

**University Of Dublin  
Trinity College  
Equality Committee**

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**Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 17 November at 3pm in the Secretary's Conference Room, 3 College Green**

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Present: Dr C McCabe (Chair), the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Prof L Hogan), Ms S MacBride, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Mr A Hanna (GSU), Mr I Mooney (SU), Dr E Curtis, Mr D Treanor, Mr M McKeown, Mr L Field (secretary).

Apologies: Prof J Walsh.

Absent: Prof M McCarron (Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences), Prof L Stassen.

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**Equal/14-15/1 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting, 29 May 2014, were approved and signed.

**Equal/14-15/2 Matters Arising**

- Dr Curtis referred to the possibility of undertaking a review of the Dignity & Respect Policy and whether this should be added to the agenda for the Committee for the current year. (Equal/13-14/32). It was agreed that this matter would be discussed under Any Other Business.

**Equal/14-15/3 Action Call-over**

- **Equality Proofing and Review of draft Strategy document:** The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer confirmed that she had engaged extensively with the Equality Officer during the vacation period and that recommendations demonstrating the College's commitment to Equality issues had been incorporated into the final Strategic Plan.
- **Template Self-Nomination Process:** Ms Mac Bride confirmed that the template self-nomination process had been approved by the Registrar and implemented.

## **Section B – Implementation issues**

### **Equal/14-15/4 Equality Committee Vacancies Self-Nomination Consideration**

Mr Field invited the Committee's attention to the self-nominations to the Equality Committee that were due for consideration in order to fill two positions which are currently vacant. The high volume of applications received was noted positively. Mr Field drew the attention of the Committee to the guidance note that had been circulated to the members of the Committee to inform the selection process, and said that its provisions had been drawn from the Equality Committee's Terms of Reference. It was noted that the guidance note highlighted a requirement for the Equality Committee to seek to have a broad representation of all groups within the College community amongst its membership. Several points were noted in relation to this requirement:

- Clarity on the current composition of the Equality Committee would be necessary to meet this requirement.
- The Quality Committee, which uses a similar self-nomination process and has a similar requirement in its terms of reference, seeks to broadly proportionately represent the different groups in College in its representation.
- The Equality Committee is currently 'academic-light' in its composition.
- It is important to select applicants with a clear interest and relevant expertise for the role rather than choosing purely on the basis of making the Equality Committee representative.

In the course of a discussion the Committee noted the vast array of skills and areas of personal interest as well as personal experience of inequality from among the applicants. The Committee noted that the interests and expertise of the successful candidates should complement those of the existing members, and therefore it may be useful to profile the existing members to ensure that any new members would bring something new to the table if possible. The Chair suggested that, as two vacancies exist, it may be appropriate to choose one academic staff member and one non-academic staff member.

Due to the number of applications received, the limited time available to the Committee and the Committee's view that the discussion format of the meeting did not lend itself well to selecting applications, it was proposed to have Equality Committee members rank the applicants taking the applicant's experience, interest and skills into account, with particular regard given to those which could best assist the Committee in meeting the College's strategic goals.

The Committee agreed that members of Committee would rank their four preferred academic candidates, and four preferred administrative candidates, and indicate this ranking to the Equality Officer via email no more than ten days after receiving the request to do so.

**Actions:**

- The Equality Officer to circulate an updated version of the guidance note incorporating the criteria flagged by the meeting, and to request that Equality Committee members indicate their preferred four candidates from each of the academic and non-academic areas, ranked by preference, no more than ten days after receiving the request.
- Members of the Equality Committee to indicate their preferences to the Equality Officer via email within ten days of receiving the request.
- The Chair and Equality Officer to meet after the ten-day deadline to collate the results and determine whom the Committee has deemed successful candidates.

**Equal/14-15/5 Equality Nominee to HR Committee**

Mr Field advised the Committee that Prof Walsh had contacted him prior to the meeting, and had requested that he inform the Committee that due to increased working commitments, he is unable to continue in this role as the Equality Committee's nominee to the Human Resources Committee. Following a short discussion on the importance of ensuring equality compliance and engagement within the context of Human Resources, the Committee nominated Ms Mac Bride as the Committee's nominee.

