.1.   Clare Peterson, EDI Manager, presented the draft EDI annual report 2023/24 (EDI 250205A).

24.20.2.   In response to a query on data disclosure, the EDI Manager noted that 'sexual orientation' and 'religion and belief' had the highest non-disclosure rates, 'disability' had low disclosure, while 'race' and 'gender' had full disclosure.

24.20.3.   The EDI Manager reported ongoing discussions within the People, Culture and Wellbeing (PCW) directorate to streamline data collection for improved reporting.

24.20.4.   With reference to the pay gap data in the Summary of Progress 2023/24 section, a member suggested providing more context in future reports to enhance clarity.

24.20.5.   A member expressed concern over the absence of EDI-related actions in the report to explain the data. The Co-Chair noted that actions are usually addressed through the EDI Action Plan.

24.20.6.   Responding to a question on the report's relevance to Colleges, the Co-Chair advised the EDI Manager and her team to engage with Colleges on its implications.

24.20.7.   **AGREED** The EDI annual report 2023/24 to be submitted to the University Executive Board.

24.21.   PEOPLE STRATEGY DIVERSITY PAY GAP KPI UPDATE AND ANALYSIS OF 2024 DATA

24.21.1.   The EDI Manager presented the report on colleagues' demographic profiles 2024 (EDI 250205B).

24.21.2.   The EDI Manager explained that the gender pay gap reflects horizontal occupational segregation, with men overrepresented in senior roles and women in junior positions. The EDI Manager also noted that the calculation differs from the Government's gender pay gap reporting guidelines.

24.21.3.   A member observed that the data on different professorial levels suggested a promotion disparity for women professors. The Co-Chair highlighted that the key challenge lies in promotion from Level C to higher levels and had raised the Professors A/B vs C gap with the Heads of Colleges, encouraging them to advocate for promotion when a Level C woman professor exceeds the role's requirements.

24.21.4.   A member reported hearing about complaints from women lecturers about misogyny in a specific school, while another member expressed concern over inequities as reflected in the Colleague Wellbeing survey outcomes. The Co-Chair encouraged colleagues to direct those with complaints to the available processed offered through People, Culture, and Wellbeing (PCW).

24.21.5.   A member urged bold actions to address the ethnicity pay gap, which has remained unchanged for five years. The EDI Manager attributed the gap to the underrepresentation of racially minoritised groups and stressed the need for a five-year strategy with clear priorities, targeted measures and Committee-led monitoring for greater impact.

24.21.6.   A member asked about efforts to improve sexual orientation disclosure, noting recent progress as shown in the EDI annual report. The EDI Manager cited organisational culture and labour-intensive data collection process as the key challenges. The EDI Manager added that PCW is currently tendering for a new recruitment system to enhance data collection.

24.21.7.   A member highlighted the importance of intersectionality in fostering a truly inclusive community and reporting. The EDI Manager acknowledged its significance and committed to incorporating it into future discussions but stressed the need for meaningful data presentation for effective use.

24.22.   KEY ISSUES: DIVERSITY AND THE WORKFORCE / EDI COLLEAGUE DEVELOPMENT

24.22.1.   Pela Mashumba, Associate Director of Organisational Development (OD), updated members on EDI colleague development:

- Ongoing unconscious bias programmes covering safeguarding, Prevent, progression, bystander intervention and Green Dot. A new Wellbeing Lead will soon be on board to oversee these activities.
- A disability awareness programme launching in March 2025 following a pilot.
- New e-learning courses, including sexual harassment training, to be introduced for colleagues.
- The Women in Higher Education Network (WHEN) programme launching in mid-February 2025 as a positive action to support career progression of Black women academics.

24.22.2.   Addressing queries on WHEN, the Associate Director (OD) clarified that:

- It is exclusively for Black women academics, not the broader BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethic) group. The Co-Chair further explained that Black women of African diaspora are the most under-represented in the sector with less than 0.2% of the professoriate (74 black women professors).
- The programme has received 38 applications, with selection involving an internal review followed by external shortlisting.

24.22.3.   A member shared insights from another successful programme, emphasising that targeted approaches lead to greater success.

24.22.4. The Co-Chair queried the take-up rate of the EDI colleague development programmes to assess colleagues' comfort in participating in EDI development.

24.22.4.1. **ACTION Associate Director (OD) and Committee Secretary** to share the EDI development programmes participation data with members.

