Equality and Diversity Committee  
Tuesday 13th May 2014  
Boardroom, Faculty Building, South Kensington Campus

Present:

Mr Dave Cosgrave  
Chair & Equalities Co-ordinator of UNISON, Imperial College Branch

Ms Hannah Dolby  
Secretary to the EDC (HD)

Ms Kim Everitt  
Deputy Director HR (KE)

Professor Nigel Gooderham  
Senior Consul (NG)

Professor Jo Haigh  
Co-Director, Grantham Institute for Climate Change & Environment (JH)

Ms Marissa Lewis  
ICU Deputy President (Welfare) (ML)

Ms Louise Lindsay  
Director of Human Resources (LL)

Mr John Neilson  
College Secretary and Registrar (JN)

Professor Washington Ochieng  
Professor in Positioning & Navigation Systems, Faculty of Engineering

Ms Leyla Okhai  
Equality & Diversity Manager (LO)

Ms Susan Parker  
Unite, Branch Secretary and Equalities Officer (SP)

Dr Mark Richards  
IAO Member & Senior Teaching Fellow (MR)

Ms Sarah Shemilt  
Chair of Able@Imperial (SS)

Professor Denis Wright  
Director of Student Support (DW)

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed the Committee to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies were received from Richard Martin, Melanie Peter, Zarine Khurshid, Joe Cooper, Mr David Goldsmith, Michael McGarvey and Dean Pateman

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising not covered by agenda items

The minutes were deemed to be an accurate record of events other than reference to the Director of Occupational Health should be replaced by the Head of Student Counselling in 4.8.

2.1 Good Practice Webpage: DW stated that the Registry Good Practice site was fully operational, with a SharePoint site available to tutors. Access to Student Disability Data: JN facilitated a meeting between the Disability Advisory Service and Registry and confirmed that the two departments are sharing data where possible. The Careers Advisory Service has built its own list of students who have declared a disability but students have to opt in and so far this has not been too successful; the Disability Advice Service had suggested that the Careers Advisory Service draws down data from OSS since students with a disability on this list have agreed to information being passed on.

2.2 Update on item 2.4 (March 2014): KE stated that the Communications Team is devising new guidance - 'News and Media helping you' - to assist contributors, including those wishing to publicise equality and diversity events/stories etc.

2.3 Update on item 4.0: JN had provided wording to KE for the Equality Objectives; a revised objective in relation to education and students was still to be written.

Action DH/DP

2.4 Update on item 6.0 – reverse mentoring for members of Provost’s Board: DH stated that she and LO would be meeting with the staff network champions as part of the work to devise action plans for the year ahead.

Action: LO to coordinate

2.5 Update on item 7.5 – Advisory Groups – Roles and Job Descriptions: LO stated that the current network Chairs are already able to take on network-related activity as part of their roles but guidance would be needed when Chairs change. DH thanked SS for leading the way.

Action: Equalities Unit to draft guidance for line managers
3.0 Staff Unions’ Update

3.1 The Trades Unions had been invited to give their perspective on equality issues in the College. DC provided details of his current roles within Unison:
   - Chair & Equalities Co-ordinator of Imperial College UNISON branch;
   - Co-Chair of UNISON London Region LGBT Committee;
   - HR/Union Liaison Officer for Imperial 600.

3.2 DC said that Unison policies are produced from bottom up, with a wide representation of membership involved in developing policies, and that this is reflected in both the tone and language of the documentation produced by Unison.

3.3 DC stated that Unison is committed to fair representation, proportionality and self-organisation and highlighted some of the key areas of relevance to the committee:
   - Disability: DC highlighted the potential for targeting disabled people for redundancy and the need for awareness of this where it may not be obvious.
   - Female Members: Guaranteeing proportionality and ensuring representation at committee level is a reflection of membership.
   - LGBT: Ensuring LGBT issues are fully understood and debated before policies are created and Unison is campaigning for pension equality.
   - BME: a commitment to fair representation at all levels of Unison.
   - Self-organisation: DC stated that Imperial College’s staff networks are a reflection of the concept of self-organisation; however he believed that more could be done to involve staff networks in College equality issues.

3.4 DC said that Unison is committed to improving equality through a number of mechanisms, including: negotiation, bargaining, redundancy avoidance groups, use of the legal system, lobbying and campaigning as well as promoting equality and challenging discrimination. DC stated that Unison produces many specific fact sheets on equality issues that may be of benefit to the committee and the College.

3.5 SP explained that her role within Unite was more local and related to Imperial specifically where she views equalities issues from a ‘user’ point of view. SP highlighted that the key issue for her was the need to increase awareness and training for those in management and leadership roles across Imperial College.

3.6 DH asked SP and DC what framework would make the best use of the Unions’ knowledge. DC stated that using a bottom up approach to policy and change, i.e. utilising staff networks more to inform the Equality and Diversity Committee and other decision making groups. LO stated that the staff networks should be there for those who want to have them for social events and for those who want to engage with policy issues, and it is important to ensure both groups of staff are catered for. SS said that Able@Imperial is both committed to helping shape policy and to organise social activity. SP stated that it is vital that feedback from policy and decision making exercises is fed back to the staff networks after they have been consulted, so as to close the loop and show that they make a difference and are contributing to change. SP said it was also important to communicate how the networks are involved and their impact to show that they are worthwhile. MR said that the College needs to ensure that advisory groups’ recommendations are considered during policy and decision making and that there needs to be more clarity, transparency and a robust feedback mechanism around how the views have, or have not, been used.

