

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

TRINITY COLLEGE

EQUALITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

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EQUALITY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

1. Introduction

This is the Annual Report of the Equality Committee to Board for activities during 2011/2012 academic year. The Equality Officer produces an Annual Report which is submitted to the Equality Committee.

2. Terms of Reference

The revised Terms of Reference (approved by Board in June 2012) are included in Appendix 1. The Equality Committee is a Committee of Board with responsibility for advising Board and Council on all equality-related matters.

The duties of the Equality Committee include assisting Board and Council in the development, co-ordination and implementation of equality policies, practices and action plans throughout College.

The Committee operates under delegated authority from the Board, which is ultimately responsible for all matters relating to equality.

3. Membership

The Membership of the Committee according to the Terms of Reference in place for 2011-2012 was as follows (please note the membership of the Committee was amended in the revised Terms of Reference approved by Board in June 2012).

Elected Board Member (Chair)

Vice-Provost

Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences

Secretary to the College (or nominee)

Academic Secretary (or nominee)

Staff Secretary (or nominee)

Director of the Disability Service

Access Officer

Personnel Officer

Representative of Dignity and Respect Contact Persons - vacant

Welfare Officer –Students’ Union

Representative of the Graduate Students’ Union

1 Council nominee

Equality Officer (Secretary)

4 members of staff

4 Legislation

The Committee is to advise Board on legal requirements arising from the Universities Act 1997, The Employment Equality Act 1998-2010, the Equal Status Act 2000-2010, Disability Act 2005 and any other relevant legislation.

The key aspects of the legislation for the College are:

- College is to ‘promote gender balance and equality of opportunity among students and employees of the university’ as one of its objectives under The Universities Act 1997.
- The Equal Status and Employment Equality Acts outlaw direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the following 9 grounds: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or ethnicity and membership of the Traveller community.
- These Acts place a responsibility on Trinity as the employer and educational establishment not to discriminate on any of these grounds against staff, students or service users; and to take reasonably practicable steps to prevent discriminatory conduct by its employees.
- The areas covered by the Equal Status Act include the admission, terms and conditions of participation and access of students to any course and facility.
- Employment equality legislation covers advertising, equal pay, access to employment, vocational training and work experience, terms and conditions of employment, and promotions, amongst others.
- The Equal Status Act and Employment Equality Act allow for preferential treatment or the taking of positive measures which are intended to promote equality of opportunity for disadvantaged persons; or cater for the special needs of persons who may require facilities, arrangements, services or assistance. For example training for particular groups of staff, or reasonable accommodations required by staff with disabilities.
- The Disability Act 2005 requires all public bodies to fulfill a 3% employment target of staff with disabilities, and to monitor and report on the achievement of this target annually.

- The HEA High Level Group Report (2004) requests all third level institutions to collect equality monitoring data for students in a standardized fashion across the sector. Additionally there is a recommendation to monitor data regarding staff across the different grounds included in equality legislation.
- Higher level institutions have developed Access Plans as required by the HEA National Access Office (College Access Plan 2009-2013).
- The Civil Partnership Act 2010 provides for the recognition of same sex partnerships on similar terms to marriage. The protected equality ground is now civil status.

These legal developments have placed an increased responsibility on the College to promote and mainstream equality in all aspects of College activity. The College's commitment to promoting equality in all its activities is outlined in the College Equality policy approved in 2011.

5 Meetings

The Committee normally meets once per term, or as often as may be necessary to complete the business before it. The quorum for meetings in 2011-2012 was 50% plus 1 - the quorum has now been amended in the revised Terms of Reference, included in Appendix 1. The Committee may invite any other person to attend any Committee meeting as it may deem suitable. In 2011/2012 the Committee met on the following dates:

22 November 2011

13 March 2012

28 May 2012

12 June 2012

6 The Equality Officer

An Equality Officer was appointed in 2006 to advise and assist the Equality Committee. The Equality Officer's role is to promote equality in all areas of College life for both staff and students, covering all 9 grounds of discrimination included in Irish equality legislation. The Equality Officer is secretary to the Equality Committee, and advises the Committee on matters regarding legislation and policy implementation; as well as liaising with the different individuals and groups involved in equality related matters in College.

The Equality Officer, during the period in question, reported to the College Information Compliance Officer/Solicitor.

The Equality Officer also produces an annual report for the Equality Committee.

