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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STEERING COMMITTEE: 3rd JUNE 2020

PRESENT: Dr C. Walsh (in the Chair), Dr A. Alifuoco, Mr A. Catterall, Dr B. Dagger, Dr T. Gallagher-Mitchell, Ms T. Lewin, Ms H. McGarry, Dr A. Pereira, Mr J. Ryan, Dr A. Yeates

Secretariat: Mr M. Jones

APOLOGIES: Mr J. Ellison

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2019. The Chair requested that the references to Mr Ryan in actum seven be corrected to Dr Bennett. Pending this correction the minutes were **APPROVED** by those who had attended as an accurate record.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

(i) Dignity at Work Policy (actum 3)

Ms Lewin informed members that she had sent the draft version of the policy to Ms Gittins and that this version is currently accessible on the University's website.

(ii) Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy (actum 4)

Mr Ryan confirmed that he had sent the updated draft policy to Ms Gittins. Mr Ryan added that the updated draft policy had been submitted to Rectorate Team, who had requested a number of changes.

ACTION: Chair to contact Ms Gittins re Dignity at Work policy and Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy.

(iii) Student Data (actum 5)

The Chair drew members' attention to the paper on student achievement (ED 634) and its finding that self-efficacy is the one significant predictor of achievement shared by males and females. Dr Pereira noted that the paper did not take into account students' backgrounds (ie the community from which they come). Members noted the significant differences in achievement between genders. The Chair undertook to liaise with Dr Bennett re speaking to the Chairs of the new schools committees about this issue.

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ACTION: Chair to contact Dr Bennett, as above.

(iv) Staff Issues (actum 9)

Dr Yeates confirmed that these issues have now been resolved.

3. Terms of Reference, Updated Equality and Diversity Objectives, and Equality and Diversity Policy Update

Members had received the Terms of Reference, Updated Equality and Diversity Objectives, and Equality and Diversity Policy Update. The Chair informed members that minor changes have been made to the Terms of Reference. Dr Gallagher-Mitchell noted that some terminology in the document would need to be updated in light of the University's adoption of a schools-based structure. Mr Catterall added that the reference to 'Senior Management Team' should be replaced with 'Operational Leadership Group'. The Chair requested that the committee's constitution be updated, and a reference added to the committee meeting three times per year.

ACTION: Mr Jones to update Terms of Reference, as above.

Pending these changes, members APPROVED the updated Terms of Reference.

Turning to the updated Equality & Diversity Objectives, the Chair informed members that objectives outlined in the document have been taken directly from the University's Access and Participation Plan. Dr Pereira welcomed the update to the objectives and asked the Chair to confirm that the committee would have the role of advising on the implementation of the objectives. The Chair confirmed that this was the case and added that the objectives would be examined at each meeting of the committee. The Chair requested that any feedback on the updated objectives be sent to her as soon as possible.

ACTION: Members to send feedback to Chair, as above.

Turning to the updated Equality & Diversity Policy, the Chair informed members that the previous version of the policy had been extended upon its expiry to the end of summer 2019 and that the updated policy was substantially new. The Chair asked Mr Catterall to ensure that the staff policies listed in the document are available and up to date.

ACTION: Mr Catterall to ensure staff policies listed in document are available and up to date.

Dr Alifuoco noted that appendices one and two both appear twice at the end of the policy. The Chair undertook to rectify this.

ACTION: Chair to update document, as above.

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4. Access and Participation Plan Update

Members had received the report from Chair of the Access and Participation Plan Implementation Groups. The Chair reminded members that the Access and Participation Plan Implementation Group has four Implementation Groups, focussing on Data, Access, Success and Progression. Members noted that in the 2018/19 academic year, the University's good degree outcomes rose to 72%. In the same year, the good degree outcomes of those students with a disability dropped to 64% whereas the good degree outcomes of those students with no disability increased to 75%. This resulted in a percentage point gap of 11 for the 2018/19 academic year. Mr Ryan informed members that students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) are more likely to get a good degree and emphasised the importance of increasing the number of students with a disability applying for DSA. Mr Ryan raised the possibility of the University assisting students with the costs involved in applying. Members noted that in 2018/19, the University has seen increases in the percentage point difference of good degrees by disability, ethnicity and POLAR4 and IMD quintiles 1-5.

Turning to the Analysis of Attainment Data by Risk Flag/s and Entry Qualifications, members noted the relationship between multiple risk flags and poorer degree outcomes, particularly when the risk flags include areas of high deprivation (IMD quintiles) and low participation (POLAR 4). Mr Ryan informed members that while attainment levels among students with disabilities have remained the same, attainment levels among students without disabilities have increased, leading to a widening of the attainment gap. Ms McGarry informed members that the Success Group, chaired by Ms Murray, is looking at strategies to address this gap. The Chair requested that members send her any practical suggestions as to ways in which the gap could be addressed.

ACTION: Members to feed back to Chair, as above.

5. Staff Issues

Members had received the Staff Equality and Diversity Data Report. Dr Pereira noted the report's finding that while females make up 58% of all staff, most sit at lower grades and fewer at higher levels (Grade 9 and above). Ms Lewin informed members that the University's participation in Advance HE's Aurora leadership programme is part of an effort to rectify this, adding that the University is currently considering the recently released review on the future of Athena SWAN. Dr Gallagher-Mitchell informed members that the University has recently joined the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) a professional organisation supporting those involved in widening access to higher education.

6. AOB

Dr Dagger raised the issue of annual leave during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Queries were raised about the return to campus following COVID-19 for those with caring responsibilities.

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Ms Lewin advised that such issues should be discussed with colleagues' Personnel Manager and would be brought to the attention of the COVID Planning group.