**Minutes of the SBCS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Meeting**

**26 June 2020, 10.00-12.00, Microsoft Teams**

1. **Attendance and Apologies for absence**

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| *Attendance:* | *Apologies:* |
| Anna Pachol - Co-Chair (AP)  Richard Pickersgill – Co-Chair (RWP)  Daisy Crowfoot (DC)  Marina Resmini (MR)  Giulia De Falco (GDF)  Christoph Engl (CE)  Kristin Hadfield (KH)  Angelika Stollewerk (AS)  Joanna Szular (JS)  Janelle Jones (JJ)  Peter Heathcote (PH)  Henry Oamen (HO)  Ellie Marshall (EM)  Susanne Steck (SS)  Christian Nielsen (CN)  Petra Ungerer (PU)  Elisabetta Versace (EV)  Catherine Murray - *notes* (CM) | Frances Healy (FH)  Dunja Aksentijevic (DA)  Christina Kousseff (CA) |

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

AP noted that the up-to date action log is on MS Teams.

1. **News**
   1. AP welcomed Elisabetta Versace to the Committee. Elisabetta will replace KH as the Undergraduate Working Group Lead. AP thanked KH for her immense contribution to the Committee over the past three years.
   2. AP welcomed Isa to the meeting. Isa was invited to the meeting to share her ideas on possible BAME actions and share her experience of working with DrosAfrica.
   3. AP noted Shaheda Batha was also invited to join but was not available on this occasion.

1. **Issues arising**
   1. Introducing new BAME focused actions across four main areas: Students, Academic Staff (incl. PDRAs), Professional Services and Technical Staff and Culture.

**Students**

* + Data from 2017/18, and some of the reports on MS Teams, indicate SBCS has an over representation of BAME UG students, however this is not the case when we look at PGT and PDR.
  + RWP believes UG population, postgraduate taught and research tend to be distinct cohorts, with the UG drawn from local community.
  + The Committee discussed what can be done to improve the transition for students from UG to Postgraduates**.**

**The following actions were agreed:**

* Ask academics to expand the reading list and embed broader references in their teaching. This needs to be done throughout the module and their teaching activities, otherwise could appear tokenistic
* Run a focus group for UG and MSc students to hear their thoughts
* Investigate the possibility of having picture representation of research/scientist role models around the Fogg building, similar to what has been done at JP
* Improve communication of widening participation events/workshops already happening (including those organised by Viji), this would enable supervisors to target specific students
  + MR noted that the RSC is doing some work in this area which has highlighted the need for mentors. Holding widening participation events is not sufficient - there is a lack of role models.
  + JJ has been involved with mentorship programmes at QM and felt these were not helpful. People don’t need to know how to do research, they need access to opportunities. In this sense sponsorship is more beneficial.
  + SS felt that generating a sense of community is important. Shirley Wang is working hard to generate this for UGs. This is especially important now with teaching moving online.

**ACTIONS:**

* **EV and FH to see if dashboard includes the destinations**
* **Review the data on BAME representation for UG and PG and on the destinations of students after completing UG degree.**
  + AS suggested that it might be worth looking at PhD schemes, where we don’t recruit the students, to see if there is an opportunity try to influence these by, for example, making a statement of our expectations. It was noted that there are some we can’t influence, where the criteria is very specific. School has influence on BBRSC – DTP and NERC – DTP which could be investigated.
  + DC informed the committee that the University will shortly be announcing a race equality action group, chaired by Sheila Gupta and set up by Jill Scott. The group will look at the Race Equality Charter which we will be submitting for as a university next year. It will also work with schools across the university to come up with actions relating to race equality.
  + The new university EDI KPIs, relating to gender and race, have been approved. Schools will be sent a list of actions and will be asked to select the ones which are most applicable to them, according to their data. DC was keen to for there to be an agreed minimum number of actions relating to race, but this hasn’t been approved yet.

PDRAs

* + School data indicated BAME representation of PDRAs was 19% in 2017/18 and 23% in 2018/19. The number of BAME post docs will directly influence the number of BAME lecturers
  + IP discussed how to cover mentorship and role models. Her opinion is having more black lecturers and researchers in the school will inspire PhDs and post docs because they have more role models.
  + IP attended a forum where they were discussing these issues and the feedback from participants, many of whom were black academics, was that they don’t need more reports/data they want action.
  + IP proposed a longer-term solution, which would involve putting together a team of people who can apply for a significant amount of funds in organisations (to be identified) at a global level, then creating positions/ Fellowships specifically for black people and lecturers to become young group leaders. She suggested it could be taken a step further by defining where they are from.
  + HO and GDF offered to spread this information through their networks.

