

Evaluation report of ‘Celebrating Equality and Diversity at MMU’ Event

This evaluation report briefly outlines details of the Equality and Diversity (E&D) event, who attended, summary of the feedback received and the main points raised in the discussion groups that took place.

The Event

The event was held on Wednesday 20th Oct 2010, beginning with a lunch at 12.00 pm. The VC opened the event and thanked and welcomed people for attending. The Keynote Speaker David Ruebain, Chief Executive of the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) went on to talk about the implications of the Equality Act for Higher Education and answered questions from the audience after his talk. The Head of Organisational, Development, Training and Diversity (ODT&D) introduced MMU’s first Single Equality Scheme and gave a brief overview of the University’s objectives for the future. Podcasts of the talks should be available soon on our equalities website.

Following a break, the discussion groups met for two 30 minute sessions and then fed back to the whole group their top 3 issues and top 3 recommendations on each topic. Appendix 1 shows these issues and recommendations and includes responses from the teams they are relevant to and any progress made. The discussion group topics had come from suggestions in the fora meetings and the Event volunteer sub group:

- 1. Career Progression/development:** *How can MMU further empower staff and help them to develop the skills that would better equip them for progression or opportunities?*
- 2. Agents of Change:** *How can we work together to manage change at MMU?*
- 3. Work-life balance:** *What does this mean for you?*
- 4. Promoting engagement with the forums:** *How can we better promote and increase attendance at equality forums?*
- 5. Making involvement meaningful:** *How do we ensure involvement of staff from equality groups makes a difference to both MMU and the individual?*
- 6. Special Leave:** *Work has commenced on the newly revised Special Leave policy and consultation has started. The Deputy Head of Operational Services is interested to hear what staffs’ views are.*

One of the Co-Chairs of the LGBT forum closed down the event and invited everyone to the Student Union Conference Room where refreshments were provided.

The attendees

91 people signed to say they had attended the event, with 27% of these returning their equality monitoring forms and 16% their feedback forms. The low response rate of respondents means that this summary report is a bit limited and a consideration for future events would be to try to encourage more respondents to leave feedback and complete the equality monitoring forms. The equality breakdown from the equality monitoring forms compared to overall MMU figures for 2009/10¹ is shown in Appendix 2 (*N.B. not all questions were answered on each form which may affect the results*).

Equality Monitoring of attendees

Overall 27% of attendees completed the E and D section of the feedback form, although the number of responses was lower than we had hoped, they still fully represented the diverse population of staff at MMU. The evaluation forms showed that

- There was a very high presence of disabled staff (42%) at the event in comparison to the overall MMU population, where 6% of staff classed themselves as having a disability. Of those that attended the event and had classed themselves as having a disability, 38% specified it as a physical impairment or mobility issue.
- 19% of attendees classed themselves as BME², which was higher than the overall MMU population where 11% of staff classed themselves as BME.
- A high percentage of female staff attended (72%) compared to the overall MMU staff population of 54% females.
- The highest percentage for those that answered the religion and belief section said they were Christian (54%), followed by 27% saying that they had no religion. This compares with the overall MMU staff population where the highest percentage was 35% which was staff classing themselves as Christian, and the second highest was 21% where staff classed themselves as having no religion or belief.
- The percentage of attendees classing themselves as a gay man or lesbian (36%) is considerably higher than the overall MMU staff population, where 2% classed themselves as being a gay man, gay woman or lesbian.
- The most represented grade at the event were grades 4 and 9 (both 18%) which compares to the overall MMU staff population where the highest percentage of staff are grade 9 (25.1%).

¹ Taken from Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2009/10 – <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/equalities/pdf/e&d-annual-report-0910.pdf> (only Disability, Ethnicity and Gender published)

² Black and Minority Ethnic

General Observations about the event's organisation

16% of attendees returned their feedback forms, with the following results (*N.B. not all questions were answered on each form which may affect the results*):

	Fair	Good	Excellent
Event administration/ joining instructions	7%	50%	43%
Trainer/ facilitator - presentation skills		53%	47%
Content and activities	13%	60%	27%
Exercises and activities	15%	46%	38%
Your own contribution/ participation	27%	64%	9%

No one left feedback around any of these areas saying they were poor.

General comments left included:

- "Really helpful event that set the context of the equality act"
- "David Ruebain excellent speaker"

There was a comment made on the venue having poor acoustics and too much background noise and one person was new to the area of Equality and Diversity and struggled with some of the language used.

When asked if the areas covered during the event and discussion groups would help to improve or change their current working practice, 86% answered yes it would.

