

## 1. Introduction

This report (*written in early March*) summarises progress on EDI during Term two for the 2019/20 academic year, including developments, challenges and achievements, together with proposed next steps.

At the July Council, our new EDI Vision 2025 '**Everyone Welcome, Many Voices, One Community**', and associated 2019/20 Action Plan, was agreed. We have, over this term, embedded new ways of working informed by change and external Charter frameworks. This report also outlines our new training and development activities as well as a new communications strategy designed to build EDI awareness within our community. We have received feedback from our student and staff community, expressing frustration with the pace of change and the incidents on campus. We value this open and honest feedback and are engaging with the community to take impactful and agile actions.

**Looking forward to the remainder of the 2019/20 academic year, we must review and reflect on all planned actions within the 2019/20 ED&I Action Plan through the lens of Covid-19 and refocus our EDI activity accordingly.**

## 2. Progress on Priorities

### 2.1 EDI Action Plan 2019-20

A strong project management approach has been implemented this year to ensure the delivery of the new EDI vision and governance structure. Central to this has been increased consultation and 'voice' from stakeholders. All Equality Groups (for Gender, Race, Disability and Sexual Orientation) are developing a consistent, 'SMART' action plan against national best EDI practice through external accreditations and Charters. Action from these groups, against their agreed plans, is reported on a termly basis to the University Inclusivity Group.

The new governance structures have been established with representatives from the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG) chairing each of the Equality Groups. This has led to a series of improvements:

- a. Strong academic and student representation on all groups.
- b. Positive engagement with staff and student networks as critical advisors.
- c. Effective reporting from Equality Groups to the overarching University Inclusion Group.
- d. All equality groups being led by a VCEG 'champion'.

### 2.2 EDI Communications Strategy



To support the delivery of the vision it is key that we raise awareness of the shared values of our community and the benefits of a diverse student and staff body. The aim of the 'Everyone Welcome' campaign is to create specific and measurable communication and engagement objectives with defined priority audiences, to target communications e.g. students in specific societies and clubs, students in halls of residence, BAME and international students, teaching staff.

This will be achieved through a clear identity/brand (example above) that brings together all the communications for greater impact and recognition across multiple channels. We will balance action on unacceptable behaviour with a positive and inclusive campaign. This, most importantly, must follow impactful positive actions for our students and staff at the university.



## 2.3 High level training plan

To help us achieve the [EDI Vision 2025](#), the Provost Commission Forum for EDI Innovation has been working with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to roll out a two-year high-level EDI training and development plan which focuses on the following main activities:

**2.3i Diversity Champions.** We are pleased to be working with Advance HE to deliver our flagship [Exeter Diversity Champions Programme](#). Our first cohort of 20 colleagues began in February 2020 and once trained, they will deliver EDI awareness training within their Colleges and Directorates from this spring. A further cohort of 20 colleagues will begin training in the summer once we have had the opportunity to fully evaluate the impact of cohort one. We are hopeful that this second cohort will be trained at Penryn to ensure we have Diversity Champions across all our campuses.

**2.3ii Bystander Intervention** training programme: A 'Train the Trainer' programme developing knowledge on establishing social norms/Intervention initiatives for tackling sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviours, will be rolled out for staff and students.

**2.3iii Cultural Awareness** at Exeter through the delivery of training and consultancy from NCCC, Georgetown University: This pioneering new programme will establish a Community of Practice of leaders in Cultural Competence composed of 24 staff from across the institution with the ability to develop, deliver and lead change in their respective areas.

**2.3iv ED&I Training to support REF 2021:** All academic staff who form part of internal REF panels have been offered ED&I Unconscious Bias training. In addition, we are about to launch an on-line Unconscious Bias training package and plan to make this part of our suite of mandatory training for all new colleagues.

**2.3v Domestic abuse training** sessions have been delivered for VCEG and 60 staff across Exeter and Penryn campuses, to support our new Domestic Abuse guidance due to be launch in May. This follows our recent membership of [The Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse](#).

