

COU17D064

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## REPORT TO COUNCIL – JUNE 2018

This paper summarises work undertaken in 2017/18 and highlights current challenges for the equality agenda at UEA.

### 1. Athena SWAN

The year has been very active for Athena SWAN despite a lower number of submissions. All Schools are working on the framework with a scheduled date for future submission. The Equality and Diversity Office put forward a Bronze submission for the Norwich Business School and a Silver submission for the School of Psychology in the April 2018 round and expect the results in October 2018. Currently UEA holds 11 Bronze awards and three Silver.

As the REF 2020 deadline approaches we have a number of Schools to put forward from HUM and SSF for their first awards (the framework didn't allow these subject areas until 2015) while others in SCI and FMH will need to be renewed (each award lasts a maximum of four years). The plan over the next two academic years is busy, with five submissions planned in November and four in April 2018. 2019 follows a similar pattern:

| June 2018 Forward Planning |     | pre- REF deadline |            | REF        |            |            |            |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                            |     | 30/11/2018        | 30/04/2019 | 30/11/2019 | 30/04/2020 | 30/11/2020 | 30/04/2021 |
| FACULTY                    |     |                   |            |            |            |            |            |
| UEA                        |     | S ®               |            |            |            |            |            |
| SCI                        | BIO |                   |            |            | ®          |            |            |
| SCI                        | PHA |                   |            |            | ®          |            |            |
| SCI                        | ENV |                   |            |            |            |            | ®          |
| SCI                        | MTH | ®BR               |            |            |            |            |            |
| SCI                        | CMP | ®BR               |            |            |            |            |            |
| SCI                        | CHE |                   |            | BB®        |            |            |            |
| FMH                        | MED |                   | ® S        |            |            |            |            |
| FMH                        | HSC |                   |            | SS?        | ®          |            |            |
| SSF                        | PSY |                   |            |            |            |            | ®          |
| SSF                        | ECO |                   |            | SS??       |            |            |            |
| SSF                        | LAW | BB??              |            |            |            |            |            |
| SSF                        | DEV |                   |            | BB??       |            |            |            |
| SSF                        | EDU |                   | BB??       |            |            |            |            |
| SSF                        | NBS |                   |            |            |            |            |            |
| SSF                        | SWK |                   | BB??       |            |            |            |            |
| HUM                        | PPL |                   |            |            | ®          |            |            |
| HUM                        | AMA | BB??              |            |            |            |            |            |
| HUM                        | HIS |                   |            | BB??       |            |            |            |
| HUM                        | LDC | BB??              |            |            |            |            |            |
| HUM                        | IIH |                   |            |            |            | BB??       |            |
| Number of rounds:          |     | 1                 | 2          | 3          | 4          | 5          | 6          |
| B =Bronze                  |     |                   |            |            |            |            |            |
| S =Silver                  |     |                   |            |            |            |            |            |
| ® =Renewal                 |     |                   |            |            |            |            |            |

Part of the power of the Athena SWAN framework is that it encourages each School to consider its practice and improve it, however, over time this has led, in turn, to some widely varying practices. At the last Athena SWAN Central Steering Group discussion focussed on establishing commonly agreed approaches across Faculties to a variety of issues forming part of a 'pack', and raised via Athena SWAN such as improving appraisal uptake, establishing 'Return/Back to Work Funds', having guidelines on Obtaining Bridging Funds for RAs, common approaches to Induction and standard use of positive action statements in recruitment. Commonality in all of these areas will help the University on its journey towards Silver. We are also looking at similar approaches for Professional and Support staff where possible and relevant.

The initial draft of the University's Silver submission will take place over the summer to establish our strengths and determine remaining work to be done. The deadline for submission is Tuesday 30 April 2019. Similar work will also take place on the Silver submission for the Norwich Medical School, also due for renewal next April.

Very recently, the University has had the opportunity to influence work on gender equality in Australia and Africa. SAGE, the Australian equivalent of Athena SWAN and administered by the Equality Challenge Unit here, has been rolled out over the last three years. JIC invited the Head of Equality to meet the Lead on SAGE from CSIRO, which has 53 research institutes in different locations across Australia. The exchange of practice was fruitful and the challenges experienced in CSIRO were very similar to those at UEA. Good practice will continue to be exchanged now this relationship has been established. Additionally, the School of Development Studies are establishing a pan-African network to support funding for development projects. The Equality Office were invited to deliver a presentation by Skype to their conference in Tanzania about the Athena SWAN framework and our experience of it. This was followed by a delegate discussion about gender equality in Higher Education across Africa which highlighted the barriers facing young women in accessing and staying in academia.

