

People, Culture and Engagement Committee

TIME /DATE / VENUE	1400, Thursday 16 May 2024 in Room 0.32, Unit 1, St Andrew's Court
PRESENT	<p>Claudia Iton (Chair)</p> <p>David Willan</p> <p>Chris Williams (via video conference)</p> <p>Stacey Parrinder-Johnson (via video-conference)</p> <p>Mark Readman (To Minute 38)</p> <p>David Wilding</p> <p>Professor Graham Galbraith</p>
IN ATTENDANCE	<p>Fiona Hnatow, Chief People Officer</p> <p>Wayne Bowen, Head of HR Strategic Planning</p> <p>Becky Miles, Professional Services Staff Governor</p> <p>Nikki Sowerby, Staff Representative</p> <p>Kevin Child, Director of Student Support Services</p> <p>James Morris, Head of Reward and Recognition</p>
SECRETARIAT	<p>Claire Dunning, Executive Director of Corporate Governance</p> <p>Peter Aldred, University Solicitor</p> <p>Jacqui Bryden, Senior Governance Officer</p>

To facilitate the attendance of staff for specific items, some items were taken out of the order designated in the agenda.

30 Welcome, Quoracy, Conflict of Interest and Apologies

- 30.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.
- 30.2 There were no apologies.
- 30.3 The Executive Director of Corporate Governance confirmed that the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.
- 30.4 There were no conflicts of interest declared.

31 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record.

32 Matters Actioned and Matters Arising

- 32.1 Action was reported within the agenda papers on five items; one for note, three items to be received on the agenda and one item to be received at a future meeting.
- 32.2 There were no other matters arising.

33 People, Culture and Engagement: Student Wellbeing

Kevin Child, Director Student Support Services provided a presentation on Student Support Services and Safeguarding Developments at the University.

33.1 The key points noted were:

- i. Four reviews had been undertaken into the student services provision at the University to consider all aspects of the service. Following the reviews, the proposal to restructure the service had been approved at the Board in May 2023.
- ii. The key findings of the reviews had identified that there was a lack of cohesion in the service provision and no senior advocate for the student experience. A number of gaps were identified as the service was provided across different departments in the University.
- iii. The restructure of Student Services brought the service into one central area headed by a Director and two Deputy Directors to oversee a cohesive service provision and eliminate gaps. The new structure had been established in December 2023.
- iv. The new structure established Student Life as the first point of contact for students to receive immediate advice and support. The Student Life team would triage the concern for onward referral to other teams within Student Services. The team had received training to support all issues and specifically, sexual violence and sexual misconduct.
- v. Since January 2024, there had been very positive feedback from students and from colleagues, particularly in the prevention of student withdrawal.
- vi. The safeguarding and welfare referral pathways had been established as a clear path to the appropriate and necessary levels of support. There were four levels of escalation. In conjunction with the Prevent Duty, there was a stronger oversight of safeguarding.
- vii. Cases were digitally recorded which provided assurance of active management although a case management software system would be able to provide further analysis and statistics. Data was currently harder to extract and caused some limitations to the ability to focus resources and clearly identified trends. It was important to ensure that any case management system was aligned to other systems and supported appropriately.
- viii. There were weekly meetings of the safeguarding panel which was attended by the Associate Deans (Students) from the faculties to ensure that decision-makers were involved at the earliest stage.
- ix. Student Services teams would be co-located in University House by the end of May 2024, with the exception of Student Wellbeing.
- x. The plan to continue embedding structural and policy changes was mapped for 2025/2026.

33.2 In discussion, it was noted that:

- i. The structure was the first iteration and would change as the process matured and developed.

- ii. It was too early to identify and analyse meaningful usage figures and support systems were now in place to provide support at every stage and level of a concern.
- iii. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) was in the initial stages of a discussion to identify if it was of use to student support and wellbeing as demand emerged.
- iv. It was important to note that the OfS statement of expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct affecting students in higher education introduce specific requirements that were monitored by the University. There was no evidence of a systemic problem at the University.
- v. Prevention was the key driver of student support and wellbeing; to engage with students; and to support emergent concerns before any crisis.

33.3 Following discussion, the Committee noted the presentation.

34 People, Culture and Engagement: Gender Pay Gap Update

James Morris, Head of Reward and Recognition presented the annual report on the Gender Pay Gap and pay analysis for other protected characteristics: ethnicity and disability.

