

**University Of Dublin  
Trinity College  
Equality Committee**

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**Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May at 10 am in the Board Room, House 1**

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Present: Prof M Bouroche (Chair), Ms S MacBride, Ms K O'Toole, Ms Sarah Smith (GSU), Ms L Power, Mr D Treanor\*, Ms K Campos (secretary) .

Apologies: The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Prof L Hogan), Prof M McCarron, Mr Stephen Garry (SU), Prof L Stassen, Prof J Walsh, Mr T Woods, Mr J Munnely,

In attendance: Ms Deirdre McAdams\*\*

Present for: \*Eqal/13-14/31-35, Eqal/13-14/34\*\*

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**Items for Board attention are denoted XXX**

The Chair suggested that attendance is included in the upcoming Committee self-evaluation. The Chair noted this was the last Committee meeting for the Chair and the Equality Officer.

**Eqal/13-14/31 Minutes** The minutes of the previous meeting, 14 April 2014, were approved and signed.

**Eqal/13-14/32 Action call-over**

- **INTEGER** Ms Campos advised that the report had been submitted to the HR Committee, Finance Committee and Council but was not due to go to Board until next term.
- **Dignity and Respect** Ms Power advised that this item should remain on the Committee agenda and that a full review of the policy may be required.
- **Grace at Commons** Ms Campos advised that the recommendation suggesting an informal discussion regarding the practice of Latin Grace at Commons had been sent to the Chair of Fellows, the Secretary to the Scholars and the Senior Tutor. The Chair of Fellows had advised that this item was due for discussion at the upcoming Fellowship Committee.
- **Student data information system** the Chair advised that she had raised the problems identified with the new data information system at Board and brought these to the Vice-Provost's attention in particular.
- **LEAD** the Chair advised that Board had agreed to re-state its decision that completing the LEAD online equality training programme was mandatory for all staff participating on

selection panels. Ms Campos advised that she was not aware of further compliance issues and that Aurion Learning was completing work to upgrade the tracking and reporting system, which would greatly facilitate monitoring compliance.

## **Section B – Implementation issues**

### **Equal/13-14/33 Ms Campos presented the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2013-2014**

**XXX** on behalf of the Monitoring Advisory Group. Ms Campos noted that the report is incomplete due to the new SITS (student information system) implementation. The new system does not provide the required data for access departments and requires ineffective manual data entry (with a potential for inaccuracy). Staffing issues have contributed to exacerbate the difficulties associated with SITS and this has impacted on the data provided by the Disability Service, Mature Student Officer, TAP and WiSER. Mr Treanor expressed concerns at the huge variations in student numbers depending on the data a report is run. Ms O'Toole also noted this was critical as it could affect student ESF payments. The Committee discussed these issues and expressed its concern that these difficulties were not being addressed and prioritised. The Chair suggested that members could submit further details in relation to the key blockages and impact of the new SITS system for the Committee to raise this at Board together with the Annual Equality Monitoring Report.

Ms Campos outlined some of the key findings for the Committee's consideration, noting little variation in the proportion of female Professors (Chairs) since 2007 (from 13% to 15%) below the Irish Universities' and UK averages (18.6% and 21.7% respectively). Ms Power noted that in the current Senior Promotions exercise there continued to be a marked gender imbalance in the candidates shortlisted for Chair, indicating the gender imbalance at Professorial level would not improve in the short term. Ms Power also noted that the quota might drive the gender imbalance further.

Ms Campos noted the application rate to the Merit Bar is now gender balanced, with an improvement in the female application rate, and the application rate in the Faculty of Health Sciences in particular.

The Committee discussed the format of the report and suggested that a short summary is included with an attractive infographic overview (poster format). Ms Campos suggested this

recommendation is made to the Monitoring Advisory Group and Ms O'Toole and Mr Treanor advised they could provide templates and guidance on producing this infographic overview.

