

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

Trinity College

EQUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 8 March 2007 at 10:30 am in Conference Room, Top Floor, 1 College Green

Present: Vice-Provost, Mr D Treanor, Ms L Power, Professor M O'Moore, Professor G Whyte, Ms A FitzGerald (secretary), Mr R Hodson (GSU), Mr D Quinn, Ms K Campos McCormack.

Apologies: Mr M Gleeson, Ms R Torode, SU Welfare Officer, Professor E Drew, Ms I Gannon, Ms C Hannon, Ms C Byrne.

In attendance: Professor T Jackson*

Present for: *Equal/06/07/13-19

The Vice-Provost welcomed the GSU representative Ronan Hodson. The Committee also welcomed Professor Tim Jackson who was deputising from Ms Torode as a representative of the Contact Persons on Sexual Harassment and Bullying.

Items for Board attention are denoted XXX

Eqal/06-07/13 Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting, 6 December 2006, were approved and signed.

Eqal/06-07/14 Matters arising Matters arising from the minutes were discussed and have been minuted below.

Eqal/06-07/15 Anti-Racism Week initiatives Ms Campos McCormack reported on the progress of the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Anti-Racism Week report. The initial recommended anti-racist focus group discussion had taken place and proved useful in determining the most appropriate actions to promote an inter-cultural campus.
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The Committee noted the need for gathering feedback from students and staff from ethnically diverse backgrounds on racist incidents in College. The Vice-Provost invited the Equality Officer to provide a more detailed proposal in relation to an anti-racist discussion forum for students and to conducting a survey in this regard.

Ms Campos McCormack informed the Committee that the recommendation to implement an English language training programme for College staff was being supported by the Staff Office. This training would be provided in collaboration with ICTU and would involve a small amount of work time release for staff. Ms Power noted that it was initially planned to introduce this training in the Catering and Housekeeping areas where there are large numbers of non-national employees. It was suggested this programme might be extended to include researchers and other areas.

The necessity for language training and the possible costs for departments were discussed by Committee members. The Committee welcomed and strongly supported the initiative and suggested that a central fund might be made available for departments, on a competitive basis, to cover costs of this type of training and other equality initiatives.

ACTIONS:

- 15.1 Ms Campos McCormack to develop student forum discussion initiative and survey model for consideration.
- 15.2 The Staff Office to continue with the implementation of English language training.
- 15.3 The Secretary to propose a central equality fund to the Executive Officers.

Eqal/06-07/16 Up-date on the implementation of the Disability Act 2005 The Disability Services Coordinator invited the Committee's attention to the following documents:

- the Board minute noting delegated authority from the Provost to the Disability Services Coordinator
- the Internal Procedures for Handling Complaints under the Act (document circulated).

Disability Act Internal Complaints Procedure

Mr Treanor noted that the College was ahead of other universities in developing a complaints procedure under the Disability Act. The document outlined in detail the procedures and time-frame for Inquiry Officers to deal with complaints. This document had also been placed on the Disability website.

The possibility of using face-to-face hearings in some cases was noted. The possibilities of more informal and formal hearings were discussed and it was agreed that this would be considered in the future on a case by case basis.

Other updates

Mr Treanor also informed the Committee of other developments that had occurred since the last meeting.

Mr Treanor updated the Committee on the implementation of the 3% quota under NDA directions, and noted that the College Secretary was seeking further advice from the NDA and the HEA due to a lack of clarity in the procedures for complying with this requirement.

Building accessibility

The Vice-Provost enquired about College's accessibility, which is also a priority in the College Strategic Plan, and the deadline for compliance with the Disability Act and other regulations. Mr Treanor advised the Committee that, at present, there were two conflicting deadlines regarding College accessibility: the 31st December 2007 for the Heritage Act and 2015 for the Disability Act. The difficulty of complying with the Heritage Acts by that date was acknowledged by

the Committee. The Committee noted that this matter had also been considered by the Site and Facilities Committee.

Regarding College accessibility and the relocation of some student services to the Luce Hall, Mr Treanor noted that this would facilitate the provision of accessible services for students, but that the issue of inaccessibility of some College administration offices in Front Square remained.

In response to further enquiries Mr Treanor clarified that there had been an audit of building accessibility for academic activities carried out by the Disability Service. He noted that this did not include all buildings, and that it was expected the majority of complaints under the Disability Act would relate to building accessibility.

Eqal/06-07/17 XXX **Equality Plan 2007-2009 update** Ms Campos McCormack reported on the progress made in the implementation of the initiatives outlined in the Equality Plan at the previous Committee meeting.

