

University Of Dublin
Trinity College
Equality Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 22nd November 2011 at 2 p.m. in the Board room, House 1.

Present: Dr N Marples (Chair), Dr M Ó Siochrú, Ms A FitzGerald***, Ms A Taylor, Ms L Power, Ms C Hannon**, Mr D Treanor, Ms L Miller (SU), Mr M McAndrew (GSU), Ms K Campos McCormack (secretary).

Apologies: Vice-Provost, Prof. M McCarron, Ms V Butler, Ms C Byrne, Dr O Doyle, Mr D Quinn, Prof E Drew.

In attendance: Ms Caroline Roughneen*, Director of WiSER.

Present for: *Eqal/11-12/01-11. **Eqal/11-12/01-13, ***Eqal/11-12/01-14.

Items for Board attention are denoted XXX

Eqal/11-12/01 Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting, 24 May 2011, were approved and signed.

Matters arising were discussed and minuted below:

Eqal/11-12/02 [Eqal/10-11/33] **Committee quorum** Dr Ó Siochrú raised concerns regarding the poor attendance at Committee meetings. The Chair advised the Committee that this item had been considered and resulted in the proposed committee self-evaluation, on the agenda for discussion.

Eqal/11-12/03 [Eqal/10-11/38] **Annual Equality Monitoring and Merit Bar report** Dr Ó Siochrú enquired into the status of findings regarding the Merit Bar that were highlighted in the Annual Equality Monitoring Report and Merit Bar reports. The Chair advised that this item had been brought to Board's attention and was referred to the HR Committee for appropriate action.

Eqal/11-12/04 [Eqal/10-11/35] **Civil Partnership Act** Ms Power advised the Committee that amendments to HR policies and materials had been made in compliance with the Civil Partnership Act 2010, and these documents were due to be uploaded to the HR website over the coming couple of weeks.

Eqal/11-12/05 [Eqal/10-11/37] **Student Parent Policy** Ms Campos advised the Committee that the memo had been sent and discussions held with the Dean of Students regarding the development of an inclusive student parent policy. A proposal for a working group to be established including the Senior Tutor, Senior Lecturer and Graduate Studies areas, Equality Officer and student representatives is due to be made to the next Student Services Committee.

Eqal/11-12/06 [Eqal/10-11/38] **Gender and promotions** Ms Taylor suggested that given the initiation of promotion processes in 2012 it would be an opportune occasion to bring the promotions committees' attention to the identified gender imbalances occurring in relation to career progression in College, which had previously been discussed at this Committee. The Committee concurred with this proposal.

Action:

Ms Campos to contact the new promotions committees requesting they consider the key findings regarding gender and promotions contained in the Gender and Promotions and Merit Bar Reports as discussed by the Equality Committee.

Eqal/11-12/07 [Eqal/10-11/34] **legal advice on provision of reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities** Ms FitzGerald advised the Committee that she had liaised with former Senior Lecturer on this matter, who had been well disposed to consider possible changes in relation to examinations. Mr Treanor advised he was liaising with the current Senior Lecturer and Dean of Students to explore the possibility of enhancing the role of the Academic Liaison Officer to deal with examination issues locally in order to avoid the appeals process.

Eqal/11-12/08 [Eqal/10-11/36] **accessible information and stationery templates** Mr Treanor advised that he was liaising with the College printing supplier regarding accessible stationery.

Eqal/11-12/09 [Eqal/10-11/39] **supporting Deaf staff in College** Ms Campos advised that a memo had been sent to the Head of School of Linguistics, Speech and Communication Sciences and discussions were taking place between the Head of School and the Centre of Deaf Studies. Ms Campos noted she would update the Committee when further information was available.

Section A – Policy issues

Eqal/11-12/10 **Dignity and Respect policy amendment** Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to the proposed additions to the Dignity and Respect Policy regarding posters and publications (circulated): an insertion in Section 3 of the policy (Definitions): *Note on posters and promotional materials*; and an insertion in Section 4 of the policy: *Posters and student publications*. Ms Campos advised these amendments provided greater clarity about the scope of the policy with regards to harassment in the form of visual and textual materials. Ms Campos advised the text was devised in consultation with the Central Societies Committee and provided for an informal and a formal option for dealing with this type of complaint. Dr Ó Siochrú expressed concerns that the wording regarding '...content that could reasonably be perceived as offensive, intimidating or humiliating to the recipient in relation to any of the nine equality grounds...' might not take sufficient account of the particular nature of the University environment and inhibit student expression. Ms Campos advised that the dignity and respect policy provided a process for dealing with complaints in relation to all types of harassment and this wording reflected the definitions for other types of harassment. Ms Roughneen suggested that consideration needed to be provided not only to offensive material but to the creation and perpetuation of negative stereotypes in relation to different groups – a common occurrence in posters on display in lecture buildings. The Committee noted Dr Ó Siochrú's comments and agreed to the suggestion to include the wording 'within a university context' in the proposed insert.