## **2. Race/Ethnicity**

The University's first Black and Minority Ethnic Staff Network has been established during 2018/19, meeting roughly once every two months. Staff involved are mainly academics although we are promoting the group to all staff and will continue to do so. Differently timed meetings will be tried in addition to lunchtime meetings during 2018/19 to see if a wider range of staff can be engaged. The meetings have revealed very mixed experiences of life at the University as the following extract from the meeting notes reveals:

Members of the group reported some common experiences (i.e. the experience reported by one member of staff was acknowledged by several others in the room as being their own experience too):

- Micro-aggressions, such as 'blocking' behaviours by other staff members in the course of normal work – this might be not providing information, ignoring work related requests, ignoring presence, condescension.
- Several members of staff reported being made to feel lucky that they were in a post at all.
- Most had had the experience of being asked where they are from and when a location in the UK is given, being disbelieved or repeatedly asked.
- There was some experience of being directly blocked, obstructed or diverted from pursuing a promotion without valid justification.
- All noted the lack of positive role models at different levels throughout the University.
- All noted really variable terminology, at times inexcusable, being used and this not being properly addressed within the institution.
- As well as what's said there's also a sense of 'what's not being said'.
- Also the experience of being the only black or minority ethnic person in the room at meetings and feelings of isolation or marginalisation (deliberate or unconscious) as a result.

In a later meeting, concerns were also raised about incidents of racial harassment and the way it is (or isn't) dealt with; for example, colleagues simply glossing over issues that BME colleagues experienced and felt should be addressed.

Some of the reported experiences mirror those also encountered by students according to recent feedback and highlight a range of issues which are generally not reported as individuals attempt to deal with them.

A number of group members felt it was useful that the University is providing training on Understanding Unconscious Bias, but that this needed to be mandatory for all members of staff. There was also a feeling that there should be a Code of Conduct for Students on dignity and respect which included issues of race and harassment.

More positively:

It was felt the group would be a safe place to explore the experience of what it means to be Black or Minority Ethnic at UEA.

The Equality Office has been exploring the possibility of working towards Advance HE's (ECU's) Race Equality Charter which is available only at institutional level (rather than every School having to work individually towards awards as well). **Appendix 1** shows the extent of information required by the Charter.

On current resources and with the Athena SWAN agenda requiring four submissions per round on average (i.e. once all Schools hold awards, in theory by 2020, the continuous renewal of awards will be needed), the office can begin working to gather information but achievement of an award would require sustained work over a period of time. This work has not previously been factored into the office's resource. The Charter Mark is not a 'quick win', although the journey in working **towards** this will undoubtedly yield benefits and bring about change as it requires us to look at current outcomes, policy, practice and culture. This Charter should not be under-estimated as it is known that a number of universities have tried to achieve it and been unsuccessful. Currently there are 45 members of the Charter and just nine award holders (Abertay, De Montfort, Kings College London, Kingston, Royal Holloway, Staffordshire, UCL, Hertfordshire and Manchester). We can sign up to the Charter, but the requirement is that an institution will submit for its award within four years of signing. There are no extra costs, other than the submission application fee, involved (i.e. no additional annual fee involved).

The Equality Office is currently building data trends of the type required by the Charter so a first assessment of our overall position vis a vis the career pipeline from undergraduate to Professor can be undertaken. The Head of Equality and Diversity is attending a HERAG (Higher Education Race Action Group) Think Tank in London on June 20<sup>th</sup>, hosted by ECU.

However, it should be borne in mind that cultural change is part of the work facing the institution and so the Charter would form only part of the work involved and additional work will no doubt emerge in response to issues raised by the BME Staff Network.

Ideas for Black History Month are also being explored in conjunction with the BME Staff Group and ARM.

### **3. Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI) and Staff Pride**

The University's Staff Pride Group has had an active year continuing group social events outside work and frequent meetings helping to further work on the Stonewall WEI. IDAHOBIT Day was marked with the Rainbow flag and a film screening of cult film 'Paris is Burning', jointly facilitated with JICs Pride Group. The UEA Staff Pride Group is currently preparing to participate in Norwich Pride at the end of July, at which a stand is booked from which to promote UEA prior to the city centre parade.

