



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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**EQUALITY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes**

**Meeting 15 October 2018, 2.00pm – 4.00pm**

**Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Conference Room**

**Present:** Prof R Moss (Chair), Vice-Provost / Chief Academic Officer (Prof C Morash), Dean of Health Sciences (Prof M McCarron), Prof A-M Brady, Dr S Brennan, Mr J Cunningham (SU), Mr K O'Doherty, Mr C O'Donnell, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Ms S Oye (GSU), Mr C Rashleigh, Mr D Treanor, Secretary / Equality Officer (Ms A Crawford)

**In attendance:** Prof E Drew

**Apologies:** Ms S MacBride

**Equal/18-19/001      Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 24 May 2018 were approved without amendment.

## **Eqal/18-19/002      Matters Arising**

The Vice-Provost updated the Committee on the outcome of the dubium sent by Board to the Visitors, on the question of permissible titles for first- and second-year students. The Visitors have advised that the Statutes do not provide for alternatives to “Freshman”, except in that students may be described by the relevant year (“First year student”, etc.) This response was received after 2018/19 documents, such as course handbooks, would already have been distributed with the terms “Fresh” and “Fresher” in use, based on the best advice available at the time – therefore these do not have to be amended. For the 2019/20 academic year, documents will have to revert to “Freshman” or the Statutes will have to be changed to allow for the alternative terms. This change could be processed simultaneously with other proposed Statute changes.

There were no other matters arising.

## **Eqal/18-19/003      Action Callover**

The Chair noted that the two actions from the meeting of 24 May 2018 (Eqal/17-18/046, Eqal/17-18/047) are completed, and that two further actions (Eqal/17-18/021, Eqal/17-18/031(b)) were to be dealt with on today’s agenda. She then invited action owners to comment on the remaining actions. The updates were as follows:

- Eqal/16-17/067(b) – Estates and Facilities are identifying a suitable location in the Arts Building for a breastfeeding / lactation “pod”. A previously-identified space is unfortunately not suitable due to the need for water piping to the area
- Eqal/17-18/037(a) – An email has been drafted to be sent by the Director of HR, drawing staff attention to the new Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities and encouraging them to engage with their line manager to disclose disability and seek supports. Ms A Crawford, Mr K O’Doherty and Mr D Treanor will meet to discuss further communications

The Vice-Provost presented a draft Trinity Gender Action Plan Progress Report for the Committee's review and approval. He outlined that this is the integrated document for university-level monitoring of various gender actions, and that it uses a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) analysis.

The analysis shows that 2 actions are not progressing well (red), 36 are progressing well (amber), and 34 are completed (green). A further 11 are "blue", indicating that they are not yet or no longer relevant, or that they cannot be reported on. In the last Trinity Gender Action Plan Progress Report to Board, 16 actions were green, so a further 18 actions have been completed since then.

The report was approved for forwarding to the Board meeting of 21 November 2018. The following points were raised in discussion of the report and matters arising:

- A Meeting Hours Policy has been approved by EOG and will be reviewed by HR Committee on 18 October 2018, with meeting hours of 10am – 4.30pm
- One "red" action (14.4) relates to data, and equality data needs will expand under new Athena SWAN rules. It is imperative that adequate data collection systems are in place to support the Committee's actions
- Adequate cover for academic staff on maternity leave has been highlighted as a key issue in both the institutional and Faculty of Health Sciences Athena SWAN applications. Funding for teaching buy-out (covering the period of leave plus a post-maternity return period) should be made available **centrally**
- Early career researchers or "postdocs" are a precarious group. The Research Excellence Strategy, currently being drafted, is an opportunity to support them and to drive the implementation of action 5.1 (establishment of a postdoc centre)

**ACTION (a):** Chair to contact HR to enquire about current systems for cover of academic staff on maternity leave, and to recommend on behalf of the Committee that a fund be made available at university level - to cover teaching buy-out for all periods of maternity leave, plus post-maternity return periods - if such is not already in place

**ACTION (b):** Chair to contact Dean of Research to recommend on behalf of the Committee that development of a postdoc centre be included in the Research Excellence Strategy.

**Eqal/18-19/005      Equality Committee Annual Report 2017/18**

Ms Crawford presented a draft Equality Committee Annual Report 2017/18, for review and approval. She highlighted key findings of the members' survey. Overall, members' feedback was positive. The few negative responses relate to membership and to the Committee's relationship with other university bodies. The report was approved, subject to the addition of a line or paragraph to highlight the Committee's need for reliable, easily available data to progress its aims.

