

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITYBOARD OF GOVERNORS 17 JULY 2014

Title	Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2013-14 and proposed Priority Actions for 2014-15.
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Aim	This report provides a progress report of the key equality objectives and actions during the last year in addition to a summary of the key findings from the student monitoring reports during academic year 2013-14. Priority actions for 2014-15 are also set out in this report for Board approval.
Executive Summary	The report summarises the key achievements for the year which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the equality actions approved in 2013; • Progress report of the published Equality Objectives; and • Summary of the key findings from the analysis of student monitoring.
Annexes	Annex 1: Summary of E&D in respect of staff employment Annex 2: Summary of the 2013/14 FT/UK undergraduate population Annex 3: Progress on institutional equality objectives 2012-16 Annex 3a: Institutional E&D Priority Actions 2013-14 Annex 4: Overview of significant statistical analyses conducted during 2013/14.
Strategic Risks addressed	N/A
Consideration at sub-committee level	The E&D Annual Report 2014 was considered at the meeting of the E&D Steering Committee held 09 June 2014 and comes forward with the Steering Committee's endorsement.
Action requested	The Board is invited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the paper; and • Approve the E&D priority actions for 2014/15.
Timing	For implementation 2014-15.
Status of Paper	Non-confidential.

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS – 2014

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

1. Aim

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to provide a summary of key institutional and student related equality and diversity achievements for the year which include:
- Meeting the equality actions approved in 2013;
 - A progress report of the published Equality Objectives;
 - A summary of the key findings from the analysis of student monitoring during academic year 2013-14;and
 - A new set of proposed equality actions for 2014-15.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The report focuses on equality and diversity in relation to student activity. It covers: the work of the Equality and Diversity Steering Committee in monitoring and analysing student achievement; and a progress report against the Equality Priority Actions 13/14.
- 2.2 Equality and Diversity in relation to staff and employment are coordinated through the HR department, and reported to the Personnel and Remuneration Committee and is available in **Annex 1** for information.
- 2.3 The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee provides leadership and governance for the University by its monitoring across all the protected characteristic areas for students, sharing any identified good practice and success of Faculties/Schools as well as proposing actions and interventions that could prove successful.
- 2.4 The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee has continued its evidence-based approach using a series of student monitoring reports to inform recommended interventions to improve student success on the performance indicators of entrant participation, retention, achievement, efficiency (of progression) and graduate destination.
- 2.5 The Equality and Diversity Steering Committee has met four times during this academic year and reports to Senate. Membership of the Committee is reflective of all faculties in the university and key departments and professional services such as Planning and Performance, HR Department and Student Services. Students are represented on the Committee by an Executive of the University's Student's Union.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 The term “Equality and Diversity (E&D)” covers the range of activities involved in promoting a diverse and inclusive student community in which all students are treated fairly, irrespective of their backgrounds or protected characteristics¹ as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 “Equality” and “Diversity” are, however, different concepts requiring different responses. Equality refers primarily to statutory compliance with the Equality Act and the actions the University takes, through its policies and procedures, to prevent direct and indirect discrimination. Diversity relates to the discretionary activities of the University in promoting a diverse student community, reflective of the City and the region.

4. Student Population 2013/14

- 4.1 The University continues to have a large and diverse student population. **Annex 2** details the population in terms of Full Time Undergraduate UK students.

5. Achievements

5.1 **Equality Objectives 2012-16 and Priority Actions for 2013-14**

- 5.1.1 As required by the Public Sector Equality Duty, the University has published a set of *Equality Objectives* on its website. Good progress has been made towards delivering these institutional objectives and a summary is provided in **Annex 3**.

- 5.1.2 A set of equality and diversity *Priority Actions* was agreed by the Board of Governors at its July meeting 2013. A review of progress against these actions is provided in **Annex 3a**.

5.2 **Analysis of Student Monitoring Reports**

- 5.2.1 A key role of the Steering Committee is to analyse the results of the reports produced by the Planning and Performance Department. The analysis of these reports provides the evidence-base for recommendations and identifies areas for actions for other groups, Committees or Faculties to take forward. This approach is designed to prevent, duplication and fragmentation of effort, and to advance the University’s strategic objectives.
- 5.2.2 The Steering Committee received (at the meeting denoted in brackets) the respective annual student monitoring reports for the academic year 2013-14, all of which analysed student performance according to the protected characteristics where data is collected i.e. gender (sex), age, ethnicity (race) and disability:

¹ Defined by the Equality Act 2010 as: age, disability, sex (gender), race (ethnicity), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, sexual orientation.

