

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

COUNCIL & ACADEMIC BOARD

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Notes of the informal meeting held on 7 March 2013

Present: Mrs Alyson McGarrigle (Chair), Ms Sharon Alleyne, Ms Vicky Annand, Ms Jennifer Bain, Mrs Liz Bromley, Ms Kath Clarke, Mr Barry Hayward, Mr Joe Killin, Ms Laura Kishore, Ms Sarah Lambert, Ms Rachel Soper, Ms Colleen Toomey, Ms Tama White, Dr Michael Young

Apologies: Ms Rebecca Pearson-Close

In attendance: Mr Bryan Lymbery, Miss Rachel Arratoon (Secretary)

1 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Noted:

i) The Chair thanked everyone for attending to discuss the Equality and Diversity Officer vacancy and potential barriers and enablers for the College in respect of achieving equality and diversity objectives in the short to medium term.

ii) The meeting is intended as an interim discussion by the Committee members in light of the Equality and Diversity Officer vacancy and therefore there no formal agenda has been circulated.

Resolved:

Apologies from L Bromley are to be added to the minutes of the meeting held on the 6 November 2012 (ED/18). The minutes are otherwise approved as a correct record of the meeting.

2 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY OFFICER VACANCY

Noted:

i) KC confirmed an Establishment Control Form has been approved by the Senior Management Team for a Grade 8 full-time permanent post, which will be advertised in due course. It is expected the post to be recruited within 3 months pending suitability of the candidate pool.

The remit of the role will be to advance the Equality and Diversity practice culture of the organisation across the student life cycle as well as impacting the working styles of all College staff.

KC invited feedback and discussion by the group in regards to expectations of how the role might develop.

ii) Key discussion points:

Current management practice –

- The group acknowledged strengths and weaknesses in the College's approach to equality and diversity in practice.
- In regards to the fair treatment of those with a disability BH shared his observation that the College had entered into the Two Ticks Scheme but had then failed to develop and embed the scheme.
- The current restructure of professional services was noted by LB as a key action aimed at redressing concerns of individuals taking responsibility and accountability.

Reporting lines –

- It is proposed that the Equality & Diversity Officer will be line managed by the Director of Human Resources but the function and scope of the role is intended to impact College wide through liaison with key stakeholders.
- The Equality & Diversity Officer will provide specialist leadership skills and play a key role in implementing change. Once priorities for the post holder have been agreed an initial management matrix can be drawn.
- It is expected that in time, the Wardens Advisory Groups will act as discussion points and action initiators. Council, as the College's governing body is briefed on related issues via several reporting lines e.g. the Internal Auditor and Audit Committee.
- Consideration of other Higher Education Institutes' approach to Equality and Diversity practice was briefly discussed.

Resolved:

- Committee members to review the remit of the Equality & Diversity Committee at the next meeting on the 1 May 2013.

Equality and Diversity data –

- The College is in compliance with the Equality Act 2010 through publication of the Equality Action Plan and Staff and Student Profile reports, which are available online.
- The Staff and Student Profiles provide a breakdown of 4 of the 9 protected characteristics; age, gender, ethnicity and disability.
- LK confirmed that additional information will be asked of students enrolling 2013-14 to enable baseline measures for faith and belief, sexual orientation, and gender re-assignment.
- It was noted that Higher Education national performance indicators provide related student data covering categories such as students in receipt of disability living allowance, as well as factors that fall outside of the protected characteristics list e.g. socio-economic class.
- The risk of non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is monitored via the Strategic Risk Register.

- At a 2012 Council meeting CT recalled an item was tabled by the Warden that requested that the collection of equality and diversity data becomes a priority.

Resolved:

- RS to provide a summary of available data to the next Equality and Diversity Committee.

Remit of the post holder –

- The complexities of equality and diversity issues in the HE environment were broadly examined and concern was voiced in regards to the scope of the role to grow beyond the capability of a single post holder if not properly managed.

iii) In conclusion it was summarised that despite action and progress in some areas, the potential scope of the role and current management practice, presented a potential barrier to success of the post holder.

In consideration of the issues raised KC expressed confidence that once a suitably experienced candidate was appointed, further progress would be observed within a relatively short period.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Resolved:

i) At the next meeting it was agreed that the Committee would consider the Equality Plan objectives against the Student and Staff Profile reports so that observations could be highlighted and briefed to the new Equality & Diversity Officer.

ii) RS to circulate the web link to the Equality Action Plan to all Committee members.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted:

The next meeting will be held on 1 May 2013 at 10am.

Rachel Arratoon
Management Information and Statistical Officer
March 2013