

Draft Gender Equality Scheme Annual Report April 2008

Background

In October 2007 the University of Cambridge published a draft Gender Equality Scheme and gender equality policy (*Reporter* 24 October 2007). This document is the first annual report on progress made through the implementation of the Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan and covers the period 1st May 2007 – 30th April 2008.

It is a UK statutory requirement that Higher Educational institutions report annually against their Disability and Gender schemes and provide data in respect of race equality monitoring.¹ This report reflects the University's ongoing commitment to Diversity and its aim, to meet compliance requirements and to implement best practice, through the adoption of Diversity schemes and annual reporting. These will produce appropriate frameworks for the University to further embed diversity values within the University's culture.

The Council have requested that the University undertakes a review of the Draft Gender Equality Scheme to ensure it meets the above aims.

The Equal Opportunities Commission's Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Gender Equality states that:

- Listed public authorities must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to publish an annual report, summarising the actions they have taken to implement their scheme objectives;
- The report can be published as a separate document or within another published document, for example, the public authority's main annual report.

¹ To meet this UK statutory requirement the University will aim to review and report on all its equality schemes at the end of each academic year (to be agreed with the respective representative groups/parties). This will support the future adoption of a single equality scheme encompassing the University's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Duties and assist the University plan and assess progress against all diversity action plans.

The Gender Equality Policy and Draft Scheme

The University's Equality Policy and Draft Scheme is available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/gender/>

The Draft Gender Equality Scheme (GES) sets out the University's commitment to the principles of the general gender equality duty specified in the Equality Act (2006)², and is the means by which the University fulfils its obligations, intentions and goals namely,

- to eliminate discrimination and harassment;
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The Scheme:

- explains what this means for everyone in the University;
- gives details of how the University will monitor and assess the Scheme's effectiveness;
- defines roles and responsibilities so that responsible bodies and individuals know what is expected of them;
- sets out how the University will develop the Scheme and monitor its effectiveness.

The Scheme contains a list of actions by which the University will fulfill the specific duties set out in the Code of Practice for Gender Duty and is reviewed annually by the Head of Equality and Diversity in consultation with key stakeholders and reported in the University's Gender Equality Annual Report.

Progress against the Scheme's Action Plan is reported to the University's Human Resources (HR) Committee. The Scheme's Action Plan will continue to evolve in light of the above and will take account of the University's evolving priorities in gender equality.

The Gender Equality Annual Report

This report identifies progress against those actions as contained in the scheme available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/gender/interim.pdf>

Progress against Actions

Action point 1

² It is a UK government statutory requirement that the University sets out its strategy and the actions required for fulfilling the specific duties imposed by the Equality Act (2006).

The Council, the General Board and those exercising senior management and administrative responsibilities shall ensure the fulfilment of the Gender Equality Scheme (GES) in the University through:

- (a) commitment to implementation of the GES;*
- (b) monitoring its progress;*
- (c) publication of progress reports.*

Work is in hand to ensure that the Cambridge Human Resources Information System (CHRIS) provides data reporting which will further facilitate diversity and gender monitoring relating to the University's employees and applications for employment.

Action Point 2

The Council will approve a timetable within which institutions are expected to complete policy impact assessments and the reporting mechanisms for responsible institutions in relation to their impact assessment.

Four key areas have been prioritized for Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs): recruitment, promotion, student admissions and student attainment. A thematic approach has been adopted which will ensure that the process is outcome focused, i.e. the EQIA will assess the impact of existing and proposed policies directly in relation to their impact on equality of opportunity.³

The first Equality Impact Assessment on policies, procedures and practices relating to recruitment has now been completed and the report, outcomes and proposed actions communicated for consideration and approval to the University's HR Committee, the General Board via its Education Committee, and the Council.

Action point 3

- (a) The Education Committee will regularly scrutinize Tripos examination results; will undertake ongoing identification of relevant issues arising from routine consideration of teaching and learning and will respond to any issues drawn to their attention by the Gender Equality Duty Advisory Group.*
- (b) The Board of Graduate Studies will review and advise on statistical reports relating to Graduate students.*
- (c) The Senior Tutors' Committee will draw up a model Gender Equality Policy for use by Colleges after the University has completed and approved its Gender Equality Scheme.*

The Education Committee receives and reviews Tripos examination results based on gender. These are published in the 'Student Numbers' edition of the Reporter (e.g. Special No 9, 22 January 2008) and are made available to Colleges and Faculties and Departments. Any matters of concern are discussed by the Education Committee and referred to the relevant bodies as appropriate.

