

DIVERSITY MATTERS, Issue 1, January 2016

The e-newsletter from the Equality and Diversity Team



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Executive Board Lead for Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion

As Executive Board lead for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, it has been an exciting time to oversee developments during 2015. The highlight of the year was the launch of the University's new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (2015-17), which brought to life the innovative approaches that the University is using to promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all of its activities by working with local, national and international communities. An important part of delivering the strategy is the series of equality groups that have been created to drive forward key areas within the University. These groups include race, gender, disability, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT), and faith, and through extensive engagement and representation from the community, provides the engine which will drive forward the overarching strategy. Importantly, each area has a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are stretching but also measurable.

In order to celebrate and disseminate equality, diversity and inclusion across the University, we have adopted a series of communication streams working in collaboration with Marketing and Communications. This has resulted in a short film outlining the work of the Equality & Diversity team, which has been shown to various staff and student audiences and is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vK1tPmgTQwk>

Being able to celebrate and communicate what the University is doing in equality, diversity and inclusion is a key strand of promoting the strategy both inside and outside of the University, and allows us to showcase many examples of exciting developments that are occurring. In particular, our success at achieving Athena SWAN bronze awards was reinforced through the four successful awards we received in 2015, and our preparations are well underway for the renewal of our University level bronze award in 2016. Whilst things are going well, we cannot be complacent. It is beholden upon everyone in the

University to appreciate that equality, diversity and inclusion is central to all that we do and, therefore, as we move forward, commitment to both the strategy and the ethos is necessary to ensure we are making a positive impact at all levels of the University.

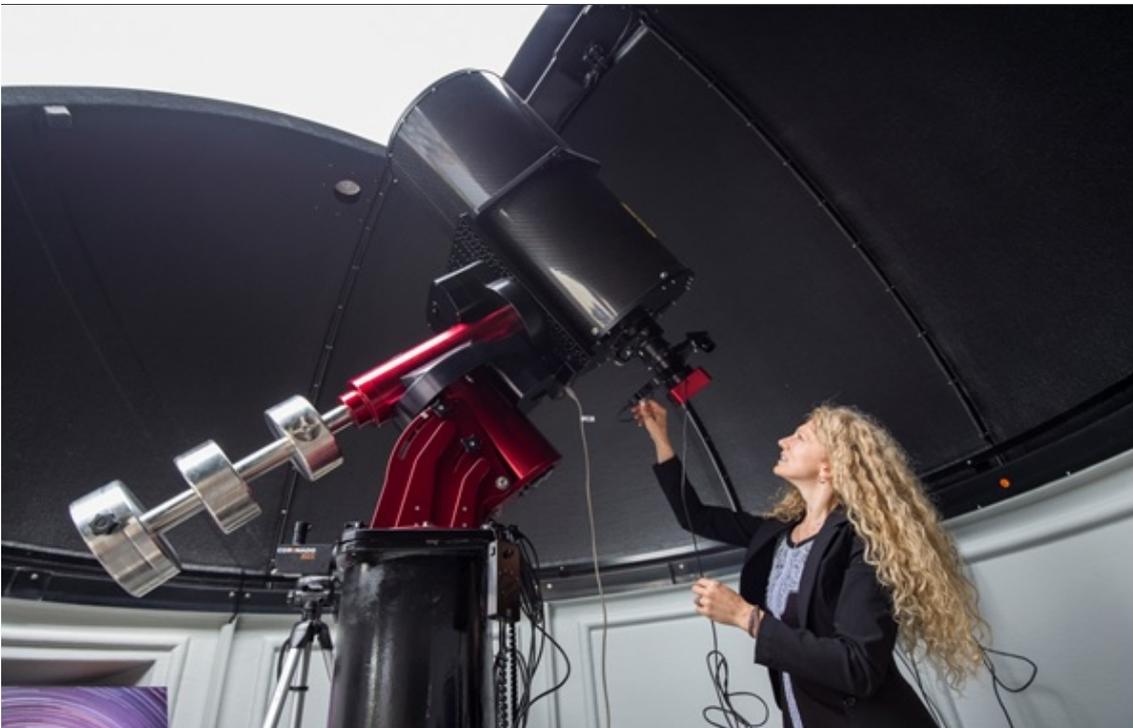


Why Diversity Matters at the University of Surrey

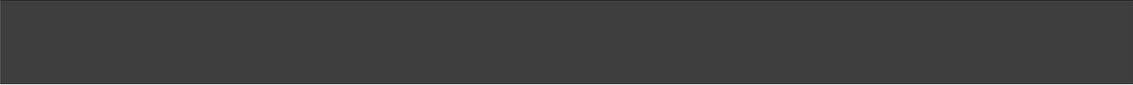
**Mrs Angie Cousins
Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

As lead for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion at the University of Surrey for the last ten years, Angie was asked by the Equality Challenge Unit to write about equality at Surrey and the impact she has had over those ten years. Read the full article here:

www.ecu.ac.uk/blogs/subscriber-stories-university-of-surrey



Athena SWAN Charter for the advancement of gender equality



The Athena SWAN Charter recognizes the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. It was established by the Equality Challenge Unit in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.

In May 2015 the charter was expanded to recognise work undertaken in arts, humanities, social sciences, business and law (AHSSBL), and in professional and support roles, and for trans staff and students. The charter now recognises work undertaken to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women.

