

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACADEMICS

May 1991

and students: it was agreed that this should be implemented operationally, as documents come up for revision, and satisfactory progress has been made. Secondly, in order to raise the awareness of those who are implicitly or explicitly sexist in their attitudes to staff and/or students, the Committee recommended that the Provost and Board should formally declare that sexist attitudes are completely unacceptable in the College. In discussion, this proposal was amended to a request for vigilance in the voicing of criticisms of sexist attitudes. This Committee suggests that the Board should consider whether the original proposal should be reinstated and acted upon in the context of the revision of the statutes.

Recruitment and Promotion

The Committee sought a mix of male and female members on all promotions committees. Unfortunately the composition of promotion committees, which are constituted by a mixture of *ex officio* and elective membership, makes it impossible to ensure the inclusion of women in all cases. It is important that the Committee's original suggestion, that this issue be raised with the nominating groups, should be implemented in future as a matter of annual routine.

Employment Contracts

The Committee drew attention to the evidence it had received that many part-time employees in the College were dissatisfied with their working conditions and it noted that many of the part-timers, for whom employment in the College was their main or sole source of income, were women.¹ The Board accepted the Committee's recommendation that the committee established to examine this matter in the late 1970s should be reconstituted. This has not yet been done, and this Committee recommends that the matter should be attended to in the course of this Term.

Sexual Harassment

The Committee recommended that an appropriate definition of sexual harassment in a university environment should be formulated. The Equal Opportunities Committee has collected material relating to both definitions and procedures adopted in US and UK universities and will present proposals to the Board in due course.

4. Outlook for the Future

The outlook for equality of opportunity in Trinity College depends crucially on two factors: (a) the willingness of the College to implement policies which will create an environment in which male and female academics operate *de facto* on equal terms and (b) the opportunity available to the College to employ and promote more female academics.

¹The dissatisfaction expressed by such staff related far more to the lack of adequate library, parking, and accommodation rights than to rates of pay.

1. Introduction

The committee appointed by the Board in November 1988 to advise on the position of Women Academics reported in June 1989. Noting the low representation of women academics in College generally, and at higher levels in particular, it concluded that while "*there appears to be no evidence of a pattern of deliberate discrimination against women academics in Trinity College*", there are areas in which women academics may be implicitly receiving less favourable treatment than their male colleagues. The Report proposed a series of policy recommendations which, while not discriminating against men, would help remove obstacles to and support the recruitment and promotion of more women academics. Most of these recommendations were accepted by the Board on 13 December 1989; others, dealing with matters of recruitment and promotion, were referred to the University Council and in part formed the basis of the document concerning 'Guidance on nominating committees' which Council approved on 7 March 1990. Among the recommendations accepted by the Board was the proposal to establish a Committee on Equal Opportunities for Academics.

At its first meeting that Committee elected the Vice-Provost to the chair and invited Mrs Daphne Siggins to act as secretary to the Committee. It also agreed to adopt interim terms of reference, as follows:

- (a) To monitor and to report annually to Board on the position of woman academics in College.
- (b) To oversee the introduction of the proposals relating to the position of woman academics in College accepted by the Board on 13 December 1989.

In this, the Committee's first report, noting that most of the recommendations have already been implemented, we confine ourselves to making some observations upon a few of these, drawing attention to agreed recommendations which have not been acted upon, and suggesting immediate priorities for action. The Committee wishes to acknowledge the active cooperation of the Staff Office, both in giving effect to the recommendations themselves and in providing it with information.

2. The Policy Recommendations Accepted and Implemented

The recommendations accepted and acted upon can be grouped under a number of headings.

College Government

It was recommended that there should be greater democratisation of College committees and increased use of women academics as tutors where possible. These recommendations are being implemented, and were adopted in the Registrar's annual review of Standing Committees of the Board in 1990. However, the associated proposal to

proceed systematically by requiring the Deans to draw up a list of academics who have indicated their willingness to serve on particular committees has not been put into effect.

Recruitment and Promotion

It was recommended that there should be representation of both sexes on each nominating committee and that all members of each committee should be entitled to full access to all documentation and to participate in all procedures relevant to the appointment. Both of these recommendations were accepted and the University Council subsequently set out in detail the procedures to be used in the recruitment of all academic staff. There is, however, no mechanism to ensure that these procedures are implemented fully at departmental level. In response to other recommendations, the College has also revised its application forms to exclude questions relating to marital and parental status and has introduced a statement to the effect that it is an equal opportunities employer in advertisements for academic posts.

Maternity Leave and Childcare

The establishment of standard procedures for maternity leave was proposed, so that women seeking such leave would not be dependent for replacement simply on the good nature of their head of department or their departmental colleagues. The Board accepted this recommendation in general terms though it did not agree to the automatic provision of full replacement resources, on the grounds that the need varied across different departments. The effectiveness of this approach is difficult to monitor, but the position appears to be satisfactory.

