



Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
Equality Diversity Inclusion and Access Committee
Minutes
Wednesday 24 March 2021, 14:30
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/4602537413>

Attendees: Catherine Walton (CW), Noriko Griffiths (NG), Vicky Coker (VC), Manasij Pal Chowdhury (MPC), Rob Sansom (RS)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Abby Ragazzon-Smith, Helena Gittins, David Shultz, Katherine Joy

CW apologised for the delay in getting these meeting back up and running after such a long time.

2. Reflection on previous EDIA issues we were dealing with and where we are up to now.

Training for senior people on how to manage meetings to ensure quieter voices (which may often be women, but not exclusively so) are heard. CW looked into online options for this but found nothing suitable including the University website. A document was however sent round to DEES staff on procedures for departmental zoom meetings to promote inclusivity (attached).

Gender Neutral Toilets were brought up by Abby Ragazzon-Smith. Attached is a document on feedback from Estates on this matter in May 2020.

ACTION: CW to get back to Abby Ragazzon-Smith on this.

3. New structure for EDIA and future organisation of meetings.

The committee were asked by CW to think about how they want the meetings to run in future.

Now that Athena Swan is being ran at school level it is up to the department to feed through to the School appropriately (and vice-versa).

It was asked that these meetings change to a forum but the agreement was to have both a forum and a committee, this means allowing people to come to the meetings and raise any issues or concerns they may have.

The committee suggested tying it in with the departmental fora, this would probably get more of an ~~up~~take. RS agreed with doing this, the time frame would only be short but it would be useful to distribute information. VC asked that people were given a short chance to raise issues that then could be discussed and resolved at the committee meetings. Staff will need to be made aware of this in advance so that they are prepared to raise issues or can raise them anonymously.

ACTION: RS will keep EDIA as a standing item on the Departmental Fora.

The student / staff liaison committee could be asked to have EDIA as a standing item on their committee.

ACTION: CW will ask Mike Turner to have EDIA as a standing item on their committee.

ACTION: CW will also reach out for a PDRA representative.

It would be suggested that a member of the EDIA committee will go to listen to the student's thoughts. It is good to reach into other meetings rather than getting people to proactively come to a new meeting in busy periods.

The committee discussed the old Terms of Reference.

ACTION: CW will edit the Terms of Reference so that they are more up to date and circulate the document for checking.

The committee agreed to meet 4 to 6 times a year in line with the departmental fora.

ACTION: RS will inform CW of the date of the next departmental fora so that the next EDIA meeting can be arranged around this.

4. Report on new committee for BAME inclusion and access and how to intersect with this.

The point of this committee is to focus on outreach activities that reach out to BAME people. The data for EES is very low for BAME students and something needs to be done about it.

Since the University restructure, the job role for Director of Social Responsibility has now gone but the work that was in this role is still there.

ACTION: CW will send over a set of slides produced by Katie Joy that detailed ~~which has been produced on~~ everything she considers that needs to be done regarding BAME inclusion and access, based on the recommendations of the Oxford Geoscience EDIA report, to the committee.

As a first action, the committee has been taking forward the outreach approach whereby all (most?) academics generate an activity they can take out to local schools. We are starting with a focussed approach considering a small number of schools as it was agreed that this may have more impact. The schools selected were Cedar Mount Academy, Trinity, Abraham Moss and Medical Health. The main point that was raised from the problems was the need to go out and speak to students within outreach activities.

5. COVID impacts, Rob's letter, etc.

ACTION: RS will send his letter to School (Giles Johnson) and Faculty for auctioning as this is something that cannot be solved at departmental level.

CW thanked RS for taking the initiative to create this document and move forward with it.

6. Athena Swan update.

ACTION: NG will carry this item over to the next meeting.

7. Decision making on what to focus on going forward. Possible options include: survey of BAME students/staff/overseas students? fieldwork inclusivity? EDIA in teaching? Training initiatives?

Should the department be surveying BAME students / staff?

MPC thinks this will be a good idea as there have been problems unheard of about BAME students feeling unsupported.

It was previously suggested at the BAME committee meeting by Chris Jackson that if we are serious about this that the department should pay for this to be done externally as this would work better.

Everyone should be included in the survey.

ACTION: CW will feed the survey discussion to the BAME committee.

ACTION: CW will find out more information on what can be done with this ~~continue to gather information on what information is available on surveys within Manchester (and from other Universities) and feed this information back to both the EDIA committee and the BAME committee~~ and what budgets are likely to be needed. ~~they can get and feed this back at the next meeting.~~

ACTION: CW will find out what Athena Swan actions the department can work on.

8. Update from PGR representative

MPC doesn't have any current issues he would like to raise.

Catherine Walton raised the issue of non-~~e~~-UKRI PhD students only having 3 years money with Kevin Taylor ~~but nothing has currently been resolved a little while ago.~~ MPC commented that emails had just gone round to confirm that these students are now able to claim 3-6 months extension to their PhDs bringing them more in line with UKRI students. This is an improvement on the only other recourse to these students which was to apply for emergency funds. However, this application process was extremely intrusive requiring ~~To apply for extra funding students have intrusive checks such as 3 months of bank statements and declare incomings of over £50.~~

MPC has spoken to Professor Sarah Haigh about this but would like this chasing up.

~~ACTION: CW will chase this up with Kevin Taylor and see if any extensions can be made.~~

~~To apply for extra funding students have intrusive checks such as 3 months of bank statements and declare incomings of over £50.~~

ACTION: The EDIA committee should make sure that support for living costs etc. are better sign posted and reminding PGR supervisors are aware of this and discussing this with their students.

9. AOB

There was no other business to report

EDIA COMMITTEE ACTION TABLE			
Action number	Action	Owner(s)	Progress
24/03/21 - 1	Respond to Abby Ragazzon-Smith on the gender neutral toilet query.	CW	
24/03/21 - 2	Keep EDIA as a standing item on the Departmental Fora	RS	
24/03/21 - 3	Ask Mike Turner to have EDIA as a standing item on their committee.	CW	
24/03/21 - 4	Reach out for a PDRA representative.	CW	

Commented [CW1]: I don't think this action needed as I said this before MPC said that the email had gone round saying non-UKRI students could apply for extensions.

Commented [CW2]: ?? not sure what this is referring to? Maybe leave this in and I'll check with Manasij what needs doing.

24/03/21 - 5	Edit the Terms of Reference so that they are more up to date and circulate the document for checking.	CW	
24/03/21 - 6	inform CW of the date of the next departmental fora so that the next EDIA meeting can be arranged around this.	RS / CW	
24/03/21 - 7	Circulate the slide which has been produced on everything that needs to be done regarding BAME to the committee.	CW	
24/03/21 - 8	Send letter to School (Giles Johnson) and Faculty for auctioning as this is something that cannot be solved at departmental level.	RS	
24/03/21 - 9	Carry 'Athena Swan Update' as an item over to the next meeting.	NG	
24/03/21 - 10	Feed the survey discussion to the BAME committee.	CW	
24/03/21 - 11	Find out more information on what can be done with this and what budget they can get and feed this back at the next meeting.	CW	
24/03/21 - 12	Find out what Athena Swan actions the department can work on.	CW	
24/03/21 - 13	Chase up about student funding with Kevin Taylor and see if any extensions can be made.	CW	
24/03/21 - 14	Make sure that support for living costs etc. are better sign posted and reminding PGR supervisors are aware of this and discussing this with their students.	EDIA Committee	

