

# Equality Office

Celebrating Diversity, Advancing Equality, Promoting Inclusion

Issue 6, March 2017

News

## Who We Are

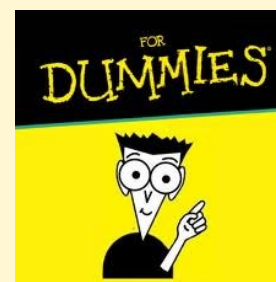
Welcome to the Equality Office update! We have had a very productive few months working on a range of projects and continuing to support staff and students at the University through training events and one-to-one consultations. Our ongoing work includes advising on legal requirements and good practice; developing policies and implementing action plans; monitoring and reporting progress against equality goals; celebrating diversity and raising awareness through events. You can find our contact details at the end of this newsletter. Enjoy!

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) History Month



In February, the Equality Office hosted a number of events to celebrate LGBT History Month, an annual event which aims to promote equality and diversity for the benefit of the public by: Increasing the visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, their history, lives and their experiences; raising awareness and advancing education on matters affecting the LGBT community; working to make educational and other institutions safe spaces for all LGBT communities and, promoting the welfare of LGBT people.

### LGBT for Dummies



### LGBT Symposium: Minority within a Minority

**What is it like to be gay in an ethnic minority, or be part of a religious community that doesn't condone your sexual orientation?**

These were just some of the big questions that were asked as part of our lively panel debate 'Minority within a Minority', which took place on the 22 February as part of LGBT History Month.



The event's key speakers revealed the challenges and opportunities they believe minority groups within LGBT communities face in everyday life.

The panel included 'LGBT champions' from disability, cultural and religious groups, as well as charities and organisations that work with the community. For more information, visit our [StaffNet](#) pages.

### The Chair of the LGBT Staff Network, Michael Wilkinson, led a

presentation on the history and culture of LGBT issues in the UK from the middle ages to present day. This was followed by an engaging discussion with participants.

### The Danish Girl



We screened this beautiful and remarkable love story inspired by the true story of real-life Danish painter Einar Wegener who, in 1931, became the first man to undergo a sex-change operation.

We screened **The New Black Documentary** which tells the story of how the African-American community is grappling with the gay rights issue in light of the recent gay marriage movement and the fight over civil rights. It was followed by an interesting discussion with audience participants led by Julia Warrener Academic Lead for Social Work at the University of Hertfordshire.



# What We've Been Doing

## Launch of the Dignity and Respect Advisors

We are delighted to announce the Equality Office has launched a team of 12 trained Dignity and Respect Advisors. These advisors can be approached as a first point of contact for any staff or students who feel they are experiencing bullying and or harassment at the university. The advisors will offer you a friendly ear and equip you with the knowledge you need to make informed decisions. [Meet the Dignity and Respect Advisors](#)

### UH Dignity and Respect Advisors



Nicola Grace  
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## International Women's Day, March 2017

International Women's Day (IWD) celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of

women around the world. The University is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion through initiatives such as the Athena SWAN charter and uses IWD to draw attention to women's achievements whilst exploring the issues they face. We worked together with the Schools of Law, Criminology and Political Science; Life and Medical Sciences; Humanities, and Health and Social Work to offer a programme which included a panel discussion on women's global issues and various talks on issues such as: confidence; domestic violence; eating disorders; representations of the female body in magazines, and gender and leadership. [Full programme of events](#)

## Equality & Diversity Annual Report

The Equality Act 2010 states that public authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty. The duty aims to make sure public authorities consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. We have a specific duty to annually publish information in an accessible way that demonstrates the university's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty to include at least one specific measurable objective.

