

**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MAY 2024 AT 2PM IN ROOM MG38, 35 MARYLEBONE ROAD LONDON NW1 5LS.**

PRESENT:	Professor D Anand (Co-Chair) Dr D Husbands (Co-Chair) T Bangia S Bunbury D de Silva Professor V Gillies Dr K Juddoo	C Lloyd (up to minute 23.54) P Mashumba S Razzaq R Shah J Smith R Tully
IN ATTENDANCE:	Trishna Patki (Minutes) Zahra Surooprajally	Dr Seagh Kehoe (Q+ network Co-Chair)
APOLOGIES:	C Benyon Professor P Catterall M Chan (Secretary) M Linfoot	C Molloy C Robertson Dr C Smith Dr N Weingarten

**23.50. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 23.50.1. **Welcome:** The Co-Chairs welcomed members and attendees to the meeting. The Co-Chairs thanked the President of the Students' Union for her valuable contribution to the EDI Committee.
- 23.50.2. **Apologies:** Apologies and absences were noted as above.
- 23.50.3. **Declaration of Interest:** The Co-Chair confirmed that there were no declarations of interest.
- 23.50.4. **AOB and starred items:** A member requested an AOB item for a review of the children on campus policy as requested by Women of Westminster members.
- 23.50.5. There was no request to discuss starred items.

**23.51. CO-CHAIR'S REPORT**

- 23.51.1. Members heard the following updates on the recent activities and progress made since the last meeting from the Co-Chairs:
  - Midterm review of University EDI Strategy shared with Court of Governors and the Governance and Nominations Committee. There will be an end-of-year review of the EDI Action plan item at the next meeting.
  - Current Quintin Hogg Trust (QHT) funding for EDI Programme ends in July 2024. Funding bid for next year for EDI programme for one year has been successful. We have to apply again after this period.
  - There are various training programmes facilitated by Organisation Development (OD) for the Professional Services (PS) Colleague leads to help them settle into their roles. PS leads will be invited to meet PS Directors through the office of USCOO (University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer).
  - The following EDI roles have been advertised for recruitment - EDI Officer, EDI Accreditations Project Lead, EDI Manager. Student EDI Champion role will be discussed during the EDI Forum on 5 June.
  - Invitation to members to participate in the EDI Open Forum on 5 June 2024, the Queering Academia, Intersectionally Conference on 28 June and the Pride Parade on 29 June.

- Impact of EDI on the University discussed with the UEB (14 May). Co-Chairs discussed various issues, achievements and challenges and pointed out that there is a general view within the EDI Committee that there is inconsistent buy in for EDI work and the role of middle management in enabling their teams to support and participate in EDI activities is vital. Co-Chairs are hopeful that the UEB members will take action to improve colleagues' participation. Some additional actions can be determined at the EDI open forum as well.

23.51.1.1. **ACTION EDI Officer** to prepare the Annual EDI Action Plan for presentation at the July meeting of the EDI Committee.

23.51.1.2. **ACTION EDI Officer** to introduce the three PS EDI leads to the USCOO

## 23.52. KEY ISSUES IN EDI – NETWORKS' PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2024/25

23.52.1. The representatives of each network provided a short presentation about their priorities and challenges.

23.52.2. Faith Spirituality & Belief Network priorities:

- Suggestion to include a free text box for the 'other faith' option in all surveys so that colleagues may be able to inform us of the faith they believe in, which are currently unrepresented.
- Discussions with People Culture and Wellbeing (PCW) on Islamicness and Jewishness being an ethnicity or faith.
- Religious calendar for student, teaching and assessment for next year to revisit any notable days and addressing course leaders' awareness for religious observance dates for implications on assessments.
- Encouraging review and refurb of faith spaces across all campuses.
- Capacity building.

23.52.3. Disability Network update: (Document EDI 240529A)

- Work has started on accreditations for disability.
- In the wellbeing survey, questions on disability were included for the first time.
- Disability awareness module pilot project will go live in September.
- The inclusive recruitment online application can be improved further to make it more accessible.
- Colleague disability network meeting on 30 May 2024.
- Need recommendation from the EDI Committee for a working group for safety and wellbeing.

23.52.4. Q+ Network priorities and challenges:

- Allocate hours to all committee members and not only co-chairs for participation in the network activities.
- Revisit decision-making within the Network on participation in major initiatives
- Secure gender neutral toilets on every campus.
- Speed up the process of changing of names in the University system.
- There is a concern about only binary options available on log in page.
- There is a concern about the current volume of events advertisements, news items and other generic central communications posted in the Network Teams chat. We suggest exploring the development of a different Teams space for these communications.

23.52.5. BME Network priorities:

- Invite senior management to engage more with the network with a focus on accountability
- To have a centralised administration team for all networks and dedicated staff for each network.
- To grow and develop the network and have allies.

Challenges:

- Sustain energy and engagement within the network.
- Find another medium for communication rather than using Teams chat.
- Encouraging PS colleagues to participate more in the network.
- Bringing a culture change so that colleagues planning events for particular groups do not need to provide explanation.

23.52.6. Women of Westminster (WoW) network:

- Priority - Secure more hours allocated for participation in network activities and get senior management engagement.

- WoW network is managing projects rather than working groups.
- Challenges - Securing admin support for WoW events, increasing awareness and participation in WoW activities and encouraging active involvement.
- Suggestion - Arrange drop-in sessions where the Co-Chairs are available and colleagues can approach when they have availability.

