



26<sup>th</sup>

June 2020

RVC Equality & Diversity Working Group – 26/06/20

E&D Working group Meeting: 10:09am-12:30pm

Attending:

Hasita Dodhia (HD), Olivia Craddock (OC), Kamila Karimjee (KK), Sarah Fray (SF), Shiv Patil (SP), Andy Marshall Revd. (AM Revd.), Tzarina Tuen-Matthews (TT-M), Anantha Kumarvel (AK).

1. Meeting started abruptly so some of the information/intro has been missed.

2. RVC Transparency

SF – mentions the chart that RVC has, to indicate even proportions of students from mixed backgrounds.

HD – Refers to the need for complete transparency from the RVC regarding proportions of students of mixed backgrounds and ethnicities attending the university. Refers to groups that will be set up as part of the Racial Equality Task Group: Transparency and communications, Reporting incidences and one that discusses education.

OC – Race equality charter - RVC want to be a part of this.

3. Education about equality and diversity

AK - explained that her tutor applied for a grant application from Edinburgh university to support her own research into how racism impacts mental health. Suggests some education/method could be incorporated into the day-to-day teaching at university, to reduce incidences of racism and how it affects peoples' mental health.

SP – Suggests that there should be an outreach programme to encourage international students who are also considered from ethnic minorities, to apply to the RVC.

SF – Also refers to the importance of education about the difficulties that students from ethnic minorities, may face that could discourage them from applying e.g. religious beliefs from families that disagree with touching certain animals.

HD, AM Revd. and KK – mention the need for compulsory incorporated training for all students about cultural differences, equality and diversity etc.



SP – Education regarding these issues need to be continuous throughout university education.

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Discussion about DLs being given to students to teach about equality, professionalism, diversity from the beginning of the course.

#### 4. Finances

General discussion regarding issues surrounding the difficulties of paying for any university related costs as they are undoubtedly expensive. References to the need for RVC to support their students, who have been accepted through access/widening participation (and anyone who needs it) more financially, to reduce the financial barriers.

HD, AM Revd. and KK – discuss issues surrounding school children and teenagers being able to physically attend university events and getting practical experience on placements before university, in order to apply. E.G. issues surrounding cost of travel to university events, having to work jobs in the holidays so not being able to do work experience to even apply to university.

HD – refers to the need that there needs to be financial support system in place for students who do not meet the criteria for the student support/hardship fund but also are not completely financially stable.

#### 5. Support and Protection:

KK – Refers to the lack of guidance from RVC about what to do if there are any issues whilst on a placement i.e. if there has been any discrimination or any kind of disrespect, safety issues etc. There is a lack of guidance on how to safely leave, leave comfortably, discuss said issues with the university and how the university will deal with it appropriately and fully.

General discussion about the need for more communication between the university and placement providers particularly regarding code of conduct.

TT-M - Discusses the need for acknowledgement and for practices to be put into place in case a placement cannot be completed for whatever reason.



AM Revd.- All external contractors, caterers, everyone involved in the university should have to agree to a standard code of conduct.

KK – Suggests an agreement/code of conduct to be sent out to placement providers prior to students attending the placement.

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6. Events and Social Spaces:

Discussion regarding the need to steer away from drinking focused activities/socials in societies:

TT-M – talks about the financial and practical difficulties with coming up with different nondrinking focused activities for socials each week to include everyone. However, mentions it is possible and has started to be done. This needs to continue.

SF – mentions the need for more Fresher's events that cater for non-drinking, mature, commuting students e.g. coffee mornings.

KK and AM Revd. – suggest having the on-campus café/canteens open in the evening/1 evening a week to encourage more use of them and to allow another relaxed social area. TT-M: Welfare committee role within societies suggested – includes a buddy system to encourage more people to join societies. Composing documents about trans inclusion, racial equality in the societies.

General discussion surrounding issues with alcohol focused events and this therefore, excluding a lot of students from events.

7. Micro-aggressions

SF – Suggests the need for education/some system to be put into place to teach all students professional/code of conduct. I.E. need training on how to conduct yourselves within the professional environment and within university, training on what micro-aggressions are, training on how to approach people and colleagues when there are issues and when there are not.

AM Revd. – Need to improve and implement training on how to have open conversations about equality, issues etc to avoid causing any more issues.

KK – Need to understand what a micro-aggression is.



AM Revd. – suggests something to teach students about micro-aggressions and talking and understanding cultural differences as part of the course. It should need to be completed in order to complete the course.

AK and KK – More education needed about Halal meat and the cultural aspects.