Training

Ms Campos McCormack invited the Committee's attention to the implementation of equality and diversity awareness training in College. She noted that an initial Equality and Diversity at Work 'training the trainers' workshop was taking place in March to facilitate College staff involved in training and recruitment activities to introduce an equality dimension to their work and possibly develop specific equality workshops.

International Women's Day

Committee members were also invited to note the events occurring for International Women's Day to celebrate women's achievements in the arts and sciences, organized in collaboration with the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies, the WISER centre, Dublin University Gender Equality Society, the School of Drama, Film and Music, the School of Engineering, Music and Media Technologies, noting that these events were supported by Ms Campos McCormack.

Monitoring Report

An initial report was circulated on Equality Monitoring. It was noted that the aim of collecting and monitoring equality data is to establish the base-line position, monitor the progress and impact of initiatives, identify areas of action and comply with legal requirements. The report detailed legal requirements such as the 3% statutory Disability Act staff quota and the duty to promote gender equality and equality of opportunity under 1997 Universities Act, as well as not discriminating on any of the nine grounds included in Equality legislation.

Ms Campos McCormack highlighted that in the overview of equality monitoring in three universities – Queen's University Belfast, Oxford and Cambridge – all three universities were shown to have extensive monitoring systems in place, generally with a dedicated equality unit and database system. These universities monitored and reported annually on staff composition regarding gender, race and disability.

The methodologies used were a combination of data collection for applicants and appointments at recruitment stage using a unique code identifier system, current staff surveys collecting additional qualitative data, and analysis of current staff composition.

The monitoring situation in the Irish context was shown to be less developed. However several universities (UCC, UCD, DCU and NUIG) have already carried out equality and diversity surveys, audits or, in the case of NUIG, monitoring of applicants and appointments on all nine grounds.

The particular situation of TCD regarding data collection and monitoring was discussed, and it was agreed that a more detailed report on methodology and costing would be necessary.

Several points were highlighted regarding staff monitoring:

- The current CORE Staff Office database could facilitate information on gender and age regarding current staff, but additional technical resources and personnel would be required in the Staff Office before it would be possible to record other equality grounds or monitor applicants or promotions.
- Monitoring for applicants, appointments and promotions needed to be developed.
- The methodology for the data collection needed to be decided.

Regarding student monitoring, Ms Campos McCormack noted that, in general, data are collected and forwarded to HEA for central analysis. The student database will be enhanced for the year 2007/2008 so as to comply with new HEA requirements regarding the recording of social background and disability data at registration.

Ms Campos McCormack also drew the Committee's attention to the importance of the quality of data collected, its reliability and accessibility, with specific attention to issues of data protection and confidentiality.

Ms Campos McCormack had originally proposed that gender and disability be priority grounds for monitoring, but after discussing the matter the Committee felt that consideration should be given to monitoring on all nine grounds defined in equality legislation.

ACTION:

Ms Campos McCormack to provide a paper outlining a template for an annual monitoring report, including an analysis of methodology and resources options.

Eqal/06-07/18 Contact Persons on Bullying and Harassment Prof. Jackson reported on the Code of Practice for Contact persons referring to the document 'Code of Practice and Guidelines for the Panel of Contact persons' (March 2007) which had been circulated to the Committee.

Prof. Jackson highlighted the importance of the informal procedure offered by the contact persons and the confidentiality and experience of their service. The Code outlines the role of the contact person, the recruitment procedure and service of panel members, regulations regarding the interaction with staff and students, and extent and duty of role, guidelines for contact persons meetings, record keeping and training and support.

The Committee was also informed by Ms Power of the four-part training for new contact persons consisting of:

- a) Harassment prevention training. Three new contact persons had recently received expert training on harassment legislation and managing harassment complaints at the Rape Crisis Centre
- b) College policy training provided by the Staff Office

- c) Listening skills course provided by the Counselling Service
- d) In-house training with the other contact persons.

In response to a query on the selection process for contact persons it was suggested that a paper outlining the specific requirements and procedures for appointing a contact person should be prepared. The possibility of getting other members of staff involved in a voluntary capacity as champions for the new dignity and respect policy was also discussed.

The Committee was also informed that the Staff Office would be following the contact persons guidelines in its statistical recording and monitoring of harassment complaints.

ACTION:

Ms Power to prepare a paper outlining the criteria for the appointment of contact persons.

Eqal/06-07/19 XXX Reports of sub-groups Ms Power invited the Committee's attention to reports from two Committee sub-groups.

Report on Parental Leave Ms Power highlighted the key points of the report carried out for the Work-Life Balance Group (Parental Leave 2006-2007, circulated previously to the Committee).

