

EDI Newsletter

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

April 2021



Welcome

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee at the Business School focusses on addressing inequalities. The purpose of the Committee is to acknowledge a range of perspectives in decision-making and to create an inclusive environment, where both staff and students' opinions and differences are valued. We are committed to promoting equality within the Business School through workshops, events, and training sessions. Through these, individuals are given opportunities to interact with each other, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and build a sense of community. Our dedicated EDI Champions also carry out focus groups, surveys, and informal discussions with staff and students at the Business School to capture views and answers that can help understand the successes, identify the challenges and find ways to improve the situation. Presently at the Business School, we are in the process of preparing our 2021 application to renew our Athena Swan Bronze award. We then hope to apply for our Silver award in 2023. We are aware that the need to pursue this gender-focused award and beginning to address issues related to race can divert

focus from other characteristics, whether legally protected or otherwise, that might be reducing individuals' opportunity and the effective working out of their equality.

Initial evidence points to the Covid-19 situation reinforcing existing privileges and exacerbating inequalities within the higher education sector. This has required additional measures to support staff and students working from home who are adjusting to this "new normal". In relation to this, the Business School has re-assessed the Athena Swan action points, sought to improve communication through consultation with staff and students, and promoted initiatives to embed good practices where needed to create a research and teaching environment that both staff and students can benefit from. Advancing equality demands understanding commitment and action from all levels. To acknowledge this, the EDI team at the Business School engages with equality groups, both internal to the university and external, with the aim of ensuring the views of all are recognised. We recognise that this approach needs to recognise intersectionality, that individuals are not defined by any one characteristic and may be disadvantaged or advantaged by

a combination of characteristics. We believe that not only individuals but also academia as a whole, and not least our School, cannot reach its full potential unless it can draw on the recognised talents of all.

The Aberdeen 2040 strategic vision for the University highlights inclusivity and values diversity, not least with the phrase "Open to all". The Business School works closely with the University's Equality and Diversity team to understand and learn how to support and embed this commitment to Equality and Diversity principles within the Business School and across the institution. In pursuit of that aim, we seek a culture that recognises and tackles systemic inequalities, promoting inclusiveness and diversity for all staff and students.



Mark Whittington and Cheryl Dowie –
Co Chairs, Business School EDI Committee

Interested in sharing or reading about diversity in teaching and learning?

The University of Aberdeen now has a "Celebrating Diversity" blog page for staff and students to share their experiences, practices and thoughts on how we can all move forward to delivering teaching and learning which embraces diversity and all that this can offer. <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/celebrating-diversity/index.php>

Why not check out the growing number of blogs, engage in discussion or even write a blog yourself!

EDI Competition for School Children

The Business School, EDI Committee has launched a competition for local school children to create a logo/slogan based on their understanding of EDI issues, at home, in the community, in School or further afield. Pam Cumming (Schools Engagement Officer) is also delivering associated workshops to local schools to get them started for the competition. Closing date is early April. For further details, please contact

p.cumming@abdn.ac.uk



Committee Spotlight

Angela Black



My reasons to be part of the Equality Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDI) are because I believe in the motives of the committee to cultivate a positive

workplace that values and embraces all people in the school, including students at all levels and each individual member of staff. At the heart of the committee is the desire to support equality and encourage characteristics in our everyday interaction including gratitude, praise, a sense of purpose and social interaction - all within an environment that puts things in perspective and supports mental and physical well-being. Achieving equality and diversity is a collective effort; the committee gives us the chance to promote empathy and embody its power to bring us together, sharing adversity and achievements.

The committee also encourages us to be aware of unconscious bias and create a cultural environment that welcomes, includes, and integrates all people.

In my first lecturer post at a different institution many years ago, I was the only female academic in the department. Therefore - only because of my gender - I was to be on an appointing committee. Male colleagues reached out and formally voted to have me as their representative rather than a token person; I was deeply heartened by their actions. The Principal of the university opened the meeting with "Do we have the right number of X chromosomes?" It felt like, here is a reminder you are different from us; invited to the dinner table but not necessarily to dinner. I am sure the comment was not intended to invoke these feelings but is an example of how diversity can be achieved but it is our actions that make people feel included.

