

# Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression: EDI Work Stream

## Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The purpose of the Equality/Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Work Stream is to consider the intersection between Academic Freedom, Freedom of Expression and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) / Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

### Guiding Question(s)

1. How can our university community celebrate its (intellectual) diversity, affirming the democratic principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression, while fostering a respectful and inclusive environment?

### Remit

The work stream group will:

1. plan to identify, and amplify, the interdependencies between academic freedom and freedom of expression; and equality, diversity and inclusion as core values of the University's mission and purpose; and to identify and to address tensions, where they arise.
2. engage with the university community, staff and students, to discuss and to educate about the EDI aspects of academic freedom and freedom of expression, along with the ethical responsibilities that come with the exercising of academic freedom and freedom of expression; devising events, and contributing to the Coordinating Group's communication plan, consulting other Work Streams for feedback on draft work/plans, as relevant.
3. consider how a respectful and inclusive environment can be further fostered, while allowing for open and critical inquiry, by exploring case studies and experiences from global Higher Education contexts, developing guidelines for navigating complex topics while maintaining respectful discourse.
4. Provide guidance, including tools and frameworks, to help individuals to engage constructively in discussions around academic freedom, freedom of expression, and EDI matters.

### Membership

The Work Stream membership will comprise those with relevant academic and professional expertise and experience

Membership will be by invitation, following discussion between the Work Stream Group Convenor and Convenor/Deputy Convenor of the Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Coordinating Group. However, the Work Stream will be inclusive and will wish to engage a wide variety of stakeholders and contributions to develop its proposals and take forward and deliver the outcomes of the work.

### Timescale and meeting arrangements

The number, frequency and format of meetings will be ordinarily monthly. However, additional meetings may be scheduled in support of the milestones and key deliverables. To ensure maximum participation, meetings may be online unless the purpose of the meeting would be better supported by a different mode.

The meeting agenda and any papers will normally be circulated via email, at least 5 working days prior to each meeting, and a note of actions will be circulated within 5 working days of each meeting.

Each Work Stream member is responsible for contributing opinions and relevant examples of experience for discussion at the group. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they will be invited to submit a written contribution to the group, to ensure their views are considered in their absence.

### Reporting

The Work Stream will report regularly on its progress to the Coordinating Group and will support the achievement of deliverables within its focus area.

### Governance and Operation

The Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression EDI Work Stream reports to the Coordinating Group via the Work Stream Convenor. The EDI Work Stream has a structural link to the University EDI Committee.