- Of the 51 parental leaves granted in a year, 86% were women and 14 % men
- There was a low uptake rate of parental leave by academic staff. None of the academic staff taking leave were male
- In most cases full parental leave was not taken

The matter of flexible paternal leave was discussed and it was noted that there is inconsistency across the College in this regard. It was suggested that each area or department should outline what leave arrangements it is prepared to facilitate.

Ms Power also informed the Committee that a maternity 'returners' group was being established.

Career Progression Report Ms Power informed the Committee of the review and progress made in the implementation of two previous Committee reports: Professor Barbara Wright's *Women Academics and Promotions* (2002) and Professor Eileen Drew's *Best Practice Models for the Career Advancement of Women in Academe* (2002).

Ms Power reported that several of the recommendations had been implemented or were being progressed:

- opening hours have been extended in the crèche and the new nursery is currently being investigated by the Day Nursery Working Group
- recommendations regarding maternity leave, its resourcing and replacements have been implemented by the Staff Office
- the terms and conditions for part-time academics have been modified in line with new legislation

Other recommendations regarding the monitoring of female staff recruitment, retention and promotion have yet to be implemented.

Ms Power asked the Committee's opinion as to whether it was still relevant to pursue several recommendations, such as:

- implementing a mentoring scheme for staff
- actively encouraging women to apply for Fellowship.

These two initiatives would be considered positive measures rather than positive discrimination, as clarified by Professor Whyte. It was agreed a mentoring scheme was to be discussed with Ms Daly in the Staff Office in view of the revised probation policy under consideration by the PAC, and that the matter regarding the fellowships should be forwarded to the Fellows.

Ms Power drew the Committee's attention to the importance of courses and training schemes in the recommendations of the two previous reports and advised that different career development and management skills courses were to be run by Staff Development. The Springboard programme for female staff was also to be implemented with collaboration of the WISER centre.

Ms Power informed the Committee that the recommendation for exit interviews was being progressed by the Staff Office.

It was also agreed that consideration would be given to the establishment of a women's career progression working group later in the year, noting that care would have to be taken to ensure that there would be no overlap or conflict with the WISER initiative.

ACTIONS:

- 19.1 The Staff Office to ask each area or department to propose what parental leave arrangements they are prepared to facilitate.
- 19.2 Staff Development to implement courses and training specifically related to career progression, including the Springboard programme.
- 19.3 Ms Campos McCormack to develop statistical monitoring on career progression of women as part of the equality monitoring scheme.
- 19.4 Ms Campos McCormack to discuss the establishment of a mentoring scheme with the Establishment Officer.

Eqal/06-07/20 IUA Equality and Diversity Group Ms Campos McCormack reported on the IUA Equality and Diversity Group meetings and drew the Committee's attention to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

This EU initiative is championed by the Equality Authority in Ireland, and all the universities members of the IUA group would like to make a collaborative effort to celebrate this year. The Committee welcomed this initiative and supported the proposal of seeking the support and funding of the Equality Authority for a joint project. The possibility of a commemorative volume or calendar collecting winning entries to a written/visual competition in each university was suggested, with each university focussing on a different equality dimension.

ACTION:

The IUA group to discuss the *Equal Opportunities for All* initiative with the Equality Authority and seek funding and support.

Eqal/06-07/21 Dignity and Respect Policy Ms Power reported on the progress made on the implementation of the action point in Towards 2016 to proof all policies and develop a Dignity and Respect Policy. This new policy would incorporate the existing Bullying and Harassment policy, while including additional information

regarding duty of care, managerial training, information on support systems etc. and reflect the collegiate nature of College.

It was agreed that a group should meet to develop this policy, including Ms Power, Ms Campos McCormack and two volunteers from the Committee, Professor M Moore and Professor I Gannon, and a student representative.

ACTION:

Ms Louise Power to contact the secretary of the Partnership Committee with a view to establishing a joint working group to develop a Dignity and Respect Policy.

**Eqal/06-07/22
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Revised Committee Terms of Reference had been circulated to the Committee members. The role of the Committee and its authority were discussed. Taking into account its advisory role two amendments were suggested regarding its authority:

- authority to appoint a contact person
- authority to approve equality-related procedures and guidelines within the parameters of approved policy on behalf of Board.

Amendments to membership were also noted, now to include one elected Board member, once Council nominee and four members of staff instead of the existing membership of six staff members. The Equality Officer to be listed as Secretary.

The Terms of Reference were approved with these modifications and it was agreed that they should be forwarded to Board for approval in due course

Signed

Date