

# 'Listen!'

University of Salford Equality and Diversity Strategy

2012/16

DRAFT

***“Confucius said, 5 centuries before Christ, “do not do unto others what you would not like them to do to you”***

***When in Jerusalem “in that tortured city where you see these three faiths (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) jostling so uneasily together you also become aware of the profound connection between them”<sup>1</sup>***

***“For me, forgiveness and compassion are always linked: how do we hold people accountable for wrongdoing and yet at the same time remain in touch with their humanity enough to believe in their capacity to be transformed?”<sup>2</sup>***

***“It would be nice to feel that we are a better world, a world of more compassion and a world of more humanity, and to believe in the basic goodness of man.”<sup>3</sup>***

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<sup>1</sup> Karen Armstrong – TED 2008

<sup>2</sup> Bell Hooks - Author

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Walters - Journalist

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The University's Equality agreements:-

- Our Equality and Diversity Strategy 'Listen' is the overarching approach looking at how we will be delivering against our objectives. This document aims to explain how equality objectives have been determined, what improvements will be achieved and how progress will be measured over the next 4 years.
- The main driver behind the document is realising our vision  
"The University of Salford will be, by 2017, an outstanding University renowned for the quality of its engagement, humanity, global reach and leadership in research, innovation and education."

And our value of:

Diversity, humanity, fairness and respect

- We will ensure that the design, delivery and commissioning of programs and services are fair, equitable and accessible
- The document also outlines: a) compliance with the public sector equality duty, within the Equality Act 2010 b) improvement of the University's performance in relation to Equality and Diversity, as defined in our Key Performance Indicators
- Equality objectives have been devised following consideration of multiple information sources (equality monitoring, results of consultation and engagement with staff and students, collective understanding of the issues the protected groups in the University are facing).
- Equality objectives have been developed on a service level and form an integral part of the business planning process and although the objectives are set for 4 years, the actions and milestones will be reviewed annually in line with the business planning cycle to ensure they remain challenging and reflective of current developments and circumstances.
- Wherever possible the objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed), however, in some circumstances milestones rather than measurable targets have been used.

## **Section 1 - Overview of previous listen**

*“Respecting the value of people addresses unfair discrimination at its point of germination and promotes the development of a successful environment for work and study. Focusing on the merits that an individual brings to the university breaks away from the tendency to make normative assumptions about the inherent superiority of long-dominant groups”<sup>4</sup>*

Following on from the implementation of our first ‘Listen’ strategy in 2010/11, good progress has been made in our work on the equality and diversity agenda.

Some of the key developments have included:-

- Updating and progressing our work in relation to Equality Analysis, making continual review part of normal working
- Progression on implementation of the recommendations coming out of the two reports commissioned on LGBT and Disability issues.
- Becoming one of Stonewalls Top 100 employers
- Holding the first national conference sharing good practice re LGBT progression
- Celebrating Black History and LGBT months
- Development of an Independent Mediation Service
- Further consolidation and development of staff networks, the network of equality and diversity coordinators and new approaches to tackling bullying and harassment

In order to comply with the requirements of the Specific duties, to publish relevant equality statistics by January 2012, much work was undertaken in Governance Services Unit with the Support of the Planning and Performance Unit to produce a set of data that gave an overall profile of our staff and students relating to their protected characteristics. A comprehensive report was presented to Executive and Council for their approval and sign off of the recommendations.

The report can be found at: <http://www.equality.salford.ac.uk/monitoring>

Governance Services Unit also produced the Action Plan arising from our Listen! strategy. The action plan was integrated into a new planning process that will enable us to ensure that Equality and Diversity becomes an integral part of our business planning process and is not seen as a standalone issue. Following a six month review of the actions the progress is as below.

<b>Progressing as planned</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Concern</b>
<b>47</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>

A more comprehensive breakdown of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan can be found at: <http://www.equality.salford.ac.uk/plan>

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<sup>4</sup> VC Martin Hall

## **Section 2 – Theme of Compassion**

Compassion - sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others:<sup>5</sup>

Synonyms - benevolence, consideration, empathy, fellow feeling, grace, humanity, kindness, lenity, mercy, sympathy, tenderness,

This strategy 'Listen! II builds on the work of the first 'Listen!' equality and diversity strategy which "set out a programme for recognizing, respecting and enacting the opportunities brought to the university by the diversity of our students and staff."

