

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

**Date:** Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Time:** 3.00 – 4.30pm, via Zoom

**Chairperson:** Ms Ruth Beadle

**Attendees:** Dr Allison Keneally  
Mr David Denieffe  
Ms Sarah Clarke  
Mr Paul Bennett  
Dr Cara Daly  
Dr Vivian Rath  
Ms Mary Connors Aldridge

**Apologies:** Ms Anne Murphy  
Ms Kelly Han

**Secretariat:** Ms Samantha O'Connor (recording)

Item Title	
1.	<b><u>Chairperson's Opening:</u></b>
1.1	<u>Approval of Agenda</u> NOTED Confirming the meeting was quorate and no conflict of interest for matters arising Ms Beadle confirmed approval of agenda and commenced the meeting.
1.2	<u>Approval of Minutes</u> AGREED To approve the minutes of 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024.
2.	<b><u>EDI Strategy</u></b>
2.1	<u>EDI Strategic Plan:</u> NOTED Dr Kenneally discussed the phases of consultation and upcoming feedback engagements with Academic Council and external groups, noting that external consultations will be online.  NOTED Dr Kenneally noted that the university is on course to have the plan before Governing Bodies by May 24.  NOTED Dr Kenneally listed various groups included in the engagement process as per legislation. Dr Rath suggested contacting the Independent Living Movement as an external group for consultation. Dr Kenneally expressed gratitude and willingness to follow up on suggestions.
3.	<b><u>EDI Policies &amp; Action Plans</u></b>
	NOTED Ms Beadle invited updates on the following:
3.1	<u>Athena SWAN – Approval of Terms of Reference &amp; Process, Timelines</u>

<p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>NOTED Mr Denieffe provided context on the Athena Swan assessment team and committees. Dr Kenneally discussed the alignment and possible crossover of working groups within the Athena Swan application.</p> <p>NOTED Dr Rath sought clarity on whether Athena Swan recognises and addresses the intersectionality of gender equality, including the challenges faced by marginalized groups. Mr Denieffe agreed indicating this would be an opportune time to gather such data, which could be included in the Terms of reference.</p> <p>NOTED Dr Kenneally confirmed work has been ongoing to actively gather data on disability inclusion and data related to race and disability and acknowledged that there is a commitment to understanding and address the intersectional challenges faced by various groups within the university.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Terms of reference will be updated at WG meetings and will be circulated ahead of next meeting for approval.</p> <p><u>Gender Identity &amp; Expression Policy – Updated Policy for Approval</u></p> <p>NOTED Dr Beadle provided context on updates to the gender identity policy. Mr Denieffe presented proposed changes, focusing on legal framework references and language usage. Discussion and review of proposed changes arose, addressing clarity, legality and effectiveness.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Further clarification to be sought from legal representatives  <u>ACTION:</u> Amended policy to revert to EDI Committee for review</p> <p><u>Race Equality Action Plan</u></p> <p>NOTED Mr Denieffe requested that the Race Equality Action Plan remain on the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Item to remain on agenda to provide updates on the process and progress.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b><u>Sexual Violence &amp; Harassment Prevention &amp; Response Manager</u></b></p> <p>NOTED Ms Roisin Shanahan joined the meeting and gave a presentation on sexual harassment and violence and the ongoing work to tackle it within higher education institutions. Ms Shanahan emphasised the university’s commitment to proactive measures and support services in combating sexual harassment and violence.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b><u>Estates Representative for EDI Committee &amp; Period Poverty Initiative</u></b></p> <p>NOTED Mr Denieffe shared the positive news that Mr David Buckley, SETU Estates Manager, Carlow Campus are piloting the Period Poverty initiative in the Department of Engineering Carlow Campus. The aim is to implement the initiative in time for the Easter term starting on April 8th. Mr Denieffe noted that the pilot will help assess usage and help guide further decisions.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> Mr Denieffe to seek a volunteer from Estates to join this committee.  <u>ACTION:</u> Keep on agenda for further updates.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <p>NOTED Mr Denieffe offered Dr Daly commiserations on not winning in the category of Employee of the Year at the 2024 National Diversity Awards. Dr Daly said she was honoured to have been nominated.</p> <p>NOTED Dr Rath notified the group that the AHEAD Conference 2024 will take place on March 20 and 21, where the ALTITUDE Charter will be launched. Dr Rath noted the initiative aims to enhance accessibility and inclusivity within the education sector.</p> <p>NOTED Dr Kenneally noted two ‘dates for diaries’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EQUITAS Conference on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>• HEA National EDI Conference on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April</li> </ul>

NOTED Dr Kenneally and Mr Denieffe commended the work of Dr Sara Kennedy, Dr Claire Power and the team in the Departments of Nursing and Student Life & Learning on the awarding of funding for the Intellectual Disability Programme.

NOTED Ms Clarke requested that a presentation on the aforementioned programme be given to this committee. She also requested that the topic of the Gender Pay Gap report be added to the committees next meeting agenda for discussion.

Ms Beadle requested that the next meeting be held earlier than the scheduled 13<sup>th</sup> April meeting, possibly in 4-6 weeks. She thanked all for their participation and there being no other matters to address she closed the meeting.