

Terms of Reference for Parent and Carers Staff Network

Introduction

Everyone should feel safe, supported and comfortable at work, where they feel able to be themselves without experiencing discrimination or harassment. People perform better when they can be themselves. Sussex staff networks ensure that the University hears the voices of a wide range of people and to fully understand and address the barriers to equal representation, progression and reward. The networks enable staff to be consulted as part of our decision making processes and development of major changes which have an impact on staff.

Membership

The Parent and Carers Staff Network¹ is for staff who identify as having caring responsibilities.

Objectives of the network

The network aims to meet clearly identified objectives:

1. To create an open, supportive, inclusive and welcoming culture, in order to create a space for all staff who define into the network.

Senior management support and reporting structure

It is widely recognised that commitment from senior leaders – and communications from them to make this commitment clear – is critical to parent and carer inclusion and ensuring the success of the staff network. The designated senior sponsor at the University of Sussex is the academic lead for EDI, who acts as a point of contact for feedback and escalation to the Inclusive Sussex Programme Board.

Network Structure

Staff networks can agree on how formal or informal they wish their structures to be. This may be influenced by the size and diversity of the membership. As the network has formal roles within the University structure it is important that it is able to accurately represent its membership rather than the views of a few individuals, e.g. in any consultation or in feeding back concerns.

Networks can consider formal or informal steering groups with fixed or rotating chairs. All networks should appoint a Network Chair. The Network Chair will organise any network meetings, manage the shared mailbox for the group and ensure that any formal responses to consultation are collated and sent to reflect the views of the network. They will also manage the network's social media accounts unless this is allocated to another network member. The Network Chair will liaise with the EDI Unit over any events that require central support/budget.