Mr Treanor drew attention for the need for the Central Societies Committee to give greater consideration to inclusivity and accessibility in their activities. The Committee suggested the Equality Office could provide an information session for the CSC jointly with the SU, WiSER and the Disability Service.

Memo to Capitation Committee regarding poster regulations The proposed amendment to the Calendar poster regulations for the consideration of the Capitation Committee (circulated) was considered by the Committee. Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to comments submitted by Dr Doyle, who was unable to attend, regarding the length of the proposed amendment to the poster regulations in the Calendar in comparison to the length of the dignity and respect section within the Calendar. The Committee was of the view that the proposed inclusion of a section b referring to the dignity and respect policy within the general poster regulations was of the appropriate length, as was current section XIII (H30) of Calendar referring to the Dignity and Respect policy.

Actions:

- Ms Campos to amend the Dignity and Respect policy to include the proposed inserts, with the amendment discussed - to include 'in a university context' to the *Note on posters and promotional materials* - and to remove the reference to 'student' in the title.
- Ms Campos to circulate the amended memo to the Capitation Committee.
- Ms Campos to contact the Central Societies Committee to suggest providing an information session on inclusivity and accessibility.

Section B – Implementation issues

Eqal/11-12/11 INTEGER project Ms Roughneen outlined her role as Director of WiSER (Centre for Women in Science and Engineering Research), which was established in 2006 to promote the recruitment, retention and progression of women in science and technology. Ms Roughneen advised of the key purpose and scope of the INTEGER project – seeking sustainable change in institutions to improve career progression of women scientific researchers and based on the use of established gender and management research tools. The Committee noted the INTEGER project has secured €773,028 funding (30% College funding). Ms Roughneen suggested this was the right moment for change given the concurrent transformative processes occurring in College. Ms Roughneen outlined the time-frame for the project, currently focussing on the gender awareness development and the diagnosis stages. Ms Roughneen advised the committee that there would be an all staff quantitative and qualitative survey as part of the diagnosis process, and invited members of the Committee to pilot it. Following the diagnosis stage, two interrelated action plans would be drawn up: an institutional action plan and a Faculty action plan. The action plans would be implemented and externally evaluated annually (GESIS-Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences, CEWS, Germany).

Ms Roughneen discussed the project partners and highlighted the leading role Trinity was taking in this field: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), France; University of Siauliai (SU), Gender Studies Centre, Lithuania; and UK Resource Centre. Ms Roughneen advised these institutions faced similar challenges in terms of gender equality but with different contexts - and that an important level of tailoring was required for each institutional action plan. The Committee was invited to attend a re-launch for WiSER activities on 7 December. Ms Roughneen also noted that there would be an event with Prof. Paul Walton

discussing why it is taking so long to achieve equality between men and women and what can be done about this.

Ms Campos welcomed the INTEGER project as an opportunity for real progress in relation to gender inequality in College, a subject that had been discussed on numerous occasions by the Committee. Ms Roughneen advised that the targets outlined in the briefing document would be based on past and present data analysis and realistic targets would be set following engagement with the academic community. The Chair noted that gender progression was an important equality challenge in College and welcomed future updates from Ms Roughneen on the progress of the INTEGER project.

Eqal/11-12/12 Equality Fund Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to the Equality Fund projects completed in 2010-2011 (10 projects successfully completed and three projects cancelled) with a total expenditure of €12,835. Ms Campos suggested 2010-2011 had been a very positive year with projects focussing on a range of equality matters such as outreach and access, mental health, and resources for students with disabilities. Ms Campos circulated further information regarding the launch of a new resource for students with Asperger's Syndrome, the School of Nursing 'Men in Nursing – Challenging Stereotypes' brochure and tabled a copy of 'The Ghost in the Library' story book. Ms Campos highlighted the very valuable resource developed for students with Asperger's Syndrome, including videos with students discussing their College experience and an i-book, and noted Dr Doyle's suggestion that this resource could be made available to the general student body as it contained valuable information and would help raise positive awareness about Asperger's Syndrome. Mr Treanor advised he could progress this recommendation with Communications and the Web Office.

2011-2012 allocation Ms Campos advised that the most popular themes in 2011-2012 were *Listen, speak and be heard* and *The campus community of the future*. There were 21 applications in total, slightly fewer than last year: 7 student led projects, 11 staff and 2 joint projects. The total proposed allocation is €11,725 for 9 projects. Ms Campos outlined briefly the key activities for the selected projects, which focussed on: student parents (identifying student parent needs in College); mental health initiatives involving the development of a 5 day resource and the refurbishment of a drop-in facility in Goldsmith Hall; two projects relating to the inclusion of NIID students in College life (Vincent de Paul and School of Nursing), a communication project, continuing support for the Pathways resource development, a glossy publication for International Women's Week and a student project during the Trinity Arts Festival.

