



EDI REAR sub-committee
Thursday 3rd March 2022 10:30am-12:30pm

Attendees

Akinola, Aisha – EUSA VP Welfare
Bevan, Charlie – Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program
Cattell, Laura – Head of Widening Participation
Creighton-Offord, David – EREN
Curry, Tommy – School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences
Dawson, Lisa – Director – Student Systems and Administration
de Silva-Williams, Deepthi - CAM
Dora, Ellie – HR Partner, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Doughty Shenton, Dahlia – CMVM
Ghul, Rayya - IAD
Gieban-Gamal, Emma – CAHSS EDI Committee
Grewal-Kang, Gurpreet – Student Admissions, R(D)SVS & The Roslin Institute
Gray, Mohini – Edinburgh Diversity and Inclusion Network
Hale, Olivia – Research Cultures Working Group
Halliday, Karen – College of Science & Engineering EDI Convenor
Holtan, Johanna – co-Convenor
Jansen, Itandehui – Women of Colour Collective
Likonde, Samantha – BAME Liberation Officer, EUSA
McKelvey, Roisin – eBASE Project, College of Science and Engineering
Norman, Steve - Careers
Perez-Espona, Silvia – R(D)SVS, EDI Easter Bush EDI Committee
Reilly, Liz – Development and Alumni
Santayana, Vivek – Joint Unions Liaison Committee
Sena, Emily – co-Convenor
Shade, Rebecca – Student Experience Services
Tao, Can – Racism unmasked
Vadasaria, Sharia – RACE.ED

1. Welcome and actions from the last meeting (*Emily Sena*)

ES welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly new members Charlie Bevan, Rayya Ghul, Steven Norman, and Itandehui Jansen. Olivia Hale now represents the Research Cultures Working Group. Welcome too to guests Lisa Dawson and Rebecca Shade. Apologies were noted from Rashné Limki, Caroline Wallace, Martine Irakoze and Sarah Liu. Actions from the last meeting will be discussed at later points on the agenda.

2. Updates on current priorities

a) Report and support (*Lisa Dawson*)

LD acknowledged the expectation of the R&S extension being delivered in January and apologised for the delay. LD has been discussing the plan for the extension with colleagues and is attending today to reassure REAR of the next steps. CAM will provide comms resource to support the delivery. Resources to manage the extension are important and LD is looking to have someone in post (equivalent to Lesley Johnston's role for gender-based violence) by July, with delivery of the platform by the new academic year, but also thinking about a 'pre-arrival space' for



students. Communications will be picked up with students in the summer. There will be some part time resource and possibly an internship role to help facilitate continuity of resource. LD advised that Rebecca Shade will be able to give the committee more information on how the process will work, what it will look like, student consultations etc. Literature will be included in students welcome information.

b) Attainment Gap (Mohini Gray)

MG gave a brief background of the research project for the new members. The project aims to understand the reasons behind the consistent award gap for all BAME students at the University (both UK domiciled and international). MG's research, funded by PTAS, proposes to interview 50 UK domiciled U/G students from across the University to understand their views on why there is a BAME award gap and research indicating issues affecting attainment. Recommendations will then be made to REAR about how to improve the situation.

Intern Sarah Shemery who is assisting with the research, has currently completed interviews with 15 students. Her interim findings can be found [here](#). A few more months of funding would allow Sarah to complete the interviews. Initial findings show that students are really keen to talk. An interim analysis will be done in April and with more funding, a final analysis completed at the end of the project. There needs to be a shift to a more learning and nurturing experience for both BAME and non-BAME students. Currently students do not report incidents for fear of being labelled troublemakers. More CAHSS student recruitment would be useful and Emma Gieban-Gamal offered assistance with recruitment. Approximately £5K would fund the rest of the interviews. Samantha Likonde offered to reach out to The Macmillan Forum as a way of recruiting more students for the interviews.

Action: JH, ES and MG to discuss funding offline.

