

**1. Introduction**

This report summarises progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) over the first term of the 2020/21 academic year, including new developments, challenges along with proposed next steps.

In the past year, we have been on a journey of reflection on our culture and how we begin to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into all aspects of the University of Exeter. This has been informed by our key initiatives like the [Provost Commission](#), our [Speak Out Guardians](#), Employee Engagement Survey, our [Access and Participation](#) plans, our staff and student networks and our community partners.

Work is now underway to identify Key Performance Indicators to measure the impact of our EDI activities in a robust and meaningful way.

**2. Progress on Priorities**

**2.1 EDI Action Plan 2020-21**

Following the approval of the EDI Vision, and the new governance structure, the EDI Team have been working with colleagues across the institution to embed the following changes:

- As per Council’s direction, we have taken a strong project approach to the delivery of the new Vision and governance structure. All Equality Groups (for Gender, Race, Disability and Sexual Orientation) have developed or are developing a consistent, SMART action plan that guides UoE towards national best practice through external accreditations and charters.
- Based on feedback from our student and staff community, the vision has been refocused into seven priority areas:

**Themes of change**

<b>Recruitment, Recognition and Reward</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our own BAME leadership, representation within recruitment, promotion and progression processes</li> <li>• Identify and address pay gaps for Gender, Ethnicity and Disability.</li> </ul>
<b>Education, Curriculum and Success For All</b>
<b>Creating an inclusive culture, norms and values – supported through charters and accreditations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic freedom, addressing hate crime and online harms</li> <li>• Engaging with the RECM, Stonewall WEI, Disability Confident and Athena SWAN as drivers for change</li> </ul>
<b>Community and Involvement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch online collaboration forum, EDI central to local meetings (CEGs)</li> <li>• Delivery of effective training programmes including Diversity Champions, ELEVATE and student and staff mandatory training alongside Equality Group action plans relating to Gender, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religion &amp; Belief</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Racist Manifesto - Independent review</li> <li>• Looking at our data, tracking progress and change whilst communicating clearly and openly with our community</li> </ul>
<b>HR Policies, Training &amp; Development and Redress</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting tools, response to incidents, support for victims, wellbeing policies</li> </ul>
<b>Research</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a diverse research environment.</li> </ul>

## 2.2 EDI Training Plan

Training and Development is a vital part of the University EDI Vision to 2025. Training needs have been reviewed and priorities for 20/21 are:-

- a. *A refresh of current mandatory staff EDI induction training*  
A comprehensive review of our existing online training programme has been carried out in consultation with Equality Group members and networks with a refreshed version due to be launched in November 2020.
- b. *Further development of new Student EDI training*  
In September 2020 the University launched an EDI training e-module for all students. All students are expected to complete the training as part of their induction requirements. The training is intended to deliver a foundation level of knowledge and shared understanding for all and students are encouraged to implement what they learn into their wider university journey. The course covers topics such as how to challenge unacceptable behaviour, what the law says, understanding what equality, diversity and inclusion actually means, alongside University of Exeter policies and guidelines. We are monitoring engagement and completion rates and further work is required to ensure this increases.
- c. *Cultural Competence programme (delivered by Georgetown University in the US)*  
In July 2020 the University launched the Cultural Competence Community of Practice Training, led by Tawara Goode and Suzanne Bronheim of The National Centre of Cultural Competence (NCCC) at Georgetown University. 27 members of staff from across the university community are participating in this pilot programme to establish a Community of Practice of leaders in cultural competence.
- d. *Conclude cohort 1 of Diversity Champions*  
Our inaugural Diversity Champions Programme commenced last year and is delivered in collaboration with Advance HE. We will train 21 colleagues embed EDI principles and support for 'front-line' staff (those who deal with students directly in any capacity at the university). Our aspiration is to reach 1,000 colleagues through the work of our Champions in the next 18 months as they implement projects in response to locally identified EDI needs.
- e. *'Diversifying Leadership'*  
A programme of leadership development for BAME colleagues (early career academics and professional services staff) which explores themes of power and influence, cultural identity increasing visibility and authentic leadership.
- f. *Implementing new Equality Impact Assessments*  
A bite-sized introduction to EIAs providing an overview of EIAs and how to undertake them aimed at colleagues responsible for creating new or developing existing policies / procedures / processes / decisions.

