

Ref. 2382 - St Andrews Race and Ethnicity Practice Report

University of St Andrews

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1. Executive Summary

Commissioned by the University of St Andrews, SUMS Consulting was asked to review the University's approach to race and ethnicity practice. This report documents SUMS findings based on:

- a series of engagement exercises – including one-to-one meetings, focus groups (attended by staff and students), and attendance at various committee meetings/network groups;
- a review of documentation available on race and ethnicity including strategies, ongoing initiatives and plans;
- comparison to appropriate sector best practice (relevant to the St Andrews context).

The report presents findings against three key themes: Strategy and Governance, Operations and Process, People and Culture.

The review identified:

- Significant strengths in relation to strategic direction and University leadership commitment
- Some strengths in relation to operations and process, but significant inconsistencies and the need for improvement
- Significant areas for development in relation to People and Culture from both staff and students' perspectives with a range of perceptions around -
 - A culture of "Tell" rather than "Involve"
 - A fear of getting involved (speaking out against inappropriate behaviour), or being seen to be a trouble-maker
 - Minimal recognition of the opportunity for differences to be acknowledged and celebrated, or the need to foster equity, with some perceiving a patronising and/or paternalistic culture towards race and ethnicity at all levels across the organisation

An assessment against the recommendations in the [UUK racial harassment report](#) indicates two areas of strength (*senior leadership commitment to change, and defined channels of reporting*); five areas that require some improvement (*consistency, implementing agreed policies, training that delivers results, collection of data on racial harassment and responding to emerging trends, and evaluation of activities aimed at addressing issues of race and ethnicity*); and four areas that require significant improvement (*partnership with the Students Union and other networks, facilitation of confident open conversations, implementing appropriate behaviour frameworks, and delivery of equitable outcomes following racial harassment complaints*).

There is an urgent requirement to fill the post of VP People and Diversity and it was noted that the recruitment process is now progressing with interviews scheduled for the end of March 2022.

Key Recommendations are to:

- Raise the profile of race and ethnicity priorities and pump-prime initiatives aimed at ensuring equity
- Facilitate open, honest conversations around race and ethnicity to explore differences, and achieve change
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of EDI groups, and create links between these groups to maximise resources; document communication channels that exist between the Central EDI Team and Schools
- Strengthen the partnership between the University and the Students' Association
- Raise the profile of the 'One St Andrews' initiative to the level of a Civic University Agreement, creating formal partnerships with external bodies and the community
- Enhance training and development initiatives – including training for allies and bystanders
- Update module evaluation questionnaires to include questions linked to inclusive/diverse curricula
- Improve reporting on race and ethnicity issues through a specific category in the Report and Support tool (considering how this overarching category will intersect with existing categories around microaggressions, discrimination and/or hate incidents, hate crime)
- Introduce positive action targeted fellowships and scholarships

The full list of recommendations is set out in Section 5 of this report, with recommended timeframes.

2. The Assignment

2.1 The Context

The University of St Andrews aims to conduct an institutional review of its work and approach to race and ethnicity linked to Diverse St Andrews – one of the four themes in the current University Strategy. The review will also be of benefit to the University in its preparation for the Advance HE Race Equality Charter. Following a two-year tenure as Assistant Vice-Principal responsible for the Diversity Agenda, the role holder has returned to academic research and the University is now in the process of recruiting a full-time Vice-Principal responsible for People and Diversity. The new VP will have a key role in steering the University through the Race Equality Charter application process. The University of St Andrews recognises the challenge of recruiting an individual with strategic HR skills plus a Diversity background with appropriate subject matter expertise. The University also has some unique challenges around the perception of St Andrews (as a location), and the demographics of Scotland - and Fife in particular. Approximately 8% of the University workforce is from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background, compared with 2.5% of the population in Fife. 86% of the BAME population in Fife are based in St Andrews - either working or studying at the University.

The University has put significant effort into raising the profile of Diversity - initially focused around gender. All Schools have achieved Athena Swan accreditations at various levels, and the University as a whole has an Athena Swan Bronze Award. Work is continuing in this area at both an institutional and at departmental levels.

Over the last three years the University of St Andrews has started to focus on race and ethnicity as the next challenge. The University was the first in the UK to become a signatory of the Prince of Wales's Responsible Business Network, and Business in the Community Race at Work Charter; and was the first Scottish University to advertise staff vacancies on the Black Female Professors Forum platform. Already a key focus of the Diverse St Andrews agenda, the profile of race and ethnicity has been further propelled due to the #BlackLivesMatter movement over the Summer 2020. There are a number of networks in place in the University – formal and informal. The informal Staff BAME Network provides a focus for identifying issues linked to race and ethnicity that sit outside the formal structures for staff engagement in these areas.

Recent staff and student feedback has highlighted specific areas of concern – for example not enough staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in senior positions; experiences of micro-aggressions; and perceptions of a lack of appreciation and tokenism/lack of real intent to address issues linked to race and ethnicity. While there was minimal feedback suggesting overt racism within the University setting, the University is now looking for an objective view of their progress in this area to assess reality versus rhetoric.

The University would like an objective view on:

- Whether the University is doing the right things – strategically, operationally and culturally
- Whether there is more that the University should be doing (against the same three parameters)
- An Assessment of progress made over the last three years of the People Strategy
- Whether meaningful plans are in place to support the development of the next People Strategy (2023 to 2028); including baselining the current approach to Race and Ethnicity as a starting point for the new strategy.

It is acknowledged that the review has both a strategic element (baselining) and a management element (tactical actions – managing expectations and where appropriate, addressing issues). It is expected that the

new VP will be identified before the review is completed and they will own the outputs - setting and delivering short, medium, and long-term objectives relating to race and ethnicity.

2.2 Terms of Reference

Against this background, SUMS Consulting was asked to:

- Document the areas in which the University of St Andrews has produced innovative work, developed effective plans and made an observable impact on inequity and inequality
- Make recommendations for practical steps to address challenges and achieve constructive change in practice and culture
- Make proposals for longer-term strategies to develop cultural change and address issues relating to race and ethnicity.

You have also asked that SUMS:

- Reflect on recommendations and actions that are right for the University of St Andrews (rather than a generic HE institution), recognising the context within which you work and the resources available due to the unique location of the University
- Support achievable, progressive actions and changes that can be implemented in a stepwise manner
- Attend to the practical considerations of operationalising recommendations, including resourcing, timelines, milestones and outputs.

2.3 The Approach

Our approach included three key components:

Component 1: Challenge and Context

- A desk-based review of documentation - Reviewing documents relating to EDI, including relevant policies and procedures to inform the development of race and ethnicity focused work; comparison of that work and proposed actions with good practice across the HE sector and in other sectors
- Attendance at selected University meetings focused on Race and Ethnicity in order to understand the conditions under which the University is operating and to facilitate learning
- Giving feedback and challenge to the sponsor and appropriate officers.

Component 2 - Recommendations on EDI in terms of governance, accountability and structure, in order to enable progress in implementation of actions focused on race and ethnicity

- One-to-one interviews with key internal stakeholders working across the EDI activities and members of the Executive Board
- Making recommendations on governance, communication, structure and accountability with the aim of enhancing the progress made by the University of St Andrews in race and ethnicity specifically, and EDI initiatives more generally.

Component 3 - Cultural Environment

- Focus groups with:
 - Staff from Academic Schools
 - Staff from Professional Service units
 - Student Representatives (UG and PG)
- Document findings from engagement and link observations to relevant recommendations.

While this report includes some direct quotes (suitably anonymised) where appropriate, it does not go into detail of specific incidences or lived experiences which are already well documented in the Staff Lived Experiences Report and the Students' Open Letter to the Principal.

3. Findings

3.1 Overview

Findings in this report are categorised into strengths and weaknesses linked to the following key themes:

Strategy and Governance (Section 3.2.1 and Section 3.3.1):

- Strategic direction given by the University leadership
- EDI Communication Strategy and activities
- EDI/race and ethnicity governance, structure, responsibilities and accountability
- Staff/student partnership in the context of race and ethnicity.

Operations/Process (Section 3.2.2 and Section 3.3.2):

- EDI Activities - such as undertaken by Athena Swan team, Prince of Wales's responsible business network, Business in the Community Race at Work Charter, equality networks, Student Union and representatives, HR and Organisational Development.

People/Culture (Section 3.2.3 and Section 3.3.3):

- An exploration of staff and students' perceptions linked to cultural elements including underlying assumptions.

Many points in this report cut across staff and students. However, where there are differences, these are highlighted in the narrative.

3.2 Key Strengths

Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.3 highlight strengths across all three dimensions covered by this review.

3.2.1 Strategy and Governance

Strategy and Governance is an area of strength for the University of St Andrews compared to sector best practice (see Section 4 for details of sector best practice).

Specific points are summarised below:

a. Strategic Direction given by the University Leadership

There is acknowledgement by staff and students that there have been major steps in the prioritisation of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in general, since the appointment of the current Principal.

The positioning of EDI within the published strategy of the University is strong. "Diverse St Andrews" is one of the four pillars of the overall strategy, and phrases such as "beacon of inclusivity" reflect ambition. The language used in describing the "Diverse St Andrews" pillar is active, referring to "empowering a deliberate culture shift" as the first of 8 key principles.

