

Rowett Institute  
Quarterly EDIT Meeting  
3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026



## EDIT Attendees

This is an open meeting, all staff and students from the Rowett are welcome!

**EDIT Co-leads: Alasdair Leeson-Payne (ALP), Karen Scott (KS), Susan Anderson (SA)**

EDIT members: Alex Johnstone (AJ), Antonio Gonzalez Sanchez (AGS), Grant Rae (GR), Gary Cooper (GC), Heather Mackintosh (HM), Jules Griffin (JG), Justin Rochford (JR), Karen Hislop (KH), Karen Taylor (KT), Nick Hayward (NH), Silvia Gratz (SG)

Apologies: Joe Churcher (JC), Jodie Park (JP), Maria Grazia Cascio (MG)

Secretariat: Claire Hammerton (CH)

## Minutes

Note: see attached the accompanying EDIT presentation slides from the meeting.

| Agenda Item                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Action                                               |
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| ALP chaired today's meeting of EDIT and presented slides on the following items for the committee's discussion. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                      |
| 1.                                                                                                              | <p>Previous minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Minutes from 20<sup>th</sup> Nov: approved and will be published online.</li><li>ii. Actions from previous minutes (see attached action list) were discussed with the main ongoing actions outlined below:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>Ongoing call for new EDIT members</b> (ECRs and students).</li><li>- <b>Subgroup leads to update at next EDIT meeting.</b></li><li>- <b>Induction modifications</b> – EDIT members are currently reviewing the induction process and updating the induction pack. The RI webpages will then also be updated.</li></ul></li></ul> | <p>CH</p> <p>ALL<br/>Subgroup leads<br/>Admin/GC</p> |
| 2.                                                                                                              | <p>EDIT Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>Co-lead structure:</b> Karen Scott, Alasdair Leeson-Payne, Susan Anderson</li><li><b>Deputising to represent Rowett at:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- People Culture and Equality (PCE) group</li><li>- SMMSN Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Committee (EDIC)</li><li>- Gender Equality Steering Group (GEST)</li></ul></li><li>ii. Gender balance update: <b>9F:7M</b> (staff, no student members)</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                      |                                                      |