- 23.52.7. The EDI Committee Co-Chairs and members discussed:
- networks face common challenges and some networks have become redundant after covid.
  - importance of securing resources and utilising the allocated finance for networks.
  - encouraging participation and maintaining energy within the networks is essential.
  - whether network teams chat is a safe space for everyone, including managers, or is there a need to have guidelines or Code of Conduct for members to communicate using Teams chat.
  - information and questions about networks to be included in Colleague Wellbeing and Engagement Survey.

23.52.7.1. **ACTION Network Co-Chairs** to email their priorities and challenges to the Secretary of the EDI Committee after the EDI Open Forum and to develop action plans based on these priorities.

23.52.7.2. **ACTION Associate Director of OD** to consider including network related questions in the Colleague Wellbeing and Engagement Survey.

### 23.53. COLLEAGUE DEVELOPMENT AND EDI

23.53.1. Members received an update on the key priorities to deliver the People Strategy from the Associate Director of Organisation Development (OD):

- Focus groups - Planned by OD and PCW Team. Dates have been announced.
- Professional Development Review (PDR) - Provide training to colleagues to deliver excellence through the revised PDR process. Questions in the PDR have been refreshed and tools using AI have been introduced to prepare colleagues for PDR conversations. Information sessions for managers and colleagues are available. Colleagues can now upload their files to show evidence on progress against their objectives.
- Leadership development - Development programmes for leaders with enhanced content are available. The team is looking to develop programmes for colleagues who are keen to take up leadership positions. It is important to communicate these programmes to the networks.
- Westminster Academy - The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Head of College, Westminster Business School (WBS) and Pro Vice-Chancellor are leading the launch of Westminster Academy in September 2024 where courses from all colleges be will consolidated and available.
- Colleague Wellbeing and Engagement Survey - Questions were on track with the Being Westminster strategy. Responses were up to 51%. The responses are being considered and the team is taking comments of colleagues on board to get action steps.
- Go Westminster Awards - Event on 17 June celebrating contributions and achievements of colleagues. This will become an annual event.
- EDI Challenge - To encourage Aurora programme alumni to take leadership positions in WoW and other networks to develop the coaching they have gained through the programme.

23.53.1.1. **ACTION Associate Director (OD)** to provide an update on the Wellbeing Survey EDI questions to the committee in the July 2024 meeting of the EDI Committee.

23.53.1.2. **ACTION Associate Director (OD)** to provide an update on the responses to EDI questions in the PDR form in November 2024 meeting of the EDI Committee.

### 23.54. OVERVIEW OF EDI PROGRAMMES 2023/24

23.54.1. Members received update on the EDI programmes in 2023/24 (Document EDI 240529B)

23.54.2. The Event Manager and EDI Programme Co-ordinator explained the four Strands: Strand 1 - Students Union, Strand 2 - Major events, Strand 3 - Projects, Strand 4 - Capacity building.

23.54.3. The team held 50 major events with the support of over 49 colleagues, students and volunteers. Various colleague-focused EDI training and student programmes were held to encourage cultural

change within UoW.

- 23.54.4. Members discussed the question of how to measure culture change:
- Need for a baseline to compare, however baseline is subjective as student body changes continuously.
  - Culture change is intangible and difficult to measure quantitatively.
  - If colleagues and students have a sense of belonging when working or studying at the University, this shows culture change.

**23.54.4.1. ACTION Co-Chair of the WoW network** to explore a bespoke careers and empowerment programme for Asian female students to be run by someone from WOW. This will be funded through QHT EDI Programme.

23.54.5. A Co-Chair provided update on the programmes, festivals and events through the QHT Community and Communities 2023/24 and informed members that they have approval for three new international students' champion roles.

- 23.54.6. Members discussed:
- lack of scholarships for International students and whether scholarships are driven by university priorities.
  - number of surveys students are expected to participate in and if it is possible to collate the surveys and reduce the number.
  - possibility of paying external speakers without using the payroll route

**23.54.6.1. ACTION Event Manager and EDI Programme Co-ordinator** to contact the Deputy Director of Finance to check for available ways to pay the external speakers.

## **23.55. UPDATE ON MEMBERS' EDI ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE COMMITTEE**

- 23.55.1. Members shared the activities that they have recently been involved with to strengthen the EDI work in the wider University community.
- Philanthropic partnership with groups in Barbados encouraging alumni relationships and PhD studentship
  - Engaging and celebrating Refugee week 17 -23 June
  - Black History Year Create initiative
  - Demographic questions being included in wellbeing survey
  - Period Poverty (free sanitary products across the campus)
  - Refurbishment of prayer and contemplation rooms in Marylebone campus
  - Addressing gender pay gaps
  - Trans allyship training
  - Planning series of leadership programme workshops for EDI leads
  - Green workshop planned for July 24 - EDI and sustainability initiative
  - Securing funding for EDI activities
  - Wow mentoring programme 2023-24

## **23.56. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 23.56.1. **AGREED** Members confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 20 March 2024 (Document EDI 240529C) as an accurate record.
- 23.56.2. Members noted a summary of progress in actions from previous meetings (Document EDI 240529D) and confirmed the completed actions.

## **23.57. SCHEDULE OF BUSINESS**

- 23.57.1. Members noted the updated schedule of business 2023/24 (Document EDI 240529E).

## **23.58. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

24 July 2024  
9 October 2024

13 November 2024  
5 February 2025  
19 March 2025  
4 June 2025  
23 July 2025

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

**23.59. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 23.59.1. Concerns were raised by a member on behalf of colleagues that although the University has a Children on Campus policy, there is not much help available. Colleagues' concerns included cost of living increase, health and safety issues in the buildings and university calendar not matching the school holiday calendar.
- 23.59.1.1. **ACTION Co-Chair of the WoW network** to contact the Clerk to the Court of Governors and Head of University Governance to discuss the process of re-consideration of the Children on Premises policy.