

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Terms of Reference

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Purpose.....	4
3. Membership	4
4. Duration of Appointments	5
5. Secretary.....	6
6. Meetings.....	6
7. Minutes of Meetings	7
8. Conflict of Interest.....	7
9. Quorum	7
10. Responsibilities.....	7
11. Reporting.....	8
12. Rights	8
13. Review of terms of reference.....	8
Appendix 1	9
Proposed SETU Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Governance & Implementation Framework - Diagram	9

1. Introduction

South East Technological University (SETU) Governing Body has established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Governing Body from which it derives its authority and to which it regularly reports.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the committee is to assist and advise the Governing Body in the performance of its functions by providing governance and oversight which will be achieved by reviewing reports and assurances received from the President and the SETU Executive Management Team. The committee will also provide guidance and direction on policy matters associated with the achievement of EDI objectives across the university. The EDI Committee may also request reports on relevant matters from SETU Executive Management.

The Governing Body will support the committee in discharging its responsibilities contained in these terms of reference, and undertakes to provide adequate resources to enable the committee to properly discharge its function.

Whilst the Governing Body has delegated the authority to the committee as set out in these terms of reference, the Governing Body remains accountable for all legislative functions.

The committee, acting on behalf of the Governing Body, will have explicit authority to review and consider any matters within its terms of reference.

3. Membership

3.1 The Governing Body will appoint the members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee on the joint nomination of the Chairperson of the Governing Body and the President of the University.

3.2 The Chair of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee appointed by the Governing Body and shall be an external member of the Governing Body.

3.3 The members of the Committee shall include:

- The President of the University or their nominee who will be a member of the Executive Management Team;

- In addition to the chair outlined in 3.2 at least 2 other members of Governing Body one of whom shall be the Student Union President¹ and one of whom shall be a staff member;
- Two members of staff with knowledge or expertise in EDI;
- At least two members of the university community, nominated by the President in consultation with the chairperson of the committee, reflective of the diversity of the university.;
- At least one external member, nominated by the President in consultation with the chairperson of the committee.

The Vice Presidents for EDI shall be Secretary to the Committee and they shall be assisted by a recording secretary.

3.4 In making the appointments, the Governing Body shall have regard to ensuring that membership is as diverse as possible and the committee members have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience necessary. Gender balance is imperative for this committee (being, the objective that at least 40 per cent of members of the committee shall be female and at least 40 per cent shall be male).

4. Duration of Appointments

4.1 Period of appointments will be the following:

- For external and staff members of the Governing Body, their membership will coincide with one term of membership of Governing Body;
- For independent external members, their membership will be for three years, with the possibility of an extension of a further two years.

4.2 The Governing Body will aim to change the appointments from time to time to ensure an appropriate balance between continuity and fresh perspectives.

4.3 Membership of the committee will be reviewed annually by the President and the Chairperson of the Governing Body.

4.4 A Governing Body member will cease to be a member of the committee if the member ceases to be a member of the Governing Body.

¹ Both SU Presidents shall be members of this committee until such a time as the SU consolidates into one SU representing SETU.

5. Secretary

- 5.1 The Secretary to the committee shall be the Vice President for EDI who shall be assisted by a recording secretary.
- 5.2 The Secretary will be responsible for the preparation and distribution of the agenda, papers, minutes and reports following consultation with the Chairperson of the committee and the President or their nominee.

6. Meetings

- 6.1 The committee will meet as many times as is required, but at least four times a year.
- 6.2 All members are expected to attend each meeting. A member who is absent from all meetings of the committee for a period of twelve consecutive months, unless such absence was due to illness or was approved by the Governing Body, shall be disqualified at the expiry of such period from continuing to be a member of the committee for the remainder of that person's term of office.
- 6.3 The committee may hold or continue a meeting by the use of any means of communication by which all members can hear and be heard at the same time (referred to as an electronic meeting). A member of the committee who participates in an electronic meeting is taken for all purposes to have been present at the meeting.
- 6.4 The committee may require other persons e.g. relevant staff to attend specific meetings.
- 6.5 The committee may ask other employees of the University to attend to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter.
- 6.6 The committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend but who are not members to withdraw from specific meeting or agenda items to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.

6.7 The Governing Body may ask the committee to convene further meetings to discuss particular issues on which they seek the committee's advice.

7. Minutes of Meetings

7.1 The recording secretary shall minute the proceedings and decisions of all committee meetings, including recording the names of those present and in attendance, and absent. Draft minutes shall be circulated to all members of the Committee, and subsequently approved by all members. Draft minutes shall be sent to the first Governing Body meeting following the EDI Committee meeting, if possible.

7.2 An agenda and papers will normally be circulated one week in advance of each meeting.

8. Conflict of Interest

At each meeting, members must disclose if they have an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest and, where necessary, agree any interventions that may be required to manage that conflict.

9. Quorum

A meeting shall be quorate when of 50% plus one of the members are present, to consist of at least one external member.

10. Responsibilities

The committee's responsibilities are:

- to familiarise themselves with EDI legislation, policies, strategies and reports which are relevant to the university, and any associated material; This material will be provided by the Vice-President EDI, and other material may be requested by any member of the committee;

- to consider the recommendations made in those reports and the possible impact of implementation of such recommendations in relation to the University
- to guide and monitor the implementation of relevant EDI policies and strategies across the University
- to report to Governing Body on progress in a timely manner;
- to receive and review an Annual EDI Report from the Vice-President for EDI, and for the Chairperson of the EDI Committee and the Vice-President for EDI to present it to the Governing Body;
- to monitor any other matters associated with EDI, and in particular, to advise on emerging issue in the field

11. Reporting

11.1 The draft minutes of the Committee shall be circulated with the papers for the Governing Body meeting immediately following.

11.2 The committee may bring any relevant matters to the attention of the Governing Body

12. Rights

The committee may:

- Co-opt additional members to provide specialist skills, knowledge and experience, subject to Governing Body approval;
- Procure specialist ad-hoc advice at the reasonable expense of the University, subject to budgets agreed by the Governing Body;
- Review any matter within its terms of reference, be provided with the resources it needs to do so and have full access to all information.

13. Review of terms of reference

These terms of reference will be reviewed every three years.

Appendix 1

Proposed SETU Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Governance & Implementation Framework - Diagram

