

**EQUALITIES COUNCIL**

01 MAY 2018 // MINUTES

Time: 18:00

Venue: INTER 243

**In Attendance:**

Willow Wong

Emma Underwood

Emma Halahan

Christopher Keane

Rene Landell

Sophie Bury

Mary Phillips

Catherine Hollands

Hannah Bedford

James Sullivan

Tara Moussavi

Samantha

* **Welcome and introductions**

Willow Wong opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Names, pronouns, and positions were given by those around the table, and the agenda was laid out. An apology was given for Carly Newman, Vice Chair of the Mental Health Network.

* **Officers report**

WW commenced her officer’s report for the past term. She discussed NUS national conference, at which she voted to elect the new NUS Welfare Officer. An update on the Council Tax campaign was given, with WW providing information on how the campaign has been progressing, the council’s response, the legal situation, and the next steps. The “Access Agreement” was also discussed, with items such as establishing an inclusive curriculum being brought forward. Chris Keane, Disabled Students’ Rep proceeded to give an update on the recently held Disabled Students Forum. CK outlined the discussion points, and highlighted three key themes – the lack of communication between academic departments and DDS, a one size fits all approach to student support, and the struggle of continuing as a student at RHUL.

* **Items for discussions – Engaging Marginalised Groups**

WW opened the discussion on engaging marginalised groups by citing some examples of past campaigns. EU added further clarification by asking questions to the room surrounding accessibility, appropriateness of campaigns, and activity types. The floor was then opened to comments. EH began by commenting that many of the activities for stressbusting events were too light, and did not do enough to combat issues faced by students suffering from mental health issues. This sentiment was echoed by several others present. JS suggested a feedback system be implemented for events, and LS suggested that more marketing would be needed for events to be successful. RL commented that many BME students felt underrepresented at these events, and that mental health activities were not culturally relevant enough for them to attend. SB and TM recommended that both Equalities Reps and student groups be involved in campaign planning consistently. WW and EU stressed the difference between change campaigns and awareness campaigns, with the former being policy heavy and it being difficult for students to get involved, however an effort should be made to improve participation in awareness campaigns. SB stressed the need for student group training, and EU clarified Student Opps Training Conference, where campaigns training will be delivered. EH pointed out the difficulties for student reps in attending college meetings, and stressed that a culture change needed to occur in order for reps to perform their roles efficiently.

* **Elections**

EU opened the elections by providing an explanation of AV, and went on to detail the elections process and the rules for speaking. Elections were conducted for Mental Health Chair, Mental Health Vice Chair, Mental Health Men’s Rep, Women’s Rep, LGBTQ Rep, BME Rep, and Disabled Students’ Rep. There were no candidates for International Rep. Votes were counted the following day under the supervision of the Student Voice Manager and the Campaigns and Communications Coordinator.

* **Any other business**

EH commented that further discussion following the engaging marginalised students’ discussion would be useful. WW agreed to organise a further discussion panel later in the term. WW thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.