**ACTIONS:**

* Set up new ‘Intersectionality’ Working Group of SBCS EDIC and define the area of responsibility, recruit new members
* Collate list of fellowships accessible for BAME scientists/PhD students (CN/HO)
* Ask staff to spread the news about these fellowships through their networks (e.g. to contact collaborators in low and middle income countries or commonwealth countries and see if they know of any eligible PhD students) (CN/HO)
  + JJ suggested refraining mentoring as ‘success workshops’, particularly as people are so pressed for time. They could cover topics such as, how to achieve worklife balance, how to get published in the journals you want to get published in etc. It wouldn’t just speak to BAME individuals and would give everyone access to the same information. This would require us running our own programme – it is something we could suggest and see if there is an appetite for it.
  + EV noted that the term ‘mentorship’ is very broad and having specific mentors for specific topics might encourage more people to put themselves forward. AP noted this is something to bear in mind if the School ever decides to run its own scheme, alternatively the School could encourage a system of identifying people who can help in certain areas.

Academic staff, Technical staff and Professional services

* + In terms of staff, school data shows amongst T&R staff only 10% BAME staff in 2017 and 11.5% in 2019. T&S numbers are worse – only 6% were BAME in 2018/19.
  + 35% of admin staff were BAME in 2017/18. This went down to 30% in 2018/19. In 2017/18 16% of staff were BAME and this went up to 25% in 2018/19.
  + AP suggested that one statistic it is useful to have in mind when discussing this is the London population of 35%.
  + AP noted that there is currently an action to have a gender representative on our recruitment panels and we should also try to have a BAME representative on recruitment panels, where possible. It was noted this was challenging due to numbers of BAME staff and concern about overburdening them. It might be useful to look at the information we have on recruitment panels and see how often this is happening.
  + Thinking about culture, DC suggested sharing a list of resources as a lot of issues stem from lack of awareness. DC suggested using a range of different material to make the information accessible to all.

**ACTION: DC to share the reading list she shared with the S&E EDI Committee so that it can be shared within the School**

* + RWP is involved in a lot of shortlisting and noted that part of the challenge is not getting the applications from BAME applicants. It was noted information on ethnicity isn’t currently available when the School receives the shortlist.
  + DC noted that QMUL is currently considering making personal detail form mandatory (with a prefer not to say option).
  + In terms of getting quality BAME applicants, it was agreed that it would be useful to look at changing the culture, as the message about QM is not really positive at the moment.

Professional service / technical staff

* + RWP noted that Shaheda Batha had expressed an interest in joining the committee.

**ACTION: AP to follow up with Shaheda and see if she is interested in joining the EDIC**

* + SS raised the issue of BAME representation on the committee. AP suggested we might want to look at this more broadly.

**ACTION: Analyse the data of committees at SBCS and BAME representation**

* + JJ suggested that we need to be mindful of who you are asking to do what and why. One of the things raised in the forum meeting was that a lot of the time, especially with regards to EDI issues, it falls on the shoulder of BAME individuals.
  + The EDIC agreed the education piece is a good place to start with regards to culture.

**ACTION: Summarise the actions and post them on Teams for comment (AP). Formalise the actions and add them to the action plan by the next meeting (All).**

1. **Blended teaching requirements.**
   * MR raised the issue of deadlines being imposed on teaching staff to develop their blended learning material, which is putting a lot of unnecessary pressure on staff who have not taught like this before. This added pressure on people already struggling with care responsibilities, stress etc. is not good. If even a small percentage of people end up being signed off with stress the School will be in a very difficult situation. Staff are being told if they can’t cope they should take unpaid leave.
   * MR has been speaking with other chemistry departments in the UK about how they are managing the situation and has responses from about 16 institutions. She notes that some responses were taken directly from communications sent to staff and had a caring tone that was completely absent from the communications to staff at QMUL.

**ACTION: AP to feed back at the Faculty EDI Committee next week**

* + RWP noted that there is a lot of pressure coming from the centre. Thinking about what we can do as a School, RWP suggested trying to be as kind as possible with process we have control over. One area where the School can help is appraisal. RWP will adapt the appraisal check list to take account of the situation. When it comes to the deadline for teaching material, there may be some flexibility. RWP is concerned with the amount we are asking staff to do.
  + AP noted promotions will be hugely impacted this year. RWP suggested discussing how we can influence promotion guidelines at the next Faculty EDI meeting. DC informed the EDIC that the EDI team has been talking to the Reward team about this and has stressed it is important for the process to be changed in light of covid.

**ACTION: Discuss how to influence promotion guidelines at the Faculty EDI meeting**

1. **AOB**
   * RWP thanked KH for her contribution both to the school and the EDI committee.
2. **Date of next meeting** – TBC (September)