Minutes of the Equality & Diversity Committee held on Monday 21st March 2016 in the Principal’s Meeting Room

Present: Mrs Christine Goodyear (Chair),
Mr Jack Kilker
Mr Simon Higman, Registrar and Secretary
Professor Katie Normington Vice Principal, Staffing

In attendance: Mrs Susan Lee, (Equality & Diversity Officer)
Mrs Hilary Baker (Governance Assistant)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Majid Hawa and Mrs Cheryl Newsome. 16/01

2. MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2015. 16/02

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Equality and Diversity Monitoring data of Council Members.

RECEIVED the monitoring data for Council members. 16/03

NOTED that the diversity of Council broadly reflected the diversity of students in College. 16/04

DISCUSSED that further consideration needed to be given to how to encourage applications from different minority groups. It could be helpful to review publications where adverts for new Council members were placed and also to consider using the alumni database. Although it was recognised that the database had only recently been updated to capture this information. Current Council members might also have local connections that could be helpful. 16/05

3.2 Equality & Diversity Training for Council members

NOTED that the Leadership Foundation provided training on Unconscious Bias for governing bodies. This could be carried out before a Council Meeting or part of the Council Strategy Days. 16/06

ACTION – Agreed to bring forward as an action at the next meeting. Secretary would liaise with Council Executive Officer so this could be included in agenda planning. 16/07

4. MONITORING DATA FOR STUDENTS

RECEIVED the equal opportunities monitoring data for under graduate and post graduate students. 16/08

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NOTED that decrease in the proportion of mature students enrolling at the College was also a national trend. Contributing factors were that the numbers of people coming to university straight from school had increased so it was less likely that they would take an access course and then study part time. In addition students were more likely to follow the CPD option rather than take a degree course.

DISCUSSED that due to the small numbers and range of ages of mature students it was hard to put in place appropriate support and social events. It was also recognised that there were no rooms for staff or students who might need to bring children on campus if they were attending a short meeting or if they were breast feeding. The possibility of a parent room was raised.

NOTED that in relation to Section 3.3 Achievement and Ethnicity non-white students in the Science faculty were generally lower achieving than white students and that if there was not a correlation with language difficulty this could be a worrying trend.

NOTED that further information on the link between BME data and those working in a second language would be helpful.

5. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

RECEIVED an update to progress to date with the Equality & Diversity Action Plan. NOTED that as some actions were long term progress had been updated on the current plan rather than a new annual plan produced. Contributors to the plan had wanted to be able to track progress made against their longer term projects.

The Committee emphasised that it was important to ensure that progress continued to be made rather than actions just being allowed to continue over time.

The Committee noted progress against the Action Plan and discussed in more detail the particular points below:

5.1 Progress on Equality & Diversity Action Plan for Students

Action 1.1. Student Listening post – NOTED that the setting up of a “listening post” for students was not being continued as there had been insufficient take up of the SMS based platform however alternative ways of engagement were being developed.

Action 1.3 Student Barometer – NOTED that the student barometer results had been presented to the Equality & Diversity Steering Group.

Action 2.3 Developing the Student Portal and 3.1 Monitoring Student Population and Attainment Statistics – NOTED that these were large pieces of work and progress was ongoing.

5.1 Progress on Equality Diversity Action Plan for Staff

Action 4.2 Support and promote participation in positive action development initiatives.
NOTE that the University of Surrey and Reading University had not wanted to explore an inter institutional mentoring scheme but work was continuing on identifying possible partners. Mentoring and Cultural Awareness training had taken place.

6. **TRANSGENDER GUIDELINES**

RECEIVED paper on Transgender Guidance

NOTE that the final draft of the Transgender Guidance would be brought to the June meeting together with a formal action plan for development of the suggestions within the guidance.

NOTE that this was an important piece of work in ensuring that transgender students felt supported.

7. **REPORT ON THE EQUAL PAY AUDIT**

RECEIVED a summary paper clarifying the issues raised by the Equal Pay Audit.

NOTE that although the EPA had shown no significant gender pay gaps there were a number of areas in the report that required further exploration. This largely involved looking at the data to identify whether pay gaps between male and females were due to length of service which had proved to be the case.

The report had also noted a gender pay gap in Band 1 professors however further analysis of the data had found an explanation for this and recalculation had shown that there was no gap.

NOTE that it was positive a female reader had recently been promoted and that there were currently three female Heads of Department.

8. **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP**

Received the minutes of Equality & Diversity Steering Group.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

   14th June 2016 at 9.30 in the PMR
   3rd October 2016 at 9.30 in the PMR