

EQUALITY STEERING GROUP
Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of the Equality Steering Group
12 February 2003

Present: Albert Pratt (Chair)
Mary Ainscough (Equality Director)
Ellen Breen
Marian Burns
Lisa Looney
Padraig MacNeela
Sean Marlow

1. Apologies: Patricia Barker
Claire Byrne
Martin Conry
Xiaojun Wang

2. Minutes of the Meeting of 29 January 2003 were approved

3. Matters Arising

There were not items under Matters Arising

4. Review of Facilitated Meeting of the ESG 29 January 2003

The Group agreed that the Review Meeting had been worthwhile and proceeded to consider a number of matters relevant to the effective functioning of the ESG which had emerged in the Review. A collegiate approach to the work of the ESG was to be encouraged. Areas were discussed upon which action could be taken immediately, while other initiatives would happen into the future.

It was agreed that:

- The terms of reference for the Group be agreed as soon as possible
- The Chair would rotate for each meeting. This would come into effect at the next meeting of the Group. Sean Marlow would chair the next meeting, followed by Marian Burns, then Ellen Breen and then Lisa Looney.
- The ESG would meet at different locations around the campus
- Task groups or working parties of the ESG would be established and would include people external to the ESG
- All Minutes of the ESG meetings would go on the Website and this would be brought to the attention of all staff
- Appointing a "Process Observer" would be a worthwhile initiative for some meetings in the future
- Encouraging Group members to advocate a view opposite to their own in order to see all sides to an issue would also be a worthwhile initiative in future meetings
- Establish a resource library on Equality.

The Equality Director agreed to circulate a copy of the terms of reference for the "DCU Equality Committee" which she had received prior to taking up the position of

Equality Director. This could be used as a basis for agreeing terms of reference at the next meeting of the Group.

5. Chairman's Business

There were no topics for the Meeting under this item.

5. Policy Review and Development:

5.1 Policy to Promote Respect and to Protect Dignity at Dublin City University

Final amendments were agreed to the draft policy in the light of answers received from the University's solicitors following concerns raised at the 29 January meeting of the ESG.

It was agreed that the draft policy would now go forward for adoption to the next meeting of Governing Authority in March.

5.2 Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities

The Code had been circulated to staff for comment. The meeting considered the comment and proposed modifications received from staff.

The University is seen to be taking positive action in relation to employing people with disabilities, and, in general, the Code had been well received by staff with some concerns raised about its implementation. Concerns raised included the difficulties encountered in targeting people with disabilities for employment and whether the University should be responsible for this centrally, or should it be the responsibility of individual Heads. Concerns were raised too in relation to consistency between the provisions in the draft Code in relation to people who acquire a disability while in employment and the provisions in the *University Statute No3* relating to *Incapability*.

It was agreed that the Chair of the ESG would meet with the HR Director and the Disability Officer to consider issues emerging in relation to some sections of the Code.

It was further agreed that the HR Director would seek to achieve consistency across the Code and the *University Statute No 3*.

5. Equality Review and Action Plan

The Equality Director informed the meeting that preliminary meetings were ongoing with the Equality auditors. It was envisaged that the auditors would attend the next meeting of the ESG scheduled for 5 March and would present the proposed structure of the Equality Audit to the Group.

7. Any Other Business

There were no topics for the Meeting under this item.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Equality Steering Group was scheduled for Wednesday, 5 March 2003, venue: DG 11 (Oscail).