



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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**EQUALITY COMMITTEE**

**Approved Minutes**

**Meeting 21 September 2016, 2pm,**

**Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Boardroom**

**Present:** Chair (Ms S Dunphy), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Prof C Morash), Ms A Ní Lochlainn (SU), Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Prof S Brennan, Prof M Cuypers, Ms E Crespo (GSU), Mr K O'Doherty, Ms S MacBride, Mr D Treanor, Secretary / Equality Officer (Ms A Crawford)

**In attendance:** Mr T McMahon, Director of Diversity and Inclusion (Eqal/16-17/010-015)

**Apologies:** Dean of Health Sciences (Prof M McCarron), Prof Inmaculada Arnedillo-Sánchez, Mr J Cumiskey, Prof Daniel Faas

**Eqal/16-17/001**

**Opening**

**Chair**

The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to the new academic year and thanks to the outgoing Chair, Prof Catherine McCabe. Apologies were taken and members introduced themselves. The procedure for dealing with matters for noting was outlined.

**Eqal/16-17/002**

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

**Chair**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

**Action:** Equality Officer to forward the minutes of the previous meeting to the next Board meeting (12<sup>th</sup> October)

**Eqal/16-17/003**

**Action call-over**

**Equality Officer**

The Action Call-over was taken as read - all actions are completed or ongoing.

The following actions were discussed by the Committee:

- **Eqal/15-16/049(b)** The Committee welcomed the mentoring programme and the provision for dealing with periods of leave (by pro-rating the benchmarks for review) that have been built into the new tenure track system for early-career academics.
- **Eqal/15-16/054** The Chair will invite the Director of Public Affairs and Communications to meet regarding equality issues including accessibility.
- **Eqal/15-16/050(d)** The gender-neutral toilets in the Arts Block have been very positively received. Thanks were given to the Disability Service and the SU. It was noted that further toilets will be identified for new signage during the year, and that a map of all gender-neutral toilets will be publicised when ready.
- **Eqal/15-16/052(b)** The Committee will review the pre-employment medical questionnaire by email, to ensure it does not raise any equality issues.

**Action:** Chair to invite the Director of Public Affairs and Communications and Director of Disability Service to meet regarding equality issues including accessibility.

**Action:** Equality Officer to circulate the pre-employment medical questionnaire to the Committee

Eqal/16-17/004

Matters arising

Chair

There were no matters arising.

### Matters for Discussion

Eqal/16-17/005

HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIs

Chair

**[The Vice-Provost entered the meeting at the beginning of this item]**

The Chair introduced the HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIs (“HEA report”) highlighting its key finding that gender inequality does exist in Irish HEIs and noting the importance of its recommendations for the university. The Vice-Provost was then invited to speak on the topic.

The Vice-Provost informed the Committee that the report is on the work plan of both the Provost and the Vice-Provost; that in considering Trinity’s response to the report, the university’s existing equality infrastructure has been examined; and that a lack of formal connection between the Equality Committee (and thereby the Board) and the university’s major gender equality bodies (i.e. the Trinity Centre for Gender Equality and Leadership [TCGEL] and the institutional Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team) has been identified. The Committee welcomed the Vice-Provost’s proposals that the Director of TCGEL (or nominee) be invited to join the Equality Committee in order to strengthen the Committee’s connection to gender equality expertise in the university, and also that the Equality

Committee is to have the primary responsibility for bringing a plan to Board on how to implement the HEA report in Trinity, with prioritised actions.

Members noted that for the Equality Committee to fulfil this task effectively, the importance of the Committee's work in general must be recognised by the university, and equality must be acknowledged as an integral part of all university activities. It was confirmed that the Committee, which is highly committed to gender equality, will also maintain its commitment to other equality grounds. Implementing the HEA report will likely have resource implications, but existing resources will be used where appropriate – for example, the HEA recommendations align with the objectives of the Athena SWAN programme. The Committee agreed that the Director of Diversity and Inclusion, although independent of the Equality Committee, is a valuable resource and should have a key role in drafting the implementation plan. External expertise may also be availed of as appropriate.

