

**North West Higher Education Equality Network  
University of Manchester**

**Notes of Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

**1. Attendance**

**Present**

Wendy Kenyon	Manchester Metropolitan University (Acting Chair)
Sally Middleton	University of Liverpool
Kathryn Fagan	University of Chester
Theresa Lewin	Liverpool Hope University
Kate Noble	Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts (LIPA)
Gary Loke	Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)
Sabiha Patel	University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)
Mona Patel	Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)
Ken Grainger	University of Salford
Shirley Silcock	University of Bolton
Moni Akinsanya	Liverpool John Moores (LJM)
Angella Leese	University of Liverpool
Lynne Ashmore	University of Huddersfield

**Apologies**

Amy Causley	University of Liverpool
Clare Ridgley	Staffordshire University
Rebecca Hewitson	University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)
Alison Hunt	Staffordshire University
Patrick Johnson	University of Manchester
Ann Balcerak	Royal Northern College of Music
Catherine Nevin	Liverpool John Moores University

**2. Equality Impact Assessment Presentation**

Wendy Kenyon and Sabiha Patel gave a presentation on the progress MMU and UCLAN has made in relation to conducting Equality Impact Assessments. The presentation is attached. Any members who were not present at the meeting can contact Sabiha or Wendy directly for any further details (contact details contained in presentation). It was agreed that the presentation was helpful in outlining the two approaches taken and progress made and that a useful agenda item for the next meeting would be to look at a specific Equality Impact Assessment as an informal case study.

**Agreed action:** Wendy Kenyon agreed to present informally a Full Impact Assessment at the next meeting and Kathryn Fagan will provide a guest speaker to discuss the arrangements and initial plans at Chester University for embedding EIA across schools and faculties, via existing quality assurance mechanisms

**3. ECU Update and Highlights – Gary Loke (Senior Policy Advisor, ECU)**

- **ECU funding** - Funding is now secured for ECU till 2015, and plans are underway to recruit a new CEO to replace Nicola Dandridge who has taken up a new role as Chief Executive of Universities UK. Sue Cavanaugh is currently acting CEO.
- **HEIDI** (Higher Education Information Database for Institutions) - Gary provided an early opportunity for members to view the new Heidi equality tool briefing (released 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009). The briefing provides institutions with information on the new equality function which has been added to the existing Higher Education Information Database for institutions (Heidi).

The tool allows Institutions to access a broad range of data about their workforce and student body and compare those results of institutions; HEIs need to subscribe to Heidi to use it although 80% already subscribe to the service. A Briefing was not available to provide via web link at time of minutes being written but a presentation with details on the tool can be found following this link: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/events/materials/heidi-equality-hesa.ppt/view?searchterm=heidi>. There will be 3 national training sessions one of which will be held in Leeds around Nov/Dec (TBC).

- **The annual equality statistical reports** are to be launched via ECU website 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009. These cover data and analysis from 2007/08
- **Equality Bill** – Gary explained that although he is not certain what will happen with the Bill if there is a change in Government before the Bill is passed, it would be best for institutions to prepare for it. The Bill will go to the Lords in November, if rejected then there will be a higher degree of uncertainty that the Bill will become law before the next general election. The recent Consultation conducted by ECU has raised some concerns in relation to the lack of clarity about EIAs and the introduction of equality objectives. More guidance is required.
- ECU are producing briefings with Institutions and students union in relation to the Bills impact on Students Union during November
- **LGBT** – Following the national LGBT survey a briefing will be developed to provide guidance covering:
  - Homophobia in halls
  - Homophobic language
  - Sexual Orientation training for staff
  - LGBT networks
  - Managing conflict/tensions around sexual orientation and religion and belief.

Gary asked members present at the meeting to confirm who is collecting Sexual Orientation and Religion and Belief Data the results were as follows:

Institution	Staff Data		Student Data		Comments
	Sexual Orientation	Religion/ Belief	Sexual Orientation	Religion/ Belief	
MMU	Yes	Yes	No	No	<i>Not activity monitoring</i>

<b>Liverpool Hope</b>	No	No	No	No	
<b>Uclan</b>	No	No	No	No	
<b>Bolton</b>	No	No	No	No	<i>Staff survey did highlight SO issues</i>
<b>Chester</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	<i>LGBT group may encourage use of data</i>
<b>LIPA</b>	No	No	No	No	<i>VC decided Inst is too small to show trends</i>
<b>LJM</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	
<b>Liverpool</b>	No	No	No	No	<i>Hoping to put in place for staff soon</i>

- Research is being done around Religious Observance (Timetabling, facilities, space, food, accommodation, participation in sports and perceptions of religious privileges) and it is hoped that a bigger religious and belief survey might be conducted across institutions next year to support some of the outcomes of the recent survey.  
**Action: If any institutions have any good practice around these areas contact Gary**
- Gary updated the group on other ECU projects and publications, which included:
  1. Inclusive campus: practical guidance on sensory accessibility
  2. Disability Legislation: Practical Guidance for Academics
  3. Work placements and transition to work - Working with specialist arts-based higher education institutions to develop inclusive work-placement activities (BME & Disabled students)
  4. Encouraging staff disclosure in higher education institutions Conference (20<sup>th</sup> Oct) – Report will be available in due course.
- Athena SWAN Awards – Manchester Life Sciences gained Silver award last month.
- The programme for ECU activities and projects for 2010/11 is currently being developed.
- The Government has proposed the regulations, once finalised, will come into force next April, enabling mothers of children due on or after 3 April 2011 to transfer up to six months of their maternity leave to the father when they return to work.
- Gary reminded members that Disability Equality Schemes need to be revised and published by 4<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Kathryn Fagan enquired about the particular issues where institutions were in progress with transferring all equality schemes into one single equality scheme and not being ready for the 4<sup>th</sup> December deadline. This also affects MMU to who are prioritising their Disability element of single equality scheme between now and December but will be consulting with staff and students widely post December 2009 as part of the single equality scheme consultation and engagement plans for Spring/summer term. This activity will then provide a wider view on actions required for disability in the longer term (years 2 and 3 related actions in the SES).

**Action: Gary to provide further guidance and feedback from ECU in relation to the expectations of ECU in relation to those institutions who are working on Single Equality Schemes.**

#### **4. Suggestions for Next meeting**

The group agreed to accept Kathryn Fagan's kind offer of hosting the next meeting at Chester University on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009 during the University's Diversity Festival week. Suggestions for the next meeting included:

- Progress on Equality Bill ( and specifically EIA and Objective setting guidance)  
Gary Loke
- Equality Impact Assessments – Wendy and Kathryn (see notes above)
- Disclosure Case studies - (Ken Grainger to talk through case studies from disclosure conference)
- Attending a Chester Diversity Festival event (Subject to timetable of events )
- Network Host for future meetings (2010/2011)

**Action: Kathryn to provide members with details of meeting time, venue and directions nearer the time. It is expected to be a fuller meeting so please keep diaries free all day if possible.**

#### **5. Network host for future meetings**

Ann Balcarak - Royal Northern College of Music, has offered to host the last meeting of the academic year in May 2010, date to be confirmed.

**Action: Ann to circulate possible dates in May 2010 to the group for consideration once a room has been sourced.**