

Council

Date of Meeting: 26th November 2015

Report: Enhancing Equality and Diversity – update report and recommendations for 2015/16.

Sponsor: Professor Dame Jessica Corner, University Equality and Diversity Champion.

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report highlights progress on equality and diversity and asks Council to note:

- The new proposed governance and leadership arrangements for Equality and Diversity.
- Progress made on Equality and Diversity over the last year including substantive progress on Athena SWAN and promotions for women.
- The recommendations agreed by the University Senior Management Team to gain further traction on equality and diversity (section 4).
- Plans to develop a new University E&D strategy aligned and integrated with the University Vision and key strategies, such as the People Plan.

2.0 Summary

2.1 The University Academic Executive (UAE) has reviewed the context relating to Equality and Diversity issues within the higher education sector and the progress of the University of Southampton against comparator Universities as well as against the University's own performance, as reflected in equal pay and supporting career progression of women and other equality groups. The context and recommendations as set out in this paper have been discussed by the University Executive and agreed by the University Senior Management Team.

2.2 Implementing these actions will more firmly embed support for equality and diversity within governance structures and day-to-day activities of the University. Sir Christopher Snowden has assumed the role of Equality and Diversity Champion for the University to provide leadership for this important agenda at the highest level. Professor Nyovani Madise will take on the role of Equality and Diversity Lead for the University once Professor Dame Jessica Corner stands down as University Champion in December. It is also proposed that a new Equality and Diversity Committee is established, chaired by the Vice Chancellor.

Background

2.3 The University has statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- demonstrate due regard towards people identifying with protected characteristics¹ by considering the implications of our decisions (including policies) on those people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- set an example to the wider sector and community by advancing equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- publish 'equality information' and at least one equality objective publicly on what the University aims to achieve with regards to E&D

¹ The Equality Act 2010 defines the protected characteristics as: age, disability, gender (inc. transgender), race, religion & belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity and marriage & civil partnership.

- provide a healthy and inclusive environment for work and study
- ensure 'equal pay for equal work'

2.4 Further to this In July 2011, the Chief Medical Officer Dame Sally Davies in a letter to the Medical Schools Council expressed the view that only medical schools with a Silver Athena SWAN award would be shortlisted for NIHR Biomedical Research Centres/Units funding in 2016. Thereby increasing the business imperative to take action on gender equality in particular.

2.5 This was followed by a statement from RCUK in 2013 reinstating its expectations of universities to embed and demonstrate equality and diversity at institutional and faculty/departmental levels as part of their awarding of research grants.

Southampton and the sector

2.6 The equality and diversity challenge for universities is a complex and systemic problem. Statistics show that progress is being made nationally and at Southampton. However, the 'glass ceiling' effect is still substantial for women and black and minority ethnic (BME) academics and the overall pay gap still remains.

2.7 Statistics for other protected characteristics are not provided here due to low disclosure within the University or a lack of national or sector benchmarks to use for comparison.

2.8 Table 1 shows the numbers and percentage of professorial academics that are female and BME (black and minority ethnic) from all nationalities for all UK higher education institutions (HEIs), the Russell Group and Southampton. The latest national data is only available for December 2013, but Southampton data for August 2015 is provided to show our progress.

Table 1: Number and percentage of professorial academics who are women or BME

	All HEIs	Russell Group	University of Southampton	
	December 2013 (HESA)			August 2015
Women	4,415 22.4%	2,440 20.9%	90 19.6%	118 23.4%
BME	1,615 8.2%	815 7.0%	35 7.8%	38 7.5%
All professors	19,745	11,680	455	504

2.9 At the time of the most recent benchmarks, Southampton had slightly lower representation of women at Level 7 than across the Russell Group. By August 2015, we have increased this to 23.4 per cent. It remains to be seen how the Russell Group has progressed, but this shows that we are moving in the right direction; the proactive work we have undertaken through our initiatives appears to be making a difference (see Paragraph 2.25).

2.10 However, we have some way to go to meet the goal of the 30% Club (see Paragraph 2.31) and further still to achieve equal representation of women at all levels. At 1 August 2015, women represented 40.0 per cent of all academics in the University.

2.11 We are behind the sector for representation of BME professors, but at a similar position to the Russell Group. Just 7.5 per cent of our Level 7 academics are BME compared to 15.0 per cent at levels 4 – 7.

2.12 Moreover, the picture is starker for particular ethnicities: while 19.0 per cent of academics in the sector are professors, only 4.0 per cent of all black British academics have reached professorial levels.

2.13 Other universities have been more proactive in developing their BME academics through work on the new Race Charter Mark, recently launched by the Equality Challenge Unit.

Equal pay

- 2.14 Table 2 shows the mean gender and ethnicity pay gaps for the UK workforce², the sector³ (Russell Group figures not currently available) and Southampton (from the University's latest equal pay review for July 2015, to be published shortly).

