



Equality and Diversity Committee

23 April 2019

Minutes

Present:

Yetunde Ogedengbe (VP SHLS) (Chair)
Vincent Waters (Men's Health and Alliance Officer)
Tara Campbell (International Officer)
Moses Apiliga (VP GSBS)
Rachel Simpson (Student President)

Apologies: Racheal Olayinka (BME Officer), Molly Ferguson (LGBT+ Officer), Sara Cullen (Women's Officer), Susan Docherty (Mature and P/T Officer), Daniel Vilafrance (Sports E&D Champion)

Present:

Adrian Lui (GCU Equality and Diversity Lead)
Lesley McAleavy (GCU Policy Officer)
Sara MacLean (Student Voice Team Leader) (Clerk)
Caroline Miller (Representation and Advice Manager)

1. Apologies

As above

2. Minutes

Minutes of 27 March 2018 were approved

3. GCU Equality and Diversity Update

Adrian Lui presented the Race Equality paper for discussion. He explained that a number of internal and external drivers were important to note such as the BME attainment gap which is typically a 20% difference for BME students attaining a "good" at degree level. Currently, the gap at GCU is at 23% [Students who attain a good degree classification = 74% (overall) and 51% (BME)]. GCU is focusing on the whole student experience – not just the degree. For example, questions they have been asking applicable students are: Do you feel welcomed? Do you identify with staff/mentors? Does your curriculum account for your experience?

Discussion points:

- International Officer feedback that international students often feel disconnected from Scottish students and not always welcomed in the classroom. This starts as early as the international welcome week which doesn't support integration as it is only international students with minimal participation from home students.

- Group noted that Programme leaders are key. They need to introduce and frame these discussions and create space for integration through shared experiences.
- Group work has potential to help break down barriers but usually only reinforces them as students usually create their own groups.
- It was noted that GSBS had a buddying system but that it need to evolve to promote inclusive skills and to expose yourself to those who are not always like you. That is an employability strength - a soft skill. Get this message out through careers and employability.
- Group noted that there should be lead staff members in the University who are champions for each liberation group much like we have an FTO champion. Top staff need to take ownership of the issues.
- The SA needs better group sustainability with actual handovers between years to help ensure better work in the area.

4. Enhancement lead institutional review (ELIR)

GCU Policy officer, Lesley McAleavy, discussed ELIR. Explained that university is about to go through it next March. ELIR looks at what deliberate steps the university has taken to enhance the student learning. It offers the university a good chance to reflect. Last ELIR was in 2014 and GCU was given an effective rating – the highest we can get and this is what we are going for this year. LM then explained the process for the group. The Reflective Analysis (RA) is currently being drafted. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the national body that runs ELIRs, will then draw together a panel who will review the RA and associated evidence. The panel then visits campus and interview/investigate areas of interest.

Discussion –

LM then asked the group to feedback on what they think are GCU distinguishing traits:

- inclusive (compared to other universities)
- good pastoral care
- sensitivity to the students' opinion
- small seminars and class sizes
- Articulation and smaller group sizes is more supportive.
- Doesn't feel like a factory farm.
- Opportunities to be involved outside the classroom.
- Staff approachable and respond (most)
- Good teachers instead of some world-renowned researcher - that is more important.

LM then asked for areas that could be strengthened

- Increased leadership support for equality and diversity by the university. There should be a lead for the e & d areas in the university – a champion.
- Inadequate support in writing/ academics.
 - Learning Development Centres (LDCs) are usually full and can't get appointments with them
 - LDCs don't cater well to PGT, mature or international student's needs.
 - Focus of LDCs is on those that are struggling because they are overstretched. More support for students who need help but not at risk of dropping out.

5. Officer Reports

- Men's health: Have begun planning for next year. Also working with Strathclyde on the Anthony Nolan bone marrow drive
- International – Cross- group working was beneficial. Collaborated with BME officer on co-hosting events was helpful

6. Upcoming campaign

Chair noted that the bullying campaign will have to be tabled at next year's E & D to see if there is still support for it.

7. NUS Delegation Fair Representation

Chair introduced paper that would bring our by-laws into compliance with NUS conference rules. Group unanimously recommended for the Fair Representation paper to pass student voice.

8. Student mental health update

Student Voice approved the creation of a student mental health officer and group. Will begin recruiting for the role this summer.

9. Engaging Care Experienced Students Development Workshops

VP GSBS discussed an upcoming workshop in life. As we currently have no Care Experienced Officer, VP GSBS requested that the seed fund for the group be partially used to pay for travel to attend the workshop that will help development our engagement with Care experienced students. Group unanimously agreed that the fund could be accessed to support this.

10. AOCB

Disabled parking needs to be better monitored. Spaces are being used for other reasons (especially in the evenings) and disabled students are not able to access it. Action: Student President to bring up with facilities