SOCIAL SCIENCES DIVISION

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan, 2021

Overarching objectives

To increase the diversity of the people, scholarship and teaching across the Social Sciences Division, and to ensure that each member is, and feels, valued, listened to and respected, able to be themselves and to participate fully in the life of the division[1].

The context of the EDI action plan for 2021

The divisional E&D Action Plan 2017-20 is due for renewal. Much of 2020 was exceptionally challenging and early 2021 appears to offer little change. The impacts of Covid-19 have potential for unequal and detrimental effects on those with particular protected characteristics, and there is a continuing awareness within society and across the HE sector of how systemic racism significantly impacts on the lives of people of colour. Moreover, the University is starting to re-apply for various external EDI-related forms of recognition, and the Athena Swan charter is being reviewed.

In the context of these ongoing pressures and uncertainties, it is particularly important to safeguard the health and wellbeing of staff and students, and not overburden those who may already be facing considerable workload and other challenges.

We are therefore proposing an *interim* EDI Action Plan for the calendar year 2021, focussed on a few key achievable priorities. We will develop a plan for the next 3-4 years by the end of 2021, with input from departments and divisional committees, including student and researcher representatives (see section (b)).

To identify those few key priorities, as listed in the plan:

1. we have carefully considered what roles the division can most effectively perform. These are:
   o within the overarching framework of University policies, developing policies as appropriate to apply to the processes the division has *specific* responsibility for – e.g. in relation to academic recruitment and progression;
   o allocating EDI activity across a range of the division's governance structures;
   o developing best practice in response to challenges common across and specific to the division (e.g. in relation to social sciences fieldwork), or in piloting initiatives which might be rolled out more broadly across the University;
   o providing any other form of effective support for all departments to achieve progress in equality, diversity and inclusion.

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[1] See also the University's Equality Policy at https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/equality-policy

2. we have decided to build on ongoing work in departments. We are aware that many departments have already identified EDI priorities and projects locally. We therefore have asked departments to identify specific EDI projects of most value to them, and from this have identified priority areas for sharing best practice (see section (d)).

3. we will need to ensure that we fulfil our commitments as they emerge from the University, for example under the institutional Race Equality and Athena Swan action plans and University's work towards the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and Mindful Employers' Charter, and be ready to respond to consultations by the central University in these areas going forward (see section (c)).

It is important to ensure – but must not go without saying – that equality, diversity and inclusion considerations should be integral to any work being undertaken or decisions being made in the division and in departments – both as part of our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, and in support of the overarching objective above.

ACTION PLAN

(a) PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR THE DIVISION, 2021

	Responsibility[2]	Objective/rationale (including baseline data where relevant)	Details of action planned and timescales	Success measure	Comment
	Actions coordinated by EDI Panel and Chair, Planning & Projects Team, Academic Appointments Team, AHOD (Personnel). Relevant University committees: Equality & Diversity Panel, Personnel Committee (contact: diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk)				
1	Academic Appointments Team, P&E Manager, AHOD (Personnel), Chair EDI Panel.	To recruit a more diverse staff body.	To contribute to University policy developments around recruitment for diversity, including introduction of EDI-based selection criteria, and to support dissemination and implementation of the	2021: contribute to and disseminate new guidance. Contribute to and implement new guidance in relation to AP recruitment.	Note that we will want to consider good practice in relation to recruitment to professional and support staff posts, as well as academic and research posts. May want to consider setting future targets at a divisional level in relation to recruitment of women and BME staff.

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[2] For details of postholders see About us | Social Sciences Division (ox.ac.uk)