Following on and building on the theme of listening, we are taking the theme of Compassion as our underpinning theme.

In 2008 Karen Armstrong a British author, won the TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) Prize and made her wish to the TED community to help her create, launch, and propagate a Charter for Compassion.

**"The principle of compassion** lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect".

**"We urgently need** to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community."<sup>6</sup>

Whilst this charter was born out of the need to bring world religions back to their route messages of compassion; what does the message of compassion, in its wider concept mean to us in the University of Salford?

Whilst the term compassion may not be one that is widely used within the University, examples of how it is put into practice throughout the different courses we offer are visible. For example, empathy is the underlining message and ethos for all those entering the College of Health and Social Care; we will be collating case studies throughout the year to highlight the different examples within the university around the theme of compassion, both from a personal perspective and within examples of our academic portfolio.

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<sup>5</sup> Oxford dictionary

<sup>6</sup> Excerpt from Charter for Compassion

## Section3 – Example of Compassion in Action

### Article 26 Project - opening the door to higher education for students seeking sanctuary

The University has launched, via the Student Information Directorate, the Article 26 Project, a project that highlights effectively how the University is putting the theme of compassion into practice.

Article 26 of the Human Rights Act 1998, states:

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

In partnership with the Helena Kennedy Foundation, the University is offering support for people who are seeking sanctuary to commence an undergraduate degree course starting from 2012.

The Helena Kennedy Foundation exists to overcome social injustice by providing financial bursaries, mentoring and support to disadvantaged students from the further and adult education sectors, enabling them to complete their studies in higher education and move on successfully into employment.

They do this by

- Taking **social action** to increase the number and enhance the value of bursaries awarded each year.
- Encouraging **social mobility** by increasing the range and types of student support available, particularly for talented students from non-traditional backgrounds.
- Promoting **social justice** by offering more opportunities for students and graduates to participate in peer mentoring, work shadowing, and personal skills training; and by extending the reach of our student support volunteers network

Their overall aim is to make a practical contribution to government policies on social justice, widening participation in education and equality and diversity.

The Article 26 project is aimed at students who will be either:

- An asylum-seeker, or the partner/dependent of an asylum-seeker; or
- A person or the partner/dependent of someone who sought asylum in the UK and has been granted temporary status, e.g. DLR (discretionary leave to remain) awarded on the basis of a claim for asylum.

If successful they will be provided with:

- Full tuition fee waiver by the University until such time as their status in the UK is resolved and they can access student finance
- A Personal Support Plan to enable them to identify and overcome barriers to achievement on their degree course
- Group support and training to cover topics including 'Minimising the impact of the Asylum Process on their higher education course'
- Further training and mentoring provided by the Helena Kennedy Foundation – which has 13 years' experience of supporting students. Examples of the training sessions include confidence building, interview skills, revision techniques, stress management and public speaking
- A small grant, if needed, to help with their travel and study costs

## **Section 4 - Events Calendar**

### **How will the events programme support the Listen! strategy?**

The events programme is a key mechanism through which the Listen! Strategy will be communicated to stakeholders. The programme for 2012-2013 aims to move engagement by our staff, students and local communities from the observing stage through to endorsing, contributing and owning the University's approach to equality and diversity. As such, the programme seeks to offer a diverse range of participatory opportunities that engage at different levels.

During 2012-2013 the events programme will be guided by the cross cutting theme of compassion. Activities will be informed by a desire to explore the meaning of and practical application of related concepts such as: awareness, understanding, empathy, listening, reflecting, justice, equity, respect and interdependence.

### **Audiences**

Vital to the successful application of the Listen! Strategy will be an understanding of who our audiences are. Audience development activity will therefore form an important part of our events programme development over the next year. We will work with Internal and Student Communications teams to identify appropriate methodologies, as well as exploring techniques such as ambassador schemes for harnessing the power of "word of mouth".

### **Structure**

The events programme offers the opportunity to develop a model for managing the Listen! events in the future. Events and projects should acknowledge and relate to the diversity of audiences within the scope of the Listen! strategy. We will offer a portfolio of events that work at different levels:

#### **Trailblazer Events**

- A series of high profile events aimed at raising awareness of the Listen! Strategy and the theme of Compassion to the University community and the external community

#### **Staff Network Events**

- More focused events that engage staff with specific issues
- Organised by the individual staff networks in response to the needs and interests of their members

### **Creative Engagement Programme (Internal)**

- Workshops and participatory projects aimed at encouraging staff to take ownership of the strategy and apply their learning to their own professional practice
- The programme will be delivered alongside meaningful consultation and partnership building with departments/units.

