I am delighted to have been appointed as the Equality and Diversity Champion for Brunel University and look forward to undertaking this important role.

The focus of my role will be to champion the University’s commitment of promoting the principles of equality and diversity in all areas of University activity. As the Champion, I shall be taking on a leadership role to help create and maintain an inclusive culture where equality is practiced and diversity is valued. Together we will continue to develop a community where equality of opportunity becomes established and embedded in all we do and where diversity is celebrated and inspires us to enhance the quality of our relationships with all groups and individuals.

As an Education Institution the University, along with other public bodies, has new responsibilities placed upon it in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010. This is easily summed up by the phrase having ‘due regard’. Having ‘due regard’ means consciously thinking about equality and diversity as part of the process of decision making. This means that consideration of equality and diversity issues must influence the decisions reached including in how we develop, evaluate and review policy and how we design, deliver and evaluate services, among other matters.

The University should continue to develop and enhance equality and diversity embedding it into all policy and practices because it is the right thing to do. In addition, our external significant stakeholders expect it of us. The Research Councils UK (RCUK) and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) panels among others shall be expecting Universities to not only demonstrate and evidence our ‘due regard’ to equality and diversity but to also promote and lead cultural change in relation to equality and diversity.

As the Equality and Diversity Champion I shall encourage all staff and students to view diversity as a strength that adds value to our academic culture and contributes to the University’s strategic objectives of internationalisation and globalisation and of widening participation. I will help stakeholders to understand that this is both an individual and collective responsibility that must be enacted through what we do as a community.

By working together we have the opportunity to make a difference and effect change through engagement at all levels. I would like to see the University viewed as a leader of good practice on equality and diversity matters through building on its excellent foundations of inclusivity and positive regard for diverse cultures. The role of Champion provides an opportunity to influence the views, behaviours and expectations of people by promoting the principles of equality and diversity.