7 Main issues addressed by the Committee in 2011/2012

Equality Committee self-evaluation (Eqal11-12/13 &19) The Committee completed a self-evaluation exercise with the support of the Secretary's Office. The meeting of the 13th March was dedicated to discussing the findings of the Committee self-evaluation report to which members had contributed confidentially. The Committee self-evaluation focused on the following areas: Function and aims; Membership of the Committee; Operation of meetings; Equality Fund; Training of new members; Implementation of policy and Future work topics. The Committee discussed issues in relation to the large size of the Committee and achieving quorum, agreed actions included: amendments to the Terms of Reference to reduce membership to 2 staff members and one representative from each area (14 members instead of 18); an amendment to the quorum requirement and attendance requirement. The Committee discussed the challenges of implementing equality policy at local and School level. Actions were agreed to ensure greater follow-through of Committee recommendations and to raise the profile of the Committee's function: an action call-over to be included at each meeting; amendment to the Committee reports and establishing a committee reporting schedule for relevant areas (TAP, WiSER, Disability Service, HR); Committee reports on compliance to be brought to Board under section A. The training needs for a specialized Committee were highlighted and the Equality Officer and Chair agreed to develop a handbook for new members and identify training topics. The Committee proposed several actions to promote the Equality Fund. The Committee discussed the need to focus on specific areas of action and agreed the value of establishing ad hoc working groups to develop particular projects and determine the future direction of the Committee.

Disability Act (Eqal11-12/24) The Committee welcomed the first comprehensive report on how College was meeting its commitments under the Disability Act 2005 in relation to: access to buildings; accessible information; employment; procurement and dealing with complaints. The Committee noted progress made in improving physical access implementing the accessibility audit recommendations. Mr Treanor advised that he would be investigating further the estimate of compliant buildings. The Committee discussed the current financing for accessibility improvements and recommended that the extent of remaining works be clarified in order to estimate cost to College. The Committee discussed compliance with the employment target, with College's disclosure rate (2.3% of staff declare a disability) being in line with sectoral figures, and suggested that another full census could be completed to increase the response rate. The report included details of complaints received under the Act and Mr Treanor advised that training in dealing with informal complaints had been provided to relevant staff. The Committee discussed the need for further training and recommended that training in equality, disability and governance issues should be a requirement for all new Heads of Schools.

Accessible information (Eqal11-12/24&25) The Committee discussed the implementation of the Accessible Information policy. Mr Treanor and Mr Costello advised of varying degrees of engagement and implementation across administrative and support areas in their reports. The Committee noted progress in the development of further accessible information

resources. The Committee discussed implementation issues particularly in relation to procurement and branding. The Committee recommended that policy implementation needed to be prioritized at senior levels. The Committee approved the amendments of the Accessible Information Policy suggested by Mr Costello based on user feedback to ensure greater clarity.

Gender and the Merit Bar (Eqal11-12/03,06,21,27) The working group established by Board to implement the HR and Equality Committee recommendations circulated its report to the Committee. The finding that had propitiated these recommendations had been that fewer eligible women than men were applying for review at the Bar on the Lecturer scale (Gender analysis of the Merit Bar by the Equality Officer, 2010); the Committee noted that following investigation this issue had been located principally in the Faculty of Health Sciences and School of Nursing and Midwifery. The Working Group had examined the report findings and recommendations in relation to teaching and research weightings, the communication process for the Merit Bar, career guidance and the suggestion for review at the Merit Bar to be mandatory for all eligible candidates. The Committee shared the working group's view that both teaching and research were necessary to the Lecturer's portfolio and was advised by Dr Ó Siochrú of the changes introduced by the Junior Academic Progression Committee to ensure a holistic evaluation of candidates, including the expansion of research criteria. The Committee noted the steps taken by the School of Nursing and Midwifery to address this matter, including the appointment of a Career Development Officer and the teaching and the work load allocation system in place. The recommendation by the working group for the Merit Bar to placed on the 11th instead of the 12th point of the scale, ensuring an economic incentive for review, was discussed in great depth by the Committee. The Chair expressed serious concerns about this measure which were not shared by other members of the Committee.

Senior promotions: The Committee circulated a memo to the Senior Promotions Committee in relation to the findings in the Gender and Promotions Report 2009 to ensure that these findings were taking into consideration with the recommencement of promotions in 2012.

Student parents Eqal/11-12/05,21,28) The Committee discussed the status of its recommendation to the Student Services Committee that a working group be established to develop an inclusive student parent policy; since it was not possible to progress this recommendation in 2011-2012 the Committee proposed that the Equality Officer establish a working group comprising key stakeholders to develop this policy. The Committee welcomed the report on student parents presented by Ms Nicole Jagusch. This project was funded by the Equality Fund and provided the first data on student parents in College. The Committee was surprised at the number of respondents to the survey (385 in one week) and felt that the report findings provided further support to the need for developing an inclusive student parent policy for both UG and PG students. The report reflected in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with student parents and identified the need for a College resource for student parents where information could be easily accessed. Childcare, time and financial pressures were key concerns. The project found great support for the establishment of a student parent society or network amongst participants. The Committee supported the proposed actions such as the welcome event and student parent society and

noted that other issues such as the policy or resource would need to be addressed by College.