### **The Arts Programme**

- The Arts Programme has been developing and delivering creative engagement projects for 8 years and is a key tool for the University to communicate with the public. The exhibition, music, engagement and youth arts strategies already delivered by the team will contribute and support the core activities of the Listen! Strategy.
- The Arts Programme's various participatory projects will act as a focal point for engaging local communities with the issues being raised by the Listen! Strategy and offer knowledge exchange opportunities between the university and our neighbours
- The Arts Programme also has extensive experience of marketing events and projects and can support this crucial part of making the Listen! Strategy accessible and relevant to the widest audience.

### **Management**

#### **Events Steering Group<sup>7</sup>**

- Purpose:
  - To identify key themes/issues/opportunities
  - To decide on a programme of events
  - Individual members to take responsibility for specific areas of delivery if appropriate
  - To develop partnerships (internal/external) that will further the programme's aims & objectives

#### **Events Team/Arts Programme**

- Purpose:
  - To develop and deliver the events programme
  - To support the Staff Networks to deliver their own events
  - To design and deliver a marketing strategy for the programme

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<sup>7</sup> The Events Steering Group will be made up of Staff network , Events team, student representatives and will be chaired by GSU

## **Proposed Event Programme 2012-2013**

The following list is by no means an exhaustive list. Alternative Events will be programmed in as and when required.

### **Trailblazer Events**

A number of events are already in development for 2011/2012 based on models delivered last year. These events will be adapted to respond to the Year of Compassion theme whilst maintaining their distinct identities. In future years, the Trailblazer Event could evolve to encompass:

#### **LGBT History Month, February 2012**

- Storytelling workshop exploring the relationship between sexuality and other cultural identities. Participants will record stories using “guerrilla” writing techniques.

#### **Black History Month, October 2012**

- A conference exploring the relationship between compassion, faith and sexuality is currently being planned in partnership with organisations such as IMAAN, the LGBT charity supporting gay Muslims. The conference will aim to situate compassion within race, faith, gender and sexuality discourses.

### **Staff Network Events**

The networks are already developing their own programme of events but will be encouraged to incorporate the Year of Compassion themes. The steering group and events team will offer support in this.

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

- The national theme for Holocaust Memorial Day is “Speak Up; Speak Out”. Our event will therefore respond to this inherently compassionate theme by reflections being made on the many Holocausts (The Shoah, The Parajmos, The Gay Holocaust, the Disabled Holocaust) perpetrated by the Nazis and their resonance in a contemporary context.

#### **International Women’s Day, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

- This event will incorporate engagement with the *Global Peace Initiative of Women* supported by the Charter for Compassion.

#### **Desert Island Spirituality, April 2012**

### **Faith Forum Book Group**

- The group will initially read *12 Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong but will hopefully evolve into a long term group that engages with a wide range of equality & diversity related literature.

### **International Day for Disabled People, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2012**

### **International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia (IDAHO), 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

### **Creative Engagement Programme (Internal)**

The purpose of an internal creative engagement programme is to offer staff and students a range of meaningful opportunities to participate in dialogue and to contribute creative ideas to the Listen! Strategy. The programme will utilise arts based activities to engage audiences and will be rooted in the work of the University's Arts Programme. Projects will aim to offer medium to long term engagement opportunities with tangible outcomes e.g. exhibitions, presentations, etc.

The Creative Engagement Programme will work at two levels: Participatory Projects and creative events developed by the Arts Programme. In 2012/2013 we will focus the programme on developing a bank of stories recording the individual work/life experiences of our staff and students. We will seek to develop a small number of pilot partnerships with individual teams and departments who will participate in 3 overarching projects:

### **Pilot "Story Bank" Project**

#### ***Who do you think you are? Storytelling Workshops***

- A series of storytelling/creative writing workshops that encourage participants to explore individual and collective identities and the experiences that shape people and communities.
- Workshops will follow the Writing Lives model successfully
- Process could lead to a Talking Heads style presentation either online or at the Egg Space

#### **Suitcases**

- A storytelling/photography project using objects to explore individual and community identities within the context of fleeing persecution/conflict.
- Ask yourself which 6 objects you would pack if you had to leave your home in a hurry. If you had to reduce what defines you to the contents of a small suitcase, what would they look like?