Specific mention of Race and Ethnicity comes at principle 6, and includes aims for:

- greater racial and ethnic diversity
- addressing lived experiences at all levels
- focusing on interventions in recruitment, retention and curriculum reform
- taking a more active position towards academics at risk and children of refugees.

b. EDI Communication Strategy and Activities

The St Andrews EDI website is one of the most comprehensive EDI resource websites in the sector, and all information is available externally to the University. This is to be commended – it allows prospective staff and students to be clear about the policies in place across a range of issues linked to Equality and Diversity.

Internally, EDI activities are communicated regularly via the online “In The Loop” newsletter, as well as through emails. The Faculty EDI Directors, and the establishment of EDI Directors within each School have facilitated enhanced two-way communication with the Schools, as well as opportunities for sharing of good practice and initiatives within each School. In spite of these strengths, there are some areas for improvement linked to communication and involvement which are highlighted in Section 3.3.1(b), and in the People and Culture Section (3.3.3).

c. EDI/Race and ethnicity governance, structure, responsibility and accountability

The appointment of the former Assistant VP for Diversity and Inclusion and the two Faculty Directors for EDI represented a shift in the responsibility for EDI leadership and action from an HR function to a cross-organisation function with Professional Services and Academic Leadership.

This shift represents best practice and is in line with the shift that has taken place across the sector since 2015. While the move has been welcomed by staff, there are concerns about resource constraints as explained further in Section 3.3.1(c).

In January 2022, the University recruited a Race Equality Charter Chair to provide academic leadership for the University’s institutional Advance HE Race Equality Charter application. The post holder will chair the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team (REC - SAT) and will work closely with the Principal and Principal’s Office.

The Equality Mainstreaming Report¹ published in April 2021 is a useful way to bring all the actions, strategies and activities together – and the title of this report is significant. It would be useful to consider how material gathered for this report could be used in other formats to raise awareness of issues and actions.

d. Staff/Student Partnerships in the context of Race and Ethnicity

Partnership working requires a coordinated approach to working, understanding of roles and responsibilities, co-creation of activities, content etc. and working towards common goals.

Student Services are the lead for pastoral support and work closely with the Schools while the Faculty EDI Leads have a role to encourage broader engagement within Schools. However, in practice, interactions are often ad hoc, and varied in terms of the extent of activity and the success of outputs and outcomes as detailed in Section 3.3.1(d).

¹ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/media/human-resources/equalitydiversity/StAndrews-Equality-Mainstreaming-Report-29April2021.pdf>

3.2.2 Operations and Process

'Operations and Process' is an area of some strength for the University of St Andrews compared to sector best practice.

a. EDI Activities

There are several examples of good EDI activities at the University of St Andrews including:

- A range of staff networks, including an Inclusive Practice Support Group² – a group set up to support the University in its ambition to become a beacon of inclusivity with a focus on assisting colleagues in adopting and embedding inclusive practices.
- Stand-alone research funding for EDI projects (with some submissions in the most recent year that were focused around race and ethnicity).
- Internal mentoring programmes for women, and one (in development) for staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. *It has been stressed during this review, that mentoring should explore the use of leadership resources from both within and outside the University.*
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity training.
- EDI training for students.
- Mentoring scheme for undergraduates and taught post-graduates from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.
- An Inclusive Curriculum audit – although with inconsistent engagement across Schools.
- Decolonial and inclusivity practice events listed in the documents on the website, where one of the three events appeared to be decolonisation focused.

A number of activities are worthy of particular mention:

- The recent introduction of the Report and support³ tool around bullying and harassment. The system has options to submit reports anonymously or with contact details, and the website contains extensive information, definitions and signposting. Three of the ten categories in the tool include commentary around race and ethnicity issues.
- The Covid-19 section of the University website has specific guidance for BAME staff and students and their line managers – covid risk assessments include ethnicity as a risk factor.
- Decolonising the curriculum is a key activity in some Schools, with a specific example of good practice from the School of Biology.⁴
- Establishment of an Inclusive Hub⁵ – online, self-service resource to assist colleagues in adopting inclusive and anti-colonial pedagogical practices. This will include policies, practices and case studies collated during the Inclusive Curriculum Audit from Schools and Units.
- Inclusion Week – including internal and external guest speakers provoking discussions on various aspects of inclusive and anti-colonial practices.
- The Medical School has signed up to the British Medical Association Racial harassment charter⁶, a voluntary charter which emphasises the expectation that all students will experience the University

² [Inclusive Practice Support Group](#)

³ <https://reportandsupport.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

⁴ <https://st-andrews.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Embed.aspx?id=7aef8e3e-54a5-4a18-9fda-adaf00b45608>

⁵ [Hub form](#)

⁶ <https://www.bma.org.uk/media/2030/bma-med-school-charter-implementation.pdf>

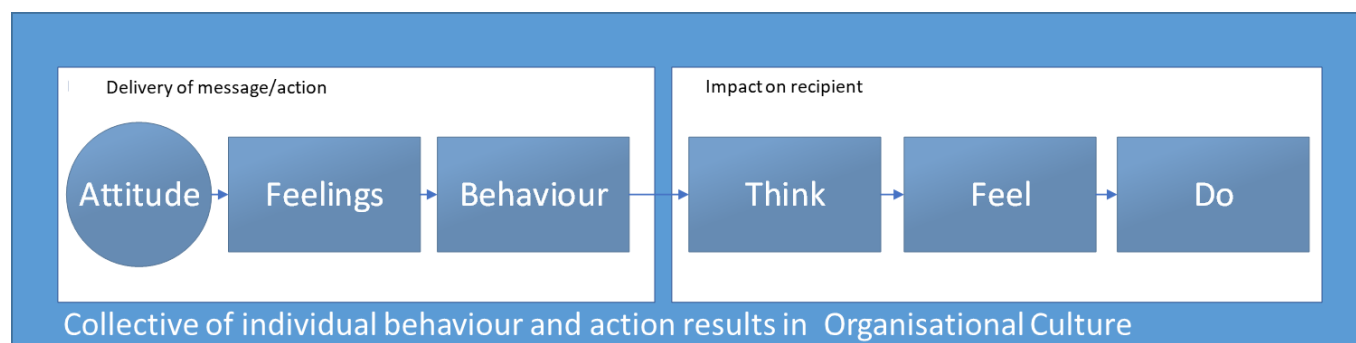
as an anti-racist environment in which to study and train. Under the charter the Medical School commits to:

- supporting individuals to speak out
 - ensuring robust processes for reporting and handling complaints
 - mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion across the learning environment
 - addressing racial harassment on work placements.
- Plans are in place to deploy active bystander training for staff and students by the end of the 2021/22 Academic Year. This is to address the acknowledged passive bystander culture, and increase skills in this area. In line with their commitment to the BMA Charter, this training has been piloted in the Medical School. Feedback suggests that there is general buy-in to support this initiative - both from the perspective of staff wanting to support students, and the students' community supporting each other.
 - Safe Leave Policy Provision, introduced in December 2021 – providing 10 days safe leave for staff (pro rata for part-time staff) who have experienced identity-based hate crimes for the purpose of protecting themselves and making necessary arrangements. This is available to employees regardless of length of service⁷
 - The University is in the process of launching the 'One St Andrews' initiative – an initiative aimed at deepening the relationships between the University and the local community; and including partnerships with local businesses and the Police. 'One St Andrews' is described as a way of articulating an individual and group commitment to tackling, solving, or addressing sub-optimal behaviour within the local community. It is envisioned that the initiative will also serve as a reminder to the community at large, of the responsibility each person has to both celebrate diversity and tackle negative behaviours, wherever they may originate. To date, the initiative has involved working with two local high schools - St Leonards School and Madras College. The local Police team has been meeting with societies and groups in order to ensure the University students understand the support the Police can offer and how they can access this support and guidance. There will be a 'One St Andrews' representative on the University's Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team in order to ensure coordination of internal and external facing initiatives.

3.2.3 People and Culture

Organisational culture is described as the way things are done, the unwritten rules that influence individual and group behaviours and attitudes. Culture shows evidence of deep held feelings and beliefs as evidenced by the stories that people tell day-to-day, and their perceptions, as opposed to the content set out in strategic plans. Findings in this area were from one-to-one and focus group discussions.

The diagram below makes it clear that organisational culture is built on collective individual behaviour



⁷ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/policy/staff-annual-leave-and-other-absence-special-leave/special-leave.pdf>

Findings suggest that this is the area that requires most development at the University of St Andrews (see Section 3.3.3). There are, however, some strengths to note as detailed below.

With no exceptions, all staff attending focus groups and one-to-one discussions expressed a commitment to change and a willingness to *“be part of a positive change at the University of St Andrews.”* They welcomed the chance to have discussions about cultural differences and expressed the need to have ongoing discussions in this area – beyond the current review process.

Most discussions highlighted leadership commitment to making change and there were some positive comments about the increasing priority given to race and ethnicity – especially from students:

“The culture has become more dynamic, more vocal, demonstrating increased awareness, and [some] lecturers are more receptive to discussing ideas.”