Many people have reached out to me throughout life with kind acts which are always remembered; including, at a crucial moment, the Principal just mentioned. Being able to mirror that and enable a truly inclusive environment by making choices

about how we welcome, include, and integrate people is the driving force for my commitment to the vision of the School and the EDI Committee.



Fernanda Antunes Batista Da Silva

I joined the Business School Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee after an invitation from my

supervisor, Dr Nan Liu, to get involved in the subcommittee of Flexible Working. The topic interests me because of my research in flexible workspaces, which is plausibly an enabler for flexible working arrangements. At a more personal level, I joined the EDI committee to contribute with my perspective, to learn about the experience of others, and to help build a more fair, plural, and welcoming environment at the Business School. I believe EDI is important because it empowers people to be their best selves. The variety of backgrounds, viewpoints, and ideas provides a richer medium to shape a better future.

Women's History Month and Intersectional Feminism

March marks Women's History Month and March 8th specifically is also International Women's Day commemorating and encouraging the study and celebration of women throughout history.

Whilst significant progress has been made for equal rights and providing equal opportunities for women even in the past decade, it is important to recognise we still live in a patriarchal society with unconscious gender bias. However all inequality is not created equal, which is why the move towards intersectional feminism is so vital for the progress towards true justice.

So what is intersectional feminism? Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American law professor who coined the term in 1989 explained intersectional feminism as, "a prism for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other."

"We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What's often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience

is not just the sum of its parts."

Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalise people – gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability etc.

Intersectional feminism recognises that no two people are the same and one must examine all facets that make a person who they are to truly understand their

position, power or privilege – or lack of. Intersectional feminism has been of particular importance in the Black Lives Matter movement and LGBTQ+ activism, particularly of black trans women who are statistically the most marginalized group within the LGBTQ+ community. (<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/06/09/ashlee-marie-preston-expectancy-black-trans-woman-36-birthday-milestone/>)

Lucy Holmes



Top 5 Intersectional Feminist Recommendations

1. Disclosure, Netflix (2020):

A documentary looking at Hollywood's depiction of transgender people and the impact of this on western cinema and culture.

2. Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women That a Movement Forgot, Mikki Kendall:

Kendall explores why mainstream feminism neglects to see how race, class, sexual orientation and disability intersects with gender and gives insights into how we should change our way of thinking and behaving.

3. Can We All Be Feminists?, June Eric-Udorie:

Seventeen established and emerging writers from diverse backgrounds wrestle with these questions, exploring what feminism means to them in the context of their other identities.

4. The Guilty Feminist, Deborah Frances-White:

A podcast hosted by comedian Deborah Frances-White and her special guests as they discuss topics surrounding 21st century feminism.

5. Feminists: What Were They Thinking?, Netflix (2018):

Filmmaker Johanna Demetrakas revisits photos from a 1977 book of photographs that captured women shedding cultural restrictions and contains interviews with women such as Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Judy Chicago.



Lucy Holmes also fundraised for the entire month of February on Twitch for The Trevor Project, raising £640 nearly double the initial fundraising goal.

The Trevor Project is a non-profit organisation focused on suicide prevention efforts for LGBT+ youth.

Blog: Experience of Homeworking during the Covid19 Pandemic: An EDI Perspective

As Covid-19 related home-based working continues into its twelfth month, an increasing amount of research is being produced on people's experiences. A recent study by researchers from Birmingham and Kent has produced interesting findings, with some significant gender differences. The survey, carried out in the UK in May and June 2020, during the first lockdown, collected data from over 1000 UK employees.