**Actions:**

- The Equality Officer to notify the HR Committee that Ms Mac Bride will be the Committee's nominee in place of Prof Walsh.

## **Section C – Matters for Noting**

### **Equal/14-15/6 Chair's Report**

The Chair advised the Committee that the Equality Monitoring Report 2013-14 had been presented to Board on 5 November 2014 as (insert Minute reference), noting that it had been received in a largely positive light. The Committee noted that Board had suggested a number of additions to the report for future years, including an analysis of the time taken for staff members to reach each staff grade within their respective grading structure. The Chair advised that Board had also requested that the trends in data over time be more clearly stated in the report in future, in a similar manner to the supplementary document prepared by the Equality Officer and circulated at that Board meeting. Other data noted as potentially useful to include were the time spent at each staff grade, the number of attempts made to seek promotion to each grade, and the possible other factors that may influence this timeline.

Mr Field advised the Committee that a request had been made from WiSER arising from the INTEGER Baseline Data Report (2013). WiSER has requested that the Equality Committee formally request gender-disaggregated information from HR relating to annual applications (successful and unsuccessful) under the Retentions Policy and Procedures and Accelerated Advancement in the Lecturer Grade. Mr Field noted that this request was relevant to the point being discussed, and the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer stated her support for exploring this information. Two other points were raised in relation to this request:

- If it is felt by potential applicants that the chances of promotion are very low, this may reduce applications, as potential applicants may simply not apply due to the perceived low chance of success. This is an Equality issue, as research indicates that women generally require more encouragement to seek promotion than their male counterparts.
- The manner in which unsuccessful applicants are informed of the outcome could also be an issue; a refusal that encouraged further and suggested alternative positions to apply for might be less damaging to morale than a simple refusal.

Relating to the Equality Monitoring Report 2013-14, Mr Treanor stated the importance of displaying the information of the report in accessible formats so

that it reaches the widest audience possible. Mr Field informed the meeting that the Equality Office would be publishing infographics later in the week relating to the internationalisation of the College community, in the hope of achieving that. Ms Mac Bride suggested that similar graphical representations of high-level College equality data could be included in the Equality News publication next term.

**Actions:**

- The Chair and Equality Officer to submit a request to HR for gender-disaggregated data on applications for promotion under the under the Retentions Policy and Procedures and Accelerated Advancement in the Lecturer Grade.
- The Equality Officer to include visual representations of high-level College equality data in the next edition of Equality News.

**Equal/14-15/7 National College Awareness Week Campaign**

Ms O'Toole-Brennan provided an update to the Equality Committee on the upcoming National College Awareness Week campaign, in which the Trinity Access Programme (TAP) will play a leading role. 281 events will take place in 17 counties. A number of different groups from College are involved in the campaign including TAP, TCDSU, and the Office of the Provost. Ms O'Toole-Brennan emphasised that this will be a significant, nationwide event, and will involve far-ranging events and activities organised by primary- and second-level schools, libraries, businesses, student services within Higher Education, and community-based organisations. The level of support for the campaign from Government was indicated by the 'soft-launch' of the campaign earlier this year by the Minister for Education, and the formal launch to be given by the Tánaiste. Ms O'Toole-Brennan applauded TCD for spearheading the campaign and supporting conversations about college-going in areas where uptake is traditionally very low, helping to reaffirm the importance of building college-going cultures in all communities. The Chair and the rest of the Equality Committee commended Ms O'Toole-Brennan for her hard work on this matter and wished her success with the rest of the campaign.

**Equal/14-15/8 INTEGER Baseline Data Report 2013**

Mr Field provided an update to the Equality Committee on a matter arising from the INTEGER Baseline Data Report (2013). The report contained a

recommendation (2.4.1. on page 16 of the Report) to 'Introduce one-term sabbatical for academics returning from long-term leave' (including maternity/adoptive, paternity/parental, carers' and sick leave). The recommendation was approved by the Faculty Executive for Engineering, Science and Mathematics on 28 October 2014. It will be a 2-year pilot within the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, allowing the teaching buy-out for one Semester for eligible academic staff. It will be funded within the Faculty rather than directly by Schools.

