



London Interdisciplinary Social Science Doctoral Training Partnership

Meeting	LISS DTP Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Open Forum
Date	Thursday, 30 th March 2023
Time	11.30 – 12.30 hours
Venue	Online
Chair	Dr Michael Sanders, LISS DTP Deputy Director

Meeting Minutes

Item	Notes
1. Welcome and Introduction MS	<p>In attendance:</p> <p>Michael T Sanders (Chair) - MTS</p> <p>Professor Jelke Boesten – JB</p> <p>Mariana Steffen (QMUL PW1)– MS</p> <p>Pippa Sterk (KCL PW7) – PS</p> <p>Robert James Hellyer (QMUL PW7) – RJH</p> <p>Keisha York (KCL PW2)-KY</p> <p>Illias Ioannou (QMUL PW5) -II</p> <p>Hannah Dasch (KCL PW1) – HD</p> <p>Gabby Stringer (QMUL PW5) – GS</p> <p>Cairn Macfarland (Secretary) - CM</p>
2. Introduction	<p>MTS: It is integral that ED&I runs through everything that we do as a DTP, it feeds into every decision that we make about staffing, funding, and every other decision that we make.</p> <p>Our own positions will not give us the perspective that you as students can give, which is why having this forum is so important.</p>

	<p>This forum is an opportunity for the DTP to hear what we can do better, gaps and blind spots, and what our priorities are.</p> <p>Its an opportunity for us to be pressed, challenged, and encouraged to make positive changes within the constraints and boundaries of what we are able to do as LISS DTP as opposed to the individual partner institutions and the E.S.R.C (Economic and Social Research Council).</p>
<p>3. Terms of Reference</p>	<p>GS: We need to be specific about protected characteristics, those are things that are worth thinking about, for example maternity is not listed there.</p> <p>PS: Is there a possibility to add something about accountability it seems mostly about intent, it doesn't go into if how that intent is met?</p> <p>JB: We will add a Bullet point on monitoring and Data collection, we need to collect data regarding progress.</p> <p>MTS: At the moment we do not collect this data, it is impossible to imagine that this is positive. We need to be measuring this in a way that means that we can hold this forum and the DTP to account.</p>
<p>3. LISS DTP Application Process</p>	<p>MTS: We hope we will begin recruiting for LISS DTP 2 in October, at that point we will have a full refresh of the application process and implement any reviewed actions. Unfortunately, individual Institutional rules on 1+3 application fees are beyond our control. However, I will take away an action to investigate what can be done at KCL and raise it with the LISS DTP directors across Queen Marys and Imperial.</p> <p>PS: A problem with KCL is the length of time before an application goes through, as it can take up to 3 months to hear back from admissions.</p>
<p>4. Recognising disability within the DTP</p>	<p>MTS: We don't currently monitor ED&I, including regarding disability. Again, we will be looking in depth at individual characteristics as terms of interaction with disabled students. We need to make sure communication is good and appropriately levelled, as disability runs a wide gamut and we need to respond appropriately for that.</p> <p>We can grant extensions and exemptions, we would like to make sure it as straightforward as possible to access these, and to be measured and sympathetic across all 3 institutions.</p>

	<p>Keisha: Interruption of studies and need for students who are carers, there is no information to describe how a student could interrupt to take care leave.</p> <p>MTS: What can we do explicitly around care and bereavement and ensure that supervisors and students know what or rules are. Michael will report back after asking the E.S.R.C, however he cannot comment on whether he will be able to make any changes.</p>
<p>5. Diversity within the DTP</p>	<p>MTS: I strongly believe these are important characteristics when it comes to ED&I. The problem I have with adopting this as a specific policy The overwhelming majority of PhD students are the first in their family to attend university, therefore it isn't a precise characteristic. Social class is very difficult to determine as many people who are middle class identify as working class and vice versa. Class is complex and fraught, it's hard to use as actual policy. I would be very interested in others' thoughts on how we can include this in the DTP.</p> <p>GS: What are we doing to make sure students don't have imposter syndrome, and don't feel isolated?</p> <p>MTS: We can think on student mentoring, one of the most important things when dealing with socio economic class is the broader and less well defined a group of people is, the less there is to support the people in that group.</p> <p>KL: DO you record ED&I data on BAME student candidates?</p> <p>MTS: We do collect that data on students and supervisors, however as of right now it cannot meaningfully be used. In future we will look at collecting meaningful data that can be effectively used.</p> <p>RJH: I did not see anything in socio economic characteristics regarding students who are estranged from parents. Measuring an institutions number of these are students is important as these students are incredibly vulnerable. Queen Marys helps these students at an undergraduate and PGT level but this support doesn't reach PGR.</p> <p>MTS: That's a good point, I will make a point to give that some thought. I have noticed that although Universities have robust widening participation departments, they often are focused solely on Undergraduate and Master's level.</p> <p>GS: This is also relevant to the parents of young children, if you are a ug student there is funding for childcare support, if you are on a funded PhD your income is untaxed your not eligible for 30 hours of childcare even though you are in theory working 35 hours a week.</p>

	<p>MTS: That is a very good point, however as a DTP what we can do to influence government decisions is relatively minor. We are prohibited from lobbying as we are a charity.</p> <p>Pippa: Funding timing frames are not robust enough and it effects research and the ability to collect data, and invite speakers to events. Stipends being late really effect students wellbeing as well.</p>
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Actions

Item	Action	Responsibility
LISS DTP Application Process	Investigate HEI admissions fees, as it is unclear.	MTS.
Choose Representative roles	Cairn will send out poll, will confirm at next meeting.	CM, All
Childcare	Investigate free childcare provision for doctoral students	MTS
Data collection	Plan how ED&I progress will be monitored across LISS DTP.	LISS DTP
Care and Bereavement.	Make possibility of care / parental and bereavement interruption and extensions clear on the website.	MTS, CM