	Responsibility[2]	Objective/rationale (including baseline data where relevant)	Details of action planned and timescales	Success measure	Comment
			new University guidance which emerges.		
2	Academic Appointments Team/P&E Manager/ Divisional comms team & network	To enable us to access and evaluate more complete diversity data on staff (as at July 2019 16% of staff in SSD had not provided information on ethnicity, and 16% had not provided information on disability).	Coordinate a publicity campaign during HT 2021 to encourage staff to update their HR Self-Service profile to include full diversity data.	By the end of 2021, aim for diversity data to be completed in CoreHR for >95% of staff.	
3	EDI Panel / PRC / P&E Manager	Embed anti-racism training across the division.	To recommend that all staff across the division undertake the University's online 'Tackling Race Bias at Work' training, and support departments in monitoring uptake and seeking suggestions for further training.	By the end of HT 2022, aim for >80% of staff to have undertaken the online course. Assess feedback to explore whether there is scope for developing further training within the division or to feed into University review of E&D training provision.	
4	P&E Manager and EDI Panel	Support and further develop sharing of good EDI practice across the division.	Continue to develop mechanisms for better sharing of EDI good practice across the division, including use of	Departments reporting regularly at EDI Panel or thematic meetings on departmental initiatives, and EDI officers/practitioners	

	Responsibility[2]	Objective/rationale (including baseline data where relevant)	Details of action planned and timescales	Success measure	Comment
			thematic meetings and Teams channel.	sharing information on developments nationally and elsewhere in the University. Use of Teams channel and other electronic means to share information.	
5	P&E Manager	Better enable identification of data-driven EDI priorities	Develop key datasets on staff and student body, at departmental and divisional level, by ethnicity, gender and other characteristics where possible, to report annually to departments, EDI Panel and PRC.	Data to be circulated annually from 2021. In future, expect new policies/initiatives to be developed on the basis of review of this data.	Note: provision of staff data will be dependent on supply by central University HR Analytics team – they are aware of the need to provide this, and will begin working on this in early 2021.
6	P&E Manager and Head of Planning & Projects	Provide structures for better supporting EDI work across the division.	Review how support for EDI work might be better provided – for example by members of divisional staff part-embedded in departments, or other models.	Review TT 2021 and make proposals by MT 2021.	
	Actions coordinated by Education Policy & Planning team, Education Committees, AHOD (Education). Relevant University committee: Education Committee (contact: lindsay.rudge@socsci.ox.ac.uk)				
7	Education Policy & Planning Team	Eliminate UG attainment gaps. Define and eliminate PG attainment gaps.	Support work in departments and central University to define and tackle attainment gaps.		In light of burdens associated with Covid19, the University will consolidate work on attainment gaps in 2020-21, and will re-address it in 2021-22.

	Responsibility[2]	Objective/rationale (including baseline data where relevant)	Details of action planned and timescales	Success measure	Comment
8	Education Policy & Planning Team	Develop understanding of the role of pedagogy in attainment gaps.	Support development and roll-out of CTLs new inclusive teaching course.	SSD academic staff to participate in course	Course new in 2020-21 - https://staff.web.ox.ac.uk/article/new-inclusive-teaching-course-launched-for-teaching-staff
9	Education Policy & Planning Team	Increase the proportion of applications from well-qualified UKBME graduate students	Continue to support departments to participate in UNIQ+, increasing visibility and access to graduate study	Increase proportion of BME applicants and entrants	
	Actions coordinated by Research Strategy Group, Research Staff Forum, Research Impact & Engagement Team, AHOD (Research). Relevant University committee: Research and Innovation Committee (contact: sam.sneddon@socsci.ox.ac.uk).				
10	Research, Impact and Engagement Team	To mitigate the negative and unequal effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on researchers careers.	Lead on actions to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on researchers, particularly differential impacts.		
11	AHOD (Research), Research Strategy Group, EDI Panel	To ensure that equality and diversity considerations are embedded in divisional research strategy.	AHOD to redraft Research and Innovation Strategy to reflect new EDI issues and bring to RSG and EDI Panel for consideration.	New strategy to be approved by PRC TT2021.	
	Action across divisional teams, coordinated by EDI Panel (contact: diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk)				
12	Research, Impact and Engagement Team, P&E Manager, Research Staff Forum, Research Strategy Group, EDI Panel	Support career development of researchers in order to ensure that all can realise their full potential and establish rewarding careers.	Take action to support implementation of the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.	Matters to be considered in Research Staff Forum, Research Strategy Group, EDI Panel and PRC as appropriate, developing divisional policies and responses in this area,	