Ms FitzGerald and Mr Treanor noted the value of the Equality Fund projects and the high impact achieved for a relatively low investment; Mr Treanor drew the Committee's attention in particular to how the Fund raised energy around equality throughout College. Mr Treanor suggested Ms Campos develop a logo to make the Equality Fund projects more identifiable. The Committee was in agreement with the proposed allocation and Ms Campos advised that she would contact applicants to inform them of the outcome.

Actions:

- Ms Campos to notify applicants of the outcome of the Equality Fund selection process and issue agreement letters to all successful applicants.
- Ms Campos to seek to develop an Equality Fund sign.

- Mr Treanor to liaise with Communications and Web Office regarding making the Asperger's Syndrome resource videos available to the wider student body.

Eqal/11-12/13 Equality Committee self-evaluation The Chair drew the Committee's attention to the committee draft self-evaluation form circulated, noting that under the Committee's Terms of Reference regular self-evaluation was required. The Chair drew attention in particular to the problem experienced at recent meetings in relation to reaching quorum; the Committee discussed possible contributing factors for member non-attendance, including the size of the Committee, and suggested the evaluation would provide an opportunity to address this. The Committee discussed the role and authority of the Committee; expressing the view that overall the Committee was positive and focussed in its activities. Ms FitzGerald drew attention to its delegated authority from Board for certain matters and the importance of persuasion in achieving the Committee's objectives.

Ms Hannon drew the Committee's attention to its remit in relation to social class and the nine equality grounds – comparing the remit of the Committee with that of the Equality Policy, which does include student access. The Committee noted the current processes by which TAP developed policy through its own steering committee and submitted proposals to the Undergraduate Studies Committee rather than the Equality Committee. The Committee discussed the possibility of creating a more connected agenda for the Committee including different access roles such as TAP, NIID, academic liaison officers etc. The ad hoc working group that was established to create the College Access Plan was suggested as an example of effective collaboration across these areas. The Committee considered there could be room for greater strengthening of links and connections between different bodies in College dealing with access and equality issues and suggested that this could be considered as part of the Committee evaluation.

The Chair advised the Committee that they would be contacted following the meeting and requested to complete the evaluation. Ms FitzGerald suggested the link to the Terms of Reference, including the committee membership, be included in the self-evaluation form. The Committee suggested the evaluation might be most easily completed using survey monkey.

Actions

- Ms Campos to include the Terms of reference with membership details in the self-evaluation circulation.
- Ms Campos to liaise with Caroline Morgan in the Secretary's Office regarding the self-evaluation process.

Eqal/11-12/14 Equality Policy implementation plan Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to the draft Equality Policy implementation plan that provides a framework for achieving the commitments outlined in the policy in relation to employment and services. Ms Campos discussed the first year of the two-year action plan under the following headings: Communications; Training and Awareness; Local Engagement; Management Systems; Self-evaluation tool and Monitoring and Reporting. Ms Campos outlined how the training actions, such as the roll-out of the LEAD(Living Equality and Diversity) programme would provide a means to raise awareness and help gain greater support for the Equality policy. Ms Campos also drew attention to the development of an implementation tool to be piloted this year with the Department of Sport and HR, as an action for achieving engagement at a local level.

Ms Campos highlighted the mainstreaming commitment contained in the Equality policy which would involve looking at central management systems - initially this action might focus on one management system, for example a quality assurance process, to ensure they included an equality perspective. Ms Campos advised that there might be resistance to this type of mainstreaming action given the current environment and suggested that gaining Board support would be beneficiary for its implementation.

Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to the monitoring and reporting responsibilities outlined in the Equality Policy and suggested that the Committee would need to define the information that would be required to monitor the implementation of the Equality Policy at a central and local level. Ms Campos suggested that while the Equality Office might collate central information, local reporting on the implementation would need to be included in the regular reporting processes. The Committee discussed the different reporting systems in place for administrative and academic areas and Ms FitzGerald suggested that the Committee needed to consider a detailed reporting proposal as a main agenda item at its next meeting. Dr Ó Siochrú suggested that a focussed template for reporting on the implementation of the Equality Policy would be well received and help to keep equality issues on the agenda. The Chair suggested the Committee would re-consider the implementation plan and reporting and monitoring requirements in greater detail at the next meeting. The Chair suggested the Equality Officer continue with the proposed implementation actions in relation to raising awareness and developing the self-evaluation tool.

Actions

- The Committee to discuss the implementation plan and policy monitoring and reporting in greater detail at a future meeting. Ms Campos to submit a detailed reporting proposal for the next Committee discussion.
- Ms Campos to proceed with the development of the self-evaluation tool and policy awareness actions.

Eqal/11-12/15 LEAD project report – deferred for consideration at next committee meeting.

Section C – Matters for noting

Eqal/11-12/16 Equality Fund projects the press release for the launch of the resource for students with Asperger's Syndrome and the *Men in Nursing: challenging stereotypes* brochure were circulated and noted by the Committee.

Any Other Business

Eqal/11-12/17 One in five balloon release 25th November Ms Campos invited the Committee members to attend the 1 in 5 national balloon action in solidarity with women who experience violence in relationships taking place on campus on the 25th November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Signed

Date