Table 2: Mean percentage pay gap for all HEI employees

	UK workers	All HEIs	University of Southampton	
	<i>Nov 2014</i>	<i>Dec 2013</i>	<i>Jul 2015</i>	
Gender	17.6	19.0	22.1	22.9
British BME	n/a ⁴	2.4	7.9	6.3

- 2.15 The University's latest Equal Pay Review demonstrates that we have 'equal pay for equal work'. However, as more women than men are employed in lower-paid jobs, we have an overall mean gender pay gap of 22.9 per cent, up slightly from 2013; the national mean gender pay gap for 2014 was 17.6 per cent. This shows that issues lie with the employment pipeline rather than equal pay for equal work.
- 2.16 The overall pay gap for British BME employees is also greater than for the sector. As with gender, this reflects the higher employment of BME people in lower paid jobs.
- 2.17 Both figures demonstrate our need to improve the employment pipeline and enhance support for women and employees from ethnic minorities to progress in their career, improving their representation at senior levels and decreasing the overall pay gaps.

Disciplinary differences

- 2.18 At the student level, our SET disciplines continue to be male dominated (70 per cent male), medicine & health are female dominated (76 per cent female) while AHSSBL⁵ tend to have a gender balance.
- 2.19 The 'leaky pipeline' or 'glass ceiling' affects women in all disciplines though differently: half of Level 4 academics are women, but just 18 per cent of STEMM and 33 per cent of AHSSBL Level 7 academics are women.

HE sector initiatives

- 2.20 The Athena SWAN charter mark was established in 2005 to address the 'glass ceiling' issue for women in STEMM. Athena SWAN has since become the beacon for impactful culture change. There are now 134 members and over 500 award-holding departments and institutions.
- 2.21 Seven departments hold Gold awards: Chemistry and Biology at York; Chemistry at Edinburgh; Biological Sciences and Psychology at Queens University Belfast; and Physics at Cambridge. Eight institutions hold Silver awards: Edinburgh, Nottingham, Warwick, Imperial, Cambridge, UCL, Babraham Institute and John Innes Centre.
- 2.22 Research has demonstrated the successful impact of Athena SWAN in improving gender equality in STEMM, and generally Athena SWAN appears to be setting a benchmark for showing how committed a university is in improving gender equality.
- 2.23 The ECU (Equality Challenge Unit) recently piloted the Race Charter Mark with 21 participating institutions, applying the learning from Athena SWAN to race and ethnicity. The Race Charter Mark is planned to be launched in 2016.

² Office for National Statistics, *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014 Provisional Results*

³ Equality Challenge Unit, *Equality in higher education: statistical report 2014*, using 2013/14 HESA data

⁴ The ONS ASHE is based on HMRC tax returns, which do not include data on ethnicity and nationality

⁵ Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business and Law

- 2.24 The Athena SWAN Charter was revised in May 2015 and the University has made a formal commitment to its new principles (Appendix 3).

Southampton initiatives

- 2.25 We were a founding signatory to the Athena SWAN charter, and have held a bronze Athena SWAN award since 2006. The University has made substantial progress on Athena SWAN since 2011. Currently nine of our faculties/academic units hold departmental/faculty Athena SWAN awards, including two silver awards for Chemistry and most recently the Faculty of Medicine. We are currently preparing a Silver institutional submission for April 2016 and a further three departmental award holders hope to achieve Silver awards soon.
- 2.26 Work on the promotions process has resulted in an increase in the application and success rates for women applying for Level 6 and Level 7 in the past five years: Level 6 increased from 29.6 per cent to 33.2 per cent women, and Level 7 increased from 18.6 per cent to 23.4 per cent. The academic reward project (revised academic pathways & enhanced guidance), Springboard Women's development programme, Action Learning Sets, Athena SWAN, promotions briefings, coaching workshops for promotion applicants and equality briefings for promotions panels have all contributed to this improvement.
- 2.27 The increasing demand for Unconscious Bias training from faculties demonstrates a raised awareness of how attitudes and behaviours can inadvertently affect equal treatment. Research has continued to show that individuals respond differently to CV's and job applicants if they think the person applying is male or female, or of a particular ethnicity or age. Internally, we have anecdotal evidence that women are more often judged in terms of having sufficient experience while men are more likely to be evaluated by their potential to develop in a particular role.

Progress compared to other institutions, governance and leadership

- 2.28 HEIs who are seen as exemplars in the sector have placed this agenda at the core of their leadership aspirations. For example, In 2000 QUB established a resourced 'Gender Initiative', leading to their success as the first Silver Athena SWAN University; Cambridge has a similar organisation. UCL's Principal (VC equivalent) chairs their '50:50' committee (gender equality group) while Nottingham's WinSET⁶ group has a corporate governance role and steers delivery of gender equality through its faculties.
- 2.29 Many universities have a strong equalities governance structure, with E&D committees chaired by Vice Chancellors, Chairs of Council or other senior people.
- 2.30 In order to ensure Southampton not only continues to make good progress on equality and diversity but also aims to be the best in the sector we will be establishing a formal University E&D committee, and associated structures across the organisation, this will further widen the E&D agenda and embed accountability for action at leadership levels as well as develop an inclusive culture where everyone takes responsibility.

