

## **Disability Action Committee**

Thursday 22 March 2018

15.30 – 17.00

Boardroom, Faculty Building, South Kensington Campus

### **Minutes**

Present:

Mr John Neilson	Chair and College Secretary (JN)
Mr Mark Allen	Careers Consultant (MA)
Mr David Ashton	Academic Registrar (DA)
Mr Hisham Aty Abdel	ICU Disabilities Officer (HA)
Ms Mary Bown	Head of the Disability Advisory Service (MB)
Ms Sally Campbell	Faculty Centre Safety Compliance Manager, Medicine (SC)
Dr Lorraine Craig	Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), Engineering (LC)
Prof Stephen Curry	Assistant Provost (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) (SC)
Ms Beth Richardson	Secretary (BR)
Mr William Hollyer	Head of Sport (WH)
Mr Mike Horner	ICT Service Line Manager for Education (MH)
Ms Kani Kamara	Acting Head, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (KK)
Prof Peter Lindstedt	Senior Consul (PL)
Ms Sara Muir	Head of Building Operations (SM)
Ms Elizabeth Nixon	Internal Communications Manager (EN)
Ms Claire O'Brien	Director of Occupational Health (CO)
Mr Fintan O'Connor	ICU Deputy President (Welfare) (FOC)
Ms Lisa Phillips	Co-Chair of Able@Imperial (LP)

Agenda Item

**1.0 Welcome and Apologies**

- 1.1 JN welcomed the Committee to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Mr Jon Tucker, Ms Jane Evers, Ms Hannah Bannister, Mr Roddy Slorach, Professor Peter Lindstedt, Ms Camille Reltien, Ms Nazia Hirjee, Ms Janette Beetham, Mr Richard Martin, and Ms Louise Lindsay.

**2.0 Minutes and Matters Arising**

- 2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were deemed to be an accurate record of events.
- 2.2 There were no matters arising.
- 2.3 The action tracker was considered. The following points were noted:

- (re: 20 October 2018, minute 4.3) It was noted that the calendar of events would be circulated in a newsletter and on certain webpages, and had been shared with the Committee. **Action: EDIC**
- (re: 7 June 2017, minute 3.2) It was noted that the work on the interruption of studies was part of an ongoing project.
- (re: 20 October, minute 3.6) It was noted that the review of exam spaces was still taking place. It was also noted that more consideration was being taking when booking certain lecture theatres. MB highlighted the issues around this and trying to gauge how many spaces were required, it was noted that the Queen's Tower Rooms were being utilised.
- (re: 20 October 2017, minute 10.3) It was noted that the lecture for Panapto close captioning had been recorded and a TA had been allocated. An update would be provided at the next meeting. **Action: JT**
- (re: 7 June 2017, minute 3.5) It was noted that MH was working with EDU to trial software using Imperial content, and that the outputs were to be reviewed.

**3.0 Review of DAC Plan 2017-18**

3.1 Action 2.1: Expand DisabledGo's annual survey of College sites

SM reported that some of the funding for building improvements was being spent on improving toilets that were not compliant with the law. SM added that the £1.2 million was being spent on wider improvements.

3.2 Action 2.4: Improve consistency and availability of adjustments to student assessment

MB reported that accommodation was limited, and that she had attended several meetings to discuss putting restrictions on rooms so that a proportion could be allocated to disabled students who needed to be close to College. MB added that last year there were enough welfare rooms available.

JN added that, at the last Provost Board meeting, it had been decided that 75 rooms would be allocated to those with highest welfare priority.

3.3 Action 2.5: Review the process for determining and approving adjustments for assessments for students

DA told the group that he was working with Hannah Bannister to conduct a review of the process end-to-end. DA said he would keep MB updated.

3.4 Action 3.1: Review of how employees are encouraged to declare disabilities

CO reported that Occupational Health were reviewing the process and considering a form that would record adjustments. KK added that a bid had taken place for extra resources for research on work place adjustments, KK confirmed that this was successful and that the team had been allocated a management trainee to carry out research, KK added that the process needed to be more joined-up. MB said that her team had some expertise in this area and offered to help.

**Action: OH, EDIC**

3.5 Action 3.3: Continue to offer support to students through the Suggested Reasonable Adjustment Fund

MB reported a £25.5K spend on the Reasonable Adjustments Fund last year, and said that there should be a rise year on year. MB expressed that she would like some help in promoting the fund and suggested this support came from Comms so that work could be done on the website. MB added that the work on promoting resources was gradually growing, and the types of resource currently taken up were ergonomic equipment and digital Dictaphones etc. MB added that if these types of resource were included and embedded into the environment, there would be no need for the fund.

**4.0 Disability Awareness Campaign**

- 4.1 BR reported on the Disability Awareness Campaign, referring to Appendix 4. BR asked the group for ideas on measuring effectiveness of the campaign. KK told the Committee that she found the campaign useful, especially in terms of the communicative material produced, such as the flyers.

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4.2 The group discussed using snap shot surveys, and including questions in the annual staff survey as a means to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. The Committee also discussed re-publicising the campaign, and suggested more publicity in other forms, and that the campaign should perhaps go live before staff are requested to update their details in July/August.