Trinity's unique structures and practices, and its relatively good position regarding gender equality (within the context of the Irish university sector) were cited as key factors for consideration when drafting the implementation plan. It was acknowledged, however, that there is much work to be done to achieve gender equality in Trinity, and to address the ambitious recommendations and timelines of the HEA report. Some recommendations may be contentious and/or require significant changes. The Equality Committee may develop a Trinity-specific interpretation of some recommendations, assuming that the Trinity equivalent is of equal impact to the original recommendation.

**[The Vice-Provost left the meeting after this item]**

**Action:** Equality Committee Chair, in consultation with the Equality Officer and other parties as relevant, to draft a membership list for a working group of the Equality Committee who will draft an implementation plan in response to the HEA report. Membership is not restricted to Equality Committee members but the composition of the group is to be approved by Equality Committee before convening

**Action:** The HEA report working group to agree a timeline for the presentation of a draft implementation plan to Board, and inform the Vice-Provost of this timeline

**Action:** The HEA report working group to draft an implementation plan in response to the HEA report, in accordance with its stated timeline

**Eqal/16-17/006      Update from Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group   Prof S Brennan**

The Chair of the Age-Friendly Working Group, Prof S Brennan, presented this item. The written update from the Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group was taken as read. The Committee approved the proposal that the Provost be invited by letter from the Equality Committee Chair to endorse the Ten Principles of the Age-Friendly University, and approved the text of the letter. Members noted that the Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group has already been beneficial in bringing disparate age-friendly groups and initiatives together. The Committee also discussed some ideas for intergenerational learning, which is a key aim of the Working Group, and the SU Welfare Officer agreed to participate in the Working Group as a representative of younger students.

**Action:** Equality Committee Chair to invite the Provost to endorse the Ten Principles of an Age-Friendly University

**Action:** Chair of the Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group to call a further meeting of the working group arising from the outcome of the invitation to the Provost

**Eqal/16-17/007      Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2015/16      Equality Officer**

The Equality Officer presented the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2015/16 to the Committee, giving thanks to the Equality Monitoring Advisory Group who greatly assisted in drafting the report. Each year the Monitoring Report examines student and staff diversity in many areas of university life. This Monitoring Report contains data on some new topics; it also now highlights the connections between statistical data and the university's strategic goals by including policy quotes and strategic targets beside the data. This is intended to reinforce the Monitoring Report's role as an evidence base for targeted action.

The Committee discussed the key findings as summarised in pages 11-17 of the Monitoring Report. Among the areas of particular note to Committee members were the apparent over-representation of Irish applicants among those appointed in recruitment competitions, which will require further investigation; and the lack of availability of appropriate data from the HEA Equal Access Survey about Irish Travellers and students' socio-economic backgrounds, which relate to Trinity's goals for widening participation. Arising from the finding that 61% of line managers have taken Living Equality and Diversity (LEAD) training, members recommended that all line managers including Principal Investigators should complete LEAD as part of a thorough management training programme.

The Committee welcomed the Equality Officer's proposal to invite a representative from the Trinity Access Programmes and a representative from the Academic Registry to take part in the Equality Monitoring Advisory group next year, in order to improve the range and reliability of student data presented in the Monitoring Report, and efficiency of data collection for all parties involved. The draft report was approved for submission to Board without amendment.

Effective communication of the findings of the report was a key theme of the discussion. Various media were proposed including infographics, digital information screens, SU communications, the Equality Office e-zine and website, and student newspapers. "This is Trinity" was suggested as a possible theme for a long-term campaign, in which communications could relate to particular university events, for example a statistic about mental health and students could be publicised during SU Mental Health Week. Direct engagement with Heads of School / Area was recommended, to ensure they are aware of the diversity profile of their cohort and to encourage them to publically celebrate this diversity (while remaining compliant with Data Protection legislation). It was noted that Trinity is sometimes thought of as a homogeneous and privileged community, but the reality is very different, and this should be communicated to the public.