## 3. External Accreditations

### 3.1 Gender: Athena SWAN

In October we applied to extend the validity of our current institutional Silver award from four years to five years. Our application was successful which means our award is now valid until April 2023. We will use this additional time to review our Gender Equality Action Plan through a CV-19 lens to identify and address the detrimental impacts of CV-19 on gender equality. The Gender Pay Gap Working Group, chaired by Professor Janice Kay, Provost, has been carrying out in-depth analysis and interrogation of our data to better understand the issues and inform the development of recommended action required to address and mitigate

further widening of the gap (e.g. measures have been taken to continue salary increments for staff up to and including grade E as women are overrepresented in these grades).

### **3.2 Sexual Orientation: Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI)**

Stonewall made the decision not to run the 2021 Workplace Equality Index due to the challenges many employers are facing in response to CV-19. The next submission date will be in September 2021 for the 2022 WEI. However, we have developed a new Sexual Orientation action plan in consultation with our staff and student community which will help drive forward our work on LGBT inclusion. Regular meetings between the Imelda Rogers, HR Director and Linda Peka, VCEG Lead for EDI and LGBTQ+ Network has resulted in some positive outcomes including Trans Awareness training for HR colleagues and Investigating Officers and new Dignity & Respect Advisors being recruited and trained to ensure the Network is representative of our Trans community.

### **3.3 Race: Race Equality Charter Mark (REC)**

Work on the charter continues according to schedule. The mandated REC surveys (one student focused, and one staff focused) were undertaken between April and May 2020 with 1199 responses to the student survey (of these 389 (32%) were from BAME students) and 633 responses to the staff survey (of which 72 (11%) were from BAME members of staff). Analysis of the survey results has now been completed.

Work is underway on compiling the REC application in readiness for submission in July 2021. To ensure university-wide engagement with this work, a series of presentations have been delivered to provide updates on REC progress, and to engage colleges/ departments and discuss how they can be involved at a “local level”. To date, discussions have been held with the Inclusion Groups of: CMH, SSIS, CLES, HR and HUMS.

Work has commenced on developing the Race Equality action plan in conjunction with our BME community and six key pan university areas have been identified which align with our Everyone Welcome, Many Voices, One Community University [EDI vision 2019-2025](#).

Intersections between gender and race are also being considered within our REC and Athena SWAN work and associated action plans.

### **3.4 Disability: Disability Confident**

A new Disability Equality action plan has been developed in consultation with students and staff. The delivery of the same has been initiated through the development of a new Disability Guidance and Procedure and an audit on reasonable adjustments. The Disability Equality action plan will feed into the whole institution approach to wellbeing that is being led by the Provost through a new Wellbeing and Mental Health Board.

## **4. Cultural Change**

### **4.1 Black History Month**

For Black History month this year, we sought to profile our African Caribbean society and other student and staff BAME networks and share resources and recommendations for all students and staff to learn more about black history and culture. A [special bulletin](#) was sent out at the start of the month promoting films, books, podcasts and internal training opportunities alongside the various events planned for Black History Month. Events included research showcases, training sessions from specialists across disciplines and speakers including Dr Patrick Vernon OBE, Pamela Maynard, Prof. Gretchen Gerzina Dean of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Louisa Adjoa Parker and many more.

### **4.2 ‘Let’s Talk’, Anti-Racism Forum and SMG Bookclub**

In August we launched the BME Network and The Provost Commission ‘Let's Talk’ series of events, which are currently focussed on the BME Awarding Gap. These sessions bring together colleagues working to reduce our awarding gaps with members of the BME community to discuss progress and actions across key areas, whilst encouraging open and transparent discussions and looking to increase the impact and pace of change.

The sessions are open to all members of the community who would like to take part, and BME voices are prioritised within these discussions. Given the success of the series so far, the EDI team are beginning to look at opportunities to create a similar series of events focused on a new topic area, ideally one that addresses intersectionality.

There is also an equivalent Cornwall Anti-racism forum that engages colleagues regularly in conversations around race and anti-racism.

The BME Staff, Student and Allies network has launched the Anti-Racist Exe Bookclub for members of the University's Senior Management Group. The group is meeting for the second time in November and will complete discussions around their chosen book 'Me and White Supremacy'. The model has also been replicated in some Colleges/Departments across the University to encourage conversations about race.

#### **4.3 £25k Student-led Anti-Racism Fund**

Following discussions with 'The Unlearn Collective' the University has committed £25,000 to support anti-racism projects within the academic year 20/21. These projects will be identified and led by the student body with support via the Education Incubator to ensure initiatives have access to the support infrastructure and networks needed to ensure their success.

It is anticipated that the fund will support between 5-10 projects across 20/21, with the funds able to be used for a combination of salary funding (via the student campus partner scheme) and other related costs such as speakers, catering, travel and publishing costs. Disbursement arrangements are being finalised and the fund will be launched imminently.