Staff recognise the priority given to training and development – in particular encouraging participation in the Advance HE Diversifying Leadership course.

There is a recognition of the need to build and support a form of ‘Code of Conduct’ to develop expectations around treating people with respect and dignity. In response to this need (based on student feedback about issues they were experiencing where individuals were excluded during group work), a cultural shift has been highlighted in the School of Management.

A Social Contract (Appendix B(i)) is now used to frame the learning environment in the classroom – asking the students about the type of environment they want to learn in. The purpose is to help the students navigate the ‘hidden curriculum’ by voicing implicit assumptions and expectations for learning. Students are also asked to reflect on the text in their groups and return a signed and amended version to the module co-ordinator ahead of engaging in group work. While not all groups amend the statements, those that do often return agreements that demonstrate a lot of thought (Appendix B(ii)).

It was noted that there has been a significant improvement in feedback from students as a result of these social contracts - shifting from comments about group work being unfair (e.g. *“one person does all the work”*), to students stating that *“they appreciate diversity in team work and hearing different viewpoints and perspectives”*. It is, however, acknowledged that not all issues around group work have gone away and this is reflected in some of the comments from students highlighted under weaknesses (Section 3.3.3(a),(c)).

The School of Management has adopted the contract as a teaching resource and its use is encouraged in all modules. This initiative has been shared through the Inclusive Curriculum Audit and the EDI network.

Lead EDI contacts also note that the principles and behaviours associated with these social contracts should apply to staff, and that students should feel empowered to challenge where behaviours from staff or their peers, are not in line with the fundamental principles set out in the contracts.

3.3 Key Weaknesses

Sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 highlight areas that require development and/or improvements across all three dimensions covered by this review.

3.3.1 Strategy and Governance

Although the Strategy and Governance category is acknowledged as an area of strength for the University of St Andrews, the following points are worth noting:

a. Strategic Direction given by the University Leadership

On closer examination, the published strategy, places more emphasis on gender, disability, and intersectionality than on race and ethnicity. This prioritisation reflects previous priorities, including engagement with Athena Swan, and senior leadership are honest about race and ethnicity not having received as high a priority to date. However, people coming new to the strategy documents may feel that race and ethnicity is not a priority. In this respect, the imminent strategy refresh is welcomed as it provides an opportunity to refocus the Diverse St Andrews priorities.

Whilst there is recognition of the commitment demonstrated by creating the post of VP People and Diversity, there is a sense of frustration amongst staff that the post has remained unfilled for a considerable length of time (albeit covered by the Principal and VP Governance to maintain the momentum associated with Diverse St Andrews). This has been interpreted as “*EDI dropping down the priority list for the University*”. However, progress has now been made in the recruitment process, with interviews planned for the end of March 2022⁸.

There are no Academic Heads of Department from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. The root cause of this is unclear as there are Professors who could put themselves forward for these positions. Further discussion is required with Professors from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups to explore the reasons for their reticence in this area, and address identified systemic issues.

b. EDI Communication Strategy and Activities

In spite of some areas of good practice in this area, feedback from discussions indicates that communication channels are not always adequate and there are relatively limited opportunities to share best practice, or cascade best practice from the Schools to the Central EDI Team which could influence University Policy and Practice. There remain some gaps in joined up communication between inclusive curriculum work undertaken within Schools, and wider EDI activities.

The website is comprehensive, however, the section on BAME staff profiles seems slightly out of place and therefore could come across as tokenistic or performative. Other institutions have created a more intersectional approach to documenting diversity across the organisation featuring visual staff profiles instead of statistical information, and this is something that could be considered.

In terms of external EDI communications, feedback suggested some experiences where expert advice on race and ethnicity has not been sought before publishing content. It is believed by many that seeking appropriate advice could have prevented some reputational damage around communications linked to the death of George Floyd. This oversight appears to be the result of tension and sensitivities around roles and responsibilities for external communications, fear of reputational damage, and the tendency to be over-responsive as a result.

In many schools the focus of the EDI Directors has been around gender in relation to Athena Swan action plans; there is some concern that as race work and expectations are increased, the teams within Schools may not be sufficient to deliver on multiple agendas. Comments included:

“There is no link between the Central EDI Team and work in academic departments. The Central EDI Team is paid to develop EDI initiatives but within Academic departments it is left to interested people to pick things up with minimal resources.”

⁸ While interviews are planned for the end of March, should there be any further delays in recruitment, the possibility of an internal secondment and/or job share arrangement will need to be considered.

In relation to students' communication, the Advice and Support Centre has published a web page on race, ethnicity, culture and discrimination which features a range of links focused race and ethnicity⁹ targeted at students. While this information is comprehensive, none of the videos are from the UK or from St Andrews. All videos feature views from the United States which implies that there are no examples of good practice from St Andrews which could be used to get these messages across. This page also includes a link to a Student Harassment and Bullying Policy which makes one reference to race in defining harassment. In focus group discussions, students challenged the absence of a specific policy around race and ethnicity targeted at students.

c. EDI/Race and ethnicity governance, structure, responsibility and accountability

In principle, 20% of time within the Academic Workload Model is available to EDI leads in Schools. However, feedback suggests that this is not consistently applied, and where it is applied it is usually focused around gender work. This has resulted in feedback suggesting the need for more academic buy out for EDI leadership. Comments included:

“Activity is largely person motivated rather than systemic which presents risks to sustainable change; this is seen as the root cause of inconsistencies between Departments/Faculties etc.”

“There is a need for a more consistent allocation of workload within schools, particularly with the likely increase in activity as Race Equality Charter work comes online alongside Athena Swan work.”

It has been highlighted by leadership that there is an agreement to provide 0.1 FTE to members of the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team (REC-SAT). This is in addition to the current 20% allocation for EDI work within the Academic Workload Model. However, the need for consistent application is critical to success.

Governance appears strong; however, the EDI structures seem particularly complicated, both within the Students' Association and the University. The Students Association features three Student Association Directors feeding into the structure at different points (Education; Student Experience; Wellbeing and EDI), as well as separate School Presidents/Faculty Presidents etc. It is likely that this complexity is contributing to the challenges around implementing staff/student partnerships.

Comments highlight this complexity -

“There are lots of groups but limited influence on overall University Policy. There is limited understanding of how all the group activity fits together and feeds upwards etc.”

“Is there a potential for a coordinated approach to activity - different action plans etc. coordinated into a single plan with short- and medium-term milestones in addition to longer term goals.”

It was also noted that the staff networks do not appear to have a direct voice on CEDI, the contact is via the Head of Equality and Diversity. This concern appears to indicate a lack of clarity about the role of the staff networks within the governance framework as there are some views that the networks are “*separate forums where participants prize their confidentiality and their separation from the formal structures of CEDI.*” There is a need for clarity to ensure understanding of the different roles of the staff network groups, management of expectations, and avoidance of misconceptions. There is also the need for clarity about who can attend the BAME staff network. While this network is classed as an “*informal forum for all who identify as Black, Asian and minority ethnic*”, there was mention (during focus groups) about being excluded from the staff network (i.e. members of White minority ethnic groups).

⁹ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/recd-support/>

An EDI Governance diagram was provided as part of the current review (See Appendix C), although it is not clear whether this is the formal framework, or one created in an attempt to understand the complexity. Regarding the role of the Proctor's Office on the EDI governance diagram, there is no arrow from the Proctor's office to the CEDI committee in either direction. While there is a link from the School EDI groups through two committees eventually to the Proctor's office, in order to ensure a fully effective governance there is a need for a Proctor's Office representative on CEDI.

Going forward, it would be useful to explain in simple terms, the functions and relationships of all the groups linked to the EDI agenda (for both staff and students), as structure is often seen as the reason for delays in progress. The complex structure can also make it harder to understand who is taking responsibility for race and ethnicity work which can cause duplication, conflicting priorities, misconceptions and confusion.

d. Staff/Student Partnerships in the context of Race and Ethnicity

This element appears to be the area most in need of development within the Strategy and Governance Theme.

There is a lack of clarity about how all the functions fit together. Any ongoing connection between the Students' Association and the University on EDI appears weak, if present at all. There are however, connections between the BAME students' network and the University, for example on producing and responding to the BAME Students Action Plan developed in response to Black Lives Matter in 2020.

There are connections between School EDI Directors/Faculty EDI Directors and Presidents in some Schools. There are however, challenges establishing consistently productive working relationships between School Presidents and the Students Association officers. Feedback suggests that positive relationships are personality driven.

Because joint working relationships are not systemic, there were concerns from both the staff-side and student-side in relation to attempts to work jointly. The Students' Association also raised concerns that they have not received any training on handling disclosures around bullying or harassment, including those related to race, and that this has caused safeguarding concerns.

The lack of consistent partnership appears to be influenced by:

- A conflation of issues impacting international students with race and ethnicity more generally which can detract from the attention on race.
- Lack of time for the Central EDI team to be involved in building the partnership with students due to their compliance role.
- Internal Students' Association issues - for example, a lack of funding for activities and training within the Students' Association; a lack of clarity about the structure for the SRC elected BAME officer, School Presidents, BAME students network group, and SA officers.
- Structure of formal interactions between students and staff. This specifically relates to Sabbatical Officers feeling disconnected from the strategic picture. Students state, for example, that they would like to be more involved with the future development of the Diverse St Andrews theme during the imminent Corporate Strategy refresh.