- Process could lead to a cross-campus exhibition as part of National Refugee Week 2012.

### **The Human Library**

- Successfully piloted by the Staff Faith Forum in 2011, the Human Library is an opportunity for marginalised stories to be told and for individuals to engage in constructive dialogue. We will seek to develop the model further through hosting the event again in greater partnership with internal teams/departments and external organisations.

### **Arts Programme**

The Arts Programme will contribute to the Listen! Events Programme by programming exhibitions, engagement projects and viral marketing campaigns that facilitate dialogue around the theme of compassion.

### **Albert Adams “Incarceration” & “The Burden” Exhibitions, April/May 2012**

- Albert Adams was born in Johannesburg in 1929. Unable to pursue his education as an artist because of the apartheid policy he moved to the UK in 1953 to study at the Slade School of Art. Adams is recognized today as a gifted Expressionist painter and printmaker. His politically charged painting ‘South Africa 1959’ in the collection of Johannesburg Art Gallery is known as ‘the South African Guernica’.
- In two linked exhibitions the University of Salford looks at Adams’ remarkable body of work. ‘Incarceration’ highlights his response to acts of political oppression and recent atrocities, ranging from Darfur to Abu Ghraib and the imprisonment of political prisoners on Robben Island. ‘The burden’ offers an overview of Adams life and career and his exploration of his own sense of identity. As well as paintings and prints, this exhibition features African and Asian artworks collected by Adams as well as studio artefacts and archive material.

### **Relevant Arts Programme Engagement Projects**

- *Yemeni Roots, Salford Lives*  
A HLF funded project exploring the heritage and culture of the Yemeni community in Eccles. The project will culminate in an exhibition at MediaCity during Black History Month 2012.
- *Secret Gardens: Festival of Mass Narratives*  
The University of Salford in partnership with the Quays Participation Group will facilitate a month long celebration of story and storytelling marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Salford born Francis Hodgson Burnett’s publication of *The Secret Garden*. Events will aim

to explore individual and community identities and aspirations through the theme of secret gardens, physical and metaphysical.

## **Marketing & Communicating the Listen Strategy Events Programme**

Communicating the message of the Listen! Strategy and encouraging engagement with its diverse activities poses a significant challenge.

### **Be Kind Campaign**

Primary engagement strategy for 'Listen!' to get students and staff engaged with the Listen! programme. It will be focused around an interactive web page where staff and students can log acts of compassion and empathy that they have seen carried out or carried out themselves. At all the events outlined in the calendar staff and students will be able to sign up by wearing one of the 'be kind' badges.

## **Section 5 - Objectives**

- **Objective 1:** Promoting diversity in the workplace via our E&D strategy 'Listen'
- **Objective 2:** Promoting diversity at Council and Executive level.
- **Objective 3:** Developing our people with the support of focused training.
- **Objective 4:** Embedding equality in the work we are doing to transform our University via the transformation board and the use of Equality Analysis
- **Objective 5:** Continuing to closely monitor the disproportionate outcomes for BME students in academic misconduct cases seeking where possible to reduce that disproportionality.
- **Objective 6:** Improving how we respond to those in the University with a disability.
- **Objective 7:** Better understanding the needs of our staff and students via questionnaires
- **Objective 8:** Encouraging a more diverse representation of staff and students

### **Objective 1: Promoting diversity in the workplace via our Equality and Diversity Strategy "Listen"**

Whilst the Equality Act does not require us to write an equality strategy, in order to show transparency and continuity, we will continue to tie in our Equality and Diversity work via our Listen Strategy.

Our workforce diversity data will be published annually and we will continue to monitor recruitment outcomes and trends. We will continue to look at our approach to recruitment advertising so that we reach a more diverse group of potential applicants.

We will be working to promote a diverse and inclusive working environment. We will carry out our staff opinion survey again, aiming for improved response rates and overall satisfaction rates. Having identified staff concerns about bullying and harassment in the workplace we will be putting measures in place to address this by reinforcing our Dignity at Work and Study Policy to staff, publicising the policy and associated procedure and encouraging staff and students to seek support.

### **Objective 2: Promoting Diversity at Council and Executive level.**

Our publishing diversity data will be presented to Executive and Council to ensure they are kept aware of emerging equality and diversity trends and will use positive action measures to increase the diversity of applications when recruiting for new members of Council.