**Action:** Chair to ensure that opportunities for communicating Trinity's diversity are on the proposed agenda for meeting the Director of Public Affairs and Communications

**Action:** Equality Officer to submit the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2015/16 to the next Board meeting (12<sup>th</sup> October).

## Eqal/16-17/008      Gender and Trinity Staff: Trends in Contract Types (report)

### Equality Officer

The Equality Officer presented *Gender and Trinity Staff: Trends in Contract Types* [“Contracts Report”] to the Committee, with many thanks to the report working group for their assistance in drafting the report. The key findings of the Contracts Report were highlighted as follows:

- 73-78% of part-time staff are female, but full-time staff are quite gender-balanced
- academic staff are 40% of full-time staff but only 15% of part-time staff, indicating that academic staff are less likely to work part-time
- temporary contracts are now more common but no clear gender imbalance in their distribution has been observed
- 71% of buy-back contracts have been held by men since 2007

In discussing these findings, members posited two possible reasons for the under-representation of academic staff among staff on part-time contracts; that academic staff may perceive part-time work to be incompatible with the demanding nature of their role, or that academic staff are not necessarily expected to be present on campus 9am – 5.30pm and may therefore be able to make flexible working arrangements without moving to a part-time contract. It was noted that under the Trinity Education Project, fixed timetables have been agreed, and that this may preclude academic staff from making flexible working arrangements in future.

The Committee suggested minor amendments to the “Analysis” and “Suggested Actions” sections of the Contracts Report to acknowledge the flexible nature of academic working hours, varying between departments. The Committee agreed with the suggestion in the Contracts Report that part-time work should be promoted to male staff as well as female.

The draft report was approved for submission to Board subject to the minor amendments noted above.

Separately to the issue of gender, the report found that temporary contracts are now more common in Trinity than they were in 2007, and while acknowledging the financial situation of the university, members commented that this is ultimately inefficient as it results in the university losing valuable staff in a competitive employment market.

**Action:** Equality Officer to make recommended minor amendments to Contracts Report and submit to next Board meeting (12<sup>th</sup> October)

**Eqal/16-17/009**

**Equality Committee Annual Report 2015/16**

**Equality Officer**

The Equality Officer presented the Equality Committee Annual Report 2015/16 to the Committee, noting that it is a requirement of the Committee's Terms of Reference but also a valuable opportunity to reflect on Committee functioning and make informed improvements thereto.

6 of 13 possible members responded to the Self-Assessment Survey, and 87% of responses were positive. Particular strengths highlighted were in the meeting administration and Chairing, policy development, recommending good practice to the university, and reporting to Board on equality and diversity in Trinity. Areas identified for improvement were interaction with other Committees and equality-related bodies, implementation of policy, and advising Board on national / EU matters. Suggestions were also made around promoting attendance and increasing the number of meetings held annually.

The Committee agreed with the findings of the survey and the following suggested actions:

- Number of Committee meetings to be increased to five in our Terms of Reference
- Membership review to be undertaken with consideration of the variety of equality-promoting bodies in Trinity, and need for diverse representation [this need has been met, however, by the membership change agreed in Eqal/16-17/005]



- Draft agenda to be circulated 2 weeks in advance of meeting; legal and policy developments in Ireland and EU to be included for discussion where relevant
- Equality Fund subcommittee to evaluate impact and consider improvements

The following changes were agreed to other suggested actions in the draft report:

- To promote attendance, Section 2.4 of the Equality Committee Terms of Reference (which states that members missing three consecutive meetings without justification deemed sufficient by the Chair should be invited to resign) will be implemented more strictly – allowing that this action is also agreed by the Secretary’s Office, and the member has been warned of this provision after missing two consecutive meetings.
- A recommendation to improve communication of the Committee’s work should be expanded to take account of the conversation minuted in Eqal/16-17/007. The Communications Office should be approached by the Equality Committee Chair to invite them to assist us in promoting equality in Trinity; the Communications and Equality Office could then draft an action plan for equality communications; and the Communications Office would be invited to present the plan to an Equality Committee meeting.

