

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

Trinity College

EQUALITY COMMITTEE

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Minutes of a meeting held on 20 November at the Board Room, Provost's House.

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Present: Dr S Ryan, Ms A FitzGerald, Mr D Treanor, Ms L Power, Ms A Murphy (GSU), Mr T McMahon, Ms R Torode, Ms C Hannon, Mr D Quinn, Ms O Foley (SU), Dr H Gibbons, Ms K Campos McCormack.

Apologies: Vice-Provost, Prof C O'Morain, Mr O Doyle, Prof E Drew, Ms C Byrne, Ms T Moloney.

In attendance: Ms C Roughneen

The Committee welcomed the new student representatives Ms Alex Murphy, Vice-President of the GSU, and Ms Orlaith Foley, Welfare Officer of the SU. The Chair thanked Vice-Provost Ruth Byrne for chairing the Committee in her absence in 2007-08.

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**Items for Board attention are denoted XXX**

**Eqal/08-09/01 Minutes** The minutes of the previous meeting, 11 June 2008, were approved and signed.

**Eqal/08-09/02 Matters arising** were discussed and minuted below.

**Section A – Policy issues**

**Eqal/08-09/03 Supporting Staff with Disabilities: Guide for staff and managers** **XXX** The Committee welcomed the publication of this Guide which builds on the revised Code of Practice applying to the Employment of People with Disabilities (Eqal/07-08/33). Mr Treanor outlined how this document would serve as a practical step by step guide to managers in: implementing the Code of Practice; providing reasonable accommodation; and supporting their staff. The Committee discussed the use of the term 'manager' as a generic term encompassing the academic roles of Head of Discipline, Head of School, Director, etc., following Mr Gibbons' suggestion that the Guide should reflect explicitly the academic nature of the organization. The Guide will be launched on 2 December by the Provost and the Minister of State for the Department of Education and Science, Mr Sean Haughey T.D.

**Eqal/08-09/04 Staff Disability Network** Ms Campos reported on the establishment of a Staff Disability Network, an outcome of the Disability Review consultation process, where staff highlighted the benefits of ongoing involvement in College policy development. The Network will serve a dual role as peer support group and a consultation forum with staff with disabilities. The Director of the Disability Service will consult with the Network annually when

developing the action plan for the implementation of the Code of Practice (to be reported to the Equality Committee), and will also provide feedback to the Staff Office where appropriate. The Committee noted the importance of confidentiality and building a supportive organization to encourage staff participation. The Network will be largely self-functioning in its activities, with a Chair due to be appointed at its first meeting in December.

**Eqal/08-9/05 Dignity and Respect Policy update** Ms Power reported to the Committee on the corrections made to the Dignity and Respect Policy, including a section on 'other types of harassment', the change of references from 'perpetrator' to 'harasser', statute of limitations for Equality Authority cases as required by legislation, and the newly appointed Contact Persons. Ms Power informed the Committee that the policy was to be launched in December and would be signed by the joint Chairs of Partnership. The Partnership Working Group will hold a last meeting in December to finalise the details of the communication programme for the policy.

The launch of the policy is to be communicated to staff and students by email, website, and a limited number of hard copies of the booklet are to be made available to Heads of School, managers and staff with particular responsibilities in the policy. The Committee discussed the additional information available in the booklet for witnesses, alleged harassers and managers. It was acknowledged that a certain void existed in the representation of staff not belonging to a Union during the investigation process, but that it lay outside the Committee's power to address this. The Committee noted that open and targeted awareness workshops were to be held following the launch.

**XXX Contact Persons** The Committee welcomed the appointment of four new Contact Persons (see Appendix 1 to these minutes), making the total number on the Panel currently 9. It was noted that these additions to the Panel had been appointed using the new Code of Practice for the Appointment of Contact Persons procedures (Eqal/07-08/04).

**ACTIONS:**

- Ms Campos to submit the details of the newly appointed Contact Persons to the Board in an appendix to these minutes.

### **Section B – Implementation issues**

**Eqal/08-09/06 Equality Fund** The Committee welcomed the increase in the number of applicants to the Equality Fund: from 8 in the first 2008 call to 27 in the present call, reflecting growing interest in this initiative in the College community. The Committee noted that this year there were an additional €5,000 available in the Fund which had been unused in the first round; the total funding available in this call being €15,000. Ms Campos reported that 10 projects had been selected for funding and a further 5 projects had been shortlisted pending the submission of further information required. A provisional document outlining the projects funded was tabled. Funding was proposed for projects under the themes of 'The inclusive College Community', 'Challenging Stereotypes' and 'Family Focus'. Ms Campos reported that projects receiving funding would be advertised to a greater extent by the Equality Office in this call. It was suggested that the SU might facilitate greater advertising amongst students in future calls to increase the proportion of student applications. It was also suggested that Ms Campos would notify Partnership of the shortlisted projects.

The revised Terms of Reference (Equal/07-08/21&36), including the provision for a student member, were circulated to the Committee. A summary of the first round of projects funded in 2008 was also circulated. The Chair thanked Ms Campos for her administration of the competition.

**ACTIONS:**

- Ms Campos to draw up a final list of funded projects once pending details had been received; this is to be circulated to the Equality Committee members and to Partnership for information purposes.
- Ms Campos to notify successful applicants of the funding received, and provide feedback to non-successful projects.