While recognising the documented constitutional responsibilities of each, there is a need for clarity when considering the roles and responsibilities of the Students' Association and the Rector/Rector's Committee within the governance framework - keeping the emphasis on the need for partnership working towards a common goal. This is especially important when one considers the need to maximise the use of resources available to support the EDI agenda, and race and ethnicity issues specifically.

3.3.2 Operations and Process

Feedback suggests a range of activities and processes in place, but limited real change. This indicates that while there are strengths in relation to Operations and Process, there is room for improvement when compared to sector best practice.

a. EDI Activities

It is acknowledged that the Central EDI team has grown, and has been enhanced by academic leadership in schools. However, it is clear that the central team still spends a significant amount of their time on compliance related activities. This is possibly due to the extensive Equality Impact Assessment legislation in Scotland.

Regarding 'Report and Support', although the tool is highlighted as a good initiative, there have been concerns raised that there is no specific category for reporting issues of racism. Instead, racism is mentioned in the commentary across a number of categories (microaggressions, discrimination and hate crime). While it is acknowledged that amending the categories in the tool would risk losing current trend comparisons, making this change early could mitigate this risk - as well as providing clearer reporting on issues associated with race and ethnicity in the future. In practice, this might require setting the current themes as sub-categories within an over-arching Race and Ethnicity category with suitable guidance associated with each sub-category.

Some elements of good practice which do not appear to be driven by the central team include:

- Specific anti-racism training
- Microaggression training (though these are well described on the Report and Support website)
- Training for PGR students – especially as the PG cohort is more diverse. It was noted that Faculty EDI Directors are making progress in building partnerships with PGR students via the Schools.

While Ally and active bystander training is currently being piloted (See section 3.2.2 (a)) there is a need for this to be a core requirement for Schools and Units in due course.

b. Complaints

Many focus group participants raised concerns about the complaints process. There was dis-satisfaction in the way that racist elements had been dealt with. In some cases, it was reported that it was difficult to prove the racist element, even though it was obvious that the behaviour shown was not ideal.

In addition, there were concerns raised about not knowing the outcome of a complaint. Comments included:

"No feedback received on the outputs from any complaints of racism – not even a 'sorry'."

While it is acknowledged that all formal complaints provide an outcome letter which will need to adhere to issues around confidentiality (as required by the University's complaints handling procedure), many comments were around the less formal complaints. For these complaints it was felt that they were not taken seriously, and there was no response and/or action. While noting that a specific action might not be possible, especially for anonymous reports, there does need to be some form of communication to let people know that these issues have been heard and addressed. There is also the need for some communication regarding how the complaints system works at present, with the possibility of reviewing this system if it is not fit-for-purpose.

3.3.3 People and Culture

People and Culture is the area that focus group participants highlighted as most in need of improvement at the University of St Andrews, with participants citing a range of issues which indicated a disconnect between strategic commitments on the one hand, and actions, outputs and outcomes on the other.

There were three general themes arising from the focus group discussions:

1. A culture of 'Tell' rather than 'Involve'.
2. A fear of getting involved (speaking out against inappropriate behaviour), or being seen to be a trouble-maker.
3. A patronising and/or paternalistic culture towards race and ethnicity across the organisation – no recognition of the opportunity for differences to be acknowledged and celebrated, or the need to foster equity.

Some focus group participants stated that they had:

"...no idea what the university was trying to achieve in relation to race and ethnicity representation, bearing in mind that the University of St Andrews is an elite university, based in an area of the country with low levels of diversity."

Some focus group participants mentioned the intersectionality point around "class and the elite nature of St Andrews" and highlighted initiatives such as First Chances Fife (an Admissions-led initiative aimed at working with High Schools in Fife to provide support with entry into Higher Education). However, it was acknowledged that such initiatives do not necessarily increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student population.

Other comments highlighting areas of improvement from students', and staff perspectives; as well as points of a general nature, are set out below.

a. Students

Most comments from students referred to the absence of a sense of belonging:

"Students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are often made to feel that they do not belong here. One of the reasons why they don't feel that they can take up positions is because the groups that they would be joining are essentially cliques."

"In my experience there is a different, more positive environment for PhD students, and the supervisors are great. For Undergraduate students, I cannot say the same. My advice to anyone who is planning to come to the University of St Andrews is- if you don't have a strong sense of identity, don't come to St Andrews. You need to know that you don't need someone else's validation. You need to be strong willed and confident – for your own peace of mind and wellbeing."

"If Black students express themselves (as a result of a racist incident) they are told that they are violent and/or lack culture. When expressing myself after an incident of racism (because my peers were silent) I was the one told off for being a trouble-maker."

In spite of the range of activity highlighted in Section 3.2.2 (a) focused on decolonising the curriculum and developing an inclusive curriculum, several students cited examples where they had raised issues linked to the need to decolonise specific aspects of their curriculum (including Reading lists, for example) and had

their concerns “actively pushed aside or ignored”. Some reported being told off for making repeated requests in this regard. Comments include:

“There is no humility, or acceptance that they [lecturers] can learn from us when it comes to suggestions for decolonising the curriculum.”

“Requests to decolonise the curriculum get reduced to a confrontation, and criticism of approach taken [by the student] when attempting to broach the subject.”

There were comments suggesting a need to encourage inter-cultural pedagogy if there is really a willingness to be more inclusive and diverse. Comments included:

“There is a lot of focus on the Socratic method of pedagogy (i.e. shared dialogue/debate between teachers and students). This particular learning environment may be new to some students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and they may need additional support to learn in this way and contribute to the discourse.”

While there is a recognition of strengths in this area, these perceptions demonstrate that there is still work to do to cascade best practice across the University, as well as the need to employ different approaches to teaching, in order to take account of various learning styles (which goes beyond race and ethnicity).

Some focus group participants highlighted the limited recognition of global approaches to English Language, and linguistic differences in written and oral English from students of different nationalities. Students reported:

“..feeling marginalised in classrooms and on online platforms, and feeling that they had to do away with ways of speech that came naturally to them”.

Other comments included:

“As a Black lady, when I enact my identity, express myself, I am seen as threatening. I shouldn’t have to become less than myself to fit in.”

“[Being marked down for linguistic differences] is dressed up as a pedagogical necessity – there needs to be some recognition of the prejudice, the bias, the assumption that is informing this judgement. What is lost when we are that prescriptive – when we are asking students to do away with modes of expression that come naturally to them.”

Students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities also state that the onus is on them to make change as opposed to being driven by the University.

Regarding student representation, comments include the need to increase out-reach activity:

“The University can’t continue to hide behind the International Student numbers. There is scope for outreach to Schools with higher diversity in the UK. And there is also the potential for a similar outreach approach regarding potential employees (beyond Fife).”

b. Staff

In addition to the general comments in Section 3.3.3(c), staff highlighted issues linked to pay gaps, promotion prospects, and workload allocation to undertake diversity work. Specific comments include:

“There are inequalities built into the recruitment process when negotiating starting salaries.”

“... told by line management not to apply for promotion because I did not meet the criteria but saw other colleagues promoted on less.”

“There is an unspoken, unwritten policy – if you are seen as a trouble-maker on issues linked to Equality and Diversity, you will not get ahead at the University of St Andrews.”

“You can get ahead and do well in the University of St Andrews if you can fit in and are not a person that creates uncertainty or doubt in the status quo.”

These comments all suggest the need to review the current policies around recruitment and promotion, and ensure that they are applied consistently.

There were also specific comments suggesting a distrust in approaching Human Resources with issues linked to race and ethnicity, as Human Resources are seen to:

“...align with the line manager, and not always take complaints about race and ethnicity seriously – complainants seen as moaning or being difficult.”

Staff reported a lack of diversity on promotion panels and recruitment panels, and positive comments about the focus on Advanced HE Diversity Leadership Training are balanced by weaknesses where staff comment that they have not been given the opportunity to use the knowledge and leadership skills gained following training.

Representation was a key issue for staff and comments suggested:

“Benchmarking is used for justification, as opposed to emphasising change – our representation is better than Fife, therefore we are okay....”

“There is no focus on equity when implementing policies or making decisions.”

Other comments around attitude to race and ethnicity included:

“It’s not about being polite and nice, it’s about having real discourse to address issues; niceness can’t be trusted, when no one reacts or comes to your defence when they see something that is not right.”

“Political correctness is often a façade, a veneer that hides true thoughts, while on the other hand some people dismiss things as political correctness and are unable to see the substance.”

c. General – Staff and Students

The comments below were common to both students and staff:

“When explaining an incident [to peers or those in management and/or leadership positions] I am not believed. I get responses like – ‘I would be very surprised if they did that, I have normally found them to be very nice...’.”

“Reputation is much more important to the University. No one wants to talk about these issues because of fear of affecting the University’s reputation.”

“When you raise any issue to do with race, people will listen to you, but it falls on you to justify why you feel this way which is very stressful. I wish there was more support when these issues come up.”