On the positive side, 90% of respondents felt supported by their line manager. Across all respondents, the three main positive benefits of working from home were the ability to look after children, do housework, and spend more time with their partner than previously. Almost 40% felt their productivity working from home was greater than when working in the office. Further, two thirds of non-parents, and 50% of parents expressed a desire to continue some degree of home-working after the pandemic, which would help reduce commuting time, allow people to spend more time with family, and have wellbeing benefits.

However, the survey identified some negative aspects to people's experiences. Unsurprisingly, the most significant, identified by two thirds of respondents, was the blurring of the boundary between work and home. This was exacerbated for

some by a lack of suitable workspace, or equipment at home. This explains why parents, but especially mothers, reported regularly experiencing work-home conflict.

Another significant negative aspect of homeworking was a lack of face to face interaction with colleagues, which was particularly the case for women without children. Further, mothers reported spending an increased amount of time on housework and childcare (especially education, when schools were closed). Also, all parents, and especially mothers, reported that the demands of childcare meant that finding significant blocks of time to work was often challenging, with 50% of mothers and 58% of fathers reporting they could reliably and consistently have blocks of time to focus on work. Thus, those with children reported that while levels of work productivity went up, their actual working hours declined, and a significant proportion of mothers reported regularly working in the evening. Fathers also reported undertaking increased levels of housework and childcare.

Donald Hislop

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/business/research/wirc/epp-working-from-home-COVID-19-lockdown.pdf>

LGBT History Month

Founded in 1994 by Missouri high-school history teacher Rodney Wilson, LGBT History Month is an annual month-long observance every February to recognise and celebrate the history of the LGBTQ+

rights and related civil rights movements.

What better way to celebrate this anniversary than by reading some LGBT+ literature? Current student, Laura Malkia has recommended her top LGBTQ+ books.

[Read More](#)

Lucy Holmes
LGBT+ History Month Streaming Fundraiser
Fundraising for The Trevor Project Inc

183%
£641
raised of £350 target
by 24 supporters

The Trevor Project Inc
Charity Registration No. 954681287

What's On

April – 27th Professor Ilaria Boncori from the University of Essex ([Profile for Ilaria Boncori at the University of Essex](#)) has kindly agreed to deliver a presentation entitled 'Understanding the experience of baby loss in the workplace followed by Q&A on 27th April at 330pm.



Drop-in session - promotions

We are holding regular drop-in sessions about the internal promotions process, including discussion of the relevant forms, guidelines, and strategies. At each session, we invite a member of staff to speak about their experience in forming and putting together their promotion application. For the first event, we are delighted that Lindsay Tibbetts has accepted this invitation and we look forward our discussion. Here are dates through to end of 2020. Members of staff are very welcome to drop into any session that suits.

- 21st April, 11:10am to 11:55am, drop-in promotions session
- 30th June, 3:10pm to 3:55pm, drop-in promotions session
- 29th September, 11:10am to 11:55am, drop-in promotions session
- 24th November, 3:10pm to 3:55pm, drop-in promotions session

Top Tips for Mental Health During Lockdown

Stephanie Marajh

I've always been a big reader, but over the last couple of years I've not had as much time so lockdown was the perfect time to get stuck in again. Escaping to unknown worlds and even exploring Aberdeen from the point of view of detectives on a case has really helped me cope over this last year. I even started painting - something I've wanted to try for ages - but I prefer to do that in sunshine, so now I have that to look forward to in the sunnier months.

Julie Adamson

I've had a bird feeder in my garden for a while now, but lockdown has given me much more of an opportunity to see which birds are using the feeder and to learn to identify them. I now have hundreds of photos of birds, varying in success – they generally don't like to stay still and pose for my camera! Here's a photo of a fieldfare, which I had never seen before and have not seen again since the day I took the photo.



Kirsteen Watt

Since lockdown I have started a subscription to a talking book service. Much to my surprise – one of my favourite things to unwind is to do jigsaws whilst listening to a talking book. Would never have done this before lockdown. Double the relaxation and a break from all of the Netflix boxsets!