#### **4.4 NEW Faith and Worldview Equality Group (FWEG)**

A first meeting of this new group, chaired by Professor Tm Quine and supported by Multifaith Chaplaincy Coordinator, Ramona Nash, took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Reporting to the University Inclusion Group, the FWEG mirrors existing subgroups for Gender, Race, Disability and Sexual Orientation and is attended by representatives from Faith and Worldview student societies, staff associations and members of the Chaplaincy and EDI teams.

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

#### **5.1 Inclusive Teaching and Success for All – Associate Academic Dean for Racial Equality and Inclusion**



Interviews took place week commencing 19<sup>th</sup> October, with representatives of the University's BME Network and Race Equality Group on the panel and further engagement with staff and student communities through a series of student and staff pre-panels. Dr Vrinda Nayak, Senior Lecturer and Academic Lead for BAME Student Support within the College of Medicine and Health has been appointed and will commence in post very soon. This role has been created to play a key role in supporting the delivery of our mission and objective with regard to racial equality and inclusion as set out in the University's Education Strategy and Access and Participation Plan.

We commit to building a more inclusive research culture, highlighting our BAME researchers and research and ensuring the highest quality support. We are investigating how our Global Research partnerships could enable us to create more diverse linkages across the world and drive more inclusive co-working and research exchange.

#### **5.2 Research Deep Dive**

A deep dive into research through an EDI lens (involving our Independent Dual Assurance Lead for EDI) is currently being planned and will consider EDI within the REF process, the impact of CV-19 on researchers by

characteristic, embedding Equality Impact Assessments into research planning and processes with a view to looking ahead to creating and fostering an Inclusive Research culture.

### **5.3 Unconscious Bias Training for REF panels**

The EDI team delivered two Unconscious Bias training sessions in conjunction with the REF team in September 2020. The EDI team will continue to work with the REF team on developing the requisite EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) for the 2021 REF submission.

### **5.4 REF Individual Circumstances Panel**

Linda Peka, VCEG Lead for EDI, and Dorcas Cowan, EDI and Wellbeing Manager, took part in the REF Individual Circumstances panel. The panel forms part of the University's preparations for REF 2021 and is designed to ensure that all staff who have had personal circumstances that have impacted in their ability to research productively during the REF period have an opportunity to have those circumstances taken into account. The panel met recently, chaired by the VCEG Lead for EDI, and the University's EDI principles have been at the forefront of the panel discussions.

### **5.5 Partnership working across the Sector**

The University continues to develop partnerships across the sector to support our important work around equality, diversity and inclusion. Learning from, and sharing best practice with, colleagues from across the Higher Education sector and beyond is an important aspect of supporting progress in this space. Recent highlights include:

- The University was invited to take part in a Halpin Partnership report on UK Universities response to the Black Lives Matter movement, with Professor Janice Kay, Provost and Linda Peka, VCEG Lead for EDI taking part in two structured interviews. The draft report and findings were the subject of a panel discussion/event hosted by the Halpin Partnership at the start of November which the Provost took part in as a panellist. The full report, which will be anonymised, will be published shortly.
- The Provost is also shortly due to take part in a closed round table on Racial Justice and Equality in Education (across FE and HE) which is being coordinated by the Bingham Centre and Nuffield College Oxford. This event is the second in a programme of work being coordinated by this partnership. The first roundtable took place at the end of June and saw several MPs and senior leaders reflect on the implications of the 'Windrush Lessons Learned Report'. The second will continue in a similar vein by considering the contribution that the education system can make to advancing equality for all.

## **6. Improved Processes**

### **6.1 Support for Staff and Students - *Training for HR and Investigating Officers***

- A series of Trans Awareness training sessions were delivered by The Intercom Trust during September.
- 2 x two-hour sessions on recognising and challenging microaggressions and supporting cases where microaggressions may be the issue have also been delivered.

### **6.2 Working with the community**

In October 2020, we hosted a joint event with Devon County Council and Exeter Community Safety Partnership to raise awareness of extremism, links to hate crimes and reporting and support avenues available. Just under 300 people registered for the event.

The EDI team also welcomed officers from Devon & Cornwall Police to the Cornwall Anti-racism Forum for a focused session on race-based hate crime and incidents. The session was attended by colleagues from the University of Exeter, Falmouth University, FX Plus and The Students' Union.

## **7. Next Steps**

We continue to ensure that all our action plans have associated KPIs and measures and consideration of some external expertise to measure impact more robustly is underway.

## **8. Recommendation**

Council is asked to NOTE the update.