



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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EQUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Meeting 5 April 2018, 11.00am – 1.00pm

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Conference Room

Present: Acting Chair (Vice-Provost / Chief Academic Officer, Prof C Morash), Dr S Brennan, Dr Subhash Chandra, Prof M Cuypers, Ms S MacBride, Mr K O’Doherty, Ms K O’Toole-Brennan, Ms Shaz Oye (GSU), Mr C Rashleigh, Mr D Treanor, Secretary / Equality Officer (Ms A Crawford)

In attendance: Prof E Drew

Apologies: Dean of Health Sciences (Prof M McCarron), Prof Inmaculada Arnedillo-Sánchez, Mr D McClean (SU), Mr T McMahan

Eqal/17-18/029 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 29 January 2018 were approved without amendment.

Eqal/17-18/030 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising except those to be covered in the Action Callover.

Eqal/17-18/031 **Action Callover**

Eqal/17-18/021: Mr O’Doherty noted that he has discussed the planned recruitment process and training programme with the Dignity and Respect Contact Persons. It has been agreed that two further Contact Persons will be added to the panel, to be sourced from the existing reserve panel. Training by IBEC has also been identified, to be paid for by the Equality Office. Ms MacBride welcomed the swift action in response to her report which was presented to the Committee on 29 January 2018.

<p>ACTION: K O’Doherty to provide the names of two proposed new Contact Persons to the Equality Committee for approval</p>

Eqal/17-18/023(a): Ms Crawford informed the Committee that a meeting was held between herself and representatives of the Disability Service, Digital and Web, and IDS-TILDA to discuss accessibility of Trinity webpages. It was agreed that the specific issue of accessibility of the IDS-TILDA webpages will be progressed by IDS-TILDA and Digital and Web. Digital and Web also agreed to consider accessibility factors in a broader review of the Trinity website.

Eqal/17-18/023(b): Ms Crawford outlined the proposed approach to reviewing the Accessible Information Policy, i.e. that a working group of the Equality Committee will produce two sets of detailed guidelines - Accessible Information and Accessible Events - under the Equality Policy, in which the key principles of the Accessible Information Policy were embedded in 2015. The Committee approved this approach.

ACTION: Chair to establish working group to produce Accessible Information and Events guidelines, in 2018/19

Eqal/17-18/025(a): Ms Crawford confirmed that she met with the organiser of the 24hr Wheelchair Challenge to discuss the risks of disability simulation, and was satisfied that these concerns were taken on board in the communication and implementation of the event.

Eqal/16-17/067(b): Ms Crawford described the proposed options for a prefabricated breastfeeding / lactation space in the Arts Building. Members noted the need to monitor usage to ensure that the space is not used by visitors to the extent that staff and students can't gain access as needed, and the importance of siting the space in an inviting location.

Eqal/17-18/032 Athena SWAN

[D Treanor entered the meeting during this item, at 11.15am]

Prof E Drew presented key updates on School and institutional progress with Athena SWAN.

She highlighted that 5 of the 7 Irish universities now have an institutional bronze award and that the new Athena SWAN rules, under which new Schools would be applying, deal with all gender imbalances, all disciplines and all staff (i.e. beyond academic and research staff).

Trinity will apply to renew its institutional bronze in November 2018. Chemistry, Natural Science and Physics will also apply to renew their bronze awards or gain a silver award in November 2018. Health Sciences are planning to apply for bronze as a Faculty in November 2018, and have recently appointed an Athena SWAN Project Officer.

The EMS and HS Faculties have financially resourced Athena SWAN, and a memo provided to the Committee by the Dean of AHSS outlines actions for Athena SWAN in that Faculty. Half of the university's STEMM Schools must have bronze or better, and at least one of those must have silver, for the institution to be eligible to apply for a silver award. Irish

funding agencies will require all Irish universities to have a silver institutional Athena SWAN award by 2023.

The Trinity Centre for Gender Equality and Leadership (TCGEL) supports Schools in applying for Athena SWAN and monitors progress across all Schools. HR can also provide data for Schools based on an agreed template.

Progress varies from School to School. Members suggested that additional communication of the first steps to apply for Athena SWAN would be beneficial for Schools.

A writing group has been established for the institutional renewal application, and has met twice. Its members are the Convenor of the institutional SAT (Self-Assessment Team), Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Director of TCGEL, Programme Manager of TCGEL and Equality Officer. Prof Drew outlined the drafting process and noted that if the institution loses its bronze award, Schools will not be eligible to apply for their own awards.

ACTION: Prof Drew to produce a one-page guide to the first steps for Schools in making an Athena SWAN application; this to be posted on the TCGEL website and distributed widely

ACTION: Prof Drew to report to the Committee meeting of 24 May on continued progress with Athena SWAN at institutional and School levels

Eqal/17-18/033 Employment of People with Disabilities: Report to the HEA

Ms Crawford presented Trinity's annual report to the HEA on employment of people with disabilities. The report outlines a range of measures taken by the university in 2017 to promote the employment of people with disabilities, and provides the number and percentage of Trinity staff who have a disability or disabilities. The figure is 2.93% in this year's report; 0.07 percentage points below the Disability Act 2005 target for 3% of staff employed by public bodies to be people with disabilities.