## 3. External Accreditations

### 3.1 Athena SWAN

- It was confirmed in September 2019 that the following departmental applications had been successful in the April 2019 submission round:
  - The College for Medicine and Health (Silver renewal)
  - Engineering (Bronze)

Engineering's success means that all nine of our STEM departments now hold an award.

- The following departments submitted applications in the November 2019 submission round (outcome expected March 2020):
  - Mathematics and Computer Science (renewal of their Silver award)
  - Psychology (renewal of their Silver award)
  - History (NEW application for a Bronze award)

### 3.2 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI)

Our application for the WEI this year went through a rigorous process of review by several senior managers and EDI experts. We ranked 323<sup>rd</sup> out of 503 employers who took part and 42<sup>nd</sup> within the education sector. Measures are being taken to review the feedback on our application and develop impactful actions to improve performance in the next round.

### 3.3 Race Equality Charter Mark

The University has made a commitment to achieve the [Race Equality Charter](#) (REC) Bronze status by October 2021. Work on the REC commenced in October 2019 with the recruitment of a dedicated and highly experienced Race Equality Charter Manager, Niema Bohrayba. A Self-Assessment Team, chaired by Professor Janice Kay, Provost, has commenced work to oversee the development of REC activity going forwards.

The first of several task and finish groups have also met to develop the baseline survey. The main aim of the group is to develop a student and a staff survey as per the REC requirements. If the drafts are approved by the SAT in April, it is envisaged that the surveys will go live in term three. The survey results will help us establish a baseline, and along with existing data sets, will be utilised to inform the development of an impactful Race Equality Action Plan.

### 3.4 EDI support for Teaching Excellence Action Plans (TEAPs)

All Colleges have developed TEAPs, a process of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will support these plans. A high-level EIA briefing document, including recommendation to consider based on a thematic EDI analysis/Review of the TEAPs at college level, has been produced. This, together with the Advance HE toolkit for 'Embedding EDI into the Curriculum', has been shared with colleges and departments. This guidance has been developed to support academic colleagues in advance of their Teaching Excellent Meetings (TEM) due to be held in March. Following the March TEM cycle, a series of good practice resources from internal and external sources will be shared.

### 3.5 Disability and Mental Health

Disability is an area of EDI work that will be prioritised. The Disability Equality Group (DEG), led by Craig Nowell, Director of Campus Infrastructure and Operational Support Services, is developing an action plan that will include student priorities as informed by the Students' Guild and Students' Union. This plan will model good practice recommendations from [Disability Confident](#) (external benchmark of good employment practice). This will include current work being undertaken to audit the reasonable adjustments process and identify steps to make this simpler and more equitable.



We have been working towards the recommendations of the [Thriving at Work \(Farmer, Stevenson\) Report](#), through the [Wellbeing sub-group](#) within Positive Working Environment project, Chaired by Professor Barney Dunn, Research Clinical Psychologist. This will result in a new and comprehensive long-term Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan due to be published in June. This plan will form part of the overall University Wellbeing Strategy recently agreed by VCEG. In addition to launching new HSE Stress and Mental Health Management standards, the development of a new online module for managers on Managing Stress and Mental Health is also underway. A programme of Mindfulness workshops has proved to be very popular. The team have also been working

with the Student Wellbeing team to ensure effective co-working on relevant services.

## 4. Cultural Change

### 4.1 PSLT EDI 'takeover'

Delivering on our commitment to establish a PS Inclusion Group, it was agreed this would be most effectively achieved through termly consideration at the Professional Services Leadership Team meeting. The first of these took place on 14 January 2020 where EDI priorities across Professional Services and action/s to advance these priorities were agreed. These were:

- a. Advancing EDI through re-considering job descriptions.
- b. Promoting knowledge and awareness through training.
- c. Making best use of EDI data available (including on pay gaps).
- d. Embedding the use of EDI Impact Assessments.



#### **4.2 LGBT History Month – February 2020**

A series of events were held during February to celebrate LGBT History Month including a Stonewall Trans Allies Programme in partnership with Devon & Cornwall Police and the Met Office, tours of the institute of sexology and events on LGBT representation within academia. The campaign aimed to raise awareness, visibility and embed support networks for LGBT individuals.