A specific theme arising from all focus groups was a reticence to speak up – even where people witnessed inappropriate behaviour:

“I don’t think it is malevolence or anything, so much as uncertainty around what to do and what to say.”

*“[Some] people **are** aware, but are choosing to take a certain path – and their behaviour is not called out.”*

“We could stop excusing the use of offensive/inappropriate remarks by members of staff who are perceived as being ‘stuck in their ways’ or ‘old-school’, or ‘jokey’.”

There is also a perception that there is an emphasis on individuals from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups having to develop coping strategies, as opposed to others being asked to stop any inappropriate behaviour.

“The emphasis is on promoting coping strategies to address issues (or encouraging whistle blowing), as opposed to addressing the behaviour. Advised to ‘act in a certain way so as to placate ...’.”

Speaking about changes that could be made to improve the culture, several focus group participants commented on the need for more informal conversations between staff and students, getting people more used to speaking to each other in non-confrontational ways, and developing understanding of, and celebrating our cultural differences. There is an observation that the absence of informal conversation (between staff and students) has been exacerbated over the last two years due to the Covid pandemic.

There is also the perception that there is limited infrastructure (i.e. facilities and/or services) to support racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, and no willingness to invest in developing this infrastructure. Focus group participants (particularly students) cited a number of examples around the absence of infrastructure to enable all religious observances (while recognising the Chaplaincy), hair styling for Afro-Caribbean hair, availability of food products etc. all of which could enhance a sense of cultural belonging if present within the environment. However, it was acknowledged that information is provided on different services available to meet diverse cultural needs¹⁰.

Follow up discussions with EDI lead officers on the infrastructure point have noted:

- The potential to fund infrastructure projects through a bidding process, supported by a business case; including the possibility of setting up social enterprise/SMEs to meet identified multi-cultural needs.
- Options to work with the Chamber of Commerce, and St Andrews West Project.
- If a bidding process is developed, this may struggle to take off initially, until basic recommendations are implemented (e.g. a willingness to speak up), and people recognise the infrastructure bidding process as a *“coherent process of celebration”*.
- The need to recognise the link with ‘One St Andrews’.
- Consideration to be given to the allocation of space at Guardbridge (i.e. potential lease space).
- The potential to rotate space with ‘the Hub’ once this is developed.
- The Race Equality Charter Survey for all students and staff, which will be deployed later in 2022 will include questions around infrastructure (beyond the basic questions required by Advance HE).

¹⁰ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/recd-support/>

A general theme around communication and engagement runs through a number of points highlighted through this review. While a detailed focus on the University's Communication Strategy is beyond the scope of the current report, it is worth emphasising that there is a need to work with the Marketing and Communications Team to make communications more imaginative and visually appealing, across a range of areas (including linked to EDI).

It is also stressed that effective communication with students is reliant on the need to build trust and focus on keeping promises made.

4. Good Practice in the HE Sector linked to Key Lines of Enquiry

In considering best practice, this section explores the following key areas:

- Key principles from The UUK racial harassment report (2020)
- UPP Foundation Civic University Commission Report (2018) focused on Civic Mission
- Examples of Best Practice from other institutions in the sector

4.1 Key Principles from the UUK Racial Harassment Report

The UUK racial harassment report suggests racial harassment work is best tackled as a clearly defined stream of more general harassment work and many institutions apply this principle, to overall race equality work in relation to diversity and inclusion in general.

Arguments for a continued and specific focus on race include:

- The barriers faced by some ethnic groups, which are strong, persistent, and unequal;
- societal impetus and expectation; and
- that gender has had special treatment for many years (and continues to do so in many organisations).

Table 1 below sets out the key recommendations from the UUK Report with reference to the work undertaken at St Andrews.

Table 1 - UUK Recommendations (including a St Andrews assessment)

	UUK Recommendation Summary	St Andrews performance against this recommendation
1	Vice-chancellors, principals and senior leaders are recommended to afford priority status to tackling racial harassment, and to demonstrate this visibly through taking ownership, responsibility, accountability and oversight for tackling it. It is recommended that this is supported by engaging with those with lived experiences of racial harassment, by dedicating specific resources to its eradication, and engaging with governing bodies or university courts.	<p>An area of strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race is 6th of the 8 principles set out against the Diverse St Andrews aim in the Corporate Strategy • The University Court has received, and responded to a report setting out the lived experiences of staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities • An Action Plan has been developed in response to an open letter from students • There is an acknowledgement of the need to raise the profile of race and ethnicity ensure parity with Athena Swan
2	Work with the entire university community, including students' unions, trades unions and staff networks, to understand the impact of racial harassment on campus. Ensure that the voices of students and staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds with lived experience of racial harassment are given due prominence, and be clear that tackling these issues is everyone's responsibility and should not fall to a minority of colleagues	<p>An area that requires significant improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from stakeholders indicates a 'scatter gun' approach to initiatives and a lack of coordination • Staff and students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups indicate that they feel the responsibility falls on them to address issues, and/or develop coping strategies.

	UUK Recommendation Summary	St Andrews performance against this recommendation
3	Universities should develop a strategy for addressing racial harassment, ensuring this is embedded consistently throughout all areas of the institution and informed by decision-makers across the university. Clear success measures should be identified and progress regularly reviewed by senior leaders and the governing body.	<p>An area that requires some improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there is a strategic commitment to addressing issues of race and ethnicity, this is not consistently applied across the University. There are no clearly stated behaviours set out in the performance management framework as part of measures of success.
4	Regularly review policies and procedures to understand possible biases or increased potential for racial harassment. Increase racial and cultural competence and awareness of the impact of racial harassment and racial microaggressions throughout the university's services, including in wellbeing, counselling, disability support and careers services.	<p>An area that requires some improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders indicate that while documented policies are robust, these are often implemented in an inconsistent manner. Staff refer to "undocumented policies around promotion" (<i>Please see recommendation - Table 5, recommendation 4</i>).
5	Be confident in holding open conversations about racism and racial harassment across the institution. Define racial harassment, using clear examples of terminology, including microaggressions, and being clear that the impact on the victim is important in determining harassment. Ensure these definitions are widely communicated and understood.	<p>An area that requires significant improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a significant gap in this area. Staff and students report the lack of open and honest conversations, and people standing by and not calling out inappropriate behaviour.
6	Increase staff and students' understanding of racism, racial harassment and microaggressions and white privilege, through training that is developed from an anti-racist perspective. This should go beyond unconscious bias training. Set targets for completion and carefully evaluate all training activities to ensure they have the desired effect.	<p>An area that requires some improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some training exists. However, this is not mandatory and does not address all issues identified.
7	Ensure that staff and students are aware of expected behaviours online and the sanctions for breaching these, highlighting that incidents will be treated with the same severity as those happening offline. In the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, review the efficacy of university support for online safety and welfare, and how effectively this meets the changing needs of students and staff.	<p>An area that requires significant improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While policy statements exist as well as policies on bullying and harassment (for students) there is no evidence of defined behaviour frameworks which can be used as a basis to address issues of racism.
8	Where these do not already exist, universities should develop and introduce clearly defined channels for reporting incidents of racial harassment, including the option for anonymous reporting where possible. Details of the system should be communicated routinely to all staff and students to encourage usage. The provision of appropriate support to the reporting party should be a key consideration in designing reporting systems.	<p>An area of strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Report and Support system has been introduced and is publicised through a range of channels. Although highlighted as a strength, in that it exists, it is too early to consider whether this has been a success. There are also concerns that there is no specific category around race in the Report and Support tool. Instead race is built into commentary linked to harassment, bullying, microaggression etc.
9	Universities should systematically collect data on reports of incidents of racial harassment, including where issues were resolved informally, and take action	<p>An area that requires some improvements</p>

	UUK Recommendation Summary	St Andrews performance against this recommendation
	to respond to emerging trends. This data should be reported to senior members of staff and governing bodies and discussed with partners, including trades unions and students' unions. Universities should create a centralised mechanism for recording incidents to understand the true extent of the issue and prevent information being held only locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no formal reporting at present, however, this will be introduced through the Report and Support tool
10	Universities should review their procedures for handling racial harassment complaints to ensure that these follow sector frameworks and guidance from ACAS and the EHRC to deliver fair, transparent and equitable outcomes for all parties involved. This should be done in collaboration with staff and students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, trades unions and students' unions. Gather, analyse and review satisfaction data to ensure procedures remain fit for purpose.	<p>An area that requires significant improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and students have raised concerns about the lack of closing the communication loop when complaints are raised. There is a need for clarity around informal and formal complaints; and the different processes that apply, in order to manage expectations. A review to ensure that this process is fit-for-purpose is also recommended (Please see recommendation - Table 5, recommendation 4).
11	Institutions should develop robust evaluation measures for their activities to prevent and respond to racial harassment. These should incorporate the experience of staff members and students who have used reporting systems and complaints procedures. Established measures should also be kept under review as changes to circumstances, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, may require new action or changes in approach.	<p>An area that requires some improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be introduced through the Report and Support tool. However, to ensure that there is a robust evaluation there is a need to have a formal category focused around race as opposed to the current framework which includes issues of race and ethnicity across three categories.