Martin Meyer

I go for a daily walk first thing in the morning before starting the working day.

Lucia Giuntoli

Like so many of us, I found lockdown and working from home quite challenging. Fresh air was and still is my godsend. No matter the weather, I stick on a podcast and head out for a walk or run. Being outside really is 'soup for the soul'!

Clare Fletcher

On New Year's Day I decided to take on the Cancer Research UK February 56 mile challenge. Had I been able to predict the weather we were going to have in February I might have hung my trainers up until spring but over the course of 28 days I walked and ran a total of 60 miles. I also raised £560 for Cancer Research UK and I know the donations will be used to support so many individuals and families dealing with cancer. My donation link has closed but if you wish to donate to this charity, or find out where donations go, you can find information here: [Donate to Cancer Research UK](#) | [Cancer Research UK](#)



Rhonda Macdonald

My top tip is to wake up every morning and lie in bed for 15 minutes before I get up, appreciate the things in life I am grateful for, baking, walking, gardening, watching more TV, and I didn't really appreciate the outdoors so much until lockdown!

Sola Kasim

First, counting one's blessings is top on my list. Second, I suppose star-gazing/ astronomy will pass as part of "nature" that some colleagues already mentioned. For me, star-gazing is the ultimate relaxer. Watching the Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn was fun. But, since NASA's Perseverance landed on Mars I've been looking more intently (through my cheap, but not too cheap telescope) at the planet for signs of the rover. Each failure to see a thing brings a smile to my face. Dream on – there's always the next time to try, or, another noteworthy must-see planetary event occurs!

Alexandros Zangelidis

For me it was music (my vinyl collection has increased substantially over the past year!) and of course Ozzy



Graeme McDonald

We are currently watching the MCU film series in its timeline order as we've never watched it before.

Listening to favourite and new music artists I've found in lockdown during work as it

helps me get on with the work (may not be everyone's method to help)

Going for walks daily/using the exercise bike and socialising with friends via Playstation almost nightly rather than staring at a phone screen messaging in group chats.



Pam Cumming

Apart from dog walks my big stress release is a new hobby, something that completely relaxes me. Diamond Painting has many mental, emotional and intellectual health benefits (though it's not made me more intellectual that's for sure). Diamond painting is a stress free activity that relaxes the amygdala - the fear centre of the brain - and allows your mind to get the rest it needs. I love it. Here's the Highland Cow I recently completed.



Recommendations

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: “The danger of a single story” – TED Talk

The danger of a single story

Our lives, our cultures, are composed of many overlapping stories. Novelist...

www.ted.com



Recipe

Shamima Haque

Piyaju – Onion and red lentil fritters

This is a very popular and traditional vegetarian snack in Bangladesh.

Serves: 3-5 people (10-15 piyaju)

Prep Time : 10 minutes; Cook Time: 15 minutes;

INGREDIENTS

- Red lentil (Masoor daal)– ½ cup
- Onion slices – 1 cup
- Chopped Green chilli – 2 table spoon (Adjust according to taste).
- Turmeric powder – ¼ teaspoon
- Red chilli – 1/5 teaspoon ((Adjust according to taste)

- Garlic and ginger paste/grated – 1 table spoon
- Salt – to taste
- Oil for deep fry
- Optional: You can also add a pinch of baking powder, fresh chopped coriander leaves

INSTRUCTIONS

Preparation:

- Wash and soak the lentil for 3-4 hours or overnight. Drain all water.
- Put into blender and make a half blend paste. Do not add any water.
- Mix lentil paste with all other ingredients. Adjust salt and chilli.

METHOD:

- Heat oil in deep frying pan on medium high.
- Make small, flat shaped fritters and slowly put in the hot oil. Be careful when putting the fritters in the hot oil as it can splatter.
- Turn over after 4-5 minutes or until golden brown on the edges, otherwise it would be broken.
- Fry until golden brown and crisp both side.
- Keep then on a paper towel.
- Serve hot with sauce, tea or salad.

