

North West Higher Education Equality Network

University of Manchester

25th February 2009

Notes of Meeting

1. Attendance

Present

Clare Ridgley	Staffordshire University
Sally Middleton	University of Liverpool
Kathryn Fagan	University of Chester
James Stratford	Liverpool John Moores University
Patrick Johnson	University of Manchester
Theresa Lewin	Liverpool Hope University
Ann Balcerak	Royal Northern College of Music
Kate Noble	Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts (LIPA)
Gary Loke	Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)
Rebecca Hewitson	University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN)
Rosemary Turner	Lancaster University
Alison Hunt	Staffordshire University
Mona Patel	Manchester Metropolitan University
Jill Scott	Birmingham City University (Presenter)

Apologies

Paul Hynes	Royal Northern College of Music
Shirley Silcock	University of Bolton
Amy Causley	University of Liverpool
Ken Grainger	University of Salford
Wendy Kenyon	Manchester Metropolitan University

2. Presentation – Dignity at Work

Jill Scott, Equality and Diversity Adviser at Birmingham City University delivered a very useful presentation on bullying and harassment in the workplace. Jill was Project Leader of a group that developed a good practice guide on dealing with bullying and harassment in the workplace. She was seconded to the Equality Challenge Unit to develop this guide. The guide is available on the ECU website. Jill's presentation is attached.

3. Notes from previous meeting

Amendments have now been made to the previous notes from the last meeting.

The production of notes from meetings was discussed and it was decided that they should not be detailed and only cover main issues and actions.

4. ECU Update

Gary Loke provided an update on ECU activities and handed out a copy of ECU's 2009 programme which includes 18 projects.

The ECU has published new accommodation guidance. The publication can be downloaded at <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/student-accommodation-providers-handbook>. Hardcopies are available and if anyone would like a copy, please email Gary on gary.loke@ecu.ac.uk You can also email Gary if you have any queries about ECU's 2009 programme.

The ECU website has been updated and includes a section on networks where this group's notes will be made available. ECU would welcome any feedback on the new look website. Please let Gary know if you would like to see anything else included on the website.

There are two conferences coming up - an LGTB conference to report back on the recent ECU survey and an internationalisation conference with AUA.

Gary was keen to promote the Disability Equality Implementation Group's (DEIG) Disability Equality Commitment and asked members to consider signing up to it. More details available on the ECU website.

5. Collection of Personal Data

Kate from LIPA lead a discussion on the collection of data particularly around Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation.

The key issue was deciding about why the data needed collecting and communicating that appropriately i.e. are you collecting the data to aid your service delivery?

6. Positive Action – examples of good practice

Patrick from Manchester lead a discussion asking for any examples of good practice particularly in relation to staff. It was evident that this was not an area that many institutions have been engaged in. Mona at MMU talked about a programme that is being developed called 'Aspire'. This will involve secondments and mentoring opportunities for 10 BME staff across the institution.

There will be a HEEON residential conference dedicated to 'Positive Action – Positive Duties' in July 2009.

7. Institution update

All institutions present gave an update on what was happening in their institution.

Main points included:

- Developing and reviewing Dignity at Work processes (harassment advisors networks, mediation);
- Development of a Single Equality Scheme;
- A discussion around the monitoring of staff targets that institutions developed for HEFCE some years ago;
- The moving away from a diversity week to diversity events that take place throughout the year;
- Conducting a questionnaire with the Board of Governors to analyse the diversity of the group;
- Development of a comprehensive diversity calendar with includes local events taking place;
- Student consultation project for Single Equality Scheme;
- Transgender awareness training for HR staff.

8. AOB

For the next meeting we will attempt to get a speaker from HEFCE.