4.2 University Civic Mission

In recognition of the importance of a university's role as an anchor institution within its locality, a key recommendation of the [UPP Foundation Civic University Commission Report \(2018\)](#) was that universities should create Civic University Agreements (CUAs). CUAs are defined as strategies, based around a shared analysis of community needs and opportunities, created in partnership.

The Commission highlighted that Civic Agreements aim to:

- Ensure that activity is focused and coordinated
- Create effective liaisons between partners, the community and other local Higher Education Institutions and Further Education providers to focus activity on local needs
- Demonstrate a commitment to collective working and to making a demonstrable contribution to their local area.

The commission identified four underpinning principles:

- **Place** – a commitment to the economic, social, environmental and cultural life of the university's local community
- **Public** – informed by an analysis of needs developed in collaboration with relevant partners and the local community
- **Partnerships** – collaboration with other anchor and educational institutions to address local challenges
- **Measurement and impact** – working with partners to assess outputs and benefits

The 'One St Andrews' Initiative lends itself to inclusion within a Civic University Agreement Framework. This would raise the profile of this initiative, formalise partnership arrangements, and provide a clear agenda to assess impact within the University and the local community.

4.3 Examples of Sector Practice

4.3.1 Race and Equality Action Plan Implementation

It is common practice across UK Universities to approach Race Equality work by:

- performing a review of quantitative and qualitative data
- developing an action plan
- putting in place a staff network
- working with Students Union officers
- setting up an oversight group chaired by someone at senior level.

Reviews of race equality have featured heavily in university responses to the Black Lives Matter protests over summer 2020 and universities are continuing to commission race equity training.

Some institutions have been able to respond quickly to issues arising. For example, UCL has published a web page emphasising the importance of open and honest conversation and providing examples of various concepts linked to race and racism.¹¹

Of particular relevance to findings from the University of St Andrews review "*fear of speaking up*" is the advice below on the UCL webpage –

"Start a conversation by asking open questions

These conversations are essential even if you feel this may be difficult or uncomfortable for you.

Please do not let worries about the following get in the way:

- *You (feel bad that you) can't resolve all the issues*
- *That things will be raised which you will struggle to respond to*
- *You will struggle to understand [the issues raised]*
- *Your Black [Asian and minority ethnic] staff will be offended you raised the topic/made assumptions about their feelings or identity etc*
- *It is not relevant to your line management responsibility*
- *That you may inadvertently say the "wrong" thing."*

¹¹ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/equality-diversity-inclusion/equality-areas/race-equality/guidance-managers-supporting-black-staff-work>

4.3.2 Race Equality Actions

Good practice in the sector indicates that there are various families of actions deployed, many of which are in place at the University of St Andrews as detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Race Equality Actions (and a comparison with the University of St Andrews)

Type of action	Included in St Andrews current activity
1. Awareness raising – usually via events, seminars and communications (including Black History Month)	Yes, but feedback suggests a lack of a coordinated approach.
2. Staff and student engagement activities – formation of BAME staff networks, BAME student ambassador programmes, staff-student partnership (examples included in Table 1)	Yes, formation of staff and student networks
3. Policy and process audit and development – e.g., policies including recruitment, harassment, report and support, promotion and progression, reward	Report and Support introduced, changes to policies may result following the first year of reporting
<p>4. Data collection and analysis – ethnicity of staff at different grades and in different job families and roles, ethnicity pay gap analysis, plus “listening” or culture survey work.</p> <p>On the student side, this often overlaps with OfS access and participation data – though the way that the data is collected and analysed may not be suitable for both purposes, given the focus of access data on quartiles etc. This is often the first step towards actions aimed at improving representation amongst various roles including professors and senior Professional Service staff. However, the necessary actions are complex and can often take a long time to be started.</p>	Significant activity in this area, and growing in response to preparations for the Race Equality Charter.
5. Curriculum – inclusive curriculum (including the more specific decolonisation of the curriculum), and consideration of alternative assessments and feedback	Some work and good practice around decolonising the curriculum; however, this is not consistently applied across all Schools
6. “Attainment gap” – more commonly now referred to as “Degree Awarding Gap” to reflect the role of the institution in reducing this gap as opposed to implying deficit model viewpoint. Unfortunately, this work is often pursued in comparative isolation from other race equality work, which can result in duplication of effort. It is so much more powerful when brought together with other race equality work.	<p>The University published a report in 2019 that includes details of attainment by gender, disability and ethnicity. While there is a lot of variability from year to year, this report suggests that generally the St Andrews attainment gap is smaller than Russell Group institutions, but there is a lot of variability from year to year.</p> <p>The Proctor's team have the bulk of the statistics and responsibility for work on degree awarding gaps. It would be useful to align some activities and actions, recognising that the issues being raised in this review around experience</p>

Type of action	Included in St Andrews current activity
	of BAME staff and students will influence the degree awarding gap.
7. Representation (of staff) mainly at professorial and senior levels – less discussion of frequent over-representation of the global majority in low paid and less secure roles.	This is an issue for the University of St Andrews.
8. Mentoring - A wide variety of mentoring programmes exist for staff and students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. “Reverse mentoring” between minority groups and white staff (particularly involving white senior management and more junior colleagues or students from minority groups) is a particular example where best practice is evolving. Where this type of partnering programme does exist, it now tends to be couched in terms of learning partnerships in an attempt to highlight the dual flow of learning and remove the residual reference to organisational hierarchy that exists within the term “reverse mentoring”.	Currently being developed at the University of St Andrews. EDI leads have recommended that mentors should include leadership resources from within and outside the University.
9. Training and education – usually general unconscious bias training (often online, sometimes mandatory): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> External development programmes such as Diversifying Leadership or Stellar HE Current trend is towards supplying racism specific training (often around micro-aggressions), partly in response to the suggestion from the UUK report on tackling racism on campus Some universities have identified the need for broader education pieces explaining institutional, systemic and societal racism in recognition that there is still a tendency to associate racism predominantly with overtly racist acts by individuals 	<p>Some activity in this area – active engagement on the Advance HE Diversifying Leadership programme.</p> <p>The Medical School has signed up to the British Medical Association Racial Harassment Charter and has piloted ally and active bystander training to support this commitment.</p>

Table 4 below presents examples of some good practice examples from other Higher Education institutions. Only examples considered relevant to a St Andrews context are highlighted here.

Table 4 – Examples of Good Practice

Type of action	Institutions and summary of action
Racism/Equality awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keele University – microaggression video aimed at students • Wolverhampton University – microaggression video • University of Essex - Essex information page provides links to BBC micro-aggression blog • University of Nottingham - University of Nottingham newsletter • Dundee University made their REC survey report fully public together with initial responses and commitments https://www.dundee.ac.uk/announcements/race-equality-charter-survey-results-2021 • University of Edinburgh - Edinburgh Global funded a collaborative decolonial research project called UncoverED which was exhibited between January and June 2019. The project had the goal of shedding light on many BME alumni of the University whose histories have been somewhat erased, and of situating the global status of the University in its rightful imperial and colonial context.

Type of action	Institutions and summary of action
	<p>Research from the project is displayed at https://www.ed.ac.uk/history-classics-archaeology/news-events/news-archive/2019/uncovered-collaborative-decolonial-research-projet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Edinburgh – reparative justice co-ordination group established
Racism specific training (including white privilege and white allyship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goldsmith’s University - Goldsmiths Anti-Racist Action Group University of Sheffield - University of Sheffield 3-part racism training for students (and other initiatives) including micro-aggression student champions The University of Dundee - compulsory ant-racist training for staff and students University of Edinburgh: Student and staff engagement – ‘Race.ED’ is a cross university hub for research and teaching on race, ethnicity and decolonial thought, showcasing teaching, research and KEI in race and decolonial studies at The University of Edinburgh.
Student and staff engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Hertfordshire Ambassador Scheme University of Sheffield - Sheffield Wall of BAME
Curriculum development projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance HE - Keele, Kingston and UCL projects on decolonising the curriculum as reported by AdvanceHE conversation University of Bath - Decolonising the Curriculum Sheffield Contextualising the curriculum
Staff and student experience projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Reading SESTEM project
Normalising discussions about Race and Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St George’s University London Talk and Transform Workshops
Mentoring Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queen Mary’s University, London - B-MEntor Scheme <p>The B-MEntor, scheme is run in partnership with University College London, University of Arts London, Kings College London, St Georges University London, Francis Crick Institute and Queen Mary’s University London</p>
Infrastructure good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Dundee Action Plan infrastructure good practice - SAT and implementation team members have a minimum 0.1FTE workload allocation Meet and Greet sessions are held twice a year with local BAME community groups Dedicated £50,000 funding to advance race equality activities
Race Equality Charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abertay University and the University of Dundee hold a Bronze Race Equality Charter

4.3.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership

Since 2015, many universities have transferred accountability and leadership of EDI out of the HR function and into the academic management realm, while retaining EDI expertise and management within HR. This is in line with the approach being taken by the University of St Andrews. This type of structure requires collaboration between the academic lead and the Corporate EDI lead.