Dignity and Respect (Eqal/11-12/10,21,29) The Committee approved the amendment to the Dignity and Respect policy to include specific mention of posters, promotional materials and publications, as proposed by the Equality Officer in consultation with the CSC. The Committee proposed an amendment to the poster regulations contained in the College Calendar (section XIII H30) consistent with this policy, this amendment was subsequently approved by the Capitation Committee. The Committee also discussed the need to raise awareness about dignity and respect, inclusivity and accessibility amongst student societies: an awareness workshop was suggested as well the possibility of the Capitation Committee developing a code of conduct for student societies.

LEAD Equality eLearning programme (Eqal/11-12/31) The Committee supported the implementation plan agreed with the HR Committee for the LEAD Living Equality and Diversity eLearning programme to be rolled out in College. All staff who participate in interview panels will have to complete the programme by September 2013 (this recommendation was made by the Equality Committee and endorsed by Board) and the resource will be made available to all staff and be integrated in relevant training programmes. The Committee noted the progress made in the launch and implementation of this interactive programme, which was nominated for an IITD Award in the Category of Most Innovative use of Technology.

Equality Monitoring (Eqal/11-12/30) The Committee welcomed the Annual Equality Monitoring Report 2011-2012. The Committee discussed the continuing gender imbalance in academic grades over the last 6 years, noting the impact of the employment control framework but also the need for greater action at local level – and agreed to bring this matter to Board’s attention. The Committee also expressed concern at the gender imbalance apparent in administrative and support services and recommended this to be further investigated. The Committee noted the low proportion of students on part-time courses in TCD by comparison to other Universities and discussed the benefits of part-time and flexible learning to promote inclusiveness and life-long learning. The Committee agreed to bring this matter to Board’s attention. The report was submitted to Board under section A and relevant excerpts of the report are to be circulated to Schools and Administrative areas.

Student accommodation (Eqal/11-12/21,32) The Committee discussed correspondence with the Junior Dean in relation to the student accommodation criteria and process, which the Committee had recommended be reviewed to ensure clarity and transparency for applicants. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of transparency in the allocation criteria and process. The Committee recommended that objective criteria and weightings should be drawn up or a random allocation process be implemented. The Committee has invited the Junior Dean to attend the next meeting.

Other matters discussed by the Committee:

INTEGER project (Eqal/11-12/11) Report by Ms C Roughneen

Equality Policy implementation (Eqal/11-12/14)

Supports for Deaf staff in College (Eqal/11-12/09)

Equality Fund (Eqal/11-12/12,16)

APPENDICES

1. Terms of Reference
2. Committee membership 2011-2012
3. Sub-committees

TRINITY COLLEGE

THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

Equality Committee

Terms of Reference

Approved by Equality Committee: 28th of May 2012

Approved by Board: 27th of June 2012

1. Objectives

The Equality Committee is a Committee of Board with responsibility for advising Board and Council on all equality-related matters.

2. Membership of the Committee

2.1 The Committee shall comprise:

An elected Board member

Vice-Provost

Equality Officer

Secretary to the College (or nominee)

Academic Secretary (or nominee)

Director of Human Resources (or nominee)

Director of the College Disability Service

Representative of the Dignity and Respect Contact Persons

Welfare Officer – Students' Union

Representative of Graduate Students' Union

1 Council nominee

1 Dean

2 members of staff

In determining the composition of the Committee at least 30% of the membership should be of each gender and there should be a broad representation of all staff groups in College.

- 2.2 The Chairperson of the Committee shall be an Elected Board Member.
- 2.3 Membership of the Committee shall be reviewed regularly by the Chairperson in consultation with the Registrar and changes as required shall be recommended to the Board at that time.
- 2.4 Attendance at Committee meetings: a member of the Committee who is absent for three consecutive meetings may be requested to resign membership unless due to illness or if the absence is approved by the Chair.
- 2.5 Membership of the Committee shall normally be for an initial term of three (3) years, with the possibility of an extension of a further three (3) years. The general aim is to change the membership from time to time to ensure an appropriate balance between continuity and fresh perspectives.
- 2.6 The Equality Officer shall act as secretary to the Committee and be responsible for the preparation and distribution of the agenda, papers, minutes and reports following consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee.