Knowledge and Understanding of the subject:

	0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Before		7%	7%	57%	29%	
After				21%	71%	7%

This shows that attendees felt they had left with more knowledge and understanding of the subject than they had arrived with.

When asked what part of the event did they find most useful and why, most of the comments made were around the presentations, especially David Ruebain's talk:

- "The Presentation by David Ruebain really helped to clarify some of changes that equality act will bring"

Also commented on were the discussion groups in the latter part of the event:

- "Discussion at the end, as it was a good chance to share ideas and express views"

One person felt the chance to mix over lunch and during the discussion groups was very beneficial.

When asked what changes or improvements would they make to the event, the suggestions given were:

- ensuring engagement with a wide cross section of staff
- encouraging more people to wear name badges
- more practical information on the implications of the Equality Act

Conclusion

When asked what they would do as a result of attending the event, most said they would be sharing with their team the information they had picked up at the event. For some it had encouraged them to be more aware of what constitutes discrimination and for others it raised their awareness of the Equality Act and equality and diversity issues in general. One person said they would get more involved in fora discussions and meetings. There was a suggestion that all the fora work together to look at improving engagement and communication within the University.

Lessons learnt/Next steps

Plans are in place for the Equality and Diversity team to meet and discuss the possibilities of running a more E and D events, we will discuss what we have learnt from the event and its evaluations and how we might approach doing a similar event in the future. Lessons learnt include:

- choosing a venue that has better acoustics and disability access
- looking at ways to gain more feedback from attendees
- Looking at ways to include more academic staff and staff from lower grades who don't traditionally attend these types of events.

Future events will probably focus on one specific theme around Equality to encourage more external attendees and be more interactive, perhaps focusing more heavily on discussion groups.

The results from this report will be discussed with DEOC 9th Feb meeting and circulated to the fora and uploaded on our website so those that attended the event but are not a member of the forum can also access it.

Appendix 1

The main issues and recommendations that came from the discussion groups and actions linked to this, with notes and progress from the teams they are relevant to are as follows:

Career Progression/development

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
Getting the PDR system right - follow through and grow	PDR timed across the year, thoughtful process (as good as the discussion), more discussion and shared responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDR reviewers' session updated in December 2010 – includes greater emphasis on the shared responsibility between reviewer and reviewee. The PDR Scheme sets out the principle that PDR's should be reviewed on an ongoing basis through the year, but this will be highlighted in the letter to Deans and Directors at the start of the next PDR round. • Responses from MMU survey did not indicate any particular timing issues about PDR, 83% of staff had received a PDR and of those 64% appeared to be satisfied with the PDR
Broadening the concept of development - sideways as well as up	Realism about progression available, less restricted by the programme, more living and less menu/list	A draft career development framework is being created to take this recommendation on board. The framework starts to identify the different opportunities for career development beyond simply workshops/a programme.
Not just progression, but motivation - role enrichment, keep learning	How we apply the learning, voluntary opportunities, succession up and across, aspiration v application of learning, shadowing, opportunity outside normal working hours, short sessions- 2 hours sharing expertise, real life experience	See point about the career development framework above – the opportunities identified here will be taken into account within the draft career development framework.

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
Shadowing	More creative ways to access development, more use of skills across the University, Shadowing (chat, find out, spend time), practise and learn	As above.
Manager as a role model	Learn from each other, aspiration, manage expectations	<p>This idea has been included in the “Role of a Manager – an Introduction” managers’ guide (available at: http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/devandtrain/resources/the-role-of-the-manager-an-introduction.pdf)</p> <p>It is also a concept which the ODTD and Operational HR Team promote and will continue to promote through sessions/meetings with managers (e.g. recently emphasised in a Grade 6 Development Programme for F&C SAS staff and in the sessions Operational HR are running for the new Managing Absence Policy).</p>
Equal ops/access to training	Better equality within a role, PDR’s need budgets behind them, more equality in training budgets/time given	Reminders regarding the Professional and Personal Staff Development Policy will be sent out at the start of the next PDR round, the staff development planning process will continue to be promoted, staff survey results will be analysed to identify any inconsistencies and the use of SAP as a University recording system should help to create a clearer picture about the budgets/time given.