The report suggests that staff reluctance to disclose disability is the primary factor in Trinity missing the 3% target this year, and proposes measures to develop a positive culture around disclosure through training and awareness-raising. Methods of data collection are also problematic and the figure is therefore unreliable.

Members emphasised the importance of managers supporting disclosure of disability. It was also suggested that staff should be made aware of the supports and accommodations available upon disclosure of disability.

ACTION: A Crawford to amend report before submission to the HEA, to highlight that the 2.93% is not reflective of the true percentage of Trinity staff with disabilities, due to disclosure and data collection issues

Eqal/17-18/034 Accessible Information Policy Review

The relevant memorandum was approved in Eqal/17-18/031 Action Callover.

Eqal/17-18/035 Gender-Neutral Term for First- and Second-Year Students

The Chair advised the Committee that there may be a statutory issue with a previous Equality Committee decision (Eqal/16-17/017) to recommend to Board that first- and second-year undergraduate students be referred to as “Junior Fresh students” and “Senior Fresh students”. The possible issue relates to Section 1.3 of the Statutes, “Description of Students”.

This section states that students may be described as students of the relevant year if Board and Council so provide; Board and Council have now “so provided” and therefore gender-neutral terms for first- and second-year students (i.e. First Year, Second Year) are formally approved. However, the status of the terms “Fresh” and “Fresher” is uncertain.

The Committee approved the Chair’s proposal that the Equality Committee will request the Board to issue a dubium, i.e. a request to the Visitors to clarify the position in the Statutes, in relation to use of the terms “Fresh” and “Fresher”.

ACTION: Chair and S MacBride to draft a dubium on the terms “Fresh” and “Fresher”, to be forwarded to Board

Equal/17-18/036 Government Taskforce on Gender Equality in Higher Education

The Chair, Prof E Drew and A Crawford provided key updates in relation to the Government Taskforce on Gender Equality in Higher Education, namely:

- The Taskforce held a stakeholder consultation meeting in January
- Prof E Drew and T McMahon (Director of Diversity and Inclusion) submitted a feedback document to the Taskforce
- On both occasions, Trinity questioned the achievability of the requirement that all Irish universities must have Athena SWAN silver by 2023 (given that under 10% of universities in the UK have silver awards) and highlighted the difficulties inherent in implementing multiple different gender equality plans
- The Taskforce requested further data in February and this has been shared to produce aggregate figures
- Appointment to Chair Professor is emerging as a priority area

Equal/17-18/037 Ireland’s Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

A Crawford provided the Committee with an overview of the features of the UNCRPD and the implications of its ratification for Trinity.

The UNCRPD does not confer any new rights, but it confirms that human rights apply equally to people with disabilities, and establishes a monitoring framework between the State and

the UN. Individual complaints under the UNCRPD will not be possible in Ireland but further legal developments may be expected as the State implements its commitments under the Convention.

Ratification of the UNCRPD is of particular relevance to the Public Sector Duty subcommittee and is an opportunity to galvanise actions for disability equality. The UNCRPD is based on key principles which should be embedded in Trinity policy and process, such as self-determination and community consultation.

Members discussed related matters in Trinity including reporting on staff disability figures; communication of supports available to staff; and training of line managers.

ACTION: K O’Doherty (with support from D Treanor and A Crawford) to develop plan with HR colleagues to ensure the supports available to staff under the Code of Practice Applying to the Employment of People with Disabilities are adequately communicated

ACTION: A Crawford to send 2018/19 Disability Census survey link to heads of area / line managers as well as through all-staff email, to encourage completion of the survey and positive conversations between managers and staff about disability supports

Eqal/17-18/038 Other Trinity Bodies

There were no matters to report from other Trinity bodies represented on the Committee.

Eqal/17-18/039 Matters for Noting

Minor amendments to the Code of Practice Applying to the Employment of People with Disabilities were noted and approved.

Minor amendments to the Equality Fund Terms of Reference were noted and approved.

Minutes of the Gender Equality Implementation Subcommittee meeting of 6 March 2018 were noted and approved.

A memorandum outlining developments in relation to accessible websites (discussed in Equal/17-18/031 Action Callover) was noted.

A memorandum detailing the 2018 Equality Champions Awards for Clubs and Societies process and winners was noted.

Equal/17-18/040 Any Other Business

Dr S Brennan, Chair of the Age-Friendly Trinity working group invited members to attend the “Energy at Any Age” photographic exhibition to be held in Regent House on 9 April 2018, as part of the Trinity Week programme on the theme of energy.

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