



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

The Council, 25 April 2016

Annual Report of the Equality and Diversity Board 2015-16

Date: 11 April 2016

Chair: Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Gill Valentine

Secretary: Ms Gill Tait

1 Governance

1.1 Gender Equality Committee (GEC)

The GEC convened as a sub-group of the Equality & Diversity Board (EDB) in 2014, to work with the EDB towards the achievement of the University's female progression KPI, taking forward a number of gender equality initiatives and focusing on the implementation and ongoing development of the University level Athena Swan action plan and award submission. Three working groups were established to focus on the key areas required by the University-level silver Athena Swan submission; 'Picture of the University', 'Evidence of Impact', and 'Embedding Athena Swan'. Our application was submitted in November 2015 and the outcome will be announced in April 2016. At departmental level, all STEM departments have now achieved Athena SWAN awards and the Department of Archaeology was awarded the Gender Equality Mark. The Committee is chaired by Professor Lorraine Maltby, who is also a member of the EDB.

The GEC oversees the University level Athena SWAN Action Plan which addresses actions to reduce gender equality under the following themes: Students, Leadership, Progression (including the Gender Pay Gap), Recruitment and Culture Change, including developing departmental goals to build diverse teams.

1.2 Partnership Working

The EDB is aiming to work in partnership with all five faculty Equality and Diversity Committees to provide effective ways of working and to encourage the sharing of good practice across the University. Each faculty E&D Committee is developing its own action plan, identifying actions specific to their own context. Through the GEC, faculties have agreed targets for senior female academics. In addition, faculty committees have encouraged staff to fill in their EO data, to support the University's Equality Objectives to improve disclosure rates.

The Chairs of University Staff Networks met in November 2015, enabling the sharing of good practice and building the basis for partnership working. Chairs updated each other regarding their current action plans, discussed areas for partnership working and shared learning from setting up a Network, including structures, roles and responsibilities.

2 Key developments and areas of work

2.1 An Educational Rationale for Equality & Diversity and Narrative Goals

The University has marked itself as an institution that believes equality and diversity is an embracing concept that will drive it to realise greater success. To drive the change for diversity and inclusion across the University, the EDB invested some time during 2015 in creating an educational rationale for equality and diversity at the University (attached as Appendix 1).

Aligning with the rationale, a further piece of work 'Narrative Goals' is now being piloted across all five academic faculties and the professional services. The work, which places diversity at the heart of workforce planning, is predicated upon our belief that diversity in all its forms delivers greater impact in our research and teaching and enhances the experience of our students.

The process of creating local 'narrative goals' for equality & diversity stimulates discussion with Heads of Departments and Directors of Professional Services how diversity can enable departments and the University to achieve their ambitions. The Heads of Departments / Directors are accountable for developing and delivering diversity goals, particularly in the areas of recruitment and promotion, to increase under-presented groups and create teams with the skills, strengths and identities to make the greatest impact towards their future goals.

Thirteen departments are part of the pilot phase and they are currently working through the narrative goals methodology and creating local action plans. The work is starting to transform the University's staff recruitment process and some of the pilot departments are currently working with revised About the Job specifications and using different recruitment channels to ensure that they attract staff that can bring positive difference to their teams. Following evaluation of the pilot it is expected the work will be rolled out across the institution.

2.2 Equality Objectives

The equality objectives are linked to the themes of Recruiting for Difference and Policy Implementation. In 2015 significant advances have been made towards achieving the objective relating to increased staff disclosure rates. Between July 2014 and March 2016 disclosure rates for sexual orientation have increased from 21% to 49%, religion and belief from 21% to 50% and disability from 75% to 85%.

A full review of the Equality Objectives will be carried out by the EDB during 2015-16, in light of the new University Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021.