We will provide equality and diversity input to new Council and Executive committee members and provide the Council and Executive with equality analysis/annual reports so that they are able to take account of equality progression and integration within the University.

### **Objective 3: Developing our people with the support of focused training**

We will be delivering focused learning and development activities which support and embed the changes in culture and skills required to support our staff and students. This will include mandatory training for those in specific roles who will be advised of this requirement.

We will deliver a range of training and development programmes to build the competence and confidence of staff on equality and diversity and will build the leadership and decision-making skills of our senior managers.

### **Objective 4: Embedding equality in the work we are doing to transform our University via the transformation board and the use of Equality Analysis**

In accordance with University policies and procedures, the impact of each major change identified within the Transformation Programme will be assessed to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Equality & Diversity Policy. Each project will be required to undertake the assessment and present this to the PMO prior to proceeding with implementation.

### **Objective 5: Continuing to closely monitor the disproportionate outcomes for BME students in academic misconduct cases seeking where possible to reduce that disproportionality.**

We will continue to monitor the experiences of our BME students, who are disproportionately more likely to go through the academic misconduct process than their white peers, and put resources in place to support them through the academic process.

### **Objective 6: Improving how we respond to those in the University with a disability**

We will build on the work that is ongoing to ensure that we get better at providing reasonable adjustments; we will distribute the 'disability at work' booklet produced by HR with the support of our Staff Network SUDS to new inductees and staff across the University.

We will work closely with Estates to address accessibility issues by setting up a staff/student disability access group. We have established a sound working relationship with Students Union and will continue to consult and engage with them in this area so that we are able to address issues at the earliest opportunity.

### **Objective 7: Better understanding the needs of our staff and students via questionnaires**

We began work in 2008 to improve our understanding of the needs of our staff and will be building on this work by following up on our staff opinion surveys and will publish not only the results but work undertaken to tackle any issues raised through the surveys.

We will put in place the mechanisms to begin to review and monitor the number of staff (and their protected characteristics) that have informal resolution of issues before embarking on formal Grievance or Disciplinary procedures

We will ensure that managers carry out exit interviews so that we can review why staff are leaving the organisation (across the protected characteristics)

**Objective 8: Encouraging a more diverse representation of staff and students**

We will use Equality Analysis as a tool for monitoring and reviewing our recruitment procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose.

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## **Appendix A - Legislation**

### **Equality Act 2010<sup>8</sup>**

Under the Equality Act there have been a number of changes to some of the protected characteristics.

#### **Disability (new definition and changes)**

The Act has made it easier for a person to show that they are disabled and protected from disability discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which would include things like using a telephone, reading a book or using public transport.

The Act includes a new protection from discrimination arising from disability. This states that it is discrimination to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (e.g. a tendency to make spelling mistakes arising from dyslexia). This type of discrimination is only justifiable if an employer can show that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The Act also includes a new provision which makes it unlawful, except in certain circumstances, for employers to ask about a candidate's health before offering them work.

#### **Gender reassignment (new definition)**

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live as a man but does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered.

It is discrimination to treat transsexual people less favourably for being absent from work because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

Age; Marriage/Civil Partnerships; Pregnancy/Maternity, Race; Religion and Belief, Sex; Sexual Orientation (no Changes)

### **Some key changes we need to know about**

#### **Positive action**

As with previous equality legislation, the Equality Act allows you to take positive action if you think that employees or job applicants who share a particular protected characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic, or if their participation in an activity is disproportionately low.

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<sup>8</sup> Acas Equality Act Guidance

### Extension of employment tribunal powers

Under previous legislation, an employment tribunal could make a recommendation that an employer must eliminate or reduce the effect on the claimant of any discrimination. The Act extends this power so that it will now be possible for a tribunal to make recommendations that an organisation takes steps to eliminate or reduce the effect of discrimination on other employees, not only on the claimant. For example, the tribunal might specify that an employer needs to train all staff about the organisation's bullying and harassment policy. This power does not apply to equal pay cases.

### Equal pay – direct discrimination

The Equality Act retains the framework that was previously in place. This means that in most circumstances a challenge to pay inequality and other contractual terms and conditions still has to be made by comparison with a real person of the opposite sex in the same employment. However, a change in the Equality Act allows a claim of direct pay discrimination to be made, even if no real person comparator can be found

### Pay secrecy

The Act makes it unlawful for you to prevent or restrict your employees from having a discussion to establish if differences in pay exist that are related to protected characteristics.