While titles of the academic leads are confusing because there is not a one-to-one mapping of title to level of seniority across all UK universities, broadly speaking universities fall into one of two groups concerning the leadership of EDI work:

- those who have an Executive Board level member with Diversity and Inclusion in their title

- and those who do not.

Some institutions also have one or more Council EDI champions. However, it is worth noting that the FTE percentage attached to the EDI part of many of these roles is often so low as to question the extent to which it is meaningful.

As is the aim at the University of St Andrews, many universities have publicly available EDI Strategies and action plans for gender equality, race equality, attainment gap reduction. There has also been a move to include reference to inclusion and diversity in many strategy statements, but the extent to which this implies meaningful priority as opposed to broad intent is reportedly varied. Some organisations have KPIs associated with EDI work, most often attainment gaps, staff representation (BAME and female professors), and student access and participation targets.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations

Our key recommendations are set out in Table 5.

Timescales are estimated as follows:

- Short-term – within the next six months
- Medium-term – 2022/23 Academic Year
- Long-term – beyond 2022/23

Table 5 – Summary of Recommendations

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
1.	Raise the profile of race and ethnicity priorities in published strategies, documents and on the website	Short-term	✓		✓
2.	Working with Professors from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, facilitate discussions to explore ways to increase representation in academic leadership roles from existing resources	Short-term	✓		✓
3.	Provide a guide on the roles and responsibilities of different EDI groups, including documenting and enhancing the communication channels between the Central EDI Team, Schools and Student representatives	Short-term	✓	✓	
4.	Conduct an internal review of current policies around recruitment, promotion and the complaints process to ensure that there is no direct or indirect discrimination built into these policies. The review will need to include an assessment of compliance against these policies and procedures	Short-term	✓	✓	✓
5.	Define a clear structure for the SRC elected BAME officer, School Presidents, BAME students network group, and SA officers to work together. Facilitate a discussion between the Students' Association and University officers (led by the Director of Student Experience and Director of Student Services) to enhance partnership working, ensuring that this is effective and efficient – working to common goals, avoiding duplication, and maximising the use of available resources.	Short-term	✓	✓	✓

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
	<p>The engagement should explore the opportunities and barriers to working together.</p> <p>There is a fundamental need for clarity in roles and responsibilities to facilitate joint working and avoid misconceptions.</p>				
6.	<p>Update Module Evaluation Questionnaires to include a question on the diversity of the curriculum. MEQs currently request information on whether the course is engaging, enjoyable, meaningful, rewarding.</p> <p>Additional question – was the curriculum diverse enough? What are the examples that demonstrate this diversity? This inclusion could inspire a focus on inclusivity across a range of areas.</p>	Short-term		✓	✓
7.	<p>Establish Open forums/facilitated workshops for discussions on race and ethnicity</p> <p>– facilitated discussion, exploring differences, managing expectations around differences, working together to achieve change.</p>	Short-term		✓	✓
8.	<p>Establish a communications campaign linking activities in Schools, Central EDI race and ethnicity work, and the establishment of the One St Andrews initiative.</p> <p>This may be linked to a wider University Communication Strategy (<i>outside the scope of the current review</i>)</p>	Short-term	✓	✓	✓
9.	<p>Establish forums to speak and share best practice from within Faculties, Schools and Units – with a clear focus on sharing actions, outputs and outcomes.</p>	Short-term		✓	✓
10.	<p>Arrange temporary academic buy-out to enable academics to take part in work related to race and ethnicity, in addition to Athena Swan. There is a need to ensure that existing arrangements are applied consistently.</p> <p>This includes the agreement to provide 0.1 FTE to members of the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team (REC-SAT) in addition to the allowance in the workload model of up to 20% of time.</p>	Short-term		✓	✓

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
11.	Update the Report and Support Tool to include a category on Race and Ethnicity to enable full reporting, with sub-categories associated with the current themes around microaggressions, discrimination and hate crime.	Short-term		✓	✓
12.	Actively promote work undertaken to decolonise the curriculum as exemplars of best practice Publicise and support the implementation of the inclusive curriculum toolkit https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/inclusivecurriculum/ In line with promotion of inclusive curriculum initiatives, develop web pages which include examples of best practice, in order to support the application processes (for both staff and students).	Short-term		✓	✓
13.	Establish partnerships with neighbouring universities, and institutions further afield to build capacity of staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to take part in recruitment and promotion panels. <i>EDI leads stress that there is a requirement for clarity where the University acknowledges that external participants have been brought in to take part in the recruitment process. Also noted that the inclusion of diverse views should be from the start of the recruitment and selection process - e.g. from the design of job descriptions.</i>	Medium-term		✓	✓
14.	Review existing training offerings and identify gaps. The current assessment from this review indicates the need to provide specific anti-racism training including ally and bystander training (building on the current pilot), microaggression training, and training in facilitating and taking part in structured conversations about race at work. In general, training and development should be focused around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> raising awareness and changing attitudes reinforcing positive attitudes and the values of diversity 	Medium-term		✓	✓

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviours • rationale and benefits of change. <p>Ensure protected time to both take part in training, and take part in the conversations that will arise as a result.</p>				
15.	Establish bespoke training for PGR students	Medium-term		✓	✓
16.	<p>Pump-prime infrastructure projects to promote a sense of belonging and wellbeing among staff and students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, building on the information sharing on services available in the local community and further afield.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This pump-priming will be an extension of the current Community Engagement Fund. • There is a requirement to maximise the use of the infrastructure already available - e.g. the Sports Centre, Chaplaincy, Students Association building • Consideration to be given to the allocation of space at Guardbridge (i.e. potential lease space). • Potential to create links with the One St Andrews Initiative – working with private commercial lease holders to supplement rent to support services that serve a term-time only customer base. • Options to work with the Chamber of Commerce and St Andrews West Project. 	Medium - term		✓	✓
17.	<p>For a defined, finite period (estimated at up to 2 Academic Years), establish a scheme to support students to take part in race and ethnicity work linked to the Race Equality Charter self-assessment.</p> <p>This is in recognition of the need to increase levels of activity to reach equity with Athena Swan as part of the Race Equality Charter work; and noting the increased workload that will result due to the limited number of participants available to undertake this work.</p>	Medium-term		✓	✓

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
18.	<p>Acknowledge and recognise work on Equality and Diversity initiatives within the Performance Management and Promotion processes.</p> <p>Noted that this requirement is included in the Academic Review Development Scheme, but not in the Professional Services performance management documentation. There is a need to emphasise both <i>inclusion</i> of this requirement within all performance management documentation and <i>consistent application</i> when going through the appraisal cycle.</p>	Medium-term		✓	✓
19.	<p>Establish and publicise Staff and Student Behaviour frameworks, including behaviours around recognising, embedding, and valuing diversity (which could be built into the ongoing work on developing a competency framework).</p> <p>Ensure that performance against behaviours is included as a factor in promotion and performance management as part of job competency (staff); and student feedback/reporting mechanisms (as part of the basic curriculum).</p> <p>The potential for this to be an OSDS project has been highlighted.</p>	Medium-term		✓	✓
20.	<p>Raise the profile of One St Andrews as part of the University's commitment to its Civic Mission (as defined in the UPP Foundation Report¹²)</p>	Medium-term (following launch)	✓	✓	✓
21.	<p>Implement reciprocal mentoring (also referred to as learning partnerships) in recognition of the enhanced learning that could result. This arrangement should include all levels of the University's hierarchy.</p>	Medium-term		✓	✓
22.	<p>Establish an allocation within Academic Workload Model focused around Race and Ethnicity citizenship (i.e. a variant on the existing allocation for Corporate initiatives). Ensure that this is applied consistency across</p>	Medium-term		✓	✓

¹² <https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Civic-University-Commission-Final-Report.pdf>

Ref.	Recommendation	Timescales (Short, Medium, Long-term)	LINK TO KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY		
			Strategy and Governance	Process and Operations	People and Culture
	Faculties and Schools, not just for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups.				
23.	Update the EDI webpages, and the website more generally, with video/visual profiles of staff and students – “ <i>who, we are, what we do, what we like etc. etc.</i> ” bringing working and studying at the University of St Andrews to life for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.	Medium-term	✓	✓	✓
24.	Introduce positive action fellowships and scholarships to increase representation	Long-term		✓	✓

6. Conclusion

At the start of this review, the University asked for an objective view on:

- Whether the University is doing the right things – strategically, operationally and culturally?
- Whether there is more that the University should be doing (against the same three parameters)?
- An Assessment of progress made over the last three years of the People Strategy
- Whether meaningful plans are in place to support the development of the next People Strategy (2023 to 2028); including baselining the current approach to Race and Ethnicity as a starting point for the new strategy?

Our assessment is that the University shows a number of strengths, and good potential – especially across two of the three elements reviewed – strategy and governance; operation and process.

There are issues around consistency, communication, involvement, and a commitment to invest in long-term sustained change linked to race and ethnicity, and this is impacting on the People and Culture element in particular.

The University advised that:

- It wants to raise the profile of racial equity work towards that of Athena Swan
- It wants to apply for the Race Equality Charter.