2.3 Athena SWAN

The University now holds 19 departmental Bronze or Silver Athena SWAN Awards, which recognise and celebrate good employment practices for women working in STEM. All of our departments across the Faculties of Engineering, Science and Medicine, Dentistry & Health have achieved individual awards within a period of three years, which is a significant achievement. In addition, the Department of Archaeology has achieved a Gender Equality Mark. The University submitted for a Silver level institution-wide award in November 2015 with the outcome expected in April 2016. The University's first gold submission was made by Animal & Plant Sciences in November 2015, with the Medical School also submitting for Gold in April 2016. Future activity will address the expansion of Athena SWAN to areas of the University beyond STEM disciplines.

The University held a celebratory event in July 2015 to recognise the staff commitment to Athena SWAN. The GEC is now planning a series of networking events for Athena SWAN Champions and self-assessment teams, to encourage the sharing of ideas and innovative practices across departments and faculties, with a meeting of Athena SWAN Champions across the Faculty of Engineering being held during March 2016.

2.4 LGBT and Stonewall

In January 2016 the University was named as a Stonewall Top 100 Employer for the third consecutive year, with a ranking of 61st. It was notable that the loss of only two marks had moved the ranking from 43rd in 2015 to 61st in 2016, which demonstrates the competition for rankings amongst institutions. The University celebrated its first LGBT Equality week in June 2015, incorporating sponsorship of Pinknic and Pride from 27 June – 4th July. The focus was on Intersectionality, with lunchtime sessions by Pinsent Masons on ‘You and the Law: from Cradle to Grave’ and Dr Kirsty Liddiard (University of Sheffield School of Education) on her research on disability and sexuality. An evening of talks brought two visiting scholars from the University of Durham and Northumbria University from the field of law and anthropology who explored ways that law and biology have been queered. The pioneering ‘Hidden Perspectives’ exhibition was on display in the Student’s Union Gallery all week, showcasing the lives of the LGBT community in Sheffield. This year Pride was held at the University, with the Concourse pillars wrapped in the rainbow colours, and the rainbow flag was once again flown from Firth Court as a visible commitment to LGBT equality. The University will once again be sponsoring Sheffield Pride and Pinknic in July 2016 as a reminder to our staff and students of our commitment to creating an inclusive University community where all can work and study as themselves.

The Student Union launched Trans* Map, a web based app which provides information to trans* individuals looking for a safe and inclusive place in Sheffield. The app is location and map based, and can suggest venues such as shops, restaurants and gyms which are trans* friendly.

The University’s LGBT allies programme for staff, Open@TUoS, was launched in January 2016 at a lunchtime event attended by members of the LGBT Staff Network alongside wider University staff and students. Open@TUoS brings together LGBT supporters and allies, regardless of sexuality and/or gender identity, to progress LGBT equality. Supporters can show their commitment in a number of ways, such as wearing a rainbow lanyard, challenging inappropriate language and behaviour, attending LGBT related events and sharing learning with others. Supporters are added to a mailing list, in order to receive updates and information about events.

2.5 Staff and Disability Network

The Staff and Disability Network (formerly Disabled Staff Network) was relaunched at an event held in November 2016, and is open to all members of University staff with experience of, or interest in these areas. Throughout 2015-16 the Network is running a series of free lunchtime events to inform, involve and support staff as part of the University’s ‘Time to Change’ mental health awareness campaign. Staff and Disability Network meetings are held regularly which provide an opportunity for all interested members of staff to meet, talk informally, raise any issues and discuss the aims of this developing network.

2.6 Additional Awards

In May 2015 the University was Highly Commended for a Diverse Company Award – Education sector in the Excellence in Diversity Awards 2015. The awards honour the remarkable work of inclusive employers and unsung diversity champions across the UK.

3. EDB: Meetings during 2015-16

3.1 2015

In February 2015 the Board discussed options for setting targets in relation to the Council paper of female progression, focusing specifically on the University's KPI for senior female academics, and the gender balance of University committee leaders. The Board also considered the new Higher Education Code of Governance and their responsibilities under it. There was an in-depth discussion on the role of the Board in the way their role enacted in trying to find the correct balance between the level of scrutiny (of policies, and of practices) and leading culture change.

