

Equality Office

Celebrating Diversity, Advancing Equality, Promoting Inclusion

Issue 4, May 2016

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!

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 4 of its Schools (Computer Science; Health and Social Work; Life and Medical Sciences; Physics, Astronomy and Mathematics) achieved Bronze status in November 2014.



Currently, all Schools within the University are working on implementing existing, or creating new actions, that will support staff and students achieve their full potential. Actions address a range of issues, including the absence of women from senior academic, professional and support roles, and the discriminatory treatment often experienced by trans people.

We expect all 10 academic Schools at the University to have applied for at least Bronze Awards by November 2016. In April 2016, the School of Engineering and Technology submitted their Bronze application and the school of Life and Medical Sciences submitted their Silver application. The School of Health and Social work will apply for Silver in November.

Athena SWAN actions have had proven impact on staff and students at the University. For example, the School of Life and Medical Sciences have increased the proportion of women on the School's Research Executive Group from 18% to 44%; they have also initiated a new Leadership Potential Scheme (Leap) to provide managerial and business planning skills to staff, enabling them to become future academic and research leaders. The School of Engineering and Technology have set up a *Keeping In Touch (KIT) days buddying scheme* to support colleagues on parental leave; they have also developed a new Biomedical Engineering course to increase the pipeline of females into Engineering. The Schools of Health and Social Work, and Life and Medical Sciences, have teamed up to host a series of events, which include menopause awareness sessions, a working parents network launch, international Women/Men's day celebrations, and work/life balance sessions.

Centrally, the Equality Office has established an [Athena SWAN Champions network](#), to support all 10 colleagues (AKA Athena SWAN Champions) from across the University who are leading Athena SWAN within their Schools, and provide them with a space to share good practice. The [Women in STEMM Network](#) has been actively supporting colleagues and research students, by continuing to organise talks on External Roles colleagues hold which enhance their academic careers. On the 27th of April, the Network invited [Professor Averil Macdonald](#) OBE to talk to colleagues from across the University about career progression and achieving promotion.

Did you Know?

"A higher proportion of female qualifiers (72.5%) received Firsts/2.1s than male qualifiers (67.3%).

[How do we support young men in HE?"](#)

What We've Been Doing



Women in STEMM

Professor Averil Macdonald OBE, talks about Gender Equality

The UH Women in STEMM Network was delighted to welcome Professor Averil Macdonald on the 27th of April.

Professor Macdonald talked to colleagues from across our academic Schools about promoting gender equality in HE, and shared some tips relating to career progression and achieving promotion. Professor Macdonald highlighted the importance of acknowledging that individuals have different sources of 'jouissance': that they derive pleasure from different types of contributions, something that needs to be acknowledged during the appraisal process.

Further discussions focused on the importance of 'dressing for the job you want, rather than the job you have', viewing the process of applying and being interviewed for posts as valuable practice that will help secure future posts, the value of visibility and exposure for promotion, and the importance of defining one's role and carving out one's own space. Professor Macdonald also drew attention to the disadvantage of employing the term 'only' when describing working patterns, advocating the replacement of "I only work part-time" with "I work prime time".



International Women's Day March 8

To celebrate International Women's day, we gave staff and students the opportunity to grab some lunch and enjoy the truly inspirational film Suffragette which chronicled the movement to secure voting rights for women.



Dementia Awareness Week 15-21 May Inside Out of Mind Film Screening

In conjunction with the Hertfordshire Year of Mental Health and led by Hertfordshire Public Health and the Health and Wellbeing Board, we screened a film of the play 'Inside Out of Mind'. A deeply touching, funny and unique play exploring life on a dementia ward from the perspective of the patients, the staff and visitors. The event was extremely well attended and invoked an emotionally charged atmosphere in the auditorium. Guests were invited to ask questions to a panel of health care experts and one of the actors from the play. It was evident that guests felt the play had dealt with many of the issues surrounding dementia in an honest and sympathetic way.



Hate Crime

The Equality Office attended hate crime training with Hertfordshire constabulary. Staff and students can now come to us to report incidents of hate crime without having to go directly to the police.

LGBT History Month February 2016

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month is an annual programme which celebrates the lives and achievements of the LGBT community.

