

# Addressing equality, diversity and inclusion issues at our University

## Introduction

This paper and draft action plan outline our approach to making more rapid progress on a range of important equality, diversity and inclusion issues at our University.

It addresses themes raised by staff and students including bias in decision making and behaviours and brings to life our Zero Tolerance commitment to tackle harassment, bullying and discrimination. Our aim is to work together to build respect and trust and act in a fair manner without bias. Central to this is giving our staff and students the opportunity to speak out, be listened to and work together to bring about significant changes to our culture, systems and processes.

Where students have issues and concerns we will clearly articulate how they can report these, how and when they will be dealt with and how the outcomes will be communicated. We will work closely with the Students' Union on all aspects of the action plan, particularly in developing and launching a campaign building on our [Speak Up! Stand Up!](#) initiative. This will build on our existing [Dignity at Work and Study](#) policy which includes our [Report and Support](#) approach, where staff and students can report incidents of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination as well as providing access to confidential support.

We will develop an EDI code of conduct setting out what we expect from our staff and students and create communities of practice to drive the change we need. We will also work with our Students' Union to build awareness of the services and support it offers.

The next step will be to work closely with staff and students to build on the themes highlighted in this report and co-create our long term action plan. In the meantime we will implement the actions outlined below and in Annex 1 which complement our [Race Matters report and action](#) plan.

### 1. Building Trust and Partnership

We will rebuild trust between students and staff by working in partnership. We will engage with our staff and students, listen to them and have an honest two-way dialogue about the roles and responsibilities of each party. We will develop a memorandum of understanding in partnership with students to clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of staff and students.

### 2. Learning and Development

We will ensure our actions and decisions are fair, inclusive and not tainted by any conscious or unconscious bias. The University's EDI team has produced Active Bystander learning and development activities around racial bias which will be rolled out to all staff

alongside our [wider EDI training](#) programme. We will equip staff who work closely with students with the knowledge and training to deal with difficult situations and how to deal with conflict if it arises. Training will be evaluated after six months.

### 3. Communication and Transparency

Our community of students and staff will thrive only with relationships built on trust, honest conversations and mutual listening. Communication flows between staff and students need to be simple, clear, honest and concise. We will ensure our students have access to information across all campus sites about how they can raise formal complaints or informal issues and concerns at any time. Our students will know:

- who to contact if there is an issue, including how to access staff out of hours;
- how their complaint or issue will be dealt with, how they will be informed of progress, how long it will take to resolve and how the outcome will be communicated;
- how to access additional support.

Investigation processes have to be independent and fair. There will be a clear process of logging and responding to student concerns in an agreed timescale. All staff involved in addressing formal complaints and informal issues will be equipped with the right skills and a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities.

### 4. Recruiting Diverse Staff

We will review our approach to staff recruitment to continue our progress towards ensuring our staff at all levels reflects the diversity of our student community. We will review job specifications, starting with those roles where there is an immediate need to attract a wider diversity of applicants. We will pilot positive action in staff recruitment by requiring shortlists for senior positions to be diverse and implementing anonymised applications for roles in Professional Services.

### 5. Governance

The EDI Governance Group will monitor progress regularly against the actions agreed and report to the University's Planning and Resources Committee and Senate, both of which include representatives from the Students' Union.

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DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Time scale	Measure of Success
<p>Arrange meeting between students and staff who work closely with them</p> <p>Begin drafting Memorandum of Understanding with student and staff representatives</p>	<p>Director of Estates, Head of Security, Senior Leader Student Representatives</p>	<p>February 2021 and ongoing at least monthly</p>	<p>Improved understanding of roles and positive engagement</p> <p>Reduction in complaints</p>
<p>Review EDI learning and development and make recommendations. Identify mandatory training elements and frequency undertaken</p>	<p>Head of Staff Learning and Development / Interim Head of EDI</p>	<p>April 2021</p>	<p>Numbers of staff undertaking the training</p> <p>Reduction in complaints</p>
<p>Delivery of Active Bystander learning and unconscious bias modules (plan to roll out to all staff but prioritise staff who work most closely with students)</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development, Head of EDI and Director of Estates</p>	<p>Online training to be arranged with immediate effect. Face to face session via Zoom – March 2021</p>	<p>Staff engagement with students across the diversity spectrum</p> <p>Positive feedback from students</p>
<p>Engage with staff network groups to develop a voice on EDI matters</p>	<p>Interim Head of EDI, Director of HR, Director for Student Experience, Director for Communications Marketing and Student Recruitment</p>	<p>March 2021 onwards</p>	<p>Positive feedback from staff and students</p> <p>Increased confidence in University processes as measured by user experience surveys and focus groups</p>
<p>Engage with Students' Union to develop a voice on EDI matters</p>	<p>Student Representatives</p>	<p>March 2021 onwards</p>	<p>Recognition of campaign in staff and student surveys</p>

Joint staff/student campaign – Speak Up! Stand Up!	Interim Head of EDI, Director for Student Experience, Director of Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment	March 2021 onwards	
Sourcing and delivering of conflict management training to be delivered to those staff first who are student facing	Head of Learning and Development	March 2021	Staff confidence in dealing with conflict in a positive manner  Student survey shows positive feedback and reduction in incidents
Review of Complaint Policy and communication (Speak Up Stand Up campaign)	Director for the Student Experience Student representatives, Director of Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment Student services and Students' Union lead	Begin in February 2021	Clear policy which is Independent and transparent  Students aware of policy Students raising concerns able to access support
Engagement with Students' Union		March 2021	
Review job specifications of front line student facing roles. Revise recruitment process to improve diversity profile	Head of Directorates/Heads of HR	March – June 2021	Clarity on roles of improved diversity