The Board agreed to refer to the College Day Nursery Committee a set of recommendations for the improvement of day-care facilities for the children of staff and students and improved management of the resources provided for this purpose by the College. These proposals have been considered by the Nursery Committee and largely adopted, though the question of extended opening hours remains a matter of contention.

3. The Policy Recommendations Accepted but Not Yet Fully Implemented

General Ethos

The Committee recommended, and the Board accepted in principle, that the College should indicate formally its commitment to equality of opportunity by amending the statutes appropriately. Amendments to Chapters I and XXI were presented by the Registrar to the Board on 25 April 1990, but the matter awaits final implementation. The Committee asked that an explicit commitment to reducing sexism in College should be made in two ways. First, by the removal of all sexist language from documentation relating to staff

and students: it was agreed that this should be implemented operationally, as documents come up for revision, and satisfactory progress has been made. Secondly, in order to raise the awareness of those who are implicitly or explicitly sexist in their attitudes to staff and/or students, the Committee recommended that the Provost and Board should formally declare that sexist attitudes are completely unacceptable in the College. In discussion, this proposal was amended to a request for vigilance in the voicing of criticisms of sexist attitudes. This Committee suggests that the Board should consider whether the original proposal should be reinstated and acted upon in the context of the revision of the statutes.

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In furtherance of equality of opportunity, this Committee recommends that the following priorities be attended to as matters of urgency:

1. the appointment of the committee to report on the working conditions of part-time members of the academic staff;
2. the completion of the revision of the statutes.
3. the preparation of a list of academics willing to serve on particular committees;
4. the further exploration of means of including women on all promotion committees in a systematic manner;
5. the charging of the Deans, as chairpersons of nominating committees, with ensuring that the Council regulations governing the conduct of appointment committees are being observed;
6. the adoption of arrangements for dealing with sexual harassment (presently with this committee).

Table 1

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME PERMANENT STAFF IN EACH GRADE

GRADE	1984/85				1988/89			
	MALES		FEMALES		MALES		FEMALES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
PROFESSOR	59	95.2	3	4.8	52	94.5	3	5.5
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	35	94.6	2	5.4	40	97.6	1	2.4
SENIOR LECTURER	98	92.5	8	7.5	117	90.7	12	9.3
LECTURER	156	72.9	58	27.1	124	70.9	51	29.1
TOTAL	345	82.9	71	17.1	333	83.2	67	16.8
<i>of which</i>								
FELLOWS	128	97.0	4	3.0	132	96.4	5	3.6
GRADE	1989/90				1990/91			
	MALES		FEMALES		MALES		FEMALES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
PROFESSOR	50	94.3	3	5.7	53	94.6	3	5.4
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	39	97.5	1	2.5	41	97.6	1	2.4
SENIOR LECTURER	119	90.1	13	9.9	119	87.5	17	12.5
LECTURER	115	68.4	53	31.6	122	69.7	53	30.3
TOTAL	323	82.2	70	17.8	335	81.9	74	18.1
<i>of which</i>								
FELLOWS	133	95.7	6	4.3	141	94.6	8	5.4

POST	NO. OF CANDIDATES		NO. SHORTLISTED		NO. INTERVIEWED		APPOINTED	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
SENIOR LECTURER/ CONSULTANT IN HISTOPATHOLOGY (Oral Pathology)	1	3	1	3	1	3	0	1
CHAIR OF IRISH	14	0	5	0	5	0	1	0
LECTURERS IN LAW (2 posts)	38	15	8	3	6	3	2	0
LECTURER IN MANAGE- MENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS	5	1	2	1	2	1	1	0
LECTURER IN MATHEMATICS	27	3	6	0	6	0	1	0
LECTURERS IN MICRO- ELECTRONICS & ELECTRICAL ENGINEER- ING (2 posts)	5	0	4	0	4	0	2	0
SENIOR LECTURER/ CONSULTANT IN OBSTETRICS & GYNAECOLOGY	13	2	7	1	6	1	0	1
LECTURER IN PHILOSOPHY	63	12	7	1	7	1	1	0
LECTURER IN QUATER- NARY ECOLOGY	5	6	2	3	2	3	1	0
LECTURER IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE	7	4	1	4	1	4	0	1
LECTURER IN SCIENCE OF MATERIALS (PHYSICS)	13	3	5	0	4	0	1	0
LECTURER IN SOCIAL WORK	27	8	5	4	5	4	1	0
LECTURER IN SPEECH PATHOLOGY (School of Clinical Speech & Language Studies)	0	9	0	5	0	4	0	1
LECTURER IN STATISTICS (Systems)	4	2	1	1	1	1	0	1
* LECTURER IN ZOOLOGY							0	1
TOTALS:	404	141	110	45	102	42	23	12

* - Post not advertised. Temporary lecturers who had previously competed for appointment following public advertisement and interview were nominated to Council and Board.