The Committee discussed the need for equality and diversity to inform the College strategy. Mr Treanor highlighted in particular the need for diversity monitoring in relation to ethnicity and other equality grounds to inform College strategy. The Committee discussed the different avenues for the Equality Committee to participate in equality proofing and providing guidance on the College Strategic Plan, noting the joint Council and Board meeting scheduled in June. The Chair agreed to contact the Vice-Provost to suggest a working group of the Equality Committee to equality-proof, review and provide input for the draft Strategy document in advance of the joint Board and Council meeting.

The Monitoring Advisory Group's document highlighted the lack of data regarding research staff and suggested that further information is collated in relation to type of contract etc. as this group was perceived as particularly vulnerable. Ms Mac Bride noted that there was an issue with the information not being tracked in the first place, irregular recruitment practices and staff without contracts who were not on the personnel system. Ms Power noted that HR was recruiting a new position with responsibility for staff information management and metrics. The Chair also noted steps being taken by WiSER and TRSA (Trinity Research Staff Association) to improve the data available regarding research staff. The Committee suggested that the Monitoring Advisory Group should link up with these initiatives and this item should be kept on the agenda for next year.

Ms Campos advised that the mode of recording student geographical origin had changed with SITS and was now based on country of domicile at the time of application. Ms Campos outlined some of the key student findings in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background and noted the low proportion of part-time students by comparison to the HEA average, particularly on undergraduate programmes, which may impact life-long learning or mature student participation. Mr Treanor advised 2013 admissions data was available and could be included in the report.

The Committee agreed to circulate the incomplete report to Board and Council with a short summary and warning in order to draw attention to the data collation difficulties.

**Actions:**

- The Chair to contact the Vice-Provost to suggest a working group of the Equality Committee to equality proof, review and provide input for the draft Strategy document in advance of the joint Board and Council meeting.
- The tracking and collation of research staff data is kept on the Equality Committee and Monitoring Advisory Group agenda for next year.
- An infographic one page summary is produced by the Monitoring Advisory Group with the Annual Equality Monitoring Report; Ms O'Toole to provide guidance.
- The draft Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2013-2014 to be circulated to Board and Council with a warning regarding student data collation.

**Equal/13-14/34 The Trinity Access Programmes Annual Report** was presented by Ms

O'Toole and Ms Deirdre McAdams. Ms McAdams, a current TAP student, outlined her school background and how the TAP programmes have been instrumental in her academic achievement. She noted the TAP Foundation course in particular had prepared her mentally and academically for studying at university; the lab experience she participated in as part of this course had helped her decide on the right course of study. Ms McAdams is now studying 2<sup>nd</sup> year Medicinal Chemistry, she has participated in the Travel Award programme (including 8 weeks volunteering in Thailand), is supported by a DUWGA bursary and has recently received a Scholar Award. Ms O'Toole highlighted the resilience demonstrated by Ms McAdams and many TAP students, noting that successful academic stories had an ongoing impact in local communities and encouraging participation in third level education. Currently there are over 800 undergraduates who have accessed College via TAP programmes and there are already 700 graduates since TAP was established 1993.

Ms O'Toole outlined some of the highlights in the report, particularly the 20% increase in the number of students accessing College via the HEAR scheme in 2013 thanks to programmes enabling FETAC 6 students to progress to College, the TAP Foundation course and other initiatives. Ms O'Toole illustrated the success of the TAP programme with examples such as a Mature student who is currently completing a PhD and two members of the Traveller community who are current students. The overall progression rate of TAP students at 94% compares positively to the general student body progression rate. Ms O'Toole noted the success of Trinity Access Programmes such as Pathways to Law is being used as a model by other departments such as Global Relations.

TAP has engaged with the College for Every Student initiative and carried out a successful pilot of the scheme with St Joseph's Secondary School (Rush). CFES focusses on

mentoring, leadership and pathways to education and aims for a change of culture so that every student is College-ready and has a post-secondary plan.

