Disability Action Committee

12 March 2014 14.00 - 16.00
Faculty Boardroom
South Kensington Campus

Minutes

Present:

- Mr John Neilson  Chair of the Disability Action Committee
- Ms Dawn Beaumont  Faculty IT Support Manager
- Ms Mary Bown  Head of the Disability Advisory Service
- Mr Kevin Cope  Head of Building Operations
- Ms Kim Everitt  Deputy Director HR
- Ms Wendy Gould  Programme Director & Deputy Faculty Operations Officer
- Ms Louise Lindsay  Director of HR
- Mr Richard Martin  Faculty Operating Officer, Engineering
- Ms Claire O’Brien  Director, Occupational Health
- Sarah Shemilt  Chair, Able @ Imperial
- Mr Jon Tucker  Faculty Operating Officer, Business School
- Professor Denis Wright  Director of Student Support
- Professor Peter Cheung  Head Department & Vice Dean
- Mr Steven Rose  Vice Dean
- Ms Leyla Okhai  Equality & Diversity Manager
- Mr David Mooney  Specialist Dyslexia Tutor
- Ms Benita Cox  Principle Teaching Fellow
- Ms Marissa Lewis  Deputy President (Welfare), Student Union
- Ms Hannah Dolby (Notes)  Secretary to the DAC

In attendance:

Ms Trudy Breuss, Ms Althea Wroblewska, Mr Jonathan Blatchford, Ms Olivia Davenport

Apologies:

Professor Dot Griffith, Professor Jenny Higham, Mr Tom Miller, Ms Sarah Shemilt, Mr Jon Tucker

Agenda Item

Item 1: Matters arising

1.1 The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the previous meeting.

1.2 DAS and Felix - minute 1.4 - ML stated there would be a double page spread on exam stress in Felix, with a request to students to disclose any disability to DAS in advance of exams. ML stated that the Student Union is planning a ‘talk to DAS campaign’ in Summer Term, with an accompanying social media campaign to increase disclosure rates

Action: MB and ML to meet to discuss campaign

1.3 ICIS Declaration Update - Minute 1.9 - LO stated that LO and SS had examined the existing staff declaration page and have updated this in collaboration with HR
systems. LO stated that HESA requirements data capture have changed and the College is required to provide more information on protected characteristic. LO stated that the ICIS updates to facilitate the changes are currently in the testing phase. LO stated that LL will send out an email around declaration in April 2014.

1.4 Campus Accessibility Update - Minute 7.1 - KC provided an update on South Kensington estates and facilities (Appendix X).

KC stated that current building stock is not accessible to all, however modifications on ancient buildings are difficult or impossible in 1 or 2 cases. KC stated that being reactive rather than proactive to access requirements is an issue. KC stated that there was a large push for accessibility from 2004-2006, however the College is still reacting to situations where visitors, staff and students are arriving on site with either temporary or permanent requirements for support. KC stated that he and MB would relish notification of prospective students’ access requirements as early as possible. KC stated that no funds were earmarked for physical environment in DDA but that funding could often be found in practice, and Building Managers provided updates and feedback via Disabled Go.

Action: KC to provide an update on outlying campuses at the next meeting

Action: All committee members to remind staff to provide updates on staff/students with permanent or access requirements to Estates ASAP

1.5 Meridian Project update - minute 7.2 - Brief update given - MB stated that she met with the group in March 2014 and that the group is at the fact finding stage to find a project that will provide the widest support. MB stated that the project will be focused on students but beneficial to staff.

Action: Meridian group to provide an update at the next meeting

ITEM 2: WEBSITE DESIGN

21 OD provided an update on website redesign project - Appendix 5. OD reminded the Committee that up-to-date announcements can be found on the web redesign website and blog. OD stated the next web forum at 26th March will be recorded on Panopto.

22 DM stated that 21 students will take part in a user survey between March and July. DM stated that DAS are endeavouring to find student volunteers with a wide range of disabilities, software set-ups and operation systems.

LO stated that she would be happy to send a request for help with testing to the Able mailing list.

