



Centre for
Society and
Mental Health



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: You Said, We Did February 2022 Report

The Centre for Society and Mental Health Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group



CSMH Report R007

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ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health

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The ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health was established in 2020 and aims to develop pioneering programmes of interdisciplinary social research on key mental health challenges facing contemporary societies.

Our research is identified and co-produced with affected communities and key stakeholders, and we are committed to building meaningful, fair and respectful relationships, both inside and outside our network, to help us undertake research with real-life impact. In 2021, an *Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) Working Group* was established to review our activities and set priorities for further related activity over the life course of the Centre.

In 2021, the Group ran a series of consultations with staff, students and stakeholders to develop a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This included the production of a CSMH Bullying, Discrimination & Harassment Report and Recommendations document, led by Challenge Consultancy (*The Challenge Report* - available upon request).

Here, we outline comments, requests and suggestions which emerged from these consultations, and our responses – in other words – what you said, and what we did.

The Centre should establish a small, but temporary representative group of staff and partner organisations to co-produce a code of conduct. The group should be equipped with adequate resources to successfully complete the task.

- In February 2022, invites were sent to Centre staff and students to elicit interest in involvement in a *Task & Finish Group*. Over a six-month period, this group will create a Code of Conduct and working plan for implementing recommendations from the Challenge Report, as well as priorities set by the *ED&I Working Group*. These will be fed back to the Centre by end of July 2022.
- The e-mail will also invite people to express (or re-express) interest in involvement in the *ED&I Working Group*. This will continue to work on existing and newly identified priorities.

EDI work should be credited and incentivised to reflect the time and effort that Centre staff, particularly our Early Career Researchers (ECRs), volunteer. It is also important that this extends beyond those formally involved in working groups to emphasises that EDI is everyone's business.

- The Centre will establish an annual *CSMH Award* to acknowledge contributions to ED&I across the Centre membership.
- We will ensure that there is public recognition for individual contributions within and beyond EDI group. For example, [Annie Irvine](#) contributed to the shaping of the King's approach to career mapping and progression - an activity led by the King's Centre for Research Staff Development; and [Natasha Chilman's](#) work on bullying and harassment reporting processes (further information is available upon request).
- Clarity that KCL promotions criteria includes demonstrable commitment to ED&I in recognition of its central role in academia. These criteria will be applied to all Centre roles within grant promotions, as a standing essential criteria in job specifications etc.

The Centre should improve support for precarious and early career staff

- Our Centre Co-Directors [Dr Hanna Kienzler](#) and [Professor Craig Morgan](#), and our Centre Manager [Virginia Elgar](#), have initiated bi-monthly meetings with Centre ECRs to both advocate for change at the King's level and to identify actions that can be taken at the Centre level.

- Further details about Centre priorities and actions for further discussion are outlined in the *Proposal for Support for ECRs* document (available upon request).

The Centre must ensure that there is accountability and transparency throughout this process

- Any recommendations and updates made by the *Task & Finish Group* will be shared Centre-wide, and be made available externally upon request.
- The *ED&I Working Group* will work with Centre Co-Directors to implement annual self-assessment of progress against priority actions and against existing KCL criteria.
- While there will be senior leader representation in the *ED&I Working Group*, who will share responsibilities for tasks, they will also leave space in meetings for ECRs to discuss and share feedback without their presence. This is in recognition of the impact of power dynamics on comfort and openness. The *ED&I Working Group* leads will support feeding back to senior leaders when required.

There should be clear routes for reporting bullying, harassment and discrimination.

- This will involve collaboration between the *Task & Finish Group* and the standing *ED&I Working Group* as there is overlap in the Challenge Report recommendations and existing priorities.
- One of our ECRs, Natasha Chilman, has worked with Centre Manager Virginia Elgar to identify current routes for reporting (either formally, informally as well as anonymous reporting) relevant to staff based in both the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (IoPPN) and the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy (SSPP). They are also clarifying processes for reporting for Centre partners, i.e. non-Kings staff or students. This information will be shared by e-mail, and programme leads and line managers/supervisors will be required to share and draw attention to the guidance at appropriate meetings.
- Further work will link to the *Challenge Report* recommendations, for example around definitions and relevant examples of what constitutes bullying, discrimination and harassment, and around sustained, experiential and reflective training.

The Centre should provide specific support for line managers and supervisors

- The Centre will identify experiential training and learning opportunities to support supervisors and line managers in one-to-one and team situations, which are more tailored to the Centre work than generic KCL training. The *Task & Finish Group* will be asked to advise further.

The Centre should map and share existing ED&I related resources, and encourage individuals to engage with the information and opportunities that this presents.

- An accessible SharePoint folder has been shared with all Centre staff and students, which includes a range of ED&I related resources. The *ED&I Working Group* will work to incorporate more SSPP resources, and signpost to sources of support and group resources in easily accessible ways.

Fundamental to ED&I, the Centre should focus on the well-being of all staff, the creation of a positive working environment and promoting a good work life balance.

- Information and resources about well-being at work from MIND and King's have been, and will continue to be, shared and highlighted in Centre communications.
- The *Task & Finish Group* will be asked to ensure that this is a cross-cutting theme underpinning all actions – for example via check ins, role modelling healthy work practices, fostering social interactions etc.

For more information about the Centre ER&I work, or anything included in this report, please email csmh-edi@kcl.ac.uk



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