Read the university's 2016 [Equality & Diversity Annual Report](#).  
For more information on [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)



## Disability Guidance

We have updated all our disability guidance for staff and line managers. It includes information on how to disclose a disability, what support and advice is available, reasonable adjustments, university processes and funding. [More information on Staffnet](#)

## What We're Working On



### Athena SWAN

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) allocates [Athena SWAN](#) Awards to Universities and Academic Schools who show evidence of commitment to the promotion of gender equality in HE. The University, alongside 5 of its Schools (Computer Science; Health and Social Work; Life and Medical Sciences; Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics and the School of Engineering and Technology) have all achieved Bronze status. The Equality Office are currently supporting 3

Schools (Creative Arts, Humanities and Business) to submit their applications for Bronze Awards and the School of Health and Social Work to submit their application for a Silver Award with results published in November 2017.

### Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Month

#### Richard O'Neill the Story Teller

We are delighted to host a morning with Richard O'Neill, a master storyteller, raised in the nomadic tradition by a family who travelled all over the country. Having learned his storytelling from the very best traditional Romany and North Country storytellers, Richard blends the old and new producing and telling unique, exciting and original stories for adults and children of all ages. In an entertaining and informative talk, he will share his personal experiences, explore the use of language, challenge some common myths and consider how educational establishments can be inclusive and supportive of the travelling community.



**Tuesday 6 June, 10:00-13:00, R115 de Havilland Campus**

**2 September 2017**

**Gadebridge Park**

**Hemel Hempstead**



The Equality Office will be holding a stall at Herts Pride to show our commitment to equality and the LGBT community. People will be able to collect a goodie pack of Equality Office Merchandise and have access to a wealth of information on the services we provide to our staff and students. If you would like to volunteer to help at the event, please contact the [Equality Office](#).

### INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA

**MAY 17** A Worldwide Celebration of Sexual and Gender Diversities



International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia is observed on May 17 and aims to raise awareness of LGBT rights.

The Equality Office will be working together with the Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust to hold a day Seminar dubbed 'The Voice of Parents', which will include workshops and keynote speakers.

**Wednesday 17 May, A154, Lindop Building, College Lane Campus**

Book you ticket at [Eventbrite](#)

### Equality Impact Assessments



The Equality Office will be carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) across the university. An EIA is a tool which ensures the university's policies, practices and decisions are fair, meet the needs of all our staff/students and do not inadvertently discriminate against any protected group.

### Work/Life Balance Coaching Session

People in the UK currently work the longest hours in Europe. This affects both men and women who struggle to find ways to balance work and family life.

Join the Working Parents' Network for a session with work/life balance coach Laura Davidson, Dean from the School of Health and Social Work. The aim of this session is to discuss one of the main challenges UH parents reported they face, ensuring a good work/life balance.

**4 April 12:00-13:00, 3J022 New Science Building (College Lane)**

Contact [Sarah Goler-Solecki](#) if you would like to attend.



### Film Screenings

We will be screening a number of films over the coming months to raise awareness of the diverse community in which we all work and study to include:

[Still Alice](#), [Fences](#), [Lion](#), [Hidden Figures](#), [Moonlight](#), [Amour](#), [A Monster Calls](#) and [Dear White People](#)

Details will be available on [StaffNet](#)



**Carers Week** is an annual campaign that raises awareness of caring, the challenges that carers face and recognises the contribution they make. This year we will be screening the film 'Amour' which follows the story of retired music teachers Georges and Anne, who face their greatest challenge when Anne suffers a debilitating stroke. We will also be offering preferential rates to those staff who are carers to have a bespoke massage geared to relieve individuals of everyday stresses whilst boosting their energy levels.

Contact [Jo Prescott](#) for more information

# Training Opportunities

## Cultural Awareness

12 April 2017, 13:30-16:30, Evolution Room 2, MacLaurin

16 May 2017, 13:30-16:30, Wo42, Law Court Building, de Havilland

9 June 2017, 09:30-12:30, Evolution Room 2, MacLaurin

4 July 2017, 13:30-16:30, Evolution Room 2, MacLaurin

Booking is via your [HR Core Portal](#).