A meeting was held with Emma Palmer for feedback from the 2018 WEI Results and an action plan has been developed based on this. 434 organisations took part in the Index and 20 different sectors were represented. UEA's overall rank was 204, up 89 places from 2017. Our Sector rank was 31. Key areas for improvement were Allies & Role Models, Procurement and the Employee Lifecycle. Additionally, as part of the WEI, Stonewall run a short survey every year. Results go to Stonewall and are fed back to us with the results. This year 111 employees at UEA responded (approximately 3%) and of those 52% were LGBT+. Of these, 14% reported experiencing negative comments or conduct from colleagues at work because of their sexual orientation, indicating that although UEA is broadly an inclusive environment for LGBT+ staff there remains work to do to improve still further.

In February 2018 the Office organised its first 'Diversity Day' at which we launched our LGBT+ Allies Network. We have given out rainbow pins or lanyards to staff who are willing to sign up to an Allies' newsletter which will be sent up to three times per year, letting staff know about work on the WEI and Pride agenda and what they as straight allies can do to support students and colleagues who are LGBT+. The initiative has proven very successful with just under two hundred people signed up so far. The first newsletter will go out in late June. Lanyards in particular are very visible around campus and 'lanyard envy' by colleagues of those already wearing them has resulted in requests from whole teams in some instances. The essential aim however, of the Allies Initiative is to create a feeling of the campus being a 'safe space' with tacit support evident throughout.

'Understanding Trans and Gender Identity' training has continued this year and is well received. Several 'bespoke' sessions have been delivered to the Library staff who requested training due to increased numbers of students who present as gender-fluid or who are transitioning.

The Staff Pride group organised a 'Coming In' Workshop attracting twenty five attendees and several members continue as Dignity and Respect Champions, with several having been approached by staff with issues to discuss.

#### **4. Access On Campus – Access All Areas**

This year, disabled staff and students have continued to work with Estates and the Equality Office in the pursuit of a fully accessible campus. The restructure of the group into two components, one being the Access All Areas consultation group (membership of students, staff and facilitated by the Equality Office) and the other being the Campus Access Budget Group, led by Estates, took place at the beginning of the year. The first task was to over-haul the Schedule of Works and ensure it a) included all works required and b) was prioritised according to real needs (determined via consultation). A full access audit was undertaken by a consultant and took some time to finalise. However, AAA have received the full Schedule for comment now, and have fed through a number of other items to include, making this a very inclusive plan.

It has been agreed that all the improvement works be scheduled as one large project and put out to tender to one contractor. This is taking place over the summer and it is anticipated that work will be easier to prioritise and manage taking this approach.

The next stage of work will be to link ITCS into the CABG and to establish more robust links with colleagues working on accessibility for the virtual campus to ensure good practice is fully embedded.

#### **5. Training**

##### **5a. Delivered Training**

2017/18 continues to be busy with delivered Training and in particular the University's course on 'Understanding Unconscious Bias' has been revised to incorporate reference to the latest research. The course continues to be well received and many comments refer to the need to make this training mandatory. This was also discussed in the BME Staff Network meeting.

A review was recently published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission considering the efficacy of Unconscious Bias Training. A key recommendation is for a workshop approach rather than relying on on line modules. The University's course follows the good practices highlighted in the report. Although on line training is useful for factual courses such as the current Diversity in the Workplace module, it is not ideal for more complex training in which a degree of emotional engagement and self-reflection is key.

The programme continues into 2018/19 when the Executive Team will receive training at the November Away-Day. A condensed version of the training will be delivered as part of the University's preparations for REF with the first session taking place on 19<sup>th</sup> September and further sessions to be scheduled between December and March.

Due to the pressures of Athena SWAN and required REF Training centrally available equality courses will be reduced this year with the aim of re-instating multiple sessions once the REF training period has passed.

Consideration will be given to developing additional training material to support future work in respect of the Race Equality Charter (see Appendix 1, sections 6 & 8).

## **5b. Online Module**

The mandatory e-learning module, Diversity in the Workplace, continues to be actively managed with a current completion rate of 95% which is in line with the stated target.