In June 2015 the Board discussed particular aspects of the Educational Rationale for Equality & Diversity. The Board also discussed the Narrative Goals project, where pilot departments had been invited to participate; feedback was given to the Board on BME Attainment and it was agreed that the Board would keep this on their agenda for 2016. The Board heard that progress had been made regarding Gender Neutral Toilets (GNT). Estates & Facilities Management (EFM) has identified a number of toilets across campus which they plan to change into GNTs. The Board noted past discussions with EFM to ensure that equality considerations are embedded into the planning and processes associated with refurbishments and developing the University estate and new buildings, and urged EFM to keep a focus on this.

In October 2015 the Board considered the Athena SWAN University level draft submission for members to comment on before the deadline. Simon Fanshawe, an equality and diversity consultant supporting the Narrative Goals pilot, attended the meeting to give an update on progress to date (see 2.2). The Board discussed a paper on Sexual Assault against women at British Universities, and sought information concerning current actions the University was taking to tackle this issue in response to a letter sent to all Vice-Chancellors from Sajid Javid, the Business Secretary.

3.2 2016

February 2016 marked Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Gill Valentine's first meeting as Chair of the EDB. The Board discussed the Black and Minority Ethnic Origin (BME) students attainment gap, including the qualitative strand focusing on the current student experience and a quantitative strand analysing graduate and current student data across all the Faculties. The Board supported the project and will receive future updates at appropriate intervals. Updates were received from the Gender Equality Committee including University and department level Athena SWAN activity, the LGBT Network including the recent launch of Open@TuoS (the LGBT Allies programme) and the Staff & Disability Network incorporating the relaunch event held in November 2015.

The Chair discussed with the Board her recommendations regarding the future of the Equality & Diversity Board. She advised members that, in response to the new Strategic Plan 2016-2021, committees were being reviewed to ensure that they act as catalysts for action and were able to enable the University's ambitious plans. With regard to equality and diversity the

publication, in 2014, of The Committee of University Chairs (CUC) revised Higher Education Code of Governance was also significant, in the context of recent (and ongoing) changes in the Higher Education landscape, including REF2014, the Teaching Excellence Framework, which was placing increased emphasis on the performance of institutions in respect of equality, diversity and social mobility, the Athena Swan charter mark and the new Race Equality Charter scheme introduced by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU). Significant agendas relating to the attainment of students of BME origin and the social mobility of students were key agendas for the NUS and ECU.

Recommendations regarding the name, future membership and terms of reference for the EDB are presented to Council in a separate paper.



Appendix 1

Rationale for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at The University of Sheffield:

Diversity is driven by social justice and equality and by making it part of the core educational aims of the university we put these values into action.

Fostering diversity is fundamental to our university because:

1. people are diverse;
2. education is about contact with new ideas. Diversity in people creates diversity of thought. Recognising difference supports the development of a critical intelligence and breaks down barriers;
3. it helps staff and students to develop their particular talents and themselves to their greatest potential;
4. there is a direct relationship between a diverse student body and a diverse curriculum that, in enriching the intellectual capacity of the University, enhances teaching and learning;
5. a more diverse research population makes the institution more intellectually robust because it enables it to investigate more widely, tap untapped sources of knowledge, have more of a world view and embrace broader challenges;
6. a diversity in staff gives the University a way to understand the range of student needs and aspirations and support them appropriately;
7. diverse teams solve problems better and develop broader and more creative solutions;
8. it offers all members of the University, students and staff, the opportunity to learn from each other's individual differences and to apply this;
9. giving people the opportunity to challenge prejudice and pre-conceptions enhances the University's positive impact on society;
10. it fosters the skills and agility for work and life in a global context.