University of Manchester Equality Objective Consultation: Objective 3 Fostering good relations

Overview

1.1   Objectives

A total of 6 equality objectives have been outlined for consideration, these include:
- Improve the representation of women and black and minority ethnic staff in senior, academic and professional support positions, by promoting the University as an employer of choice and providing targeted support in promotions and career development.
- Address the differential degree attainment of black and minority ethnic undergraduate students by further increasing our understanding and instigating programmes of support.
- Foster good relations between staff and students from different groups by challenging discrimination and stereotypes through awareness raising activities and training events.
- Understand the potential impact of University functions on disabled staff and students by improving disability disclosure rates and reporting mechanisms.
- Improving sexual orientation disclosure rates by providing an inclusive working and learning environment that promotes the University as an advocate of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans rights.

1.2   Selection Criteria

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) has outlined a set of criteria to help prioritise equality objectives:

- **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?
- **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?
- **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and service users themselves?
- **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?
- **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?
- **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?
- **Stakeholders:** What are the views of your stakeholders?

1.3   Consultation

To help you consider each of the proposed objectives the following information has been provided:
- The objective
- The measures
- A list of potential actions
- The extent to which each objective meets the criteria outlined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

At this stage in the consultation we are asking you to consider this information and answer the following questions.
- Considering the evidence outlined in the selection criteria, do you feel that this objective should be included in the final selection?
- If this objective is chosen, please identify any changes that you would make to it?
- If this objective is chosen, please identify any changes that you would make to any of the measures?
- If this objective is chosen, what actions do you think would help achieve this objective?

1.4   Timeline

- Thursday 23rd February 2012 – Final date to provide feedback on objectives
- Friday 24th February 2012 – Final Equality Objectives sent to the Planning and Resource Committee
- Tuesday 6th March 2012 – Planning and Resource Committee
- Thursday 5th April 2012 – Publish Equality Objectives

2.1   Objective 3

Foster good relations between staff and students from different groups by challenging discrimination and stereotypes through awareness raising activities and training events.

2.2   Measure
- A proportional increase in the number of staff who agree that they are valued and treated with respect and dignity across all of the protected characteristics as measured through the staff satisfaction survey.
- A proportional increase in the number of staff who agree that they are treated with respect and dignity across all of the protected characteristics as measured through the student satisfaction survey.

2.3   A list of potential actions
- Consider expanding the equality information collected and reported in both the staff and student satisfaction surveys.
- A programme of awareness raising activities, based on the equality and diversity calendar, covering all of the protected characteristics
- Promote awareness of flexible working options
- Continue to support the University's staff network groups
- A programme of conflict resolution skills training for managers and those who work with students
- Work in collaboration with the Disabled Staff Service; the Disabled Staff Network and the Equality and Diversity Team to identify a programme of awareness raising activities that promote the support mechanisms that are available to disabled staff and their managers.

2.4   Criteria

2.4.1   **General Equality Duty:** How would this objective contribute to the aims of the general equality duty?

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2.4.2 **Evidence:** Does the information at a local or national level highlight this as important?

Yes. The University's Staff Satisfaction Survey Dignity at Work and Study Report and the University's student satisfaction survey.

Summary - 2636 (approximately 23%) members of staff took part in the University's 2010 staff survey.

- Black and minority ethnic respondents were less likely to agree that staff are treated fairly irrespective of their background (62%) than white respondents (78%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree that staff are treated fairly irrespective of their background (61%) than those who did not declare a disability (76%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree: my line manager is supportive of me (61%) than those who did not declare a disability (72%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree: I feel I am treated with respect and dignity by other staff (59%) than those who did not declare a disability (71%).
- Of the 1891 respondents who have contact with students female respondents were less likely to agree: I am treated with respect and dignity by students (68%) than male respondents (76%).
- Overall 54% of respondents agreed that policies relating to equality and diversity are working.
- Black and minority ethnic respondents were less likely to agree that policies relating to equality and diversity are working (50%) than white respondents (57%).
- Disabled respondents were less likely to agree that policies relating to equality and diversity are working (50%) than white respondents (56%).
- Overall 50% of respondents agreed that: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do.
- Male respondents are less likely to agree: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do (49%) than females (53%).
- White respondents are less likely to agree: I feel valued and recognised for the work I do (52%) than black and minority ethnic respondents (57%).

A number of staff focus groups conducted on behalf of the University for disabled, international, lesbian, gay, bisexual, Trans and women, all identified training and awareness as barriers to dignity at work and progression.

A recent research report conducted by the Equality Challenge Unit on behalf of the University identified the following points relating to policy and practice

- Assess the relevance and take-up of current disability-related training.
- Develop a tailored awareness-raising training programme for line managers and middle managers to instigate change and narrow the gap between policy and practice.
- Further promote the business case for diversity in the workplace and the importance of increasing awareness and understanding of disability equality.
- Profile and promote the disabled staff network to all staff across the university.
- Develop a staff handbook which outlines regulations, legal rights and sources of support and advice

The University's Student Satisfaction Survey 2008/09:

- 75% of respondents agreed people are treated fairly irrespective of background.
- Undergraduate respondents were more likely to agree people are treated fairly irrespective of background (78%) than postgraduate taught (69%) and research (68%).
- 57% of respondents agreed there is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.
- Undergraduate respondents were more likely to agree that there is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment (59%) than post graduate taught (54%) and research (50%).

2.4.3   **Staff and Students:** Are these priorities for staff and students themselves?

Yes. Evidence through:

- The University's staff satisfaction survey and the University's student satisfaction survey.
- A series of focus groups, undertaken on behalf of the E&D Team, with staff and students looking at issues that specifically affect gender, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and Trans.
- A review of the University's Disabled Staff Service undertaken by the Equality Challenge Unit.
- The work undertaken in preparation for submission to the Athena Swan Awards and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

2.4.4   **Key Areas:** Would this objective stretch the organisation to perform better on equality issues in key areas?

Yes. Key areas of the staff and student life cycle would include:

- Dignity at Work and Study
- Training and Development
- Attainment
- Career Progression
- Retention

2.4.5   **Protected Characteristics:** How would achieving this objective improve the experience for people with a relevant protected characteristic?

- Promoting understanding and raising awareness of key issues that affect different staff and student groups has the potential to have a positive impact on the entire institution.

2.4.6 **Numbers:** How many people with relevant protected characteristics are affected by the issue, and what is the severity of the effect?

- This objective has the potential to affect all of the University community, 10,929 members of staff and 39,732 students