³ Source: **HEFCE guidance on Impact assessments.**

Where issues are picked up through the routine consideration of teaching and learning, the Education Committee ensures actions are agreed and undertaken.

Action point 4

The Human Resources Division will further develop its equality monitoring capacity as part of the implementation of Cambridge Human Resources Information System (CHRIS).

The Human Resources Division is considering how to further develop equality monitoring in the light of the completed impact assessment and identified needs. This will enable the University to review its recruitment data on a regular systematic basis. Interim measures will be put in place to address current recruitment monitoring needs, where the planned development of CHRIS may be some months away. This will enable the University to monitor internal and external applications and success rates for vacancies and promotions within the University by gender.

Action point 5

A progress report on the GES will be made by the Human Resources Committee annually and published by the Council (see Action point 1a)

This annual report identifies progress against Actions identified in the GES.

Action point 6

The Equality and Diversity Section will further develop and refine existing mechanisms for consultation with staff and students in relation to gender equality issues and make recommendations for the inclusion of further actions where appropriate.

Governance arrangements in relation to Equality and Diversity have been reviewed and a Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity has been convened. This Committee will bring together key expertise and representatives from across the University, Colleges and Human Resources (HR)

- to agree and oversee the strategic direction and implementation of Equality and Diversity policies and practices within the University of Cambridge and
- to oversee the activities taking place across the respective diversity Networks.

The formation of this Committee will build on the existing infrastructure of Women's' Networks and communication mechanisms and provide for a stronger means of consultation feeding in to an integrated E&D strategy.

A Women's Forum Conference was held on February 15th 2008 attended by over 120 University employees.

The Women's Forum Conference is a biennial conference run by the Women's Forum Steering Group and organised by Equality and Diversity. It provides an opportunity for all academic, research, technical and administrative staff to be up-dated on issues rising from the Women's Forum consultations.

This year (2008) the conference focused on 'Confidence & Voice...Tools for Change'. As a part of the conference programme, the audience had a choice of three informative workshops around the theme of personal growth and making change happen.

The keynote speakers included the Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Julie Spence and broadcaster Vivienne Parry.

In her address, Vice-Chancellor Professor Alison Richard, spoke about the importance of supporting female staff in their career development.

The Registry, Dr Jonathan Nicholls, joined the forum and gave a talk focusing on leadership, stressing practical steps to develop leadership skills.

Attendees particularly appreciated the opportunity to hear the Vice-Chancellor and Registry share their thoughts and vision with regard to gender equality.

Feedback from attendees indicated that the talks by the keynote speakers were received as both inspiring and amusing, with women who had been confident enough to use their voice and make a difference showing what could be achieved with determination, focus and passion.

The Women's Network has organized events throughout the academic year 2007/2008 covering a wide range of topics including Mentoring (15 November), Next Steps for Research Staff (15 January), Career Pathways for non-academics (8 February), Work-Life Balance (6 March), and Flexible Working (24 April).

A proposal is under consideration for implementation in the Michaelmas Term, in respect of a pilot mentoring scheme aimed at supporting the career development of women in academic positions in science, engineering and technology.

Action point 7

The Equality and Diversity Section in conjunction with the Office of Communications will develop a communications strategy for gender equality.

A draft Diversity communication strategy is currently under development

Action point 8

The Staff Development Section and the Equality and Diversity Section will develop further aspects of gender equality training both as part of the existing programme of specialized equality training and also mainstreamed into the full range of staff development provision.

E&D training has been reviewed and training needs assessed across all E&D strands at all staff levels.

Invitations to tender to provide the identified training needs have been invited from third party providers.

Basic awareness e-learning packages are being evaluated by the Equality and Diversity Section with a view to offering these to all staff and, in the future, students.

Action point 9

The Human Resources Division will develop and maintain records kept under the Dignity at Work Policy which include incidents of gender- and sex-related harassment, including harassment related to transgender.

All approaches by members of staff to the Dignity at Work contacts are recorded and analysed by category and reported to the HR Committee at the end of each academic year. The feasibility of a recording process to capture additional information is under consideration.

Action point 10

Following the completion of the planned equal pay audit, steps will be taken to address the causes of any gender pay gap.

Work in relation to an equal pay review has commenced and a monitoring group, comprising HR, trade union and institutional representatives, established. Regular update reports will be provided to the HR Committee and relevant data published to the wider University as appropriate.

If you would like more information about anything contained within this report, or if you require information about our equality and diversity work in alternative formats (for example, Braille, large print or audio), please contact the Head of Equality and Diversity for the University of Cambridge.

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/equality/>