We screened the intense and gripping thriller Imitation game, which explores the theme of sexuality in the main protagonist, Alan Turing, the man who cracked the Enigma code in World War 2. This was followed by an interactive study day 'Beyond Binary Sexuality and Gender'. Key speakers from Italy and the UK gave support to LGBTQI people and communities, focusing on themes such as challenge to discrimination, lived experience and enhancing resilience skills of LGBTQI people and communities. We finished the month with an evening extravaganza of drag, poetry, open mic and disco. There was certainly lots of outrageous comedy, laughter, and dancing.



What We're Working On



Equality Objectives and Operational Plan

We have been working towards creating our equality objectives for 2016-2020. Following a consultation with key stakeholders, the following 3 aims were identified:

- Being fair, transparent and visible
- Creating an inclusive environment
- Creating an inclusive culture.

Under each of these aims we have identified activities which will help us to achieve our aims, and will be embedded across the institution through new and existing initiatives. From these activities, we have selected three areas that require specific and measurable equality objectives. These are:

- Continue to work towards reducing the differential in degree attainment between White and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students.
- Increase the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff at senior levels (grades UH9 and above).
- Increase the proportion of female academic staff at senior levels (grades UH9 and above).

The Head of Equality, will be visiting each SBU to discuss what measures we need to take to achieve these objectives.

[More information on our objectives](#)



Carers Week June 2016

[Carers Week](#) is an annual campaign which aims to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges that carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK.

This year we will be working with [Families in Focus](#), an organisation who have over 20 years of experience. **They will offer a full day specialist workshop on the 23rd June** called: 'Complete Guide to parenting children with additional needs and handling anger in your family'.

On the 8th June we welcome the charity [Challenging Behaviour Foundation](#), a charity for people with severe learning disabilities, who work to improve understanding of challenging behaviour, empower families with information and support, and help others to provide better services and more opportunities. They will screen a short film 'Everybody Matters', which will be followed by a talk and Q&A session with a former UH student and champion of the charity. More information on [Staffnet](#)

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month, June 2016

Hertfordshire County Council are inviting UH staff to an event to celebrate GRT history and to raise awareness of GRT issues. There will be an exhibition of artwork from the local GFT community, a showing of Crystal's Vardo an informative play about discrimination against the community, and access to some education materials.

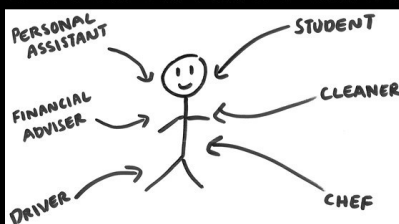
22 June 16:00-19:00, Focolare Centre Welwyn Garden City. To book your place:

Fiona.hutton@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Young Adult Carers

We are working together with a number of key stakeholders to raise awareness and highlight the problems young adult carers face at our university, and establish what we can do to help these students. We have been running a campaign on the TV screens across the campus to encourage young adult carers to come forward and let us know how they would like to see the university help them.

Do I Look Like I Care?



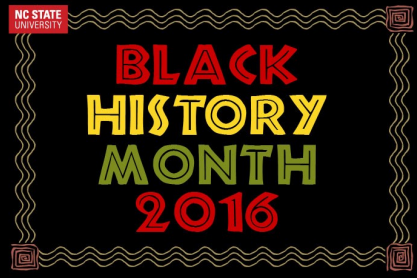
- Are you aged **14-25** and care, **unpaid**, for a friend or family member who could not cope without your support?
- Young Adult Carers have lots of extra responsibilities because they live with someone who is living with a physical or mental illness, disability or addiction.

If this describes you, please contact Jo Prescott in the Equality Office for an informal chat on how you would like to see the university supporting young adult carers.
j.prescott1@herts.ac.uk or 01707 289362

Did you Know?

1 in 8 adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers. By 2037, it's estimated that number will increase to 9 million.

What We're Working On



Black History Month October 2016

After last years successful programme of events for [Black History Month](#), we will be working on the 2016 programme over the summer. If you would like to help or have any ideas, please contact Jo Prescott j.prescott1@herts.ac.uk



We will be attending [Herts Pride](#) this year on **Saturday 3 September** at Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead. We will be showcasing our commitment to LGBT equality and handing out goodie bags with Equality Office merchandise.

Disability Guidelines

We are currently reviewing the UH staff disability guidelines to ensure they are up-to date and provide staff with accessible key information on the services, support and key contact people available to them. This information will be available on Staffnet.