- Achievement of graduates (September 2013)
- Disability Participation (December 2013)
- Student Progression, Student Participation (March 2014)
- Student Achievement, Faculty of Health (March 2014)
- Student Retention (June 2014)

5.2.3 **Annex 4** of this report provides an overview of the key findings of the monitoring reports that have been received during academic year 2013-14. The significant statistical findings across all student monitoring reports with respect to the protected characteristics indicate a correlation between:

- Ethnicity and achievement (degree classification); and
- Age and efficient progression i.e. progress without interruption or repeated years.

With respect to these correlations, it should be noted that:

- They are common across the sector;
- The correlations are consistent in at least the last three reporting cycles; and
- The underlying causes are many and complex, solutions will not be easy.

5.3.3 On the basis of this evidence, the Steering Committee has recommended that the following measures are taken:

- Feature issues concerning BME achievement for programme leaders via 'Partners for Success' and in the training courses for Course Directors;
- E&D Steering Committee reps and CELT to encourage Faculty Deans to submit project proposals focused on addressing the correlations identified by the student monitoring reports to the Student Mentoring Scheme fund;
- To work creatively with the Student Union in promoting the key performance findings from the student monitoring reports;
- To share any example of good practice with regards to the findings relating to BME and mature students for example:
 - Faculty of Health's 'Self-Help Group' for mature students;
 - PME's system of personal tutoring for all students up to three times each academic year as improved retention and progression rates; and
 - BCBS's Accountancy and Finance programme attribute good degree achievement regardless of ethnicity on two main factors i) common teaching material related to the current business and financial environment, and ii) assessing students throughout the course rather than at the year end.

6.0 Priority Actions for 2014-15

The following priority actions replacing those featured in (Annex 3a) will be overseen by the relevant Senate Committee(s) in the new arrangements² that come into effect 1 August 2014 and reported on at the designated Board of Governors meeting in 2015:-

Objective	Action(s)	Responsibility of	Accountable to
1. To embed awareness of equality and diversity issues in Faculties and Departments with particular attention to reducing the attainment gap between BME and White students and improving the retention and progression rates of mature students.	Annual Faculty and Professional Services Plans (where relevant) to feature steps in improving outcomes for all undergraduates.	Director of Planning and Performance supported by the E&D Policy Advisor.	VCO.
2. To encourage a wide range of inclusive Teaching and Learning practice across the institution as a tool for improving student outcomes.	E&D Policy Advisor to work with CELT in promoting the benefits of inclusive T&L from an equality and diversity perspective.	Director of Learning Experience.	(Faculty) SELT ³ Committee.
3. The University to achieve 'Athena Swan' ⁴ Bronze status in the 2014/15 academic year.	To resource the project with senior staff leading, HR input and administrative support. To identify the areas of concern and inequality on the opportunities, progression, pay and conditions of women in the STEM areas, and across the University. To liaise and consult with other HEIs who have Athena Swan status so as to share good practice.	Associate Dean (Faculty of Health) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Enterprise & Business Engagement).	The Vice-Chancellor.

² New Senate Committees: see Board paper, BGOV 14.07.13

³ Student Experience, Learning and Teaching Committee

⁴ An Equality Challenge Unit initiative to advance the representation of women in science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics (STEMM).

	To devise a robust action plan and implement it, monitoring progress against the agreed targets.		
4. To report on live and proposed activities aimed at furthering the University's general equality duty to "promote good relations" between students.	To work in partnership with Faculties, Departments, Professional Services and BCUSU to receive details of relevant activities.	E&D Policy Advisor.	(Faculty) SELT ⁵ Committee.
5. To include training and guidance on "Unconscious Bias" in the University's existing training and development offer for staff.	<p>The Staff Development Team in its review of staff training to feature UB where appropriate in the existing training offer e.g. Dignity at Work, Cross-Cultural Communication and mandatory online E&D training.</p> <p>The E&D Policy Advisor to offer specific UB briefings to faculty management team (or equivalent) meetings.</p>	<p>Organisational Learning and Development Manager.</p> <p>E&D Policy Advisor.</p>	<p>Annual P&R Report.</p> <p>Annual E&D report to the Board of Governors.</p>

⁵ Student Experience, Learning and Teaching Committee

7.0 Recommendations

The Board is invited to:

- Receive this paper and to note in particular, the achievements during the year, and
- Approve the E&D priority actions for 2014-15.

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