We would ask the University to ask of itself three key questions:

1. Does the University really want to change? Or does it want to maintain the status quo relating to who we are, what we are, what we stand for?
2. Recognising that “*where we are*” means low levels of racial and ethnic diversity, what mechanisms are we willing to put in place to support staff and students from minority ethnic groups already in the institution, to enhance their sense of belonging?
3. Do we *really* aim to bring the priority for race and ethnicity to the level of gender? If this is not our aim, what are the consequences of this decision? If this is our aim, are we willing to commit the time and resources?

Assuming that the fundamental response to these questions is that the University is willing to implement change to achieve its stated strategic commitment, the recommendations set-out in Section 5, should provide a focus for continuous improvement, in line with the University’s stated strategic priorities.

7. Appendices

Appendix A

Contacts and Acknowledgements

Meetings attended

- Central EDI Committee
- People and Diversity Assurance Group (PDAG)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities Students' Network
- Race, Ethnicity, Religious and Belief Group

One-to-one discussions with over 20 key stakeholders from committees, strategic leadership, Corporate and Faculty EDI leaders, and student representatives

Focus Group Summary

36 participants (23 females and 13 males) attended focus groups between 11th February and 11th March. The table below provides an overview of participants.

Category of participants	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic participants	White
Undergraduate Students	5	0
Masters Students	3	0
PhD Students	4	0
Professional Services Staff	4	8
Academic/Research	5	7

Appendix B(i). Social Contract Template



Example Social contract

This group agreement is designed to help you discuss your expectations for the group work activity, and also help you hold each other accountable. It is a living document; therefore, it may change over the course of the semester as your group work evolves. Students are asked to agree or amend the following statements and return a copy to the module coordinator.

We [group name] agree to adhere to the following guidelines when engaging in group work.

- We include all group members in meetings, group chats, messages, and social events.
- We turn up on time to meetings and lectures.
- We pay attention and contribute to group discussions.
- We contribute equally to the group tasks.
- We listen to each other's opinions.
- We share ideas and do not disregard other people's thoughts or feelings.
- We are respectful towards one another and treat each other with care and courtesy.
- We complete tasks on time and to the best of our ability.
- We do not make assumptions about individual abilities.

Groups may also wish to consider meeting frequency and logistics, for example:

- How often will you meet?
- How will you arrange meetings?
- How/where will you meet (e.g. Teams)?
- How will you ensure participation across remote and in-person students?
- How will you record discussions and actions?
- Will you take on specific roles in the group, or will these rotate (e.g. meeting chair)?

Appendix B(ii). Example of customisation of Social Contract

Undergraduate example:

As part of the Group [] team in the [] module, I will:

- I. Participate in group work and engage with the module (including lectures, readings, tutorials and group sessions) to the best of my ability.
- II. Actively listen to and respect my teammates, providing constructive feedback and keeping an inclusive mindset.
- III. Follow through on commitments in both group and individual work, meetings, etc.
- IV. Be understanding of others' limitations (particularly covid-related) and be flexible in the event that a group member is unable to complete a task and requires help or reassignment of group work.
- V. Communicate effectively with my team members (asking for help in a timely manner, providing updates on individual work, sharing important documents or information, responding to messages where necessary)
- VI. Treat all group members and contributions as equal and important, and make no assumptions about abilities.
- VII. Arrange meetings via a chat or email chain that is accessible to everyone, and ensure that options are available for those who require a Teams function.
- VIII. Keep track of my individual work in whatever way works best for me so that in group sessions I can show my contributions and provide ideas for discussion.

Postgraduate example (there is an additional language clause in this one to account for the international cohort):

We, Team [], agree to adhere to the following guidelines when engaging in group work.

- We communicate in English as a common, shared language. We are mindful that English is not everyone's first language and remember to speak clearly, slowly, and speak up if we don't understand.
- We include all group members in meetings, group chats, messages, and social events.
- We turn up on time to meetings and lectures. We agree on timing and deadlines.
- We pay attention and contribute to group discussions. We strive to make everyone feel included and heard.
- We contribute equally to the group tasks.

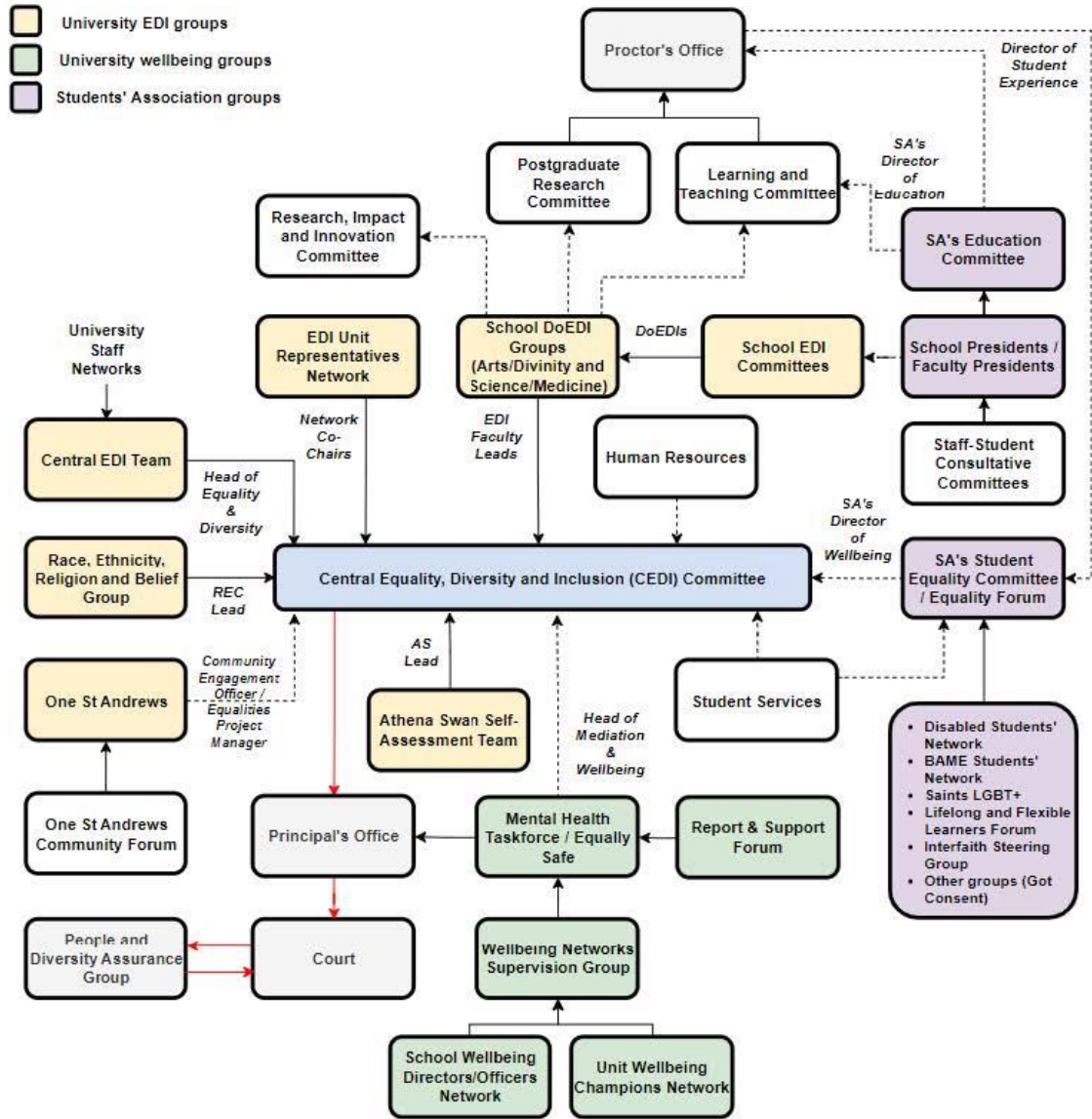
- We listen to each other's opinions and remain open to different perspectives. We don't make decisions solely on majority votes but, instead, work together to find common ground and consensus.
- We share ideas and do not disregard other people's thoughts or feelings.
- We are respectful towards one another and treat each other with care and courtesy.
- We do not make assumptions about individual abilities. We work together to be clear of each other's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that we are using our strengths in any given task or scenario.
- We don't hesitate to speak up when we feel we are struggling or would benefit from help.

Reliability, Clear Communication, Understanding and Working with our Strengths and Weaknesses

We meet together twice a week on Teams. We will agree together on set days and times to meet each week. We will arrange our meetings through Teams and WhatsApp. We understand the need to compromise and take into account team members in different time zones. We will alternate between members to keep team meeting minutes and notes. We may record sessions on Teams to ensure we can look back and reflect on team discussion. We will rotate equally each week for the short presentation, taking into account if any team member has a high workload or prior commitments that interfere with this.

Appendix C – Current Governance Framework

University EDI structures map: CEDI Committee meeting chaired by Prof. Brown, 7 October 2021.



Appendix D. References

UUK Report on Tackling Racial Harassment in Higher Education, November, 2020
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/tackling-racial-harassment>

UPP [University Partnerships Programme] Foundation Civic University Commission, 2018. *Truly Civic: Strengthening the connection between universities and their places* <https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Civic-University-Commission-Final-Report.pdf>



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