#### **4.3 International Women’s Day (IWD) – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

IWD 2020 was celebrated with roundtable events in both Exeter and Cornwall focussed on the Gender Pay Gap and showcasing inspirational women from our community through social media profile features.

**4.4 VCEG Trans Awareness Training** – Supporting our LGBT agenda, VCEG members attended an awareness raising session delivered by local LGBTQ+ charity, the Intercom Trust, on 20<sup>th</sup> January. The aim of the session was to develop a greater shared understanding and awareness of Trans and non-binary issues affecting both staff and students and provide insights into how VCEG can make a difference both through governance and operations. In addition, a very successful whole day event (26<sup>th</sup> February) was organised by the University attended by a range of senior leaders, as well as several partner organisations from Exeter including the NHS, Met Office and Police.

**4.5 Support for Staff and Students** - Building on the Speak Out Guardian role created in 2018, two new Speak Out Guardians have been recruited to replace Rachel Burn who steps down from the role at the end of March. This follows the recent appointment of Mark Plummer as the new Speak Out Guardian for Cornwall. Several new Dignity & Respect Advisors are also being trained and will join the existing Network in March. An awareness-raising campaign promoting Speak Out Guardians, Dignity & Respect Advisors and the Exeter Speaks Out online hub is planned for April 2020.

Sexual abuse and sexual/domestic violence training have been provided to the student Nightline volunteers. This includes; statistics and myths, the law and criminal justice process, services available and reporting procedures.

**4.6 Data Informed Action** – Work has progressed to develop a diversity data dashboard which includes student and staff data for Race, Gender and Disability. This will include data on attainment, admission pipeline, pay grade and progression which will aid and inform our accreditation work and targeted positive action. The target launch date for the dashboard is the end of March 2020.

**4.7 Domestic Abuse** – The University has recently become a member of [The Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse](#) whose mission is to enable employers to act on domestic abuse. As part of our membership we are developing guidance and support for colleagues and managers, as well as a series of information and training events taking place during March 2020.

### **5. Joined Up Working**

**5.1 Provost Commission Forum for EDI Innovation** – The newly reformed Provost Commission Forum for EDI Innovation has now met twice, most recently in February 2020. The expanded network serves as a forum with a wide membership to discuss innovations to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and to monitor the impact of the new EDI Vision.

The February meeting of the Provost Commission Forum focussed on ensuring EDI is at the heart of our induction materials. Work is now underway to prepare for 2020 Fresher’s Week and induction. As well as continuing the improvements that have been made in the past two years, the University’s Respect Matters quiz which has been a part of new student registration processes since 2018 is due to become compulsory for the first time.

**5.2 Inclusive Teaching and Success for All** – As part of the ‘Success for All’ aspect of our Education Strategy, the team have been working jointly with Widening Participation and Education colleagues to drive progress within Inclusive learning and teaching. A series of toolkits, including our work with Advance HE have been launched and an EDI assessment was undertaken on all departmental Teaching Excellence Action Plans with



recommendations for change. These will be inquired further within the Teaching Excellence Monitoring process.

## 6. Improved Processes

**6.1 New and updated mandatory training** - New employees are now required to complete all [mandatory training](#) on day one of employment, this includes EDI training. New induction software was launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> September to improve the delivery of online training to new staff, as well as the 'refresher' that is required after two years. This new software has significantly increased engagement in mandatory EDI training amongst colleagues. In response to feedback from staff, content has been improved, and now features a downloadable podcast and workbook which makes it fully accessible for all users.

**6.2 Equality Impact Analysis** – As part of the EDI Vision 2025, a new EIA process is being developed and will be piloted in autumn 2020. The development of a new EIA process will scope:

- A review of existing EDI resourcing, with a view of ensuring that EIA's are allocated as key EDI activity.
- Clearly defined roles of responsibilities so that expectations are managed.
- Training for senior leaders on the legislative framework to ensure that decisions consider equality information.
- A comprehensive communication strategy to ensure that the university can utilise the process effectively.