

**University Of Dublin
Trinity College
Equality Committee**

**Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 14 April 2014 at 10 am in the Board Room,
House 1**

Present: Prof M Bouroche (Chair), Ms S MacBride*, Ms Sarah Smith (GSU), Mr Stephen Garry (SU), Mr J Munnelly, Ms L Power, Prof J Walsh, Mr A Costello, Ms K Campos (secretary).

Apologies: Mr D Treanor, Prof M McCarron, Mr T Woods, Ms K O'Toole, Prof L Stassen, The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Prof L Hogan).

In attendance: Ms Clodagh Byrne, Mature Student Officer**

Present for: *Eqal/13-14/26-30, **Eqal/13-14/27

Items for Board attention are denoted XXX

Eqal/13-14/20 Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting, 23 January 2014, were approved and signed.

Matters arising were discussed and minuted below:

Eqal/13-14/21 [Eqal/13-14/07] **Fellowship Report** the Chair reported greater gender balance in the new appointments to Fellows announced on Trinity Monday (6 female and 8 male) and noted the two women (out of three) appointed as honorary Fellows.

Eqal/13-14/22 Action call-over

- **INTEGER** Ms Campos advised that the Integer report is to be submitted to Council on 16 April and following that will be submitted to Board.
- **Diversity Monitoring** Ms Campos advised that the diversity monitoring screen is now integrated in e-recruitment, live since 1st April 2014. Ms Power noted that diversity monitoring was also being integrated in e-promotions.
- **Dignity and Respect** Ms Power advised of further issues in relation to informal and informal cases and noted that a fuller review of the dignity and respect resolution process may be required before developing the complaint form.

Equal/13-14/23 HR Committee items to discuss Prof Walsh advised that the INTEGER report had been presented and well received at the HR Committee.

Section A – Policy issues

Equal/13-14/24 Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy Ms Campos presented the **XXX** draft Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy to the Committee for discussion and acknowledged the work of the working group and the previous Equality Officer Michelle Garvey in developing the policy. The policy outlines the College's commitment to recognize a person's right to express their gender identity and complements the current Equality and Dignity and Respect Policies. Ms Campos advised that while equality legislation does not specify transgender as a protected ground, based on casework, equality legislation protects transgender individuals from discrimination on the gender ground. The policy has been developed following best international practice in supporting transgender students and employees to make the College's commitments explicit in this regard. Ms Campos also noted that everyone has a gender identity and expression and that the policy had been designed with this comprehensive scope.

Ms Campos drew the Committee's attention to the key elements of the policy comprising: dignity and respect, confidentiality, a process for disclosure, guidance on supporting staff and students and training commitments. The policy includes appendices with practical considerations relating to documentation, accommodation and campus facilities.

Ms Campos advised that consultation was being carried out online and that an open consultation meeting had been held for staff and students. Feedback suggested that providing trans* awareness training to key staff, and particularly staff listed as a support and health centre and counselling staff, would be essential to implementing the policy. The working group suggests preparing a three year training strategy to be included as an appendix to the policy when submitted to Board. Ms Campos advised that there would be minor corrections to the policy following consultation before submitting to Board and invited Committee members' views.

The Committee welcomed the policy. Ms Power noted the policy was very comprehensive and suggested that it would help to communicate the policy to develop information materials such as a leaflet or similar as were created for the Dignity and

Respect Policy. Ms Power also noted that there was little awareness of transgender as a protected equality ground and supported further actions to communicate the policy. The Committee supported the policy to be submitted to Board with the suggested training outline, resource implications and risk assessment.

Action: The working group to finalise the policy in view of feedback from the consultation process and submit to Board for approval with a 3 year training strategy included as an appendix.

Eqal/13-14/25 Gender Balance in Committees The Committee welcomed the

XXX *Recommendation regarding gender balance and transparency in College Committee composition* which was prepared by Ms Mac Bride and Ms Campos at the request of the Equality Committee. The Committee recommends the following changes to Board Principal Committee Terms of Reference in order to promote gender balance and transparency in Committee composition:

1. Committees include at least one self-nominated member in their Terms of Reference.
2. A self-nomination form and procedure is developed accordingly for each Committee.
3. Committee Chairs should consider gender balance when nominating and appointing members (gender balance considered to be minimum 40% of either gender).

The Committee discussed the challenges in sourcing members and women in particular for certain committees, noting the challenge in implementing the recommendation at a time of reducing committee sizes. Prof Walsh supported the inclusion of 1 or 2 self-nominated members as a means of broadening the committee membership pool and diversity on committees. The committee also discussed the problem with ex-officio College officer members being unable to attend committee meetings, which Ms Power suggested could be somewhat addressed with sufficient advance scheduling.

