

EDI Committee Meeting

5th July 10-12 noon, room 4.10

Present: Francesco Caselli (Chair, FC), Nava Ashraf (NA), Maitreesh Ghatak (MG), Dimitra Petropoulou (DP), Gilat Levy (GL), Lorna Severn (LS), Rachael Meager (RM)

In attendance: Andy Wilson (AW), Canishk Naik (CN), Nico Rosetti (NR), Arnaud Dyevre (AD), Ola Aboukhsaiwan (OA).

FC asked everybody to introduce themselves and invited the DICE participants to discuss their initiatives and actions.

1. DICE Presentation (CN & AD)

CN informed the Committee that DICE is made up of 15 PhD students and 3 members of the Faculty. It was set up in 2020 with two main purposes: to review and help redesign the undergraduate curriculum and become involved in the Economics PhD Applicant Mentoring Programme (AMP).

Reviewing the curriculum in Economics is still a 'work in progress.' DICE aims to make economics more accessible, comprehensible, and inclusive for students, so they can relate and connect with the subject, and appreciate its real-world relevance. The group explained the main principles behind their review process and invited feedback from the Committee.

DICE had secured School funding for 100 hours of curriculum-review work in the current year.

FC enquired whether 100 hours would be enough for the execution of the task and suggested that the Department may be able to offer additional support. The committee invited DICE to prepare a report of its past and planned activities in the area of curriculum review, including needed resources. It was further suggested that DICE seeks the input of EDEN and that it involves the UG EDI representatives.

AD presented the *Applicant Mentoring Programme*. The Programme was initiated in October 2020 in collaboration with partner universities. He explained to the Committee how the programme works, provided key statistics and information about mentors and mentees, their backgrounds, the frequency of their meetings and their outcomes. AD asked the Committee to provide funding for an AMP Administrator for the equivalent of a 0.1/0.2 FTE position. The members of the Committee expressed their appreciation of the DICE's work and emphasised its importance. FC suggested emailing PhD students' supervisors to commend their good work.

Action: FC to explore the feasibility of funding an AMP Administrator & to email PhD students' supervisors

2. Junior Recruitment (JR)

The committee discussed progress by the working group (GL/MG/RM) tasked with preparing a report on EDI considerations in Junior Recruitment, to be presented to the department at the October Department meeting. GL confirmed that data sets from HR, the Department and the software Head-Hunter had been received, but the data was not in an easy-to-analyse format. However, she was still confident that the working group was on track to produce a document containing a conceptual framework based on a review of theoretical papers, empirical evidence, previous and current policies of the School & Department and JR Committee's papers, including any other relevant documentation or data. The document was expected to be a 'work in progress' with some 'soft recommendations'.

Given the data challenges encountered by the working group, NA offered to join the group to spread the load more widely.

3. **Departmental Culture:** LS/NA/DP

The committee heard further from the working group on Departmental Culture. LS reported results from a survey conducted by her in the PSS team. Its outcome shows that several PSS would like to see more appreciation and respect for their work and improved communication with Faculty. A significant part of the problem appeared to be a lack of understanding on the part of some members of the faculty of the work and role that some of the PS colleagues perform. She noted that this was a one-sided survey as Faculty did not participate.

The survey results were discussed at some length. All faculty members should understand that PSS works with them, not for them. It was thought that introducing induction sessions in which new members of the Department could meet those members of the PSS staff they'd most likely to interact with could lead to a mutually more friendly relationship. In particular it was felt this would give these colleagues a better understanding of the crucial role PS staff play in the department.

It was further agreed that the Committee should try to foster a culture of appreciation, in which colleagues routinely send each other positive and thankful messages in appreciation of each other's cooperation. The idea of joint activities with Faculty and PSS was also floated.

Actions: AW to organize induction meetings for new faculty; FC and other members of the committee to encourage colleagues to proactively show appreciation for colleagues' work.