3. Meetings and Quorum

- 3.1 The Committee will normally hold meetings once per term or as often as is necessary to complete the business before it or to deal with urgent issue that may arise.
- 3.2 The quorum for meetings will be:
 - The Chair and Equality Officer plus five Committee members
 - OR
 - 50% of members plus either the Chair or the Equality Officer
- 3.3 The Committee may also invite any or other person to attend any meeting(s) of the Committee, as it may from time to time consider desirable, to assist the Committee in achieving its objectives.

- 3.4 The draft minutes of the Equality Committee shall be circulated to the Board as soon as possible for noting and/or discussion as necessary. The Chairperson of the Committee shall be available to report orally to the Board on key aspects of the proceedings of the Committee as required.
- 3.5 In order to aid its operation, the Equality Committee may from time to time arrange for subgroups to consider specialist issues and bring forward recommendations to the Committee.

4. Duties

- 4.1 Assist Board and Council in the development, co-ordination and implementation of equality policies, practices and action plans throughout College.
- 4.2 Advise Board and Council on the legislative requirements in relation to equality matters, with particular reference to the Universities Act 1997, the Employment Equality Act 1998-2010, the Equal Status Act 2000-2010 and any other relevant legislation.
- 4.3 Monitor developments in national and EU policies in relation equality and advise Board and Council on the implications for College.
- 4.4 Review on an on-going basis the implementation of (a) approved recommendations and actions and (b) equality legislation and report accordingly.
- 4.5 Review College practices and policies from an equality perspective and where necessary make recommendations on any issues arising in order to promote good practice in these areas.
- 4.6 Report annually to Board and Council, preferably in Hilary Term, on all equality-related matters and on the results of reviews and monitoring exercises carried out during the year.

5. Authority

- 5.1 The Committee shall operate under delegated authority from the Board, which is ultimately responsible for all matters relating to equality. The Equality Committee will have devolved authority to decide on behalf of Board to:
- Appointment of Contact Persons in relation to Dignity and Respect
 - Approving procedures and guidelines for the implementation of Equality-related policies
- 5.2 The Committee may consider/review any matter falling within its terms of reference, calling on whatever resources and information it considers necessary to do so.

5.3 The Committee is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee of the College to enable it discharge its responsibilities and shall have made available to it on a timely basis all information requested from any employee in a clear, concise and well organised manner.

5.4 The Equality Committee shall carry out such other functions and take such other decisions as may be delegated to it from time to time by the Board

6. Performance Evaluation

6.1 The Committee shall, at least once a year, review its own performance and its terms of reference and shall report its conclusions and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board.

Equality Committee

Committee membership 2011-2012

Dr Nicola Marples (Member of Board) Chair

Professor Mary McCarron (Dean)

Professor Linda Hogan (Vice Provost)

Ms Anne FitzGerald (Secretary)

Mr Declan Treanor (Director of College Disability Service)

Ms Louise Power (Personnel Officer) [resigned membership in June 2012]

Vacant Representative from the Dignity and Respect Contact Persons

Ms Cliona Hannon (Access Officer)

Ms Clodagh Byrne (Academic Secretary nominee/ Mature Students' Officer) [resigned membership in June 2012]

Ms Alison Taylor (Director of HR nominee)

Dr Mícháel Ó Siochrú (Council nominee)

Mr Martin McAndrew (GSU Vice-President)

Ms Louisa Miller (SU Welfare Officer)

Professor Eileen Drew (member of staff) [resigned membership in March 2012]

Mr David Quinn (member of staff) [resigned membership in March 2012]

Mr Oran Doyle (member of staff) [resigned membership in June 2012]

Ms Victoria Butler (member of staff) [on leave for 2011-2012]

Ms Karen Campos McCormack (Equality Officer) secretary

Equality Committee Sub-committees/working groups 2011-12

Equality Fund Sub-Committee

Dr Nicola Marples (Equality Committee, Chair)

Mr Martin McAndrew (GSU Vice-president)

Louise Power (Equality Committee)

Ann-Marie Moore/Maurice Mac Bride (Treasurer's Office)

Louisa Miller (SU Welfare Officer)

Karen Campos McCormack (Equality Officer, secretary)

The Equality Fund sub-committee met on 28th September and 9th November 2011

Equality Fund sub-committee Terms of Reference

<http://www.tcd.ie/equality/pdf/EQUALITY%20FUNDTOReviewedNovember2010.pdf>

Monitoring Advisory Group

Ms Caroline Roughneen, Director of WiSER

Dr Andrew Loxley, Education

Ms Patricia Daly, Human Resources

Ms Clodagh Byrne, Mature Students' Officer, Senior Lecturer's Area

Ms Lisa Keane, TAP

Ms Michelle Garvey, Disability Service, in attendance

Ms Karen Campos, Equality Officer (secretary)

The Monitoring Advisory Group met on 9th May 2012