**ESE Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Committee**

**Minutes**

**21 November 2022**

**12:00 – 1:30 pm**

**Location: RSM G.38 and MS Teams**

1. **Introductions**

The EDIC Team introduced themselves and their roles:

Rebecca Bell - Incoming Chair of EDI

Lizzie Day

Carl Jacquemyn

Ellya Kanimova

Katharina Kreissig

Valentin Laurent

Melanie Lee – Guest from HR People and Organisational Development (POD)

Antoinette Mallon

Joanna Morgan – Outgoing Chair of EDI

Anita Murphy

Adriana Paluszny

Michele Paulatto

David R Pedreros Bastidas

Sophia Quazi - EDI Coordinator

Dylan Rood

Sneha Saunders

1. **Matters arising from last meeting**

Rebecca Bell is taking over as EDI Chair in the new year.

Unpaid UROPs are no longer permitted under the new policy for paying students. Rebecca Smith has since put the policy to both the UG Teaching Committee and presented it at a Departmental Meeting.

1. **Athena SWAN SAT Update**

The Athena Swan SAT group has been merged with the EDIC Committee.

Katharina Kreissig will continue to manage outstanding actions from the action plan and will maintain connections with parties relevant to Athena Swan. The Athena Swan SAT will resume a year before the next Athena Swan application.

1. **Terms of reference (TOR)**

It is an annual exercise to review the committee Terms Of Reference. Comments and suggestions from any members are welcome.

1. **Bullying and harassment, language used in departmental and College surveys**

The results of the Departmental Culture Survey have been developed into an infographic for easy sharing and reference purposes.

The results show that bullying & harassment and workload are the two main areas of concern for staff. In the previous EDIC committee meeting, the group discussed ways to tackle these issues and how to best understand the scale of the issues faced. As a starting point, it has been agreed that an independent facilitator (Melanie Lee) will visit the department and conduct confidential conversations with staff on a 1-1 basis. Melanie will compile an independent report based on her findings, which will be shared with the HoD and the EDI lead.

The committee agreed that in future surveys, the questions should be developed to allow for more nuanced feedback. This could be done by creating different survey pathways for different job families, for instance.

Dylan Rood spoke about the term ‘zero tolerance’, and other language used when discussing bullying and harassment issues in the department. He emphasised the importance of speaking mindfully and sensitively when discussing bullying and harassment. By making changes to the language we use, for example exchanging the word ‘worrying’ with ‘unacceptable’, a stronger message can be conveyed. There is a lack of trust in the College initiatives regarding bullying and harassment, but hopefully more trust in the actions taken at a department level. It is important that we demonstrate authenticity by using honest language.

1. **Winter celebrations and acknowledging cultural and religious holidays**

There is an ongoing conversation in other departments about the use of inclusive language around the festive period. ESE made the decision to call the end of year party a “Winter Party” rather than a “Christmas Party”. There has been some discussion as to whether this could be viewed as erasing the Christian holiday, when acknowledging other religious holidays is encouraged.

Action (all): EDIC committee members to volunteer involvement in the Winter Party planning process next year.

1. **Breakout discussions:**
2. **What actions, achievements or projects were you proud of from the last academic year?**

Achievements / successful projects and actions mentioned by the breakout groups included:

* Introduction of a therapy dog
* Hanging of student artwork in the RSM hallway
* Zainab Titus’s highly successful outreach programme in Nigeria
* Continued development of the workload model
* Introduction of further bursaries
1. **What do you think works well about EDIC committee structure and what can be improved?**

Suggestions for improvement included:

* Development of a clearer action plan
* Split actions across smaller working groups
* Think about more effective ways to communicate the EDIC committee’s work with the wider department
1. **What types of projects would you like to be involved with that aligns with EDIC Committee’s priorities?**

Committee members expressed a desire for more projects in the following areas:

* Widening participation
* Neurodiversity
* Hidden disabilities
* Training for line managers
* Bullying and harassment
* Flexible / hybrid working
1. **What questions should we ask Melanie to ask people about B&H?**
2. What was / is the setting of the bullying and harassment experienced?
3. How often does / did the bullying and harassment occur?
4. How serious was / is the bullying harassment? (The phrasing of this question requires further consideration)
5. Has the bullying and harassment been reported via Report and Support or other means? If not, why?

**8. (AOB)**

N/A