	Responsibility[2]	Objective/rationale (including baseline data where relevant)	Details of action planned and timescales	Success measure	Comment
				following signature by the University of the Concordat in March 2021.	
Action across divisional teams – coordination t.b.c. (contact: diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk)					
13	T.B.C.: potentially P&E Manager, RIE team, with input from members of Listening Project Working Group	Explore how the division might develop events addressing/highlighting issues of racism and injustice/allowing a safe space for staff and students of colour to discuss experiences – e.g. a termly 'Race and Research' seminar series.	Aim to hold an event in TT.		
Development team – working with departments (contact: rachel.kirwan@devoff.ox.ac.uk)					
14	Development Team	Increase the proportion of applications from well-qualified BME graduate students	Fundraise for PGT and PGR scholarships for BME students, with a specific focus on BME scholarships for home-based students, and scholarships for students ordinarily resident in African countries.	Secure scholarships for candidates from BME background or from African countries	Further to the Black Academic Futures scholarships launched by the Central University, the Divisional team is specifically working with OSGA, SOGE and ODID for BME scholarships.

(b) POTENTIAL AREAS FOR FUTURE ACTION FOR THE DIVISION: 2021-22 onwards

The following have been identified as areas for possible future action; either the precise needs, or the available resources to support these activities, are as yet unclear, or it is difficult to progress these activities currently due to constraints imposed by the pandemic. These areas will be part of the larger discussion when the action plan is renewed later in 2021. The renewed action plan – which will be a longer-term plan – should seek to develop a strategy not only to deepen and extend EDI in the Division, but also consider whether there are specific areas of EDI action which can generate a distinctive contribution to the University's efforts.

Actions coordinated by EDI Panel and Chair, Planning & Projects Team, Academic Appointments Team, AHOD (Personnel)

- A Listening Project Working Group has been exploring how a listening project might be designed which will add value to work being undertaken elsewhere in the University around anti-racism, with the purpose of more effectively implementing change. This work has been paused in order to better understand and therefore better complement work being undertaken by the central University's Race Equality Task Force; to allow pressures arising from the pandemic to abate; and so that any 'listening' might be carried out face-to-face.
- Review key HR processes which are managed by the division – e.g. management of Recognition of Distinction and Professorial Merit Pay applications.
- Consider introduction of exit interviews in divisional office, as a pilot of a process to share with departments.

Actions coordinated by Research Strategy Group, Research Staff Forum, Research Impact & Engagement Team, AHOD (Research)

- Explore different understandings/conceptions of research excellence, and the interplay with equality and diversity considerations, with reference to changes in the funding landscape and DORA (the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, to which the University is a signatory).

Cross-divisional teams

- Develop support for career development for senior academics, such as a seminar series on leadership (including leading on equality and diversity issues) in an SSD context.
- Develop a curated repository of social sciences research in the area of equality, and explore opportunities and mechanisms to enable research to be undertaken using University data, and to inform University policy developments.
- Further explore fundraising opportunities to secure funding for PGT and PGR BME graduate scholarships, and potentially other EDI activities.

(c) PRIORITY ACTIONS ARISING FROM UNIVERSITY/EXTERNAL COMMITMENTS

The majority of these commitments were initially made as part of the University's applications to the Athena Swan and Race Equality Charters in 2017 and 2018. Note that the deadlines for institutional reapplication to these equality charters have been extended from 2021 to 2022, due to revision of the charters and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Equality and Diversity Unit will be coordinating the consultation and application process during 2021 in advance of reapplication in 2022.

	Responsibility	Action	Comment
	Actions applicable across all departments		
15	All departments	All departments to apply for Athena SWAN awards, with those already holding awards to maintain or progress to higher level.	University commitment under AS action plan – timescale relaxed from 2021 to 2022 due to Covid-19 and review of Athena Swan. Eight departments now hold awards, and other departments are progressing towards applications, despite some delays due to Covid-19 and review of Athena Swan. Departments whose work is already underway, and those with the expiry of their award approaching will want to continue work. Others who have not yet embarked on the Athena Swan accreditation process are likely to wish to pause this until the outcomes of the review of Athena Swan are clear.
16	All departments	Ensure all eligible researchers, academic staff below the level of an AP and professional and support staff have a Career Development Review (CDR) annually, and that the majority consider this to be useful	University commitment under AS and REC action plans for all eligible staff to be offered a PDR with less than 10% finding not useful – programme to be established for researchers in Hums and SSD by 2019-20. P&E Manager to progress again in light of developments in relation to University signing the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in March 2021.
17	All departments	All departments to have appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and allocating workload.	University commitment under AS action plan that all departments should have a mechanism for monitoring