34.1 The key points noted were:

- i. The Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report for 2023 had been published onto the University external webpages in March 2024 in accordance with the statutory reporting requirements. The annual report is a year behind the current year due to the information and analysis.
- ii. For each of three protected characteristics there were six measures included in the report:
 - a. Gap in mean hourly pay
 - b. Gap in median hourly pay
 - c. Gap in mean bonus pay
 - d. Gap in median bonus pay
 - e. Proportion receiving bonuses
 - f. Distribution within pay quartiles
- iii. Not all universities analysed their pay gaps. 95% of universities calculated and analysed pay by gender; 98% calculated pay by ethnicity but 52% did not publish it; and 55% calculated pay by disability declaration but 25% did not publish it.
- iv. Declaration rates of protected characteristics were high in the University: 100% declared their gender; 89.17% declared their ethnicity; and 86.28% declared their disability, which was an increase of 5.28% on 2022.
- v. The mean hourly gender pay gap had decreased by 1% since 2022 to 13.6% and the median hourly gender pay gap had decreased by 2.1% since 2022 to 11.6%. The University outperformed the HE sector by 0.7%.
- vi. The gender pay gap trend since reporting began in 2017 had reduced. The large reduction in the median gender pay gap of 10.1% was due to the reduction in headcount of hourly paid staff.



- vii. In comparison to similar universities, the University compared favourably in reducing the mean and median hourly pay gap and the aim would be to continue the downward trend at a faster rate.
 - viii. There was no difference in the median bonus gap according to gender but there was a difference of 2.7% in the mean bonus pay paid to men. There was a small difference in men and women receiving a bonus because 2% more men had received a bonus.
 - ix. The equal pay analysis by grade and by quartile indicated that the cause of the equal pay gap was structural because there were more men in senior positions than women.
 - x. The government analysis of the causes of the gender pay gap identified women tended to be over-represented in lower paid job roles with less defined career pathways and tended to work in part-time roles. The University had been able to identify the numbers required by grade to close the pay gap. Two more women professors had been appointed since last year. Age was a significant factor particularly for women with children as the pay gap increased from age 30. It was important to support women taking maternity leave particularly in research roles.
 - xi. It was the first year that the ethnicity pay gap had been published and the publication was voluntary. The ethnicity pay gap had increased by 2.5% to 5.9%. There was over-representation of BAME staff in lower paid jobs although not as pronounced as in the gender pay gap.
 - xii. The disability pay gap was not published but was calculated. The disability declaration rate had increased by 5% against 2022 to 86.28% and there was a reduction in both mean and median disability pay gaps.
 - xiii. There were four elements in the action plan to address equal pay gaps:
 - a. Address the root causes through Athena Swan and other EDI action plans.
 - b. Develop more diverse interview panels and remove barriers.
 - c. Introduce positive action to mentor women and ethnically diverse staff.
 - d. Monitor pay on appointment and promotion.
- 34.2 In discussion, it was noted that:
- i. The reason that not all men and women had received a bonus through the all staff award was because of the eligibility criteria. Up to 73.2% of all staff had received a bonus.
 - ii. There was no target set for the gender pay gap and it was important to be realistic. The aim was to be better than the sector and the steady reduction reflected this ambition. The impact of the four elements in the action plan would not be realised for at least two years due to the reporting delay and the time necessary to embed the actions.
 - iii. Universities were traditionally male dominated and it might be ten years before real change was identified so it was important to develop and grow staff potential from within. Men tended to dominate in research activity and women leaned to teaching roles so the University focus on research also had an impact on the gender pay gap.

- iv. The structural issues that affected the gender pay gap would need to be addressed over a longer period of time to increase the number of women professors. Creating positive action at the point of entry to the University and during promotional processes prior to application were building blocks for the future. The University had implemented a number of development programmes to encourage and mentor women into leadership roles. The use of staff networks had been very helpful, in particular, increasing declaration rates.

34.3 Following discussion, the Committee noted the update and the work undertaken to address the gender pay gap and looked forward to seeing continuous improvement.

35 Policy Approvals - confidential

36 Update on UCEA pay negotiations – confidential

37 Organisational Change Update and Professional Services Operating Model - confidential

38 Indicative Committee Business

Committee discussed and noted the indicative programme of work for 2024/2025.

The Committee noted that:

- i. The reference to the Chief Operating Officer be removed from the report and the wording amended.

Action: Senior Governance Officer

- ii. The EDI Data Reports for Staff and Students would be heard at the next meeting in September and the Committee had asked that future reports should be presented as a summary of key themes and issues for discussion and attention, and prioritised for action with the greater details presented as an appendix.

Action: Chief People Officer

- iii. The Committee Review had recommended more interaction with the student body and members were keen to develop reverse mentoring relationships with Elected Officers.

Action: Executive Director of Corporate Governance

39 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Thursday 19 September 2024.

Confirmed committee dates for 2024:

- Thursday 5 December 2024 – 13:30 to 16:30.

Confirmed Committee dates for 2025:

- Tuesday 4 March 2025
- Thursday 29 May 2025

40 Record of Thanks

The Chair noted that this was the last People, Culture and Engagement Committee for David Wilding, External Governor and Claire Dunning, Executive Director of Corporate Governance. The Committee thanked them for their outstanding contributions and wished them well for the future.