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| 3. | <p>University/School EDI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>EDI at the University – Structure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (University)</b><br/>The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is responsible for the strategic direction of all Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities supporting the Aberdeen 2040 strategy.</li> <li>- <b>SMMSN Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)</b><br/>Reporting to the School Executive, the School Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee supports the Head of School by ensuring the strategic oversight of equality, diversity &amp; inclusion matters within the School.</li> <li>- <b>Rowett Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Team (EDIT)</b><br/>Promotes and oversees equality, diversity &amp; inclusion within the Institute. Reporting to School Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee and supports the SMMSN and Rowett Athena SWAN Action Plan.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. <b>EDI at the University – News &amp; Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>The School of Psychology:</b> was awarded the University’s first departmental Athena Swan Gold in Jan 2026. This is the highest level of recognition demonstrating excellence in representation, progression and success for all genders.</li> <li>- <b>Emily Test:</b> as part of the ongoing collaboration, we are facilitating a pilot to trial a new Gender-Based Violence (GBV) module for students, which will be rolled out across the Higher Education sector in 2026/27.</li> <li>- <b>Adapting for Continued Success:</b> there are continuing discussions on how ACS and the move to a faculty model will affect EDI across the University. Particularly in reference to current awards, such as the School of Psychology.</li> <li>- <b>Current compulsory training courses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Tackling sexual harassment at work</b> – a manager’s guide</li> <li>- <b>Understanding and confronting sexual harassment at work</b></li> <li>- <b>Tackling Racial Bias Training</b></li> <li>- <b>Inclusion Essentials Training</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. <b>SMMSN Equality Diversity and Inclusivity Committee (EDIC) – Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>SMMSN EDI Lead:</b> Aravinda Guntupalli has taken on the role (and remains SMMSN Race Champion).</li> <li>- <b>Staff survey results:</b> across the school identified issues of bullying and/or harassment. This equates to ~11% of staff having experienced or witnessed bullying and/or harassment at work. This is an issue that requires focus for the committee and discussions are ongoing on reporting and how to address.</li> <li>- <b>Wheelchair user access:</b> has been raised as a concern for staff as well as students across lecture halls on the Foresterhill campus. The school are reviewing how to make the campus theatres more wheelchair friendly, but it was noted that the Rowett Seminar Room is one of the only wheelchair accessible lecture theatres currently available.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |  |
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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EDIT noted that a wheelchair user friendly lectern will be soon installed in the Rowett Seminar Room in March/April.</li> <li>- EDIT noted staff should be encouraged to review accessibility requirements for their students, who may require additional support to access building facilities, toilets, hot taps etc. as well as their evacuation plan.</li> <li>- <b>Changes to Employment Rights Act:</b> has legal requirements to address sexual harassment and any changes to parental leave that are being adopted across the University. <b>Action: EDIT did not think there had been any changes to note to the parental leave policy, but HR would confirm if there were.</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | GR          |
| 4. | <p>Feedback from School Staff Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Background of staff survey:</b> the anonymised school survey was carried out from Aug-Sep 2025 by a third party. We know how many anonymous responses were submitted for the Rowett but not any further information on the submitters. The survey allowed staff to feedback the experience and understanding of the UoA policies and implementation of Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity.</li> <li>ii. <b>Application of Results for Athena SWAN Action Plan:</b> many of the results of the Staff Survey directly link to Action Plan points on the SMMSN and Rowett Athena SWAN Action Plans. These results will be used to establish efficacy of policies and interventions to address concerns within EDI as well as informing Athena SWAN renewals and applications.</li> <li>iii. <b>Rowett results: 56 members of staff responded to the survey out of approx. 90 members = 62% response rate.</b> This is below the AS Action Plan which required a minimum response rate of 70%.</li> <li>iv. <b>EDIT discussed the results for the Rowett:</b> with the Rowett having some very good results being described as supportive 75%, inclusive &amp; welcoming 63%, which is an improvement of 13% from the previous survey. Whereas being described as cliquey 18% has remained the same. 46% found RI culture to be sociable and 32% happy. Whereas 25% found the culture stressful and pressurized.</li> <li>v. <b>Bullying &amp; harassment:</b> 9% responded they had experienced bullying, 4% experienced harassment and 2% witnessed bullying. 44% of respondents answered they did not report the bullying/harassment and 22% preferred not to answer. <b>Action: Open Meeting presentation on Toolkit, Training, Policies and Reporting.</b></li> <li>- The school is currently discussing how best to encourage staff to report all sightings and to ascertain if staff i) do not feel comfortable reporting or ii) do not know how to report it. This can be safely reported through several channels: i) via the online tool accessed through the UoA webpages (can be anonymously submitted), ii) to your director or iii) to HR.</li> <li>- It was noted the survey results were collected <u>before</u> the mandatory sexual harassment training was issued to staff towards the end of 2025, and this training did encourage everyone to speak up about witnessing or receiving any bullying &amp; harassment.</li> </ul> | JC, ALP, KS |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further information on how the reports are used and processed will be shared by the school's HR to increase awareness and reassurance of anonymity when submitting a report.</li> </ul> <p>vi. <b>Training, Development and Workload:</b> responses indicate there is general awareness of UoA EDI policies, toolkits and training although the majority of staff have not used these resources and more could be done to improve awareness. 32% are not aware of the Workload Management Guidance policy. <b>Action: Promotion of Toolkits and Training in Open Meetings and Newsletters.</b></p> <p>vii. <b>Support:</b> results are mixed on annual reviews and whether all aspects of EDI checklist are being usefully discussed. 57% are not aware of the School Carer Support Fund. <b>Actions: Discussing Line Management training for annual reviews. Promotion of support information.</b></p> <p>viii. <b>EDIT:</b> most staff members find the newsletter useful for developmental opportunities and social activities (93% positive). 26% do not know if the Rowett Institute Athena Swan webpages are useful. There are mixed results on whether staff have a good understanding of the different promotion processes and other award opportunities (overall positive 72%, overall negative or don't know 26%). <b>Actions: Promotion of Rowett EDIT webpages and UoA EDI policies. Review promotion opportunities with the current pause in the promotion exercise.</b></p> | <p>JC, ALP, KS</p> <p>Leads / GR</p> <p>Leads / GR</p> |
| 5. | <p>Neurodiversity</p> <p>NH briefly summarised discussions he had been part of at the Neurodiversity at Work conference in December 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. In law, neurodivergent conditions are defined as a disability, although a formal diagnosis is not required.</li> <li>ii. A Rowett neurodiversity workshop would be useful for line managers and supervisors as management of a neurodivergent employee requires understanding and empathy. Support should also be reviewed for line managers with neurodivergent staff/students.</li> <li>iii. A neurodiversity 'passport' or a formal needs assessment can help to agree workplace adjustments between a line manager and an employee.</li> <li>iv. Awareness needs to be raised amongst staff about neurodivergent conditions and the range of tools and software already available.<br/><b>Action: add to newsletter</b></li> <li>v. Discussions will need to take place to review how to implement ideas and actions.</li> <li>vi. Further information will be shared at the Rowett Open Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>NH/JC</p> <p>NH</p>                                 |
| 6. | <p>Rowett AS Action Plan</p> <p>See action slides 25 and 26. The below points were discussed during the sub-group updates:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                        |