Action: MG to connect with SL and EG-G to connect with more students.

c) Decolonising the curriculum (Emily Sena)

Rayya Ghul confirmed only 3 case studies for the hub had been received but is keen for more. The case study template has been widely shared. **Action: RG to send template to REAR so members can circulate among peers.** RG has suggested that a student intern could conduct the interviews with staff and write up the case studies if that would help generate more. This idea has been well received. **Action: ES, JH and RG to follow up on how best to disseminate information.** The College of Science and Engineering have a cross-school decolonising working group and was started due to the realisation that the schools were at very different levels of understanding. The group is now moving to phase 2 – sharing best practice and reviewing literature. The end point of the exercise is to provide schools with recommendations and to contribute to the hub. Through discussion with colleagues in RACE.ED, it has been suggested finding funding for a 12 month secondment to support this work could help to delivery practical know-how to different schools. Curriculum Transformation (CT) is being led by Colm Harmon who is supportive of funding 2 secondments to sit within CT – one to ensure that decolonising the curriculum is embedded and the other to address the attainment gap. The next steps will be for ES and JH to put together aims and objectives of these secondments for Sarah Cunningham Burley to take up with Colm Harmon.

d) BAME counsellors (Johanna Holtan)

There are 3 full time counsellors and 1 part time counsellor in place and some students have already made use of the service. Counselling sessions have been



taking place in English but there is one counsellor who is fluent in Cantonese and has knowledge of mandarin. A small number of students have reported feeling uncomfortable being asked if they would like to use the service. **Action: JH to ask for more details on this.**

e) Underrepresentation of professional services staff (Johanna Holtan)

Sarah Cunningham-Burley has been working with James Saville (JS) to ensure this is part of the People Strategy. JH and ES have been working with Caroline Wallace's team to pull together relevant data to link with the People Strategy. JS is convening the newly put together USG EDI committee. Dave Gorman has also been prioritising this in CSG and it will be discussed at the weekly USG senior leader team meeting. D&A spent time in 2021 reviewing job descriptions and adverts and have embedded some EDI questions in internal guidance for D&A recruiting line managers. Initial analysis suggests this may have produced a more diverse candidate pool. Liz Reilly is leading a working group that will be looking at other phases of recruitment and has been liaising with HR on contributing to the inclusive recruitment toolkit. Rhona Feist has been extracting data of staff at different grades and Colleges/service groups and REAR would like to put together a small group to look at how best to analyse this, track progress and support work being carried out. **Action: Any volunteers for this group should get in touch with ES and JH.**

3. Action Plan

a) Consultation Update (Emily Sena)

ES thanked everyone for their contributions to the revised text. In the revised documents, a pathway to action has been articulated for each item and action owners have been individually named. SCB is currently reviewing the documents before sending them to the relevant action owners. The documents are confidential and not for wider circulation at the present time.

b) Discuss potential new priority items (Emily Sena)

University Executive endorsement is important and encourages wider engagement. ES and JH keen to identify two new priorities. Possibilities include specifically UG recruitment and then racial literacy and anti-blackness themes. The main points raised from discussion were:

Racial literacy

- have a more systematic approach. More support needed to look at who key audiences are/what are the needs/what should be mandatory etc. There is work currently going on in this area.
- How will this sit alongside existing grievance/disciplinary procedures in the University and of the impact race literacy programmes will have on existing staff codes of conduct. It will need synchronising.

Student recruitment

- Scholarships? There is momentum in this space. What about revisiting the language around UG recruitment priority to include scholarships? Staff scholarships – there needs to be a strategy around supporting BAME staff to progress.

Action: JH to pick up previous communications with GGK and follow up on findings from data yet to share.

Action: JH and ES to pull together description of new priorities for sharing

c) New REAR website (Johanna Holtan)

A big thank you to those from REAR who reviewed the website. Good progress is being made. CAM is working on a website and will incorporate reviews. Work will be



showcased i.e. GGK's podcast series. Working with CAM on a communications plan. Thank you to DdSW for facilitating the relationship with CAM.

d) Next steps for action plan

Once the action owner consultation process has been completed, the finalised version of the action plan will be shared with REAR for final endorsement before sending up to EDIC.

4. Islamophobia updates

EREN has an Islamophobia working group. It has been working on getting support for the University to adopt the APPG definition. The Executive is broadly supportive but has asked for additional information on the process of consultation that the working group had and clarity around the communications plan. The University will be one of the early adopters of this definition. SCB and Caroline Wallace are liaising with the working group to provide Executive with the relevant information.

