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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STEERING COMMITTEE: 11th DECEMBER 2019

PRESENT: Dr C. Walsh (in the Chair), Mr A. Catterall, Mr J. Ellison, Ms H. McGarry, Mr H. Rashid, Mr J. Ryan

Secretariat: Mr M. Jones

APOLOGIES: Dr A. Alifuoco, Dr B. Dagger, Dr T. Gallagher-Mitchell, Ms T. Lewin, Dr A. Pereira, Dr A. Yeates

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2019 and these were **APPROVED** by those who had attended as an accurate record.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

The Chair confirmed that all action points from the previous meeting have been completed.

3. Dignity at Work Policy

Members had received the Dignity at Work Policy. Mr Catterall asked members to send feedback on the document to Ms Lewin by the end of January 2020.

ACTION: Members to send feedback on Dignity at Work Policy to Ms Lewin, as above.

4. Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy

Members had received the Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Partner-Leave and Adoption Policy Statement and Procedures. Mr Ryan assured members that the policy meets statutory requirements under the Equality Act 2010. The Chair emphasised the importance of colleagues making use of the action plan contained in the policy. Mr Catterall requested that in the document heading 'Paternity' be amended to 'Partner' in line with the rest of the document.

ACTION: Mr Ryan to update heading, as above.

The Chair requested that Mr Ryan meet with Faculty Senior Academic Advisors once the policy has been approved, in order to talk them through its contents.

ACTION: Mr Ryan to meet with Faculty Senior Academic Advisors, as above.

5. Equality and Diversity Annual Student Data Report

Members had received the Equality and Diversity Annual Student Data Report. Ms McGarry informed members that the report is based on Advance HE data, which looks at the University's data in comparison with national data. Ms McGarry drew members to the proportion of students at the University who have disclosed a disability (19%, as against a national figure of 13%). Ms McGarry added that 68.8% of non-disabled leavers were in full time employment compared to 60.4% of disabled leavers; this is higher than the national statistics published by ECU, 59.9% and 51.9% respectively.

Turning to the data on ethnicity, Ms McGarry informed members that for the last three academic years the number of BAME students across the full student population has remained in the region of 8%. In the academic year 2018/19 the University had four more BAME students at the University registered as first years compared to 2017/18. The national statistics show that in 2017/18, 23.6% of students were BAME.

Ms McGarry also drew members' attention to the need to improve access rates for mature students and challenges relating to graduate-level employment rates of students with mental health conditions. Ms McGarry added that work is needed to address continuation rates in students from low participation areas.

Mr Catterall asked whether any patterns in relation to these challenges were apparent at faculty, school or subject level. Ms McGarry replied that in each case, when broken down, the numbers subject level are so small as to provide no useful data. Ms McGarry undertook to liaise with the Student Data Group re the possibility of producing data at Schools level.

ACTION: Ms McGarry to liaise with Student Data Group, as above.

Mr Catterall raised the possibility of the metrics from the report appearing in each School's ARE report, a suggestion with which the Chair concurred. Mr Catterall also suggested that an item in relation to the report be added to a future HoDSS agenda.

ACTION: Chair to discuss with PVC Student Life and Learning.

6. Academic Appeals and Complaints: Equality Impact Assessment

Members had received the report on academic appeals and complaints. The Chair informed members that during the 2018/19 academic year 58% of appellants were female (compared to 70% of the total student population); 41% were male (compared to 30% of the total student population). The proportion of male students appealing was higher than the proportion of male students in the overall University population.

The Chair drew members' attention towards the fact that an increased proportion of Black African students submitted an appeal, adding that a higher percentage of Irish students appealed than would be predicted by their proportion in the overall student

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population. The Chair added that no trends were apparent in the data contained in the report.

The Chair concluded by raising the issue of male students in areas where the majority of students were female and raised the question of whether this had an effect on male students' attainment. The Chair undertook to raise the issue with the Director of Learning and Teaching Development.

ACTION: Chair to contact Dr Bennett, as above.

7. Office for Students' Insight Briefing

Members had received the Office for Students' Insight Briefing 'Beyond the bare minimum - Are universities and colleges doing enough for disabled students?' and Dr Bennett's summary. Dr Bennett emphasised the importance of building in support for disabled students at every stage from co-design onwards, giving the provision of multiple types of assessment as an example.

8. University Access and Participation Plan 2019/20 and 2020-25

Members had received the University Access Participation Plans for 2019/20 and 2020-25. The Chair informed members that both plans have been approved by Office for Students. The Chair added that four groups have been formed to ensure the implementation of the plans: (i) Access, (ii) Success, (iii) Progress and (iv) Data. The groups will meet regularly and make recommendations to the committee.

9. Staff Issues

- (i) Update on Athena Swan review

Mr Catterall informed members that the University has withdrawn its membership of Athena Swan pending the outcome of the Advance HE Review.

- (ii) Update from Union Representative

The Chair had received an email from Dr Yeates, raising a number of issues.

- a. Lack of transport from Creative Campus to the committee meeting scheduled for 3rd June 2020. The Chair asked Mr Jones to raise this with Mr Dykins.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Dykins, as above.

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- b. August reassessment examinations at Hope Park. The Chair undertook to monitor any comments from students at Creative Campus in relation to this.
- c. Return to Work letter. Mr Catterall informed members that the revision of the Return to Work letter has been completed and recommended Dr Yeates contact Ms Lewin re this.

ACTION: Dr Yeates to contact Ms Lewin, as above.

- d. Line managers meeting with pregnant employees. Mr Catterall confirmed to members that managers are expected to meet with pregnant employees before they go on maternity leave. Mr Catterall recommended Dr Yeates contact Ms Lewin re this.

ACTION: Dr Yeates to contact Ms Lewin, as above.

10. Estates

Mr Ellison informed members that he met with SU representatives in relation to gender neutral toilet provision. Mr Ellison informed members that gender neutral toilet cubicles would be provided where possible but that this was not always the case due to space. Mr Ellison added that there was now gender neutral toilet provision at both Hope Park and Creative Campus. Mr Ellison informed members that the revolving door in the EDEN Building leading onto Taggart Avenue has now been replaced by a sliding door. Mr Ellison added that a new accessibility ramp has been installed at Aigburth campus, linking St Julie's, St Michael's and the Trinity Building. Mr Ellison concluded by informing members that a hoist and medical bed have been installed at Plas Caerdeon.

11. AOB

The Chair informed members that the committee's Terms of Reference, the Equality & Diversity Objectives and Equality & Diversity Policy are currently under review by senior management and will be presented at the next meeting of the committee.