The course aims to increase participants' awareness of the ways in which cultural difference can create barriers to effective communication and identify working practices which facilitate greater understanding of different cultures. Participants learn practical ways of reducing the chances of being misunderstood, or misreading signals from others and develop a greater understanding of cultural practice. By the end of the course participants will be able to use appropriate language to describe race and culture; apply the University of Hertfordshire's expectations with regard to working with diverse employees and students; recognise how cultural beliefs may affect relationships at work and employ strategies to facilitate cross cultural communication.

## Unconscious Bias Workshops



26 Apr 2017, 13:00-14:30 or 15:00-16:30, C402

18 May 2017, 13:00-14:30 or 15:00-16:30, W125

12 Jun 2017, 13:00-14:30 or 15:00-16:30, E351

These workshops support our work towards embedding an inclusive culture at the University of Hertfordshire by equipping participants with the tools to recognize and address bias in their

interactions with prospective and existing staff and students.

The 90 min workshop is open to all staff and can be booked through your [HR Core Portal](#).

## Equality & Diversity Essentials Workshop

Covers the fundamental aspects of equality and diversity, current legislation, individual rights and responsibilities within a higher education context, understanding discrimination and identifying barriers affecting different groups of people.

22 Mar 2017      12 June 2017

11 Apr 2017      11 Jul 2017

17 May 2017

All workshops take place in Evolution Room 2, MacLaurin Booking is via your [HR Core Portal](#).

## Dignity and Respect: Dealing with Bullying and Harassment



This Interactive Workshop aims to raise awareness of workplace bullying and harassment and the University's policy to deal with it. It also explores the complexities of identifying and dealing with incidents when they arise.

5 April 13:30-16:30

31 May 09:30-12:30

21 June 13:30-16:30

10 July 09:30-12:30

All workshops take place in Evolution Room 2, MacLaurin. Booking is via your [HR Core Portal](#).

## Online module: Diversity in the Workplace

Provides information and guidance on equality and diversity issues, legislation, rights and responsibilities and the negative effects of discrimination.

Available to all staff.

## Staff Networks

Staff Networks provide an informal and safe space where staff can be themselves and discuss issues/challenges of specific interest that have an effect on them at work. They provide an opportunity for staff to share: ideas and knowledge; advise and experiences; good working practice and peer support with one another. Networks can also act as a platform for groups to have a voice within the university, increasing awareness of 'what it's like to be in my shoes'. **More Information on [Staffnet](#)**

### Disability Network Launch



We are launching a Disability network which aims to facilitate peer support and advice around working/ studying with a disability at the university.

Contact [Jo Prescott](#) for more information

### BME Network



The Black and Minority Ethnic Network is open to all staff who identify as being BME or who have an interest in race

and want to discuss issues of specific interest that have an effect on them at work.

Contact [Nathan Ghann](#) for more information

### Working Parents' Network



The Working Parents' Network provides an opportunity for staff/students who are parents to meet and discuss the challenges of maintaining a work-life balance whilst pursuing a career and raising children.

Contact [Sarah Goler-Solecki](#) for more information

### Carers' Network



The Carers' Network is a peer support group where staff/students can come along and discuss issues they face balancing work/ studying with their caring responsibilities.

Contact [Jo Prescott](#) for more information

### LGBT Network



The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Network gives staff the opportunity to socially meet up with other LGBT colleagues at the university in an LGBT exclusive environment.

Contact [Michael Wilkinson](#) for more information

## Who We Are

Min Rodriguez;  
Head of Equality,  
Diversity and  
Inclusion



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Legal and policy advice; training opportunities; the Race Equality Charter Mark.

Sarah Bowes-Phipps  
Equality Officer



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Coordination of Dignity and Respect Advisers network and UH Coach. **(Currently on maternity leave. Please contact Jo Prescott in her absence.)**

Joanne Prescott;  
Equality Officer



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Network activities and memberships; equality and diversity events.

Sarah Goler Solecki;  
Athena SWAN  
Officer



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Gender equality and Athena SWAN.

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