5. Updates from REAR members

UG recruitment – Gurpreet Grewal-Kang

From analysing available data, it is evident the University has very few BAME UG Med/Vet Med students from the UK. GGK and colleagues have put together a group of key stakeholders that will produce a report on how the University is currently collating data on UK BAME UG students. The group will include GGK, Roisin McKelvey, Labake Fakunle, Russell Bartlett, LC, David Beamish, Rebecca Gaukroger and the incoming EUSA BAME Liberation Officer. Other suggestions include Rona Smith from Strategic Planning who is going to feed back her thoughts on a cohesive approach. An outline document will be set out to the group to facilitate discussion and the initial meeting and the finalised report will be presented at REAR and eventually shared with Student Recruitment Management Group (SRMG). An open conversation is needed around broader themed topics with the possibility of workshops too as the issue is very complex. Resources vary from school to school so open discussion should help to establish buy-in. Main points raised as a result of discussion were:-

- Cultural norms – what is an acceptable career for a BAME student to go into? Medicine is pushed rather than vet medicine. There are also religious implications around cleanliness etc.
- Positive discrimination – summer schools targeting 11 year olds? This would perhaps make a difference to recruitment in future years. GGK has been awarded alumni grant funding for a joint project with the Edinburgh Animal Aspirations Student Group (EAASG) to put on a 1 week summer school for 10 BAME students in 2022. The funding will be open to international applications. The challenge is knowing who is interested.

In collaboration with the Easter Bush EDI committee and the Animals Aspirations Edinburgh Student Group, a Vets in Diversity podcast series has been produced - 10 episodes looking at everything BAME student issues – related. More information on the podcast series can be found [here](#).

Laura Cattell – Outreach

Research has been helping with the development of ongoing outreach program focusing on BAME students. A literature and data review have been completed. The second part of the research is qualitative with a number of academics interviewing school and university BAME students about the barriers they may or may not face



etc. There have been some delays – finding academics that would resonate with the students was difficult. This part of the research will be completed soon. LC feels it will be better to show both pieces of research at the same time. Anything done across the UK would need to be differentiated due to different patterns of underrepresentation. In Scotland the focus needs to be on black students and the intersection between ethnicity and social disadvantage. It will be important to join up the outreach with the transition and academic support. The school student interviews were largely local with higher community deprivation and lower progression rates to university. Those interviewed and who are interested will be brought back for discussion around the dissemination of information and research (this will be dependent on the outreach officer being in post).

ES suggested a presentation on both parts of the research at the next REAR meeting would be welcome.

Roisin McKelvey – Data project for CSE

Action: RM to circulate the first report.

The report examined student data, looking at the application recruitment process, student population and degree awarding for UG students. On initial analysis, there was very high ethnicity non-disclosure for UG applicants. At UG level offer rates were relatively comparable but at PG level, offer rates to white students were higher. There was a general increase trend in student population and the university is on a comparable level with others in Scotland but has smaller BAME student populations than other Russell Group Institutions. Future reports will focus on disaggregating data to look at ethnicity and race and widening participation.

Laura Cattell – scholarships

LC has submitted a case for the ne to have PGT scholarships across a number of different groups, but based on socio-economic status and protected characteristics. The proposal is for high-value scholarships and wraparound support for prospective and matriculated students. This proposal was supported and approved and LC taking a final resource plan to University Executive on 15th March.

Action: LC to update REAR after this date.

Liz Reilly – D&A

D&A is looking to recruit a PhD intern shortly to research best practices in embedding EDI into advancement activities (internal and external) in the UK. LR would be very appreciative of assistance in helping to promote this opportunity to diverse candidates.

Action: LR to circulate link for recruitment of intern

Is this a useful agenda item? It was suggested that members give headline summaries of various activities and then sharing reports after the meetings.

Action: include member updates at the end of REAR for the upcoming meetings

6. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 19th May 2022, 10am



Actions

Agenda Item	Action	Owner
2b	<i>JH, ES and MG to discuss funding offline.</i>	
2c	<i>RG to send template to REAR so members can circulate among peers.</i> <i>ES, JH and RG to follow up on how best to disseminate information</i>	
2d	<i>JH to ask for more details on this.</i>	
2e	<i>Any volunteers for this group should get in touch with ES and JH</i>	
3b	<i>JH to pick up previous communications with GGK and follow up on findings from data yet to share.</i>	
5	<i>RM to circulate the first report.</i>	
5	<i>LC to update REAR after this date</i>	