The Committee supported Ms Power's suggestion that members of the Promotions Committees should complete the LEAD equality online training programme, in line with the requirement for staff on recruitment panels. The Committee also agreed that completing the LEAD programme should be made a requirement for staff self-nominating for committee membership. The Committee suggested changing the title to reflect this broader scope of the recommendation in supporting diversity in committee

membership. The Committee agreed to consider the avenues for communicating committee membership openings further following Board approval.

Actions:

- Ms Campos to amend the memo to include a recommendation for committee members to complete equality and diversity training (for example the LEAD programme) and for this to be a requirement for self-nominating candidates and members of the Promotions Committee.
- Ms Campos to amend the title to reflect the broader scope of recommendation.
- Ms Campos to re-circulate the link to the LEAD programme to Equality Committee members.

Equal/13-14/26 Grace at Commons Ms Campos provided a brief summary of the case for discussion introducing a memo dated April 2 2014, relevant statutes section and correspondence from the Chair of Fellows circulated. The College Statutes require that a Latin Grace is said with propriety before and after Commons; the tradition is for all present to stand for Grace, however, recently there had been a case where several Scholars did not wish to stand for Grace for religious reasons. The memo prepared by Rachel Barry, Legal Assistant in the Secretary's Office, provided a context outlining relevant cases taken on religious grounds for being required to sit or stand during prayers in UK and US establishments; the memo also outlined different policy responses to this issue in UK universities with similar traditions. The Committee noted that the research conducted in this area did not constitute legal advice and refers to different legal frameworks. Ms Campos advised that while there could be legal implications if a requirement to stand were enforced or the regulations amended, she considered the current Statutes wording to allow for sufficient flexibility of interpretation. Ms Campos invited the Committee to consider this matter primarily from a good practice point of view in accordance with the Committee's remit and the commitment in the Equality Policy for College to 'provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality and values diversity'.

Ms Mac Bride suggested that the Committee could make a recommendation for a collaborative agreement between the Scholars and Fellows on this matter. She suggested that the Committee limit the discussion to the religious aspect of the issue and for the Committee's recommendation to outline best practice examples.

Prof Walsh suggested that an informal meeting could take place between the Chair of Fellows and the Scholars Committee and noted the importance of respecting the Scholars as individuals and hearing the voices of dissenting Scholars. The Committee supported a mutual respect approach and suggested the Senior Tutor might be invited to attend the meeting. Ms Mac Bride drew the Committee's attention to the importance of preventing future issues from a legal point of view and the potential risks to College's reputation.

Action:

Ms Campos to draft a recommendation, in consultation with Ms Mac Bride and the Chair, suggesting an informal discussion between the Chair of Fellows, the Secretary of the Scholars Committee and the Senior Tutor regarding the practice of Latin Grace at Commons in the interest of maintaining collegiality and an inclusive environment. The recommendation is to include good practice examples.

Section B – Implementation issues

Eqal/13-14/27 Mature Student Officer Report Ms Clodagh Byrne presented the Mature Student Officer Annual Report 2013-2014. The report outlines the Mature Student Officer role to encourage and support access and integration of mature students in College life, including supports for prospective students: such as adult education visits, information sessions, Discover Trinity event, career events and a four day welcome programme. The majority of mature students enter College on the Mature Student Dispensation Scheme, with a separate CAO entry route for applicants of Nursing and Midwifery; Ms Byrne noted that those entering via the FETAC entry route to Nursing were primarily young adults. Ms Byrne drew the Committee's attention to the competitive nature of mature student admissions, where demand exceeds offers, as outlined in tables 1 and 2.

The majority of Mature Students are in AHSS, and the gender balance reflects the national profile. Currently, new entrant mature students represent approximately 4% of all new entrants, by comparison to 15% nationally, however, the College is achieving its combined target for under-represented groups of 22% by 2013 (combined mature students, TAP and Disability). Ms Byrne noted that the report does not include figures for mature students who enter via CAO (mature students 'on age') this year as these figures are not available on the current SITS system. The report also notes the completion rate

for the mature student cohort is 92%, with 12% achieving a 1st and 55% achieving a 2.1 grade.

Ms Byrne outlined some of the initiatives the Mature Student Officer was collaborating on, that contribute to the development of national policy, including the Maths for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) module. This will be a FETAC level 5 30 credit module available nationally to prepare students who wish to enter STEM degrees, as maths has been identified as a significant barrier for mature students accessing higher education. The Mature Student Officer also highlighted the Trinity Access 21 projects, document circulated for noting.

Ms Byrne drew the Committee's attention to some of key challenges and opportunities:

- Data collection. There is currently a data collection crossover in relation to under-represented groups but Ms Byrne is hopeful that SITS will provide transparency into the future.
- Balancing Academia and Parenting: this event took place during International Women's Week. It highlighted the common concerns for staff and students around balancing family responsibilities, childcare etc. Some issues included greater visibility of children in College, providing information and networking opportunities. Ms Byrne drew attention to the suggestion to align reading week with mid-term break as a simple measure that would facilitate staff and student parents.