## Events Calendar 2012

Month	Trailblazer Event	Staff Network	Internal/Creative Engagement Programme	The Arts Programme
January		Holocaust Memorial Day		
February	Launch of LGBT History Month	LGBT History Month		
March				Albert Adams Exhibition
April		Desert Island Spirituality		
May		IDAHO		
June				Secret Gardens: Festival of Mass Narratives
September	Conference – Faith and Sexuality			
October	Black History Month		Human Library	Yemeni Roots: Salford Lives Exhibition
November		Armistice Day	Anti - Bullying Week	
		Day of Remembrance for Transgender People		
December		International Day for Disabled People	Suitcases Project Workshop (phase 1)	
		Diversity Week	Be Kind Campaign launch	

# Equality and Diversity Strategy - “Listen!” – Communications Plan

## 1. Context

- The University’s new Equality and Diversity Strategy - *Listen!* - sets out a programme of five dimensions of work for ensuring full compliance with both existing and new equality legislation and regulations as well as acknowledging the need to recognise and respect individuals. The associated action plan is linked closely to the University’s six strategic goals which are:-
- **Goal 1** – Transforming learning and teaching:
- **Goal 2** – Transforming research and innovation:
- **Goal 3** – Transforming engagement:
- **Goal 4** – Our people:
- **Goal 5** – Transforming infrastructure and services:
- **Goal 6** – Internationalising the University

At the very heart of the strategy is a focus on compassion; being open to other points of view and being willing to challenge the status quo. *Listen!* is founded in the current equalities legislation, implementation guidelines and established models of good practice but it also focuses on the importance of development and celebration not just compliance

The Equality Act of 2010 provides the basis for a consolidate approach to equality and the Act replaces nine major pieces of legislation and around 100 other measures.

In line with this legislation and guidance and with growing practice across the public sector, the University’s *Listen!* Strategy will engage with appropriate stakeholders, take account of relevant evidence and of the impact of policies and practices and be realised through appropriate action plans

By aligning *Listen!* with current legislation and models of good practice, the University can focus on the nine separate protected characteristics – identified in law and through regular reporting the University will measure its progress and adapt its strategy accordingly. The nine protected characteristics are: age, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership The University will also give due regard to socio-economic status as the 10<sup>th</sup> equality strand which is acknowledged in good practice guidelines.

*Listen!* will ensure that there will not be a compliance dominated approach with an emphasis on target setting which could create an environment of resentment through punitive reporting when targets are not achieved. It has been informed by consultation and information collected over the previous five years. There has been further consultation with the Staff networks, and the Engagement and Consultation Forum and Senate.

## 2. The five dimensions of work

The five dimensions of work are the bedrock of the strategy and are:

1. **Distributed leadership and local action.** This dimension will focus on the interpretation of the University's overall work in equality and diversity in the context of the work of schools, professional departments and student organisations. The network of Equality and Diversity co-ordinators that has been set up will work with leaders and managers to ensure that the strategy is meaningful for everyone.
2. **Support and protection.** Providing support and protection for staff and students is key to the success of the *Listen!* strategy. The University will continue to encourage the formation of staff and student networks that provide support for minorities, advocacy and serve as "critical friends" of leadership. As well as the five staff networks, an independent mediation service has been set up to deal with issues through advice, mediation and informal resolution.
3. **Continual institutional improvement.** A continual process of improvement is necessary through the review and revision of policies and practices and the training and development of managers at all levels. We are committed to the full implementation of Equality Analysis (EA) required by the equalities legislation. EAs are an opportunity to keep policies and practices under continuing review.
4. **Keystone development programme.** As part of the strategy a running series of events, colloquia, exhibitions, performances and debates will be the keystone development programme holding together and animating our Strategy. A full programme of events for each academic year will be developed and our Chancellor will play a lead role.
5. **Communication, measurement and reporting.** Communicating the various aspects of *Listen!* will be integrated into the University's Communications Strategy. Measuring our progress will form part of our overall key performance indicators. The experience of staff and students of equality and diversity will be measured by our satisfaction surveys.

A new Equality and Diversity Advisory Group has been set up comprising directors, theme leads, students union and governance to support the VC who has lead management responsibility for Equality and Diversity. The Equality and Diversity Strategy is linked to the six primary goals in the University's Strategic Plan with clear, key performance measures.