A series of early morning training sessions were held in the Autumn and Spring for cleaners to ensure that those without access to a computer at work received an equivalent of the online training. The sessions were well attended and use of audience participation technology received positive feedback.

As yet, the University has no online training module for Students. There have been widespread requests for a module for students from a variety of Schools, most notably those with a professional focus such as Pharmacy, Law, Social Work and Norwich Medical School. Costings for a suitable module will be evaluated and a paper brought to ET+ in the 2018/19 academic year.

## **6. Events**

The Office organised its first Diversity Day in February 2018 as part of Do Something Different Week. Due to an administrative error over the date the event was not as well promoted as hoped, however, there was a steady stream of visitors, particularly people coming to sign up for the Allies initiative which was launched.

The day included:

- Exhibition stands about Norwich as a City of Sanctuary, to complement UEAs recent status as a University of Sanctuary,
- Never OK information from Student Support Services which brought about some new disclosures
- Films on a loop on a variety of equality related topics including Unconscious Bias and the 'Kindness' project developed in PPL
- Information about Access All Areas and Staff Pride
- Dancing by the Student African Caribbean Society
- Caribbean food
- A display by Technicians involved in the Technician's Commitment
- A rolling presentation about Athena SWAN
- Sportspark information and staff

As a first event the day went well and received positive feedback. The timing was not as well placed as it might have been as many students appeared to have left campus by the Friday of Do Something Week so a future event will be timed differently.

## **7. Policies**

The Equality Working Group, led by HR and including Trade Union representation, continues to meet to review the University's equality policies. The next phase of work will focus on issues of dignity and respect including a policy on Domestic Violence and Honour Based Violence. At the last Equality and Diversity Committee the University's first policy on Stalking was approved.

The final document of three supporting staff and students who transition gender at the University will be finished over the summer. This policy will be aimed at managers or those responsible for others, to provide guidance on supporting another person through the transition process and where to signpost for effective support.

All new policies, approved by the E&D Committee over the last two years are available on line. Further promotional work will be undertaken in 2018/19 to ensure staff know where to find these documents quickly and effectively.

## **8. Conclusion**

It has been a year of consolidation overall with much background work taking place to optimise results for the following two years which will be heavily focussed on Athena SWAN. Nevertheless, areas such

as sexual orientation and race/ethnicity are moving forward as fast as resource allows and the Office will continue to develop these as much as possible in the run-up to REF.

***Helen Murdoch***  
***Head of Equality and Diversity***  
***June 2018***

## REQUIREMENTS OF THE RACE EQUALITY CHARTER

Data requested in all sections below needs to be a minimum of three years.

1. **Letter of Endorsement from the Vice Chancellor**
2. **Establishing and operating a central self-assessment team, including consultation and communications**
3. **Description of the Institution and its local context**
  - Overview of the local population and context
4. **Staff Profile, including:**
  - Academic Staff by Faculty and grade, contract type, full and part time contracts, staff turnover rates
  - (A Silver award would include analysis considering intersectionality of ethnicity with other protected characteristics).
  - Professional and Support staff by Division, grade, contract type, full and part time contracts, staff turnover rates.
  - (Silver awards will also need to consider role and occupational segregation and intersectionality).
  - Grievances and Disciplinarys
  - Decision making Boards and Committees
  - Equal Pay
5. **For Academic Staff: recruitment data and process information, Training provided on race-specific information;**
  - Appraisal/development review – data and practice
  - Academic promotion – data and practice/policy
  - Research Excellence Framework – data
  - Support given to early career researchers
  - Profile Raising Opportunities (i.e. speaking at conferences, seminars, guest lectures, exhibitions and media opportunities, nominations to public bodies, professional bodies and external prizes)
6. **Professional and support staff: recruitment, progression and development – data and commentary**
  - Training – with race specific information
  - Appraisal/development review
  - Promotions
7. **Student Pipeline:**
  - Admissions
  - Undergraduate student body
  - Course progression
  - Attainment –UK/Non UK students
  - Postgraduate pipeline
  - Postgraduate employment
8. **Teaching and Learning**
  - Course content/syllabus
  - Teaching and Assessment methods
  - Academic Confidence – outline how academics are supported and developed to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider race equality in their teaching and course development
9. **Any other information**
10. **Action Plan.**