



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

24 May 2023

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present Members Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost (Chair)

Professor Nick Achilleos, Indie Beedie, Dr Suzy Buckley, Donna Dalrymple, Ian Dancy, Professor Rob de Bruin, Rebecca Edwards, Alan Harper, Lesley Houfe, Dr Rebecca Jennings, Denise Long, Angel Ma, Dr Nephtali Marina-Gonzalez, Dr Lucinda Miller, Professor Sara Mole, Dr Martin Oliver, Seyi Osi, Dr Sara Shafiei, Dr Michael Sulu, Becky Whitham, Professor Ifat Yasin.

Apologies: Dr Simona Aimar, Georgina Cade, Noël Caliste, Sarah Cows, Anna Cox, Professor Vanessa Diaz, Rebecca Edwards, Dr Michele Farmer, Sasha Green, Bella Malins, Manon Simmons, Harper Taylor-Hanson, Callie Yoo.

In Attendance: Megan Gerrie, Director, Projects & Planning; Gerard Jones, EDI Manager (LGBTQ+ Equality Implementation Group) (for minute 27); Professor Helen Knowler, academic lead for the Eugenics Legacy Education Project (for minute 28); Nick McGhee (acting secretary); Fiona Naughton, Legal Counsel; Ciara Wright (attending for Anna Cox).

Part I: Preliminary Business

23. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- 23.1. EDIC approved the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2023 [EDIC Minutes 13-22, 22.02.23].

24. Matters Arising

- 24.1. Minute 17.2f-g: the *Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech*, the *Management of External Speakers* process and the *Code of Conduct for Visitors* were still being updated. A new document, *UCL's Expectations for Events with External Speakers*, was being created following the discussion at the last EDIC meeting, together with a new Equality Impact Analysis proforma for use in connection with medium- or high-risk events. It was intended that these would be shared with members of

EDIC in due course, once it had been possible to digest the implications of the new Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023.

- 24.2. Minute 17.2m: Discussions had been held with the office of the Vice-President (External Engagement) on the complementarities between the suggestion of an externally-facilitated neutral platform and the ongoing work on 'disagreeing well'. Colleagues had also discussed the matter with an external academic and EDI practitioner. At present the work could be progressed with the funding available from the Equality Steering Group. EDI Committee gave its support to the progression of this work but noted that further discussions would be required if more substantial funding were necessary.

25. Updated Terms of Reference

- 25.1. EDIC noted the changes to its terms of reference. This reflected the fact that EDI annual reports would in future be submitted in the first instance to Council's People Committee, rather than Council itself.

Part II: Matters for Discussion

26. Director of EDI Report (Paper 3-02)

- 26.1. EDI Committee welcomed Lesley Houfe, interim Director of EDI, to her first meeting of the Committee.
- 26.2. The structure, resource and priorities of the EDI team were being reviewed. Interviews for the role of Pro-Provost (EDI) would be held shortly. UMC had endorsed the proposal for UCL to engage with the transformed Athena Swan charter, and the Academic Impact Statement had been well received at Academic Board. The EDI team was working with a trailblazer group of departments on the first wave of submissions to the scheme.
- 26.3. EDIC welcomed Indie Beedie to her first meeting in her capacity as Disability Envoy. The process for considering reasonable adjustments for staff would be reviewed in response to the outcome of the last Staff Survey.
- 26.4. In the course of discussion the following points were raised:
- a. It was expected that a paper on establishing a Religion & Belief Task and Finish Group would be submitted to the next meeting. EDI Committee noted the challenge of engaging the interest of volunteers who were broadly representative of the communities

across UCL, particularly in view of the breadth of the legal understanding of what constituted belief.

- b. EDI Committee discussed the complex task of prioritising strands of work and welcomed a suggestion to share updates of the action plan as part of the Director's report to each meeting. The broad issue of data was a key question to be addressed, including the question of the practical value of that data. It was suggested that Vice-Deans (EDI) would wish to be included in that conversation.

27. LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group update and Action Plan (Paper 3-03)

27.1. EDI Committee received an outline of the ongoing programme of work of the LGBTQ+ Equality Implementation Group (LEIG), in the context of the institutional decision to cut ties with Stonewall and the heightened need to demonstrate commitment to and support for the LGBTQ+ community.

27.2. In the course of discussion the following points were made:

- a. Members welcomed the resource provided by UCL for this work, as the work on Stonewall had been carried out on a voluntary basis by members of the LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group (LESG). The Provost noted that this was a priority for the institution.
- b. Further consideration would need to be given to sharing the work the wider UCL community. Students' Union UCL was supportive and would be available to assist with that process.
- c. Some elements of the action plan would require additional funding. EDI Committee did not allocate funding itself, so a separate piece of work would be required to take this through the appropriate funding approval routes.
- d. The Gender Expression Fund had been well received and it was understood that provision had been made for this to be resourced until 2024-25.

27.3. EDI Committee endorsed the action plan and thanked the colleagues involved, including Professor Graham Hart, Noël Caliste and Gerard Jones as joint chairs of LEIG and LEIG Manager respectively.

28. Eugenics Legacy Education Project Management Report (Paper 3-04)

28.1. EDI Committee received an update from Professor Helen Knowler, the academic lead for the Eugenics Legacy Education Project.

28.2. The project was developing a toolkit to support colleagues who wished to engage with teaching about the history of eugenics. A programme of

events was being developed for next year. EDI Committee was invited to contribute any suggestions or challenges for this work.

- 28.3. During the course of discussion the following points were made:
- a. Considerable work was going into working out how the learning could be shared across the sector and mechanisms such as Nedia, the network for EDI leads in Higher Education, had been identified for this.
 - b. It was noted that there was significant academic expertise in this area in the UCL community. A seminar series was being planned for next year.
- 28.4. EDI Committee endorsed the work being done by the Project and thanked Professor Knowler for her report.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

29. Any other business

- 29.1. Vice-Deans had been discussing how better to link up the faculty structures with the equity groups. This would need further discussion with the Pro-Provost (EDI) once appointed and would benefit from a discussion at a future meeting of EDIC.
- 29.2. The Race Equality Steering Group was arranging a summer event to be held on 26 July. Further details would be available in due course.

30. Date of Next Meeting

- 30.1. The next meeting would be held on 19 July 2023, 09:00-11:00.