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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STEERING COMMITTEE: 6th March 2019

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

Secretariat: Mr M. Jones

APOLOGIES: Ms N. Fearon, Dr A. Pereira, Dr A. Yeates

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2018 were **APPROVED** by those who had attended as an accurate record.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

(i) Terms of Reference

The Chair thanked members for their feedback and comments on the Terms of Reference. Terms of Reference are now agreed.

(ii) ARE Reports (actum 2 i a)

The Chair said she would give further consideration to the matter of whether the Steering Committee would need to receive ARE reports.

(iii) Pregnancy and New Parent Leave for Students (actum 2 ii)

Mr Ryan informed members that work on the policy guidelines in relation to pregnancy and new parent leave for students is ongoing and that the draft document will be presented to the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

(iv) Equality & Diversity Objectives (actum 2 iv a)

The Chair undertook to contact Ms Fearon for an update on any comments gathered from the BME Officer.

ACTION: Chair to contact Ms Fearon re any comments gathered from the BME Officer.

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(v) EDEN Building accessibility (actum 2 v)

The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Ms McManniman re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Ms McManniman re risk assessment of EDEN Building accessibility.

(vi) Accessibility Audits (actum vi)

The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re proposed mechanisms for increasing staff and student awareness of the most effective ways of reporting accessibility issues.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re proposed mechanisms for increasing staff and student awareness of the most effective ways of reporting accessibility issues.

(vii) Post-Graduation Employment Rates (actum 2 vii)

Mr Ryan informed members that Ms Mair had informed him that there has been no change in the data since the previous meeting of the Steering Committee.

(viii) Enhancement & Advancement (actum 2 viii)

Mr Jones confirmed that he had contacted Ms McDermott with a reminder that Equality & Diversity should have a distinct agenda item on all School meetings.

(ix) Equality & Diversity Objectives (actum 3)

The Chair confirmed to members that she would add information on satisfaction levels of disabled students to objective two at the next update.

(x) Disabled Students' Interruptions of Study (actum 4 i)

Ms McGarry confirmed to members that she had liaised with the Student Data Group on this matter and that data from the past five years shows that disabled students have a higher rate of interruptions than non-disabled students (disabled students: 3.6%, non-disabled students: 1.8%). Ms McGarry added that, following interruptions, disabled students returned to their studies at a higher rate than non-disabled students. Mr Ryan noted that students with a disability are supported to enter University and to continue with their studies.

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ACTION: Ms McGarry to provide a report for the next meeting on trends in relation to disabled students interrupting studies pre 2017/8.

(xi) Data Report for Heads in the Processes of Subject Level TEF (actum 4 ii)

Ms McGarry informed members that she and her colleagues are setting up reports to monitor the data in order for this to be shared with heads of department.

(xii) Gender Tracking for Teaching and Scholarship Contract Applicants (actum 5)

Mr Catterall confirmed that he had tracked the gender of applicants for Teaching and Scholarship Contract and that there is a 50/50 split.

(xiii) Accessibility Information at Open Days (actum 8)

The Chair confirmed that she had contacted Ms Kelly and Ms Dermott re this and that Ms Dermott will update her on this after the meeting of the School Board.

(xiv) Good Practice in Faculties (actum 9 i)

Mr Jones confirmed that he had contacted faculties for updates on good practice in relation to Equality & Diversity.

(xv) Faculty Alternative Representatives (actum 9 ii)

Mr Jones confirmed that he had contacted faculties re nominating alternative representatives to attend Steering Group meetings should the designated representative be unable to attend.

(xvi) Equality & Diversity Policy (actum 10)

The Chair confirmed that Ms Gittins has informed her that 'ownership' of the Equality & Diversity Policy rests with the Equality & Diversity Steering Committee. Discussion is still ongoing as to how this will be facilitated.

3. Access and Participation Plan Update

Members had received the Access and Participation Plan for 2019-2024.

The Chair emphasised to members that the plan and its implementation is integral to the University's ability to charge the current highest level of fees (£9,250 per annum). The Chair added that the University is moving forward towards the implementation of the objectives outlined in the document for when the plan comes into effect in September 2019.

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The Chair drew members' attention to the action points assigned to various members of staff. Dr Gallagher Mitchell noted the outcome for item four ('Unemployment rates for disabled students will decrease') and pointed out that for some disabled students employment is not the ultimate aim of attaining a qualification. The Chair concurred, commenting that this consideration will be noted in the plan's narrative element.

Mr Ryan asked whether campus locations would be specified in the plan (e.g. in relation to academic study skills mentors) in light of the possible disparity of accessibility of these services between campuses. The Chair undertook to consider this.

ACTION: Chair to look into possibility of adding location information into Access and Participation Plan.

