Minutes of the Governing Body Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday 15th April 2026
Time & Location: 09:30 – 11:00, Online MS Teams

Chairperson: Ms Ruth Beadle (RB)

Attendees:
Dr Allison Kenneally (AK)
Dr Cara Daly (CD)
Mr Derek Sheridan (DS)
Ms Erin Foley (EF)
Dr Isaac Alshaikh (IA)
Ms Lucy Bosch (LB)
Ms Mary Connors Aldridge (MCA)
Mr Paul Bennett (PB)
Ms Rachel O'Loughlin (ROL)
Ms Samantha O'Connor (SOC)
Ms Shauna Whyte (SW)

Apologies:
Dr Vivian Rath (VR)
Mr Jeremie Sandot (JS)
Dr Sarah Sartori (SS)

Secretariat: Ms Anne Hallinan (AH)

Item Title	
1.	**Chairperson's Opening:** The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming members.
1.1	Approval of Agenda NOTED No conflict of interest for matters arising. The Chair confirmed approval of the agenda and commenced the meeting.
1.2	Approval of Minutes AGREED Approved the minutes of 13th Jan 2026.
2.	**Final Check-In -** Private session time – 2 times per year? A discussion took place regarding the introduction of private session time to support open and candid dialogue on key EDI topics, ensuring the committee remains focused on the most relevant issues. It was proposed that this becomes a standing annual agenda item, comprising two additional one-hour brainstorming sessions per year, to be a 30-minute private segment at the beginning or end of each meeting, with a preference for in-person sessions. This approach will be trialled at the meeting on 12 May. NOTED EDI GB Committee members can participate, excluding executive management members.

3. 3.1	<u>**Committee Membership & Reporting**</u> Thematic sub committees/groups NOTED AK provided an update on both the Disability Sub-Group and the Race Equality Sub-Group. The Disability Sub-Group has met several times since January, with discussions covering the accessibility audit, implementation of live captioning and text-to-speech solutions for large events, follow-up on facilities issues, and updates required to English and Irish language signage across campus. IA also shared findings from research on developing SETU as an autism-friendly university, along with updates on upcoming ADHD and emotional regulation training sessions for students on 20 April, and additional in-person ADHD training for staff and students on 28 April at the Waterford campus. Feedback highlighted the need to increase student involvement in the accessibility audit, particularly from design students, to ensure their perspectives inform building design and campus improvements. The group also noted the importance of continuing to improve the visibility of the sub-group's work. The accessibility audit is being led by Student Life & Learning (SLL) and HR, with support from Estates. SLL will present at the 12 May meeting, outlining student supports and services. The Race Equality Sub-Group has met once to date. Training to executive management (in person) and wider management (online), has been delivered. Further training is being planned for September for HR, SLL, and all staff. SW raised the need to better communicate the work of the Disability Network Group and Disability Sub-Group, suggesting the development of a visual narrative. SLL was identified as the key stakeholder in relation to student supports. SW also suggested linking disability-related communications with ongoing work on sustainability and AI being led by David Ryan. **Action** Allison to contact David Ryan to explore opportunities for collaboration (Status: Done).
4. 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4	<u>**EDI Policies & Action Plans**</u> Update on the following: **SETU EDI Committee of GB Proposed Annual Workplan** NOTED AK reported that the Annual EDI report is finalized and gone to the designer for production. Progress is being made on the Race Equality Action Plan, and the communications campaign has been deferred until students are back on campus (scheduled for end of September). The Annual EDI GB Workplan is also progressing well and will be ready for presentation at the Committee meeting on 12 May. **IPA GB Effectiveness Review - EDI Comm Extract Jan 2026** NOTED The Chairperson presented feedback from the review, which was overall positive, and thanked members for their engagement. A need for increased access to training and development opportunities was highlighted. PB noted the success of the Traveller Culture Awareness Training delivered during CPD week and suggested it could be extended to a wider staff audience. The Chairperson invited reflection on whether roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and whether members feel able to contribute, and queried what actions should follow from the feedback. The chairperson thanked all for their strong contributions and noted the student representatives' valuable input. She highlighted the strong level of student input at committee meetings and noted that, where the student representative or Student President is unavailable, representation can be delegated to a student from Carlow or Wexford. Members of the Disability Sub-Group may also be assigned roles to support contributions as needed. AK added that the report is very positive overall, with strong and consistent student involvement clearly evident. **2025 Gender Pay Gap Report** NOTED AK presented the Pay Gap Report and noted that the largest gender pay gap exists among PMSS staff, which will be a priority area for action. Discussion focused on next steps, with SW highlighting ongoing reviews of job descriptions and an increased focus on job advertising and recruitment processes. AK also noted the need to gather additional data to better understand gaps relating to ethnicity and disability. MCA queried whether a figure of 10% or less over the coming years would be considered acceptable. AK noted that the EDI GB Committee will continue to monitor progress in this area.

4.5	**Data Disclosure Campaign Report** NOTED ROL presented the Data Disclosure Campaign, which was considered a success. The survey will be conducted twice annually to gather additional data. The Chairperson recognised the strong work and high level of engagement demonstrated by EDI in the forums.
4.6	**Update report from Estates Office Carlow** – to be tabled at the EDI GB committee meeting on 12th May. **Student Sexual Misconduct Policy** Noted AK confirmed that amendments have been made to the policy, noting its significant impact on students, and advised that a separate staff policy will be developed at a later stage. Student representatives emphasised the importance of the policy. **Action** The Chairperson requested that section 5.10.3 be simplified and amended, with formatting issues corrected in certain sections. It was also agreed that the policy review period be changed from three years to one year. These updates were completed by EDI and the revised policy was forwarded to the Policy Review Committee on 16/04/2026. Noted The Chairperson queried whether there is confidence in securing suitably qualified individuals for the investigation process. AK advised that options are being explored to either train internal experts or engage independent external specialists. The aim is to have the policy in place by September 2026. Students will be informed of the policy during orientation, supported by a dedicated landing page. Staff communications will also direct students to the relevant office for further guidance.
4.	**AOB** The Chair thanked members for their participation and, there being no other matters to attend to, closed the meeting. Next Meeting: Tuesday 12th May, in-person, 12:00-16:00.