Ask Herts

We have been working with LCS and now have a presence on Ask Herts. This is an ongoing project and new pages with helpful information and advice will be added.

Training Opportunities

Unconscious Bias Workshops

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.

13 June 2016, 13:00-14:30 or 15:00-16:30

7th July 2016, 09:30-11:30 or 11:30-13:00

18 July 2016, 09:30-11:00 or 11:30-13:00

B400, College Lane Campus.

Book your place through your HR Core Portal.

Bullying and Harassment Awareness Workshop

We will be recruiting Dignity and Respect Advisors in 2016/17 who will be appointed and fully trained by the Equality Office to deal with staff/student issues of bullying and harassment. Look out for training dates.

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.

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.

8 June 2016, Evolution Room 2

14 July 2016, Evolution Room 2

Booking is via your HR Core Portal. New dates for 2016/17 available shortly.

Gendered Intelligence

As part of our commitment to Athena Swan, we have offered a number of trans awareness workshops which have received excellent feedback with one person saying 'an excellent introduction to this topic'.

The workshop, led by [Gendered Intelligence](#), aims to raise awareness of trans identities, explores the key terms and uses of language around gender and sexual orientation, offers some insight into the legislation around the rights and responsibilities in relation to trans identities and explores how we can all ensure we are being trans-inclusive.

13 June, 10:00-13:00, C154 College Lane Contact Jo Prescott to book your place.

Could you be an investigator ?

We are looking to appoint Investigators whose role will be to carry out formal investigations of complaint cases at the university which fall under our disciplinary, grievance, student complaint, harassment and bullying and bribery and corruption policies. The role is voluntary and ongoing training will be provided to Investigators, but they must have attended the following training courses before undertaking any casework: Equality & Diversity Essentials and Unconscious Bias Awareness within the last 3 years. Bullying and Harassment Awareness (new workshop, available 2016/17) and Workplace Investigation Training. For more information on the role description, please contact equality@herts.ac.uk

Staff Networks

Keeping in Touch (KIT) Buddies

As part of the ongoing Athena SWAN project, the Equality Office conducted a series of interviews with individuals across the academic Schools to discuss the use of KIT days and identify ways of making their value and purpose more widely known. During the interviews, participants were asked to comment on the value of KIT days for them, and talk about what they did during these days.

Some of the Academic Schools have disseminated a report based on these interviews to line managers to ensure they are aware of the purpose and value of KIT days, and that they are in a position to help colleagues plan for these days.

On the back of the interviews, the Schools of Engineering and Technology, and Health and Social Work, created the role of 'KIT buddy' to further enhance support offered to parents during parental leave. The KIT buddies will be contacted by staff on parental leave at any point during their absence to talk about KIT planning.

The Equality Office has the following staff networks:

- LGBT
- Carers

Staff Networks are open to all staff and are led by interested members of staff. They seek to provide an informal peer-run environment for staff to network and discuss issues of specific interest that have an effect on them. They can provide information, support and act as a voice for staff.

More information on our [Staffnet Pages](#)

Launch of the Working Parents Network – 25th May 2016

The Schools of Health and Social Work (HSW), and Life and Medical Sciences (LMS) have teamed up to launch a new network for working parents. Participants are invited to share their experiences about family life and work balance, including planning a family, parental leave and dealing with childcare at different ages. We hope to have the opportunity to share idea and tips, and connect with others in the same position. For more information, please email Karin at k.friedli@herts.ac.uk.

Who We Are

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| Min Rodriguez; Head of Equality |  | m.rodriguez@herts.ac.uk 01707 284982 | Legal and policy advice; training opportunities; the Race Equality Charter Mark. |
| Sarah Bowes-Phipps Equality Officer |  | s.e.bowes-hipps@herts.ac.uk 01707 289362 | Gender equality and Athena SWAN (interim cover) Deputy Head of Equality, coordination of Dignity and Respect Advisers network and UH Coach. |
| Joanne Prescott; Equality Officer |  | j.prescott@herts.ac.uk 01707 289362 | Network activities and memberships; equality and diversity events. |
| Katerina Finnis; Athena SWAN Officer |  | k.finnis@herts.ac.uk 01707 284817 | Gender equality and Athena SWAN. |