**Eqal/14-15/9 Formal launches of Student Parents, Student Carers and Students Experiencing Pregnancy Policy and Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy**

Mr Field reminded the Committee meeting that there are two College policies in place that have not yet been formally launched, the Student Parents, Student Carers and Students Experiencing Pregnancy Policy, and the Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy. Mr Field informed the Committee that plans are being created to launch these policies formally in the New Year, likely in late January or early February and March respectively. Discussions with key stakeholders to formalise these plans and Mr Field will keep the Committee informed of developments.

**Eqal/14-15/10 Equality Fund 2014-15 Call for Applications**

Mr Field advised the Committee that the Call for Applications to the 2014-15 Equality Fund has been issued. A copy of the application form was circulated with the agenda to inform the Committee. The deadline for applications is Monday 8 December 2014 at 5:30pm. The Equality Fund Sub-Committee will meet at the end of that week to consider the applications and award funding.

Mr Field also advised the Committee that the Equality Fund Showcase of the successful 2013-14 projects will take place on Wednesday 26 November at 7pm in Room 3074 of the Arts Building. Mr Field noted that over half of the successful applicants from last year had agreed to participate in this year's Showcase. Following a discussion on the level of participation in the showcase from previous groups the Committee agreed that it would be useful to implement a requirement to participate in the Showcase as part of the award of funding terms and conditions.

In response to a query, Mr Field advised the Committee that the details of the Showcase had been included in the all-staff email with the Call for Applications, and that further advertising would take place through email lists, social media, and the Equality Office website. Mr Field will also enquire about advertising the event on College Digital Information Screens.

### **Any Other Business**

#### **Equal/14-15/11 Review of Dignity & Respect Policy and Equality Policy**

Dr Curtis had raised the matter of the review of the Dignity & Respect Policy from the minutes of 29 May 2014. Dr Curtis indicated that this review will be conducted by the Co-Ordinator of the Dignity and Respect Contact Persons, and the proposals from the Co-Ordinator will then be reviewed and approved by the Contact Persons. Dr Curtis will advise the Equality Committee of the outcomes of this process.

Ms Mac Bride advised the Equality Committee that the College Equality Policy is also due for review, and that an appropriate mechanism to undertake this work would be for the Committee to appoint a working party. The working party shall be chaired by the Equality Committee Chair, and the Equality Officer shall act as secretary. Mr Treanor and Mr Hanna agreed to join the working party as well. The working party shall meet in the New Year, with a view to completing the review of the Equality Policy by the end of the 2014-15 academic year.

Noting that the College is co-ordinating its plans to implement actions outlined in the College's Strategic plan, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised that the Equality Committee should advise the Chief Operating Officer regarding plans to review the Equality Policy. The Equality Officer will email the Chief Operating Officer on behalf of the Equality Committee.

The Committee agreed that Terms of Reference for the Equality Policy Review Working Party should be established prior to its first meeting.

#### **Actions:**

- Dr Curtis to consult with the Dignity & Respect Contact Persons with regard to the timeline and subgroup for the review of the Dignity & Respect Policy and to advise the Equality Committee of same.
- The Equality Officer to contact the Chief Operating Officer with regard to the review of the Equality Policy.
- The Equality Officer to establish Terms of Reference for the Equality Policy Review working party.
- The Equality Officer to convene a meeting of the Equality Policy Review working party in the New Year.

**Equal/14-15/12 Employment of Persons with Disabilities**

Mr Treanor requested that the Equality Committee seek updated statistics from HR regarding the employment of persons with disabilities in College, in relation to Section C.8.2. of the Strategic Plan.

**Actions:**

- The Equality Officer to contact HR to seek updated statistics on the employment of persons with disabilities in College.

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Signed .....

Date .....