			workload. Most departments have implemented or begun to implement such mechanisms.
	Actions for the division		
18	T.b.c.	Undertake a mapping exercise to identify existing DL and equivalent posts used by departments, their duties and change in use in recent years, and, if appropriate, evidence of successful initiatives at other universities. On the basis of this information, identify where greater consistency in approaches to such posts could be beneficial, and where good practice could be more effectively shared[3].	Postponed due to Covid-19 as this project will require significant input from departments and HR. Additional resource may be needed to undertake a detailed review during 2021.
19	P&E Manager	Support the University's Race Equality Task force in collecting information on race equality work across departments in the division, including work on diversifying and decolonising curricula.	By the end of 2020/21 to have a good understanding of work undertaken within departments which can be shared across the division.
20	EDI Panel / PRC	Feed into consultations in 2021 as part of University preparations for re-applying to the Athena SWAN and Race Equality Charters in early 2022.	

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[3] The original action in the REC Action Plan was for EDU and SSD jointly to "Undertake a mapping exercise to identify: (i) existing career development posts used by departments (including DLs) ii) evidence of successful initiatives at other universities. On the basis of this information, develop guidance and good practice examples on how such initiatives could be established more widely." – with slightly different wording in the AS Action Plan.

(d) PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR DEPARTMENTS – AREAS FOR SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Departments were asked to develop their own individual priorities, suggesting one or more action(s) on which they would be prepared to report back to the EDI Panel. Actions suggested by departments were discussed at divisional EDI Panel, to arrive at a list of priority areas for sharing good practice at future meetings. The full list of actions taking place in departments will be retained to inform the future work of the EDI Panel and development of this action plan.

	Priority level for EDI discussion	Area	Action for sharing good practice
21	Higher	Recruitment for diversity	Cover this in one or more EDI Panel meetings, seeking input from University practitioners where possible, and from departments in relation to specific departmental initiatives. (Note: the University is running a Focus project to identify good practice and the intention here is to share existing SSD efforts, not to replicate the University project.)
22	Higher	Employee lifecycle: from induction, through career development to exit interviews	Cover this in one or more EDI Panel meetings, seeking input from University practitioners where possible, and from departments in relation to specific departmental initiatives.
23	Higher	Postgraduate Admissions: diversifying admissions including exploring provision of targeted scholarships – e.g. for UK BME students, students from certain countries, or to fund studentships with a particular research focus.	Cover this is one or more EDI Panel meetings, seeking input from University practitioners where possible, and from departments in relation to specific departmental initiatives.
24	'Quick win'	Sharing further documentation between departments, e.g. • Terms of reference of EDI committees; • Consultation methods used by departments • Codes of Practice	Departments will be asked to share documents, to be added to the SSD Sharepoint E&D resources site.
25	'Quick win'	Departments running wellbeing events may wish to open these events to members of other departments.	Departments will be asked if they wish to do this, and the division can help to publicise events.
25	Lower	Decolonising curricula	This is a priority area for many departments, but issues are discipline-specific, and CTL plans to provide support, so it is not currently clear whether the division can play a productive role. Keep under review.

26	Lower	Fieldwork – developing a code of practice for ethical fieldwork	SOGE is developing a code of practice. When this is ready it might be shared with the EDI Panel/Research Strategy Group.
27	Lower	A Guide to Inclusive Communications	SOGE is developing a code of practice. When this is ready it might be shared more widely.
27	Lower	Athena Swan	Work in this area is underway across the majority of departments in SSD. The divisional office and University's EDU will continue to provide support to applicants. EDI support for Athena Swan within departments is limited and varied – this will be addressed under action 6 above.