The University's Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team have been meeting monthly as they make progress towards the Athena SWAN Bronze university award renewal, with a deadline of April 2016. Mary Hensher, the Head of IT Services, has replaced Susanna Hourani as Chair. The University Submission Action Plan has driven the actions and is progressing well. The preparation of the submission will be a team effort and we are confident of achieving a strong bid for renewal.

Bronze Departmental Awards currently held:

- Centre for Environmental Strategy (awarded April 2015)
- Electronic Engineering (April 2015)
- School of Health Sciences (April 2015)
- School of Bioscience and Medicine (April 2015)

Bronze Departmental Awards applied for:

- Civil and Environmental Engineering (applied December 2015)
- Mechanical Engineering Science (December 2015)
- Psychology (December 2015)

Bronze Departmental Award applications in the future:

- Chemistry (applying in April 2016)
- Computer Science (April 2016)
- Maths (April 2016)
- Economics (November 2016)
- Surrey Business School (November 2016)

Discussions are taking place between the Equality and Diversity Team and other departments across the University, with a view to more submissions being made in the

future at Bronze, Silver and Gold level.



The University hosted a very successful event for **International Women's Day 2015**. Planning is well underway for a similar event on March 8th 2016, this event will take place at the Ivy Theatre in the evening – SAVE THE DATE! The 2015 event was entitled 'The Meaning of Success'. It was compered by the Executive Dean of FHMS, Professor Lisa Roberts, and consisted of a panel discussion of four highly inspiring women.

From left to right: Lynne Owens, Chief Constable of Surrey Police; Dame Penelope Keith DBE, Actress and Pro-Chancellor University of Surrey; Professor Lisa Roberts, Executive Dean of FHMS; Rachel Anne Hobbs, Team GB Power Lifter, Personal Trainer and Dietician; and Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive of Universities UK.



The University continues to work in partnership with **Employment Works** and **EmployAbility**, delivering a scheme which gives young people with disabilities a chance to gain vital work experience at the University. In July we celebrated the success of this year's programme with a lunchtime awards ceremony recognising the achievements of nine individuals, including students from Freemantles School, Gosden House School, and independent young people living in the area, who all undertook work placements with us.

Over the last five years, the Equality and Diversity Team has worked with **EmployAbility** to provide 51 young people with the opportunity to develop their vocational skills and gain hands on experience in the workplace.



Disability Equality Working Group

The Disability Equality Working Group has continued to make progress this year led by Peter Brinkley, Head of Security. Excellent progress has been made in ensuring disabled representation throughout the design and build phase of major estates projects. This has resulted in changes being made to architects plans to ensure good accessibility from the outset and to reduce costly changes being required retrospectively. The Disability Working Group has been involved in the following projects this year: 5G building, the School of Veterinary Medicine, Manor Park Block G, new STEM building and the Teaching Block Refurbishment. Also on the horizon is a major refurbishment of the Students Union Buildings and the group is already being consulted as these proposals develop. Work is ongoing to ensure that we go beyond the requirements of the building regulations for accessibility and encourage universal/inclusive design principles as part of the tendering process for all major estates projects to ensure a first class experience for all users of our buildings and services. Regular campus accessibility tours have continued to take place to ensure that any particular issues are picked up and resolved.

The staff disability disclosure rate has steadily increased over the year to 2.2% from 1.3% in 2014. The student disclosure rate is currently 6%. Work continues to encourage an

environment where people feel safe to disclose any disabilities or long term health needs, and able to request reasonable adjustments required to support them in their work and study. A task and finish group has been set up to review and update the University's Disability Policy to ensure it is current and relevant for staff, students and visitors. As part of this work, disability awareness raising campaigns and provision of training and advice is also being assessed.



Spotlight on Equality and Diversity Champions

Mr Peter Brinkley

**Chair of Disability Equality Working
Group**

I was really proud to be appointed chair of the DEWG because it has given me a real opportunity to promote disability issues affecting our staff, students and visitors. The group is really keen to hear from you if you have any ideas or suggestions about how we might better respond to the needs of disabled students or staff. We are already working hard to understand the issues of the community, including regular audits of campus to examine accessibility and mobility around all areas of the University estate. This has led to lots of environmental changes which people tell us make a big difference to their mobility and accessibility around campus – recent improvements have included changes to accessible toilets, handrails and design improvements in some of our new developments including the Vet School and 5G buildings. We are also enduring that teaching areas are fit for purpose, looking at accessibility and the installation of hearing loops. An online forum has been created to give people an opportunity to feed back any issues, ideas or concerns regarding disability policy and procedure. Again if people have ideas regarding how best to capture information and ideas do get in touch with me. The DEWG will be continuing to promote the work of the group through the launch of a disability website which will signpost key information, we will also be holding a disability awareness event in 2016. One of our key challenges is better understanding the issues affecting our community and encouraging people to feedback their issues – we currently have only 3% of staff who have declared a disability. One of our priorities for the next year is to better understand the reasons for non-disclosure and to work hard to increase the numbers of staff who disclose a disability.

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

- SPOTLIGHT ON DIANE WATT
- FOCUS ON THE LGBT EQUALITY WORKING GROUP
- DETAILS OF EVENTS FOR LGBT HISTORY MONTH



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