Agents of Change

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
Training	Training to be more effective/energising/inclusive. Perhaps using outside trainers	To be investigated by Development & Training team.
Communication and transparency	Creating a culture where lines of communication work, where outcomes are transparent and it is clear who will do what	<p>The MMU staff survey looked at communication at MMU which has highlighted that there is work to be done on communication at MMU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52% of staff disagree that on the whole communication in MMU is effective • 63% do not feel communication between MMU's Senior Management Team and staff is effective • 71% said on the whole, the different parts of MMU do not communicate effectively with each other and do not feel there are effective channels for staff to feed their views upwards in MMU <p>Further information on the actions being produced from the staff survey will be released by the Continuous Improvement Board.</p>
Discussions	More discussions like this, in many places in the University (maybe outside?) consulting different groups of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&D team to meet and discuss future equality events and learn from this event • EIA consultation continuing • Possible staff briefings on equality issues • Use of Manager briefing cascades • Fora members organising their own social events e.g. LGBTs 'Pink Drink' type event or DSF having informal lunch etc
Accountability	Privatisation (PLP's, PEEP's, cases that go wrong). We need systems that create accountability	E and D team planning to set up a small working group with HR Operations staff to discuss and embed Disability support processes within HR operations. Outcomes of the working group

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
	by allowing everyone to learn	will be communicated across MMU to staff and managers, in particular disabled staff.
Empowerment	Champions to allow everyone (staff and students) to demand the recognition we need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E&D team aiming to have Equality Champions in each faculty/department E&D Team raising the profile of E&D through establishing a clear Vision and strong message to all senior staff to support Champions and staff who are engaged in the E&D agenda.
Part of the language	Diversity needs to be presented to staff as what we do, not as 'more work'. Include in PDR's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E&D team working on promoting E&D at MMU i.e. signage campaign, staff briefings Included in Induction presentation and other training courses.

Worklife Balance

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
Emails- volume (expectations of replies and actions), CC - (lack of prioritisation- service culture)	University protocol/prioritisation, use the telephone!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst this comment is valid for a number of people at the event, it isn't a specific Equality and Diversity priority. Communication strategies will be covered in the action plan emerging from the recent staff survey (see 'Communication and Transparency' in 'Agents of Change' table above). Possible use of SMS service for grades 1 & 2 staff (TBC)
Change agenda (too fast, too much- lack of planning, too slow, too little – consistency agenda. Job expansion but no extra hours)	More realistic planning, consultation timelines, proper assessment of risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst this comment is valid for a number of people at the event, it isn't a specific Equality and Diversity priority. Managing Change strategies will be covered in the action plan emerging from the recent staff survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42% though the current pace of change in MMU is too fast
Balancing care (elderly parents, single parents,	Video conferencing between sites, working from home for all	E&D team investigating use of video/phone conferencing for use in fora meetings, EIA consultation etc – possibly confidentiality

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
childcare facilities)	staff, flexible working hours	issues
Rigid working hours and impact on culture/productivity	Flexible working/flexi time	The Gender Staff Forum are looking at Flexible Working at MMU and if there is a case for flexi time
Respect for health and well-being of staff	Guidance on flexible working within entitlements e.g. Lunchtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Gender Staff Forum are looking at Flexible Working at MMU MMU Health and Well Being strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate health responsibility by ensuring the provision of a safe working and learning environment for staff and students University commitment to the development of MMU as a Healthy University Benefits available – Reward & Planning Team’s website
Management workload/time of	Good implementation of stress policy, early recognition of issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress has been identified as an issue in the staff survey – 88% said they ‘always, frequently or occasionally’ feel unduly stressed at work. The University will be addressing the concerns via development of an action plan. Introduction of ABHA will support and empower staff – ‘nip it in the bud’ before escalating into formal grievance etc

Promoting engagement with the forums/Making involvement meaningful

Main issues	Groups Recommendations	Response/Progress
Communication- use of language (exclusive, assumptions that people have engaged at policy	Use of technology to provide/access guidance-develop a process that works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E&D Co-ordinator working with Dee Vyas to produce for a wiki³ for the fora Possible use of text for non-desk based staff

³ A wiki is a website that allows the easy creation and editing of any number of interlinked web pages via a web browser