**ACTION:** Actions 1-5 in the Equality Committee Annual Report 2017/18 to be implemented:

1. When the next available self-nominated staff member position arises, the call for applications will explicitly encourage applications from staff of ethnic minority background
2. A particular focus of the Equality Office in 2018/19 will be to raise awareness of policy, and encourage implementation, through communications and training
3. The Committee will commit to **always** using accessible venues and will encourage other Committees to do so once the new (accessible) boardroom in the Trinity Business School is open
4. Equality Fund criteria and Terms of Reference will be reviewed
5. The Vice-Provost will work closely with the new Committee Chair to progress equality matters in the university

**Eqal/18-19/006      Subgroup Workplans**

The Committee has 8 subgroups operating in 2018/19:

- Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy Review Working Group
- Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group
- Accessibility Guidelines Working Group
- Equality Trail Working Group
- Public Sector Duty Subcommittee
- Equality Monitoring Advisory Group
- Gender Equality Implementation Subcommittee
- Equality Fund Subcommittee

The Chair of each subgroup presented a summary workplan to the Committee for review and approval. Each of the 8 workplans was approved.

Points discussed include:

- relative under-resourcing of Age-Friendly Trinity as compared with global Age-Friendly University initiatives, and the commercial potential of Age-Friendly Trinity
- need for consideration of accessibility in procurement processes
- modest scope of the Equality Trail, i.e. to give a “flavour” of equality in Trinity
- reporting requirements under the UNCRPD – the relevant responsibilities are yet to be allocated within Trinity (and yet to be announced by the government / HEA)

[Prof A-M Brady left the meeting during this item - 2.55pm]

**ACTION (a):** All Chairs of Subgroups to implement their workplans, and to report on same as requested by the Equality Committee Chair

**ACTION (b):** Monitoring Advisory Group to submit a memo to the Committee on equality data needs, along with the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2017/18

Prof E Drew updated the Committee on progress with institutional and School-level Athena SWAN applications. She confirmed that the institution is on course for renewal of its Bronze award in November 2018. A draft of the application will be reviewed by the institutional SAT (self-assessment team) on Thursday 18 October, and simultaneously by “critical friends” in Queen’s University Belfast and Imperial College London (both institutional Silver award holders). It was confirmed that the institutional application is approved by the Executive Officers’ Group (EOG).

There are now active SATs in all three Faculties, including Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) which has become eligible to apply for Athena SWAN more recently than the Engineering, Mathematics and Science (EMS) and Health Sciences (HS) Faculties. Prof Drew has advised the AHSS Faculty to have a rolling schedule of applications, allowing for the recommended preparation time of at least 12 months. The Dean of HS commented on progress with the HS Faculty application, and noted the importance of aligning the Faculty / School applications with the institutional application (which will be available to the HS Faculty SAT Chair and Project Officer as they are members of the institutional SAT).

The Schools of Chemistry, Natural Sciences and Physics are applying to renew their Bronze / achieve Silver, and the Faculty of Health Sciences is applying for a first-time Bronze award, in November 2018. The School of Biochemistry and Immunology plans to apply for a first-time Bronze award in April 2019. Six of the university’s EMS and HS Schools must have a Bronze award, and one further School must have a Silver award, for the university to be eligible to apply for Silver. A Bronze award for the HS Faculty would add 4 Schools to the total.

Members congratulated Prof Drew and her team on progress with Athena SWAN; commenting that awareness of Athena SWAN across the university is higher than ever.

Mr K O’Doherty updated the Committee on recent and upcoming initiatives in the area of Dignity and Respect, specifically;

1. The Contact Person panel has increased to 12 members
2. Mr Cathal O’Donnell has been nominated as the panel representative on the Equality Committee for 2018/19
3. A second session of Contact Person training from IBEC has been completed. This was well-received and has strengthened the relationship of the Contact Persons and Employee Relations
4. An operational guide for Contact Persons is in development
5. The panel have been encouraged to attend a Student Counselling workshop entitled “Responding to Distressed People”
6. The Director of HR and the Dean of Research are in the process of establishing a Steering Committee to develop the university’s central Dignity and Respect awareness campaign

Mr O’Doherty noted that Contact Persons are increasingly engaging managers to take on dual responsibility in the informal resolution of Dignity and Respect complaints, and this has been successful.

Mr O’Doherty also noted his recommendation that the awareness campaign Steering Group should have SU, GSU, Contact Persons and trade union representation. Members affirmed the importance of a widespread, central university awareness campaign, and noted that other staff (Assistant Junior Deans were cited as an example) could benefit from “Responding to Distressed People” and similar training.

[The Vice-Provost left the meeting during this item – 3.35pm]

[Ms K O’Toole-Brennan and Dr S Brennan left the meeting during this item – 3.40pm]

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| <p><b>ACTION (a):</b> K O’Doherty to share the operational guide for Dignity and Respect Contact Persons with the Committee, when finalised</p> |
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**ACTION (b):** Chair to contact the Director of HR and Dean of Research to enquire on progress with the Dignity and Respect awareness campaign, and to recommend that a representative of the Junior Dean function also be included in the Steering Group membership

**Eqal/18-19/009      Other Trinity Bodies.**

There were no updates from other Trinity bodies.

**Eqal/18-19/010      Matters for Noting**

Minutes of the Public Sector Duty subcommittee meeting of 20 September 2018 were noted and approved.

**Eqal/18-19/011      Any Other Business**

There were no further items of business.

**END**