## 2. The University's position

- Our Equality and Diversity Strategy 'Listen' will be the overarching approach looking at how we will be delivering against these objectives. This document aims to explain how equality objectives have been determined, what improvements will be achieved and how progress will be measured over the next 4 years.
- We will ensure that the design, delivery and commissioning of programs and services are fair, equitable and accessible

- The main drivers behind the document are: a) compliance with the public sector equality duty as outlined in the Equality Act 2010  
b) Improvement of the University's performance in relation to Equality and Diversity.
- Equality objectives have been devised following consideration of multiple information sources (equality monitoring, results of consultation and engagement with staff and students, collective understanding of the issues the protected groups in the University are facing).
- Equality objectives have been developed on a service level and form an integral part of the business planning process and although the objectives are set for 4 years, the actions and milestones will be reviewed annually in line with the business planning cycle to ensure they remain challenging and reflective of current developments and circumstances.
- Wherever possible the objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed), however, in some circumstances milestones rather than measurable targets have been used.

### 3. Objectives

The objectives of the communications plan are as follows:

- Promote the University as a champion of equality and diversity with key stakeholder groups including employees and students
- Promote its achievements to date in the equality and diversity areas
- Promote the commitment to engagement and consultation with all key stakeholders
- Ensure alignment between the Strategic Plan and the Equality and Diversity Strategy and particularly with the vision, mission and values embedded in the Strategic Plan which include:
  - Diversity, humanity, fairness and respect
  - The highest academic, professional and ethical standards
- Acknowledge the results from the staff experience and student experience surveys i.e. complaints of discrimination and bullying and harassment and the need to improve significantly in those areas.

### 4. Key messages are:

- The University takes its commitment to equality and diversity very seriously.
- It is leading from the top: our VC, Martin Hall is personally committed to driving through these changes and commitments
- The key to delivering the agenda successfully is leadership. We are suggesting that each manager will demonstrate commitment by the following:
  - Taking on clear, measurable targets in their performance appraisal

- Engaging in dialogue with students and staff who identify themselves by that particular protected characteristics

#### **4. Stakeholders/audiences**

The stakeholder groups are as follows:

- Employees
- Students
- Media
- Local community

#### **6. Timings and approach**

The Equality and Diversity Scheme and supporting strategy, together with this draft communications plan will go before the EDAG on the 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. Once approval has been given, it is planned to begin communicating the strategy from the beginning of April

The approach will be open and direct, acknowledging areas for improvement and development, areas of good practice and progress over the last year,

#### **7. Channels of communication**

In any form of engagement/consultation, face to face is regarded as the most appropriate means of communication. However, given the scale of the challenge and the other priorities the University is pursuing at present, the following channels of communication are suggested. These are as follows:

##### Employees:

- Staff Channel via US Online
- US Online news bulletin to all employees
- US Online monthly update to all employees
- US magazine,
- Leadership Updates for staff
- Via VC Breakfast briefing
- Via staff networks (BME, Disabled, LGBT, SSWAN, Faith Forum)
- Via the Equality and Diversity co-ordinators

##### Students

- Student Channel
- Students' Union
- Via LGBT network and other liberation societies

## Media

- Targeted media releases
- Top story on home page of website
- Equality and Diversity website

## Community

- Local partners such as Salford Equality Network and Salford City Council
- Local MP
- Equality and Diversity website

## **8. Champions/Advocates**

It is suggested that to support the equality and diversity key messages, champions of equality and diversity should be appointed, alongside VC Martin Hall,

In addition, the representatives of the University's staff networks should also be encouraged to play a key role in promoting the importance of the exercise.

## **Events funding criteria – for Listen!**

In order to apply for funding under the 'Listen!' programme event planners must meet the following criteria:-

- Meeting at least one equality objective, as outlined in the Strategy document
- Engage with the theme for 'Listen!' which in 2012 is 'Compassion'
- How the event will meet the general duty as outline in the Equality Act 2010<sup>9</sup>
- How the need for the event was identified, evidence of consultation
- Plan of delivery
- What support is required centrally, both financially and resources
- Clearly articulate audience and how engagement is going to happen
- Marketing
- Timescales for delivery

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<sup>9</sup> The General duty is the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advances the equality of opportunity and promotes good relations between groups.