



Equality & Diversity Committee

6th December 2017 (14:00 – 14:50) in NH209

Present:

Rachel Simpson, VP GSBS (**Chair**)
Lauren Baigrie, Student Carers' Officer
Fraser Knight, LGBT+ Officer

Apologies:

Eilidh Fulton, Equality & Diversity Society Champion

Absent:

Lauren Aitken, Disabled Students' Officer
Idris Akormadu, International Students' Officer
Seun Babajide, Deputy B.M.E. Officer
Pelumi Daniel, Deputy B.M.E. Officer
Raven Hingley, Women's Officer
Eleanor McAdam, Deputy Disabled Students' Officer
Victory Nwabu-ekema, B.M.E. Officer
Elliot Turnbull, Deputy LGBT+ Officer

In Attendance:

Gary Kyle, Student Rep Assistant (**Clerk**)
Caroline Miller, Representation and Advice Manager

1. Apologies

As detailed above.

2. Minutes from previous meeting (10/10/2017)

The responses to the previous meeting's actions are as follows:

ACTION: Clerk to check if liberation groups can get sponsors and partners. (COMPLETED)	RESPONSE: Cannot action staff clerk so referred to VP GSBS. VP GSBS spoke to the Sales and Advertising Co-ordinator and said that this is something that could be achieved in the next academic year.
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<p>ACTION: VP GSBS to provide workshop seminar dates for the “Responding to Gender-based Violence” at next meeting.</p> <p>(ONGOING)</p>	<p>RESPONSE: The dates were Tuesday 21st November and Thursday 23rd November.</p> <p>VP GSBS will get an update for Trimester B dates. (ACTION)</p>
<p>ACTION: VP GSBS to look into moving the GCU election dates.</p> <p>(COMPLETED)</p>	<p>RESPONSE: An e-mail from NUS Scotland’s LGBT+ Officer to the “Big Student Elections” group received a response that stated the decision process that goes into choosing an election period. GCU LGBT+ Officer was satisfied with the response.</p>
<p>ACTION: VP GSBS to directly ask the university for the location of gender-neutral toilet facilities across the campus.</p> <p>(ONGOING)</p>	<p>RESPONSE: VP GSBS looked into this and was informed that all accessible toilets across campus are gender-neutral (of which there are over 40 across campus).</p> <p>VP GSBS expressed the view that GCU Students’ Association ought to communicate this more effectively to students (ACTION)</p>

3. Committee Membership Expansion

VP GSBS has reviewed the current GCU Students’ Association by-laws associated with the Equality & Diversity (E&D) committee and proposed changes to these which reflect official membership for Sports Champion, Societies Champion, Student Carers’ Officer, and Care Experience Students’ Officer.

VP GSBS asked the committee about potentially expanding to include *ex-officio* members or opportunities to invite individuals to attend specific meetings (such as Full Time Officers) who can update the E&D committee on relevant matters. The Representation & Advice Manager indicated that the latter is already something that the committee is welcome to do if it deems it appropriate/relevant. The discussion also touched upon the varying memberships of GCU Students’ Association committees.

ACTION: VP GSBS to liaise with the policy lead for S.A.G.E. (VP SEBE) to explore the potential of widening E&D committee membership to include Education Campaign Officers.

4. GCU Equality and Diversity Update

There has been no GCU Equality and Diversity meeting since the previous E&D committee meeting but there will be a GSBS-specific one taking place tomorrow.

VP GSBS did communicate with the E&D committee that GCU have launched their Gender Action Plan that demonstrates key achievements such as the “SmartSTEMS Project”, “Inspire for Girls”, “Inspire for Boys” and “Headstart” to encourage gender equality across all subject areas. Additionally, there are policies introduced such as the Student Pregnancy and Maternity Policy; and the Trans Student Policy. GCU has also taken the stance that there will be no gender pay gap in academic roles irrespective of age or length of service and that GCU is an accredited Living Wage Employer. Additionally, GCU has achieved the Athena SWAN Bronze Award.

GCU has also launched a mentoring scheme for women in finance (a partnership between GCU, Barclays and Morgan Stanley). The Student Rep Assistant added that there may be expansion of this partnership to incorporate additional liberation groups but this was not yet confirmed.

5. Officer/Champion Updates

- Full Time Officer

VP GSBS has been working extensively on ensuring that sanitary products are made available, for free, to both GCU staff and students who menstruate. Having successfully acquired a supply of sanitary products, GCU and GCU Students’ Association will be engaging in a sector-leading pilot during March and April 2018 that will see distribution points across campus which will provide access to these products.

- LGBT+ Officer

The LGBT+ Officer noted that there has been a good student turnout to LGBT+ meetings which is an encouraging sign. The “Transgender Day of Remembrance” vigil took place on 20th November 2017 and was a big success. Additionally, the LGBT+ group supported the work by VP GSBS for “World AIDS Day” (1st December 2017) and that a sexual health workshop by Terrance Higgins Trust would be taking place this evening in GCU Students’ Association. Finally, the LGBT+ Officer was working with the GCU sports teams to explore the possibility of potentially collaborating regarding LGBT+ in sport.

- Student Carers’ Officer

The Scottish Government is introducing the “Young Carers Bill” next year and the Student Carers’ Officer is actively participating on the working group responsible for designing this Bill. Additionally, the Student Carers’ Officer is working with the Carers Trust.

6. Upcoming Campaigns

VP GSBS mentioned that in Trimester B, there will be ongoing work regarding the Sanitary Product campaign and also ongoing work with the Wellbeing campaign – specifically on the Mental Health Agreement that is currently being drafted by VP GSBS for presentation at the next E&D committee meeting.

7. AOCB

VP GSBS expanded upon the ongoing work surrounding the Mental Health Agreement policy which is a partnership between GCU Students' Association, GCU and NUS. VP GSBS has had numerous meetings throughout the Trimester and consulted with various parties to ensure that this policy will be as effective as possible. Additionally, VP GSBS has acquired access to free Mental Health First Aid training and also ASSIST training.

The LGBT+ Officer made the E&D committee aware that the LGBT+ liberation group has recently elected a new transgender representative to ensure that both sexuality and gender is equally represented.

The next meeting for the Equality & Diversity Committee is scheduled to take place on 7th February 2018 (14:00 – 15:00)