Action: LL/Equalities Unit in relation to HR policies and procedures

3.7 WO asked if Imperial is fully aligned with the Unions’ views on equality and diversity. LL replied that there are no major areas of divergence. Post-meeting note: KE invited representatives to meet with her and the Equalities Unit to discuss how we might make better use of members’ extensive knowledge and interest in equality.

4.0 Draft Annual Report

4.1 KE explained that the Annual Report is a public document from the College that is approved and endorsed by the Provost’s Board and Council. She said that the draft was divided into two parts: 1) a
summary of activity with reference to last year’s priorities, an overview of changes which had taken place in the past ten years, and key recommendations for the year ahead, and 2) a detailed account of the College’s equality-related activity and the data on which the report is based.

4.2 Page 2: 4c) WO asked if we could provide information on why declaration rates are low. LL stated that we can note in the Report that, within the next few days, she will be distributing an email to all staff which encourages declaration, and more context on why the College asks for disability information is to be provided.

4.3 Page 8: DH stated that the table to show the differences between 2004 and 2014 is extremely helpful and underplays what has been achieved in the last decade. DW said he would provide more detail on the Disability Advice Service for the table to indicate qualitative changes.

Action: DW to send wording to KE (DW sent to KE on 16.05.2014)

4.4 Page 9: WO asked if the recommendations could be more specific or include targets on how they will be progressed.

4.5 WO said that he would like to see a similar level of analysis in the representation statistics for gender, ethnic origin and disability.

4.6 MR questioned whether the Report should be used to bid for more resources. LL stated that a key to raise awareness generally is ensuring that Faculty Deans understand the importance of their role e.g. providing regular updates to the Provost’s Board, and asking Heads of Departments to promote activity. JH was asked about her role as Head within Physics and she explained that the Department’s Juno committee meets once a month and reports back to the Department on issues surrounding the treatment of all staff, but that an active chair is required. DH agreed that this was a great way to make progress happen in departments but that it requires leadership and line management support.

4.7 DW stated that it would be good to have 1) attainment data for disability compared with student body as a whole and 2) applications and admissions ratio for disability compared to whole cohort data included in the Appendix.

4.8 DH thanked KE for her hard work on the Annual Report. KE thanked the committee members for their work and assistance with the report. DH highlighted that the College has come a long way in ten years and this is testament to the hard work taking place at the College.

Action: KE to revise

5.0 Advisory Groups – oral updates

5.1 Imperial 600

LO provided update on behalf of DP. Activity had included the signing up to Stonewall’s ‘No Bystanders’ campaign, which was aimed at ensuring that individuals felt confident in challenging unacceptable language and behaviour in relation to all protected characteristics. Members had met regularly and were planning social activities and considering whether the College should enter into Stonewall’s Workplace Index again.

5.2 Able @ Imperial

LO provided an update on Mental Health Awareness Week, including the ‘building personal resilience courses’, ‘depressed cake shop’, mindfulness workshops and ‘5 ways to wellbeing’ workshop. LO thanked DH for agreeing to sign the ‘Time to Change’ pledge to reduce mental health discrimination. SP stated that it would be great to have more activities throughout the year. LO said that this feedback will be taken on board.

SS said that she is giving a talk at Royal Holloway about building staff networks and she was working on the network’s action plan. She also mentioned that she had contributed to the email and guidance to staff which was about to be sent out to encourage declaration. A lot of activity had taken place in relation to disability since the last E&DC under the auspices of the Disability Action Committee, particularly website development and physical access. The Calibre leadership programme was also to conclude at the end of the week.
5.3 Imperial As One

LO provided an update on behalf of ZK.

IAO now has an Executive Sponsor – Professor Anand Anandalingam, Dean of the Business School who had been invited to the last meeting and spoke about his career journey.

LO stated that a ‘mock run’ for the new Race Equality Charter Mark was to be undertaken to map where the current gaps are in our provision.

The new IMPACT development programme had been designed and was soon to be launched.

5.4 Imperial College Union

ML stated that Liberation Officers had been nominated for next year.

Action: ML to let LO and HD know the names of the new Liberation Officers

6 AOB

6.1 LO stated that the Annual Diversity Lecture will be held on 25 June on the subject of Transgender Awareness.

6.2 LO reminded the group that the Calibre participants would be presenting on 16th May 2014.

6.3 MR stated that he felt the visitors to the Imperial Festival could have been from a more diverse group and wondered whether we could assist to be more inclusive and help to widen attendance?

Action: LO to discuss with Communications

6.4 HD stated that the annual Athena Lecture will be held on the 12 June 2014 and that Unconscious Bias Training would take place on 15 May 2014 with more sessions to be held in the year ahead.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 21st October 2014, 3pm, Room 3.19, Faculty Building, South Kensington Campus