**Action: EN, EDIC**

4.3 Other forms of communication were discussed, such as working with local HR managers in helping to promote the material, and creating a video that captures staff/student experience at Imperial and the support available for those with disabilities. EN also confirmed that she was able to book time on the big screen in the main entrance.

4.4 The Committee discussed the timing of the campaign, and suggested that the angle could be with an aim to encourage declaration, but the group were reminded that there needed to be some sensitivity, and that SC was due to be doing some work around Stonewall and that the information needed to be more joined-up.

4.5 CO also highlighted that Mental Health Awareness Week was due to take place and that there needed to be some promotion of this Week.

**Action: CO**

## **5.0 Update on Sporting Activities**

5.1 WH provided an update on sporting activities across the College, and highlighted the campaigns around Disability History month, which featured various sporting activities such as wheelchair basketball and blind folded spin classes, which aimed to raise awareness around disabilities. WH reported that 90 people took part in the activities.

5.2 WH also advised that he was in the process of developing the sport strategy which had a focus on inclusivity. WH highlighted that Campus Services had recently employed four young disabled people under a work experience scheme, one of whom had secured a permanent contract.

5.3 The Committee suggested that the sport strategy would benefit from being more explicit in terms of the work Imperial does around inclusivity, as it would send a more welcoming message.

5.4 WH also mentioned that sporting equipment was available for booking at events around the College.

## **6.0 Update from Disability Advisory Service**

6.1 MB provided a verbal update from the DAS, advising that this was the first time in 10 years that the declaration rates had not increased, confirming an 8.3% declaration rate in May.

6.2 MB also said that the Service was less busy than before and that she needed help to raise awareness about the Service so that students knew where to go if they needed support. MB advised that the dyslexia service had undertaken 141 assessments, but

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that 11 students had not proceeded with an assessment after being told they had to make a £95 contribution.

- 6.3 MB mentioned accommodation for disabled students, and presented a paper that bid for an undergraduate accommodation subsidy. MB asked that Committee read the document in their own time and forward on any feedback.

**Action: All**

- 6.4 MB mentioned that the DAS had started an autism social club.

## **7.0 Update from Imperial College Union**

- 7.1 FOC confirmed that there were no updates from the Imperial College Union.

## **8.0 Update from Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre**

- 8.1 KK provided an update from EDIC and told the Committee that EDIC had been allocated a management trainee to carry out research on declaring disabilities, and thanked those that had replied to the Calibre Graduation invite.
- 8.2 KM updated the group on Mental Health First Aid, and highlighted the generic courses on offer along with the bespoke courses for Technicians etc. KK added that Mental Health Awareness Week was the week commencing 14 May 2018; CO added that there was going to be a sleep campaign.

## **9.0 Update from Able@Imperial**

- 9.1 LP gave an update from Able@Imperial and told the Committee that there had been some work to raise the profile of Able, which included updating the website, along with raising awareness with new starters and working with managers to advise on the support available to their staff.

## **10.0 Update from the ED&I strategy group meeting**

- 10.1 BR gave the following updates from the ED&I strategy meeting:
- Professor Stephen Curry is in the early stages of writing the ED&I strategy, the document has been drafted - SC gathered feedback at the meeting, and will re-write and circulate to a wider pool. The updated version will be reviewed at the next meeting.
  - Bids for the Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching Innovation award have been requested. The panel will be looking at interesting initiatives that would feed in to an inclusive curriculum.
  - The group discussed the pilot scheme for the financial support for carers and agreed to continue the scheme.
  - SC told the group that the ED&I Forum/Race Equality Charter had met for the first time.

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- It was agreed that a working group had been established to review policies and procedures for reporting and dealing with sexual harassment for staff and students.
  - The College has signed up to apply for the Race Equality Charter membership.
- 10.2 SC added that a website had been developed for the ED&I strategy group and that he had started a blog. SC said that the group were meeting next week and that he would be providing them with an updated version of the strategy.

### 11.0 AOB

- 11.1 HA spoke about feedback he had received from students with hidden disabilities who felt uncomfortable using the disabled toilets, and suggested the use of the sign found in Appendix 8. The group also discussed gender neutral toilets for staff, and that single user toilets could be a solution.
- 11.2 The group highlighted practicalities and concerns around having multiple signs, and were in agreement that there should be one sign to cover all. SM also mentioned that some areas create signs to suit local arrangements.
- 11.3 The Committee discussed including clarity on the College webpages about ownership of evacuation chairs and it was confirmed that this responsibility was that of the person who wrote the PEEP, and that evacuation chairs were not for general use. SC suggested more clarity about this on the website.
- 11.4 The Committee also discussed the guidance available online for visiting staff, adding that staff should work with the fire department when organising a plan.
- 11.5 CO said that the setup of the stress awareness tool was changing due to data protection concerns. CO advised that the webpages for the MHFA had been refreshed.
- 11.6 It was confirmed that all Dyslexia Champions were dyslexic.
- 11.7 MH advised that himself and HB had successfully secured funding for a technically enduring induction for assistive technology and welcomed anyone to join the working group.