4. Level C Trips to Plas Caerdeon

Members had received the report on Level C Trips to Plas Caerdeon. The Chair relayed Dr Haughan's request that colleagues who are attending Plas Caerdeon be aware of the University's policy 'Health and Safety in Fieldwork Code of Practice'. The Chair noted that this item would be included on the next Learning and Day Agenda in order to support staff across the University. The Chair added that relevant students' Learning Support Plans should be arranged as early as possible to take into account support requirements in relation to visiting Plas Caerdeon. Mr Ryan added that Student Support & Wellbeing are currently working on this issue.

ACTION: Chair to consider broader collection of data in relation to attendance at Caerdeon Level C trip and students with protected characteristics, including (but not exclusive to) those with a disability.

5. Analysis of Appeals 2017/18 academic year

Members had received the update on academic appeals received during the 2017/18 year. The Chair reminded members that the Steering Committee is tasked with ensuring that there are no issues of inequality represented in the data. The Chair drew members' attention to the paper's conclusion, which states that the protected characteristics of students who appeal demonstrates that a higher number of +21 years students and a higher proportion of disabled students appeal their outcome. This would appear to be underpinned by appeals relating to mitigating circumstances rather than to any issues of inequality of opportunity.

6. Staff issues

- (i) Updates from Trade Unions

The Chair informed members that Dr Yeates (UCU) had contacted her re letters sent to staff members returning from maternity leave. The Chair informed members that she is working on this in conjunction with Ms Lewin.

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(ii) Updates from Personnel

Members had received the Equality & Diversity Staff Data Report. Dr Alifuoco asked for further information on the gender categories used in the report. Ms Lewin replied that the report uses the same categories as those used by HESA. Dr Gallagher Mitchell requested further information on the gender pay gap figures. Mr Catterall replied that the report was due to be signed off by Staffing Committee, adding that the mean average gap has fallen from 17% to 14% while the median average gap has risen from 16% to 25%. Mr Catterall attributed this rise to the inclusion of Hope Works student employees in the report.

Dr Dagger raised the issue of the University's maternity payment, asking whether the University would consider extending this payment to fathers as well as mothers. Mr Catterall replied that the payment was to offset loss of earnings and was paid to the employee of the University who was in receipt of maternity pay or adoption pay. Payments have and would be made to male members of staff in the event of adoption where they would be the primary carer and received statutory adoption pay ie loss of earnings.

7. Student Update from LHSU

The Chair had received a summary report from Ms Fearon. The Chair informed members that Ms Fearon has met with Professor Vandewalle and Mr Ellison re gender neutral toilets and that progress on this has been made. Dr Alifuoco asked whether there would be gender neutral toilet provision in the new buildings at Creative Campus. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re gender neutral toilet provision at Creative Campus.

Dr Alifuoco raised the issue of the provision of hearing loops at the Creative Campus. Members also discussed the effectiveness of the hearing loop in Our Place. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re hearing loop in Our Place.

Mr Ryan informed members that there are issues with the accessibility of the student support rooms at the Creative Campus and requested that an accessibility audit be conducted there. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re accessibility audit of Creative Campus.

8. Reports from Faculties

(i) Arts and Humanities

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Dr Alifuoco identified a number of recent instances of good practice, including the availability of support and chaplaincy services at the Creative Campus. Dr Alifuoco informed members that Ms Dermot has confirmed that Equality & Diversity is now a standing item on School of Creative and Performing Arts Board agendas

(ii) Education

The Chair had received a report from Dr Pereira identifying a number of accessibility issues in the HCA building. The Chair noted Dr Pereira's comments about accessibility to offices of colleagues in Early Childhood and issues around lock pads on doors. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison and Mr Beecroft re this. The Chair noted Dr Pereira's comments around the proposed integration of Early Childhood and Disability Studies and concerns that this would lead to increased movement around campus for disabled staff and students. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re accessibility issues resulting from Early Childhood and Disability Studies office moves.

Faculty representative noted that there was an issue with roving microphones not working in the lecture theatre and asked that batteries were checked on a regular basis.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact ITS help to ask that batteries are checked in roving microphones in the LTC.

(iii) Science

Dr Gallagher Mitchell informed members that he has been working with colleagues to look at Level C attendance in relation to students with protected characteristics. Dr Gallagher Mitchell added that there appears to be some correlation between protected characteristics and lower attendance. Dr Gallagher Mitchell pointed out that non-attendance is not necessarily linked to non-engagement where students with protected characteristics are concerned. Ms McGarry informed members that she is currently looking into this issue.

9. Any Other Business

Mr Ryan informed members that the Disabled Students Experience Survey has been completed. 307 students responded, representing around a third of the University's disabled students. Mr Ryan informed members that survey responses had shown disability support in the University to be effective, while highlighting the need for reasonable adjustments to be applied consistently across all areas.

Dr Dagger raised concerns on behalf of students in the Science Faculty relating to use of the EDEN Lecture Theatre. Dr Dagger noted that the lecture theatre has insufficient

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wheelchair access and an insufficient provision of desks for laptops. The Chair asked Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Mr Ellison re use of EDEN Lecture Theatre.