**Equal/08-09/07 Gender and Promotions Report** Ms Campos updated the Committee on the progress of the report to the Provost examining why a low proportion of women are applying for promotion in certain academic grades. The promotions data was being considered taking into account the eligible pool of candidates within each grade. Ms Campos acknowledged the previous reports examining the issue of women's career progression and advised that an update on their implementation in the report would be included. Ms Campos discussed some of the initial findings from the consultation and meetings carried out, including a concern over the implementation of previous reports' recommendations; a perception that research was valued significantly more than teaching by College, particularly in the promotion process; and the effects of the absence of female role models and recognition.

The Committee discussed PMDS as an opportunity to provide staff with direction in relation to career development, but noted that this could vary depending on the department, and mentoring would provide more appropriate support. The Committee welcomed the progress of the mentoring scheme launched by WiSER in the Science areas and suggested the possibility of extending this to all staff. The Committee noted that the Staff Office was now able to provide reports on senior academic and administrative promotions annually and it was suggested this data be made available to the College community as a matter of interest. Other concerns discussed by the Committee included the situation of part-time academic staff, the Lecturer Bar being more appropriately treated as progression instead of promotion, and the long waiting list for staff wishing to avail of the College Day Nursery.

**ACTIONS:**

- Ms Campos to report to the Committee on the principal findings and outcomes of the report submitted to the Provost.
- Ms Campos to make public the promotional data, including this in the Monitoring report or other media.

**Equal/08-09/08 IUA Breaking Stereotypes Initiative** the Committee welcomed the report that the IUA Equality and Diversity Group had been awarded €15,000 in funding from the Equality Authority. This funding is made available from the European Commission as legacy funding from the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007, in which the IUA Group participated. The IUA Group initiatives that were successful in receiving funding will link to the overall Equality Authority theme of Breaking Stereotypes, in addition to holding the Breaking Stereotypes travelling poster exhibition in individual

colleges. Details of the IUA projects were circulated at previous Committee (Eqal/07-08/35), in summary the initiative is comprised of:

- Breaking Stereotypes travelling poster exhibition to take place in January 2009 (information on exhibition circulated to the Committee).
- Breaking Stereotypes creative competition, for staff and students, to be launched in January.
- LGBT staff network. Two workshops to be held in order to establish an inter-university network.
- Developing the LGBT initiative for use with other grounds.

**Eqal/08-09/09 Parental Group update** Ms Power reported on the progress of the Parental Group, now comprising 13 members, which was established in 2007 to oversee the recommendations arising from the discussion series held at the time. The Committee noted that the Group has now put in place the following supports:

- A Buddy system: an informal support for parents and parents-to-be. Several matches are already in place.
- Baby changing facilities: the Group has sponsorship for three additional baby changing facilities.

The Committee noted that the Group had applied for funding to the Equality Fund to establish a breastfeeding room. The Group has also organized workshops of interest to parents on the topics of: Helping your child study, Role-reversal (a stay at home father) and Parents and Teenagers. Further talks are being developed; the Group will also be exploring the possibility of expanding the Group to students.

**Eqal/08-09/10 Disability Act 3% census update** Ms Power reported that the IUA Equality and Diversity Group was developing a group strategy for the universities to fulfil their commitment under the Disability Act 2005 to report annually on the achievement of the 3% employment target for people with disabilities. The Committee noted that the data collection and storage system was being developed with the Staff Office to allow for distribution of the census in January. The primary concerns in the development of the census data collection system are in relation to confidentiality and security, as a means to encourage staff participation. The Committee noted the university sector has now been invited to meet with the DES Monitoring Committee. Ms Power reported the intention to continue preparation for the staff census for 2009. Ms Campos and Ms Power will continue to liaise with the IUA Equality Group and the HEA in this regard.

### **Section C – Matters for noting**

**Eqal/08-09/11 Statutes Review Group** The Committee noted the revised section regarding College Committees circulated by the Statutes Review Group.

**Eqal/08-09/12 Equality Events Calendar** Ms Campos circulated a calendar of equality events for 2008-2009, which will be updated to include the Equality Fund events taking place.

### **Any Other Business**

**Eqal/08-09/13 LGBT inclusive policies** Ms Campos reported on a recent query regarding

the pension conditions for staff in same-sex relationships. The Staff Office had provided the details of the pension schemes which are guided by the Public Sector pension scheme regulations and do not currently make any provision for same-sex or heterosexual unmarried couples. Ms Campos highlighted the need to review other Staff Office policies regarding leave and entitlements in order to follow best practice developing inclusive policies and to ensure non-discrimination of LGBT staff in language or content. Ms Power reported that the Staff Office were currently reviewing their policies and that this would be included as a criterion in the review.

**ACTION:** Ms Campos to liaise with the Staff Office in the current policy review.

**Eqal/08-09/14 Equality Authority Equality Review and Action Plan** Mr McMahon enquired into the situation of the College's application to the Equality Authority's ERAP scheme in 2007.

**ACTION:** Ms Campos to contact the Equality Authority to clarify the College's situation regarding its application to the ERAP scheme in 2007.

Signed .....

Date .....

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **New appointments to the Contact Persons Panel**

Appointed following the new Code of Practice for the Appointment of Contact Persons procedures.

Inmaculada Arnedillo Sánchez

Liz Curtis

Diane Sadler

Mabel Denniston