Main issues	Groups Recommendations	Response/Progress
level)		
'Box ticking exercises' lack of belief that some processes have an impact on policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fora participating in consultation exercises • Fora Co-Chairs taking issues to DEOC • Summaries of outcome of consultation
Fora perceived by some as a 'talking shop'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Co-Chair leadership in meetings • Ensure meaningful agenda's • Fora will continue to extend invitation to all Members to attend • Fora to establish up to 3 measurable objectives annually.
Possible lack of understanding from HR regarding disability		E and D team planning to set up a small working group with HR Operations staff to discuss and embed Disability support processes within HR operations – one outcome is to devise a 'Pack' of some sort.
How much power do the chairs have at DEOC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing agenda item for Co-Chairs to pass on issues/concerns at DEOC meetings. Opportunity to talk directly to VC (who is Chair) • Chairs have a direct opportunity to influence the DEOC agenda and committee through their regular DEOC updates
We need actions, not just words. When actions are fed back through proper channels are they being addressed? People do not know the channels these things go through. What happens next? There is a lack of feedback given on		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any action raised at DEOC is tabled within DEOC minutes and action plans are monitored. These are available at http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/equalities/deoc/ • The Equality Impact Assessment process identifies equality issues within a given policy. Where issues have been raised via the consultation process these are documented in an action plan. To date we are currently working on 50 action plans to make a real difference to the inclusiveness of our staff and student policies. These get uploaded onto our

Main issues	Groups Recommendations	Response/Progress
these actions, the length of time it takes to actions things is an issue		website: http://www.mmu.ac.uk/humanresources/equalities/eiat/
Improve communications	<p>Link to fora and DEOC minutes in all staff digest after each of these meetings have taken place</p> <p>Provide more training to managers, including promotion of fora amongst their team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&D Manager and Udeni Salmon working on getting information into Bitesize and possibly having staff briefings. • Possibly begin using manager cascade briefings.

Special Leave

Main issues	Group Recommendations	Response/Progress
Consistency/clarity (to avoid discrimination)	Flexi time/flexible working	<p>These recommendations have been taken into account by Deputy Head of Operational Services who is in pre-consultation stage of re-writing the Special Leave policy. She has also attended fora meetings and asked for feedback from members. She will hold focus groups for all staff and managers and then produce a draft. This will be consulted on i.e. with fora, unions etc before being finalised and published.</p>
Turn around time	Proper monitoring	
Time limit/allowance	Proper guidance	
Consistency of { logging, decision making, opportunity	Clear – defined policy (accessible)	
Awareness of policy and what is available	Awareness raising/training	
Interpretation	One policy for all	

Appendix 2

EQUALITY MONITORING INFORMATION FROM RESPONDENTS

Disability

Event:

MMU 2009/10:

Disabled	42%
Not Known to be Disabled	58%

Declared Disabled	6%
Information not provided	3%
Not Known to be Disabled	91%

The attendee's with a disability identified them as having a:

specific learning disability	8%
cognitive impairment	8%
mental health condition	15%
long standing or health condition	8%
physical impairment or mobility issues	38%
blind or serious visual impairment	8%
not sure	8%
other type of disability	8%

Ethnicity

Event:

MMU 2009/10:

Black Minority Ethnic	19%
White	77%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Black & Minority Ethnic	11%
Information Refused	2%
White	87%
Not Known	0%

The attendee's ethnicity in detail:

Indian	4%
African	4%
Caribbean	4%
Other black	4%
British	69%
Irish	4%
Other White	4%
Other Ethnic Group	4%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Gender

Event:

Male	28%
Female	72%

MMU 2009/10:

Female	54%
Male	46%

Religion and/or Belief

Event:

Christian	54%
Hindu	4%
Muslim	4%
Other	4%
No religion	27%
Prefer not to answer	8%

MMU 2009/10:

Buddhist	1%
Christian	35%
Hindu	1%
Information Refused	16%
Jewish	1%
Muslim	2%
No Religion or Belief	21%
Other	3%
Sikh	0%
Undefined	21%

Sexual Orientation

Event:

Gay Man	16%
Heterosexual/Straight	52%
Lesbian	20%
Bisexual	4%
Prefer not to answer	8%

MMU 2009/10:

Bisexual	0%
Gay Man, Gay Woman / Lesbian	2%
Heterosexual	58%
Information Refused	17%
Other	1%
Undefined	22%

Grade

Event:

1	5%
4	18%
5	5%
6	14%
7	5%
8	14%
9	18%
10	9%
Associate Lecturer	5%
Principal Lecturer	5%
Senior Lecturer	5%

MMU 2009/10:

EXEC	0.2%
Grade 01	8.8%
Grade 02	3.5%
Grade 03	9.4%
Grade 04	6.5%
Grade 05	6.0%
Grade 06	7.5%
Grade 07	6.1%
Grade 08	8.4%
Grade 09	25.1%
Grade 10	9.7%
Grade 11	0.2%
HOD	0.4%
Professor	0.2%
PTL	0.2%
Undefined	7.8%