30% Club

- 2.31 The 30% Club started in the UK in 2010 with the aim of achieving a minimum of 30 per cent women on all FTSE100 boards by the end of 2015. It has since grown to include a commitment to 30 per cent women on all senior committees and roles, and expanded globally with chapters in eight countries, including Australia, Canada and the USA.
- 2.32 The UK Chapter has 157 members, including the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Nottingham and Queens University Belfast.
- 2.33 In June 2015 the Chair of Council, Gill Rider, signed the University up to joining the 30% Club, committing us to achieve 30 per cent women on all formal committees and at Level 7. We already have 50 per cent women on Safety & Occupational Health Committee, 40 per cent on

⁶ Women in Science, Engineering and Technology

UAE, and 31 per cent on University Ethics Committee, and 38% for Senate. However, all other committees, including Council (25%) fall short of the 30 per cent target; also the UAE figure could change significantly as new senior appointments are made.

- 2.34 In January 2015 Cambridge University piloted a Students' Aspiration Survey, which the 30% Club now wants to rollout to its HEI members nationally. The survey explores how students feel their university experience has influenced their career aspirations and identifies differences between male and female respondents.
- 2.35 The pilot has provided Cambridge with a unique insight into how their female student population feel supported academically, socially and in terms of careers advice. There were over 1000 respondents to the Cambridge pilot, 54 per cent women.
- 2.36 The survey found that 30% of women feel that negative and inaccurate assumptions are made about their level of ambition because of their gender; and only 67% of women feel they will have the opportunity to advance their career as far as they want, compared to 81% of men
- 2.37 We have signed up to running a similar survey in November 2015, which will help us to better understand the barriers students at Southampton feel they face in their future aspirations.
- 2.38 If the University is to become an exemplar, we should adopt the 30 per cent ambition for all our activities and projects. For example, our distinguished lecture series, which had no women in 2014/15.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The University continues to make good progress on equality and diversity. Gaining momentum on Athena SWAN, including two silver awards for Chemistry and the Faculty of Medicine, means we are in a position to apply for an institutional University silver Athena SWAN award in 2016, in line with our KPI commitment.
- 3.2 The steady progress we have made on the promotion rates for women in the organisation at levels 6 and 7, over the past five years, has been recognised nationally as good practise. The University has been shortlisted for an impact award, to be decided at the Global Equality and Diversity Conference on 25th November 2015. Details of the conference can be found at <http://www.neilstewartassociates.com/GEDconference2015>.
- 3.3 The Vice Chancellor's leadership on this agenda, with implementation of the recommendations in this report sets in place a strong foundation to continue making progress, embed equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the University, and to aspire to be leaders in this field.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 *Make arrangements for establishing a new formal University Equality and Diversity Committee, chaired by the Vice Chancellor/or his representative, faculty and departmental E&D structures to report annually to this committee.*
- 4.2 *Each faculty identify a local E&D champion, ensuring the allocated person can raise issues at their Leadership Team and establish an E&D committee; building on Athena SWAN work where relevant*
- 4.3 *Once the new COO is in post, professional services consider appropriate E&D structures to take forward this work.*
- 4.4 *Equality and Diversity training, including Unconscious bias training, is rolled out incrementally. All senior leaders involved in the promotions process to be trained in 2015/16. Further resources to be identified for unconscious bias training in 2016/17.*
- 4.5 *The new University Executive leadership group to have equality and diversity training focussing on unconscious bias, as part of their development. Online E&D training to be made mandatory for new staff at the University as well as continuing to rollout in the University.*

- 4.6 *Focus to continue on improving gender equality in promotions and the glass ceiling. Extend work to improve the pipeline and monitor all protected characteristics through the promotions process.*
- 4.7 *Commit to achieving at least 30% women in all our governance structures and senior management positions. Further commit to at least 30% women in all key activities such as: distinguished lectures, national nominations, honorary degree awards, VIP visits, etc.*
- 4.8 *The University formally sign the revised Athena SWAN charter principles.*
- 4.9 *In 2016/17, develop plans for longer term E&D objectives as part of a new E&D strategy aligned to the University Strategy.*
- 4.10 *An implementation Plan is developed to take these recommendations forward.*

5.0 Implications

5.1 Strategic

Equality and Diversity is at the core of the University's aspirations to be a global university and the aspirations of its strategy. This report also enhances transparency in university governance.

5.2 Financial

Resources will need to continue to be identified and provided to roll out Athena SWAN, development support and E&D training including unconscious bias.

5.3 Equality and Legal

This report enhances the University's impact on equality and diversity and shows how we meet our legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

5.4 Risk and Health & Safety

N/A

5.5 Reputation

Good practice in equality and diversity improve the University's reputation as an employer of choice and an inclusive place to work and study.

6.0 Consultation

- 6.1 This report has been discussed with the Equality and Diversity Consultative Group, University Academic Executive, University Professional Services Leadership Team, University Senior Management Team.
- 6.2 Senate have also received this report for their information.

7.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1: Comparison of the gender pipeline at the University of Southampton from 2010 to 2015
- Appendix 2: Gender of promotions to Level 6 and 7 from 2011/12 to 2014/15
- Appendix 3: Athena SWAN Charter 2015

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