The Contracts Report was approved for submission to Board subject to these amendments being made.

**[Mr D Treanor left the meeting after this item]**

**Action:** Equality Officer to make the recommended minor amendments to the Equality Committee Annual Report and submit to next Board meeting (12<sup>th</sup> October) for noting

**Director of Diversity and Inclusion**

The Director of Diversity and Inclusion [“the Director”] was invited into the meeting at this point to present the revised Diversity and Inclusion Strategy [“the Strategy”] to the Committee. The Director updated members on the changes made since the Strategy was last presented to Equality Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016:

- Feedback from external consultants has been implemented, meaning that the Strategy is now more clearly focussed on actions
- The respective roles of various offices (e.g. Equality Office, WiSER / TCGEL) and their areas of collaboration have been clarified
- Actions relating to ageing have been added in accordance with the Committee’s recommendations

The Strategy will also be reviewed by the HR Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> October and action deadlines in the Strategy will be amended to align with the final approval date. The strategic goals outlined in the Strategy also align with the recommendations of the HEA Report, to which the Director has already drafted a preliminary response, and a detailed work plan for implementing the Strategy is being drafted.

The Committee welcomed the Strategy, calling it comprehensive, clear, and well-structured. Members particularly welcomed the focus on concrete action and noted the importance of the university now implementing the Strategy. One member suggested that a reference to TAP could be added – the Director will liaise with the member (Ms O’Toole-Brennan) outside the meeting in order to action this. The Strategy was approved subject to this amendment being implemented, and the Committee congratulated the Director.

**Action:** Ms O’Toole-Brennan to liaise with the Director of Diversity and Inclusion regarding a possible reference to TAP in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

## **Matters for Noting**

### **Equal/16-17/011      Revised Guidelines for Provision of and Working with ISL Interpreters**

The revised guidelines (circulated by the Director of the Disability Service, and previously reviewed by the Committee) were noted.

## **Any Other Business**

### **Equal/16-17/012      Workplace Equality Index Awards**

The Committee were informed that at the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) Workplace Equality Index (WEI) Awards on 20<sup>th</sup> September, Trinity was named the Public Sector Employer of the Year and No. 5 in the Top Ten Employers for LGBT People in Ireland. There have been great developments for LGBT staff in Trinity in the past year which have contributed to this improved performance in the WEI Awards, including the establishment of the LGBT Staff Network. Members congratulated all involved, and commented that this success can be seen as an endorsement of the relatively new Director of Diversity and Inclusion role, the relatively new Equality Officer, and their collaboration.

### **Equal/16-17/013      Photo Shoot**

Members were reminded that a photographer was booked for 4pm to take photographs of the whole committee, individual headshots of members, and promotional photographs for the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Workplace Equality Index Awards.

**Eqal/16-17/014      Boardpad**

Members were asked to comment on their first experience using Boardpad in an Equality Committee meeting – feedback was positive with only two members experiencing minor issues relating to passwords.

**Eqal/16-17/015      Change of Chair**

The Equality Officer informed the Committee that a formal gesture of thanks to the previous Chair, Prof C McCabe, would be arranged on behalf of the Committee in the near future. Members expressed their gratitude for Prof McCabe’s contribution and also welcomed the new Chair, Ms S Dunphy and congratulated her on a successful first meeting.

**Action:** Equality Officer to arrange a formal gesture of thanks to the previous Chair, Prof C McCabe, on behalf of the Committee

Signed: .....

Date: .....