



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

8 November 2023

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present Members: Professor Alison Koslowski, Pro-Provost (Equity and Inclusion) (Chair).

Maysaa Abboud (for Alan Harper); Professor Nick Achilleos; Dr Simona Aimar; Indie Beedie; Noël Caliste; Donna Dalrymple; Professor Rob de Bruin; Marie Gallagher (for Sarah Cowls); Micah Gerstner; Lesley Houfe; Ahmad Ismail; Dr Rebecca Jennings; Denise Long; Bella Malins; Dr Nephtali Marina-Gonzalez; Dr Lucinda Miller; Professor Sara Mole; Hayah Nawaz (for Rebecca Whitham); Dr Martin Oliver; Dr Michael Sulu; Anji Suri.

Apologies: Elisa de Aragao Bibay; Dr Suzy Buckley; Georgina Cade; Sarah Cowls; Anna Cox; Ian Dancy; Rebecca Edwards; Dr Michele Farmer; Sasha Green; Alan Harper; Angel Ma; Seyi Osi; Dr Sara Shafiei; Manon Simmons; Catherine Stow; Harper Taylor-Hanson; Rebecca Whitham; Professor Ifat Yasin; Callie Yoo; SU People of Colour Officer (Rachel Lim/Rawleka Wilson); SU Disabled Students' Officer (Philip Greger/Suzanna Chen).

In Attendance: Megan Gerrie (observer, President & Provost's Office); Ben Watson, (Head of Digital Accessibility) [for minute 5]; Sarah West, (observer, Legal Services); Tor Wright (ELEP Project Manager) [for minute 6].

Secretary: Nick McGhee (acting).

Part I: Preliminary Business

1 CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (Paper 1-01)

- 1.1 EDI Committee received its Terms of Reference and constitution, noting the appointment of Professor Alison Koslowski as Pro-Provost (Equity and Inclusion) and therefore as Chair of EDI Committee.
- 1.2 The Committee approved two proposed changes to the constitution for submission to UMC for approval.

2 MINUTES

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 19 July 2023 [UMC Minutes 31-42, 2022-23] were approved, subject to the following amendment to minute 36.2b:

It was observed that the structure of the Working Group had differed from similar Groups operating with UCL's EDI provision which included those with lived experience. The Chair responded by noting the Working Group membership as proposed included those whose roles would allow them to help influence and progress practical actions. The consultation process to develop an action plan would allow those with lived experience to contribute by seeking their views and suggestions about improvements. This was a deliberate approach in terms of attempting to have concerns addressed and actions formulated in a new way. Members suggested that this approach might be included in communications regarding the Working Group's nature and purpose.

Part II: Matters for Discussion

3 DIRECTOR OF EDI – UPDATE (Paper 1-02)

- 3.1 EDIC noted the new way of working in the EDI team whereby individual EDI Manager roles would be responsible for thematic areas across protected characteristics, rather than for individual protected characteristics themselves. There were a number of advantages to this approach including more effective and efficient working, greater opportunities for personal development and an increased focus on intersectionality. It was intended that EDI Managers would also fulfil EDI Liaison roles which would be modelled largely on the HR Business Partners structure in terms of coverage across faculties and departments. These roles would act as the first point of contact for queries from the relevant areas.
- 3.2 The new Religion & Belief Equality Working Group and the Disability Equality Implementation Group were due to meet shortly for the first time, and would commence work on the development of an action plan in their respective areas.
- 3.3 EDIC noted the recent relaunch of the Inclusive Advocacy Scheme. Members noted there had been some issues around the scheme in the past in respect of how it had been launched and senior commitment. The relaunch would present a chance to progress and improve upon those.
- 3.4 Members noted progress on the Disagreeing Well Project and were advised of the approach taken by the SU, including 'Impartial Chairs' training and the development of community guidance on running Disagreeing Well events. Noting concerns expressed by marginalised groups, members discussed the importance of clarity between Disagreeing Well and actions which constituted an attack on an individual's identity. The Director of EDI would discuss this matter further with the SU LGBTQ+ Officer outside the meeting. An update on

work on Safer Spaces [EDIC Minute 17.2m, 22.02.23] would be brought to the next meeting.

Action – Lesley Houfe

- 3.5 It was noted that the LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group had produced new role descriptions. Members requested further information on this so that other steering groups could learn from it.

Action – Noel Caliste

- 3.6 Members flagged a potential link-up between the upcoming 'Respect and Inclusion' training module and the SU's Active Bystander programme. The Director of EDI would raise this possibility with the team.

Action – Lesley Houfe

- 3.7 The Director thanked Gerard Jones for his work on secondment to the fixed-term role of EDI / LEIG Manager, noting his instrumental role in the development of the LGBTQ+ action plan.

4 ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION REPORT (Paper 1-03)

- 4.1 EDIC noted the proposed approach and timetable for development of an EDI Strategy. In 2023/24 this would involve a strategic review of EDI across the institution, including looking at roles, resources and structures and at the remit of EDIC itself. This would then enable a more informed consultation on an institutional strategy during 2024/25.

5 DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.1 The Head of Digital Accessibility briefed the EDI committee on the Digital Accessibility Policy, developed in response to the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications (No.2)) regulations. The Policy sought to ensure that UCL evaluated the accessibility of its products and services to inform planning for improvements, promoting accessibility in any new products and features, and where necessary advocating for improvements with suppliers. EDIC welcomed UCL's partnership with RNIB to create a standard contract wording to ensure accessibility in procured products and services, and noted the potential for this to be rolled out across the sector to maximise impact.
- 5.2 EDIC noted the potential contribution of the Digital Accessibility team at an early stage on the development of an equality impact assessment tool. The Director of EDI would pick up on this accordingly.

6 EUGENICS LEGACY EDUCATION PROJECT (Paper 1-04)

- 6.1 EDIC reviewed the Eugenics Legacy Education Project report for the period April-August 2023, including the development of a framework for teaching and learning, and a series of staff resources and development events.

- 6.2 The Committee noted the potential for crossover with the Disagreeing Well project and the potential for linkage with the Bicentenary (see Minute 7).

Part III: Other Business for information or approval

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1. EDIC discussed the potential for a legacy of the UCL bicentenary with an EDI element. There had already been some engagement with the Pro-Provost (Bicentennial) on the issue. The EDIC chair had been invited to join the Steering Group on the Bicentenary and would report back.

Action – Professor Alison Koslowski

- 7.2 EDIC welcomed the news that Lesley Houfe had agreed to stay at UCL in her current role for the rest of the academic year.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 8.1 13 December 2023, 10:00-11:30.

Nick McGhee
Tel: [+44] (0)20 3108 8217
Email: n.mcghee@ucl.ac.uk