TAP is also driving the National College Awareness Week Campaign with the support of the HEA, which will take place countrywide for the first time in November 2014.

In terms of the challenges facing TAP, Ms O'Toole highlighted the 9% reduction in HEA funding and the expected College cuts of approximately 10%. Ms O'Toole also noted that a significant amount of funds raised by TAP were allocated to cover fees for non-national students who were resident in Ireland, whereas in other third level institutions there was a fee waiver in place for access students. Ms O'Toole clarified that the decision to charge fees to non-national students resident in Ireland was a Government decision; however, College could decide to waive fees locally. The data collation issues discussed above were also a significant challenge.

The Committee welcomed the report and presentation, commending the very positive work carried out by TAP.

**Equal/13-14/35 Committee composition recommendation** The Chair advised the

**XXX** Committee that she had met with the Registrar to discuss this Committee recommendation aimed at increasing the diversity, gender balance and transparency of Committee membership. The Registrar recognises the need to improve Committee participation and discussed with the Chair some of the challenges in implementing this recommendation, mainly: to avoid increasing Committee size and how to design the self-nomination process. The Chair noted that several Committees already had non ex-officio staff members so the recommendation to include a self-nomination procedure for at least one Committee position should not affect size in these cases. The Registrar suggested that the Equality Committee or other appropriate Board committee could pilot the self-nomination procedure for the first year; the Registrar would advise Committee Chairs regarding the recommendation.

Ms Mac Bride advised that as a former member of the Quality Committee she had participated in the self-nomination process and that it had been a very good learning experience to gain insight into how College functions. Ms Power expressed concerns at Committee membership being open to new staff on probation. The Committee discussed the best way to implement the recommendation and develop a template for the self-nomination process. The Chair noted the importance of the process being inclusive. The

Committee suggested membership may be for one year, renewable up to 3 years. The Committee also discussed the possibility of particular under-represented groups being encouraged to apply. The Committee agreed that Ms Mac Bride and Ms Campos would prepare a draft process by the end of the month for the Registrar's consideration. Ms Mac Bride suggested this template could be piloted by the Equality Committee and Coiste na Gaeilge.

**Action:** Ms Mac Bride and Ms Campos to draft a template self-nomination process for the Registrar's consideration.

**Equal/13-14/36 ConnectAbility project update** Ms Campos advised that the ConnectAbility template documents had been finalised including template:

- Reasonable Accommodation Form
- Process document
- Manager Guide and Staff Guide
- Appeal form

These templates would inform the review of the College's current Guide for Supporting Staff with Disabilities (which was launched in 2008) and is currently being reviewed by Mr Treanor.

Ms Campos advised she was liaising with Staff Development and HR for the implementation of the 1.5 hour Manager Training module and it had been agreed to include this programme in the menu of Staff Development courses as a standalone module. This module aims to enable managers to support their staff with disabilities and a pilot workshop is to be delivered by the end of June.

The ConnectAbility project is scheduled to be formally launched on 11 September at a joint event with the Equality Authority and the IUA HR Directors group.

### **Section C – Matters for Noting**

**Equal/13-14/37 Revised ISL Guidelines** were circulated and duly noted. These guidelines aim to provide greater clarity on the process for providing ISL interpreting for staff, students and visitors in College.

**Equal/13-14/38 Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy** The finalised version of the policy, with minor amendments following consultation, was circulated and duly noted and approved for circulation to Board. A training proposal is now attached to the policy specifying estimated resources and costs. Ms Campos advised that the cost of training for year 1, 2 and 3 could be supported by the College Equality Office provided there were no cuts to the office's budget, and that otherwise these costs would need to be absorbed by Staff Development or other College resources. Ms Campos further emphasized the importance of providing training to key staff listed as supports in this policy.

**Equal/13-14/39 ConnectAbility** template documents were circulated for information.

**Any Other Business**

Ms Mac Bride thanked the Chair and the Equality Officer for their work on the Equality Committee.

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Signed .....

Date .....