23 BC asked if it would be possible for videos of lectures to incorporate subtitles. DM stated that DAS have a specialist in this area looking into models of good practice - and they have 2 hearing impaired students who have offered assistance in looking at the options available.

24 DM stated that establishing technological solutions for accessibility is the first half of the issue; the second half is encouraging application. PC stated that the appetite for solving problems is very low in academia, and that the use of Panopto is a struggle. PC stated that not having high definition streams of videos is an issue. RM stated that ICT do have a roll out program for upgrading of AV
material. PC stated that some academics do not want to use visualizer, but there are solutions to those using the white boards, for example multiple screen capture. PC stated that this only works very well if lecturers use host machines and not their own computers. JB stated that there is an ongoing investigation into sourcing an HD source that is fit for purpose, i.e. stable and reliable.

ITEM 3: Disability Action Plan Update (Appendix 1)

3.1 Please see updated action plan (Appendix 1 - Disability Action Plan - March 2014)

Action: HD and JN to invite Registry to provide update for next meeting

ITEM 4: Disability Equality Survey Update (Appendix 2)

4.1 LO provided a verbal update based on Appendix 2. LO stated that there is a push to increase the number of disability declarations/disclosures and LO will monitor progress. LO stated that the declaration webpage now has additional information. LO stated that HR and Able are trying to promote the message that breaches of confidentiality will not be tolerated. LO asked members to contact her if they have any suggestions for how to promote this further.

4.2 MB provided an update on the Departmental Liaison Officers. DW and MB stated there may capacity for DLO's to assist with staff disability issues.

Action: LO to meet with Denis and Mary regarding disability officers

4.3 LO stated that the disability declaration guidance for staff and students online has been updated and that there are ongoing discussions regarding an Accessibility newsletter.

4.4 DW asked LO about the current disability disclosure rate for staff, LO stated that it is 2.7% and that the industry benchmark is 3.4 - 3.5%.

ITEM 5: Able@Imperial (Appendix 3 and Appendix 6)

5.1 AW and LO provided a verbal update based on Appendix 6.

5.2 Disability History Month - JN stated that the first speaker at Disability History Month had been very good. AW stated that a 12 month action plan for Able@Imperial was in development.

Action: SS to provide an update on the action plan at the next meeting

5.3 AW asked the group if they would be interested in reverse mentoring - senior management team being mentored by junior staff/students with a protected characteristic. MB stated that it would be interesting to have disabled students work with staff.

Action: Committee members to contact SS if they are interested in taking part in reverse mentoring

ITEM 6: Disability History Month Overview

6.1 LO gave an update based on Appendix 4. LO stated that the event had prompted really positive feedback.
6.2 LO stated that visibility awareness training will be repeated in 16 April 2014. LO stated that the training is very hands on and highly recommended.

6.3 LO invited any suggestions for the 2014 Disability History Month.

ITEM 7: Reporting Groups

Mental Health Strategy Group

7.1 CO’B provided a verbal update at the meeting. Please see attached a written update provided after the meeting (Appendix 7)

Action: MB and DW to work with LO on Time to Change/Mindful Employer Charter for Imperial College

Assistive Technology Steering Group

7.2 DB stated that were continuing their review of captioning software,

7.3 JB stated that they would be looking for feedback on the redesign project.

7.4 DB stated that the availability of assistive technology availability has been publicised on the website and in FELIX.

7.5 DM stated that software was now available on networked computers and that this was available for student use and staff to download. DM stated that the software has benefits for mainstream audiences and was not exclusively useful for disabled students, e.g. Mind View mind mapping software. DM stated that the University is paying for this resource and so they are so looking to get it publicised and utilised across the College through a variety of formats. LO stated that this should be included in the HR newsletter.

Action: DM to speak to Amy Austin (HR administrator) about promoting the assistive technology in the HR Newsletter

ITEM 8: AOB

8.1 LL stated that the staff survey had now closed and that she would report the results at the June meeting.

8.2 LO asked for an update regarding the accessibility and planning of Imperial West site.

ACTION: HD to make request for speaker regarding Imperial West Planning and Accessibility.

Date of Next Meeting

30th May 2014, 2pm - 4pm
Faculty Boardroom, South Ken