The Chair thanked Ms Byrne for the report. Ms Campos welcomed discussion of the Balancing Academia and Parenting event and the need for accessible and centralised information for staff and student parents and carers; she noted she was currently liaising with the Dean of Students regarding where this information page might be hosted and noted the new Student Parent and Carer policy had yet to be communicated in College. Ms Campos further welcomed the suggestion for family to be a core value informing College strategy. Ms Mac Bride noted that College will be required to appoint a Child Protection Officer.

The Committee discussed the data challenges with the new SITS system noting the importance of data, and of data being available in an efficient manner to avoid wasting resources. Ms Byrne and Mr Costello advised that the current SITS system did not provide their offices with the required data so they were obliged to maintain parallel

databases at additional cost; Ms Byrne added it was necessary to manually check records, an inefficient practice. The Chair noted these concerns and suggested that these issues needed to be prioritized.

Action: The Chair to highlight the importance of efficient data systems to Board, in particular for access and equality areas in College, and request this is prioritized in Phase II of SITS.

Equal/13-14/28 ConnectAbility project Ms Campos advised the Committee of the progress in the ConnectAbility inter-university project, which is reaching its final stages. The ConnectAbility project aims to improve how disability is managed in the workplace in the university sector and is supported by the Equality Authority. The following project actions have been completed:

- Staff survey with over 900 respondents across the sector
- Staff focus groups
- Policy Gap analysis
- Current status report
- Train the Trainer Training

Ms Campos advised that the guides for staff and managers were being finalised. The next stage will involve local implementation and the roll-out of the line manager 1.5 hr. training. This module aims to raise awareness amongst managers of their role in providing reasonable accommodation, supporting staff with disabilities and enabling them to have a conversation about reasonable accommodation with their staff.

Ms Power noted the challenges in delivering a stand-alone disability module and suggested it would be beneficial to incorporate the module in existing training. The Committee discussed the need for Staff Development to support this initiative, to incorporate this module in existing training and to liaise with external training providers.

Equal/13-14/29 Equality Office update

International Women's Week Ms Campos reported that International Women's Week 2014 had been very successful thanks to increased partnerships, particularly closer collaboration with the SU in the communications campaign and launch. There were 19 events during International Women's Week and the Inspiring Change theme and campaign helped to raise the visibility of the week. The Balancing Parenting and Academic Life event was already discussed by the Committee (minuted above). In order to facilitate organizing this collaborative

week Ms Campos is establishing a core planning committee for International Women's Week 2015 comprising a representative for the SU, GSU, DUGES, DU Amnesty and the Centre for Gender and Women's Studies (with the Equality Officer as secretary). The Committee welcomed this suggestion.

XXX LEAD equality training programme Ms Campos advised that 723 staff had registered to complete LEAD and 461 had completed the programme and assessment (March 2014 figures), indicating that College was performing well in implementing the programme comparatively to the sector (overall 1208 users registered across 6 universities). Ms Campos advised that a new service agreement has been entered with Aurion Learning and upgrades are currently being implemented to address the tracking and reporting issues that had arisen, noting it was expected this would greatly facilitate completion reporting and compliance.

Ms Campos noted there were challenges in implementing the Board requirement for all staff on selection panels to complete the training. Ms Campos also drew the Committee's attention to the third stage of the LEAD implementation plan, which includes embedding LEAD in other training programmes such as induction, supervisory training etc.

The Committee discussed the best means of addressing non-compliance, noting the importance of listening to user feedback in relation to the content. The Committee agreed that completing the LEAD programme was a minimum requirement as it was an online introductory programme that usually took only one hour to complete; the Committee noted compliance was important from a good practice as well as legal risk perspective. Ms Campos advised that the programme upgrades being implemented include upgrades to the content and format reflecting user feedback, but that more significant content changes would have an additional cost implication. The Committee agreed that exceptions could not be made to the Board decision. Ms Mac Bride suggested that if there were objections to the LEAD programme alternative equality training may be provided at the department's cost.

The Committee suggested that Board be requested to issue a re-statement of the decision that all staff on interview panels should complete the training. Ms Power

added the agreed recommendation that completing the LEAD programme should be made a requirement for staff on the Promotions Committees for consistency.

Action: The Chair to request a re-statement of the Board decision for completion of the LEAD equality programme to be mandatory for all staff on selection panels.

Section C – Matters for Noting

Eqal/13-14/30 Accessible Information Policy Implementation Report 2013-2014

Circulated and noted.

Any Other Business

Nothing to report.

Signed

Date