24.22.5. Noting the development of the sexual harassment toolkit in the School of Social Sciences (together with the 1752 Group) and the University's application of a mental health charter led by the Head of Student Support and Residential Life (SSRL), the Co-Chair advised the Associate Director (OD) to collaborate with the School and the Head (SSRL) to advance sexual harassment training for colleagues.

24.22.6. The EDI Manager noted efforts to ensure that University data does not mask disparities at local levels, providing more meaningful and informative data on diversity and promotion for the Committee and the wider University.

24.22.7. The Co-Chair concluded that a targeted, holistic approach is key to EDI success and emphasised the importance of intersectionality and differences. The Co-Chair also noted that current data does not capture the promotion gap between UK-born and non-UK-born colleagues.

24.23. KEY ISSUES: STUDENT INCLUSITIVITY, APP AND STUDENTS' UNION

24.23.1. Krystal Douglas Dodd, Impact and Evaluation Officer (IEO); Andy Pitchford, Head of Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI), and Divanshu Airan, UWSU President presented the Access and Participation Plan (APP) evaluation framework and strategy, CETI's EDI work and the UWSU's inclusivity activities.

24.23.2. The UWSU Director of Membership Services updated the Committee on UWSU's work around access and participation including facilitating voting in the coming UWSU election, the use and triangulation of student data, and the setting up of priority groups on key APP-identified areas.

24.23.3. Sal Jarvis, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC), Education emphasised that the APP serves as the University's EDI education plan, aiming to achieve equity in education and impacting the next Teaching Excellence Framework assessment.

24.23.4. Responding to a question on decolonisation, the Head (CETI) commended the student partnership team's cutting-edge work in co-creation and decolonisation, as reflected in a paper to the School of Social Sciences. The Head (CETI) also mentioned a broader initiative on pedagogies for social justice, demonstrating connections between the student partnership team and similar groups across the UK and beyond.

24.23.5. In relation to a query on linking authentic assessment with CETI's work to avoid double assessment and recognise students' achievements, the Head (CETI) noted the benefits but stressed the need for more communications across the University for permission and implementation.

24.23.6. A member asked about whether the QHT-funded co-creation programmes are linked to the APP and the level of student participation in the programmes. The DVC (Education) explained that the APP targets specific interventions, while the IEO highlighted the need for evaluation and best practice sharing. A member suggested timetabling the programmes to improve participation. The Head (CETI) noted that CETI is now auditing timetables, with similar initiatives underway in the Westminster Business School.

24.23.7. In response to a query on cascading the APP and intervention plans to Colleges and Schools, the IEO noted the plan to start with data development followed by communications with Colleges and Schools for implementation from September 2025.

24.23.8. A member suggested joining the APP with PCW to develop specialised modules to support students, similar to those modules embedded with Prevent and safeguarding principles.

24.23.9.   The Co-Chair acknowledged the challenges in delivering the APP but appreciated CETI's innovative approach and the continuous rollout of tailored programmes.

24.23.10.   The Co-Chair expressed gratitude to the EDI Officer for leading and coordinating the EDI student leads in supporting EDI initiatives.

24.23.11.   The Co-Chair thanked the team for their contributions and engagement in the discussion.

24.24.   UPDATES ON MEMBERS' EDI ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE COMMITTEE

24.24.1.   Members shared updates on recent or on-going activities aimed at strengthening EDI efforts in the wider University community, through both work-related and personal initiatives.

24.25.   MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

24.25.1.   **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 9 October 2024 (Document EDI 250205C) as an accurate record.

24.25.2.   Members noted progress on actions from previous meetings (Document EDI 250205D), confirmed completed items and noted that the Associate Director (OD) will bring a proposal on the cultural competency farmwork to the next meeting for members' comments.

24.25.2.1. **ACTION Committee Secretary** to include cultural competency framework on the agenda for the meeting to be held on 19 March 2025.

24.26.   ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24.26.1.   Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.

24.27.   SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS 2024/25

24.27.1.   Members noted the updated schedule of business 2024/25 (Document EDI 250205E).

24.28.   DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

19 March 2025
23 July 2025

All meetings take place between 2.00pm and 5.00pm and are held in person.

24.29.   EDI STRATEGY REFRESH WORKSHOP

24.29.1.   Members and the School EDI Leads participated in a 45-minute workshop, led by the EDI Manager and the EDI Accreditations Project Lead, to discuss a proposal for the EDI Strategy refresh that will be considered by the EDI Committee later.