

From: Patrick Johnson
Sent: 28 April 2014 12:29
To: Patrick Johnson
Subject: BME Staff Network

Dear colleague,

You have received this email as you have been identified as a BME member of staff at The University of Manchester.

During the last two BME (Black Minority & Ethnic) Network meetings on 05/03/2014 and 08/04/2014 we discussed, among other things:

- the lack of visibility of the BME Network on campus,
- the lack of involvement/engagement in the Network activities especially by staff in Estates and Facilities, and
- the importance of the Network's role and attention to the university's performance and track record with regard to race equality issues.

We felt that

- the loss of the post of Associate Vice President for Equality and Diversity and its replacement by that for Social Responsibility diluted the E&D issue and was perceived as a step backwards in attempts to advance the BME agenda at Manchester;
- in spite of the senior management commitment to equality and diversity, there were real barriers at middle/lower management levels that need to be addressed;
- we need to galvanise Network members and the wider BME staff population, many of whom have lost hope that things can change at Manchester;
- there would be more involvement from (and a potential increase in) Network members if there was a clear focus, including the reason for the existence of the Network and an agreed set of changes that we collectively feel are needed at The University of Manchester;
- the recent Staff Survey had been an effective tool in making the University pay attention to the needs of disabled staff, but it was felt that this did not necessarily raise the concerns at work experienced by the BME community.

We agreed that a way forward would be an anonymous staff survey, focussed specifically upon the working experience of BME staff in order to:

- re-establish aims and objectives of the Network to fully reflect the needs of BME staff at all levels,
- raise awareness of BME staff needs within the University,
- create an action plan for the Network and the University to improve the experience of BME staff.

There is a newly-established Race Equality Charter Mark which has been developed following the success of the Athena Swan Award for gender equality. This is a nationally-recognised scheme that could impact major research funding and research awards in UK Higher Education institutions. The Universities will have to demonstrate real progress towards advancing race equality within their institutions before they can be awarded a Charter Mark. We believe using such an opportunity will improve the race equality at all levels in the university. Our input to this process is vital to give a true and real picture of the issues around race equality and challenges faced by BME staff at The University of Manchester.

Our collective voice is the only way to instigate the necessary change in the culture of the university and improve the experience of our BME staff.

We shall be using the UM-BME mailing list (um-bme@listserv.manchester.ac.uk) for future electronic communication about the BME staff survey, planned meetings, etc., so you'll need to be on the mailing list to be kept informed electronically. We intend to send out a "Next Steps" bulletin towards the end of May 2014.

Please contact blaise.nkwenti-azeh@manchester.ac.uk if you have any queries in this regard, or general questions about the Network.

If you would like to continue receiving information **intended for BME staff or** related to the experience of BME staff at the University, please join the Network: click on listserv@listserv.manchester.ac.uk and enter ONLY the text **subscribe um-bme** in the body of the message.

We look forward to hearing from you.

University of Manchester BME Staff Network Committee