

EQUITY ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

PREAMBLE

This is a brief report on the “existing or planned equity and diversity activities and initiatives”, as requested by the PVC (L&Q), pertaining to the Quality and Reviews area. In view of the recent restructuring, I have added some very brief information regarding initiatives in the former Office of Planning and Development/Office of Planning and Quality, though I expect that more details will be provided by others.

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

1.1. QUALITY AUDIT, 2002/3

The previous AUQA audit addressed very few Equity and Diversity issues, perhaps because they were only given a cursory glance in our own Performance Portfolio. Three items however did find their way into the subsequent Quality Improvement Action Plan 2003-2005, which indicated the University's undertakings in response to the audit. These were:

- An audit of the University's education and support services for students in equity categories (p. 21);
- The GE&D Committee to recommend a “champion” to implement the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan (p. 21-22) [In the event, this was Prof Mike Innes, the Chair of the GE&D Committee], and in this regard, assess how far the Plan had been implemented. I'm not sure whether Mike is still the “champion”.
- With respect to Indigenous issues, the GE&D Committee to reconsider University policies and practices (p. 22).

Progress against these commitments is outlined in the Progress Report. It can be easily argued that they have, to all intents and purposes, been dealt with reasonably well.

1.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM – QAS (under development)

The Working Party overseeing the conceptualisation and implementation of this system (chaired by Peter Dowd) has not discussed equity matters directly, and there is currently no specific module in the QAS on gender, equity and diversity as such. However:

- HR-related modules for the QAS have yet to be discussed in any detail, but these will include information on equity and diversity policies and processes, since some of this information is already collected by HR (eg. “EO for Women in the Workplace Compliance Report”);
- We have added a section in the learning and teaching area of the QAS on Equity and Diversity (should it include Gender as well?), but it is yet to be populated with information. The Working Party will need to decide on what priority it wishes to give it;
- We have not looked at the University's promotional materials to prospective students from the perspective of GE&D, but this will need to be done when the GE&D module with the QAS is implemented;
- This raises the broader issue of the level at which the GE&D matters should be presented within the QAS. Should it be a second-order area (along with “Learning and Teaching”, “Research and Research Training” and “Community Engagement”)? Or should it be a third-order area (in which case there would need to be a module on GED issues within *each* of the three higher areas)? Or should it be in the QAS at all?

All these matters are to be raised within the Quality Assurance Framework Working Party.

1.3. PROGRAM APPROVALS

Program approval processes (including the pro-forma for new proposals) do not have any specific requirements for GED-related matters to be taken into consideration.

1.4. STAFF SURVEY

The two recent staff climate surveys (in 2004 and 2006) both asked questions relating to GE&D issues, and the reports on the results are now available. What remains is to analyse the results and consider what actions to take in order to address deficiencies. Note that the University achieved an 82% favourable response to E&D issues from staff in 2006.

2. PLANNING/PERFORMANCE

There are a number of planning/performance processes which incorporate GED matters. Others can speak in more details about them, but here are some examples:

▪ **Performance Report to Council**

The annual report to Council, designed as an "institutional health" check, includes information on a number of GE&D-related measures (participation and success of student equity groups, workforce diversity, gender breakdowns).

▪ **Institutional Assessment Framework (IAF) Portfolio**

The biennial IAF process run by DEST includes, *inter alia*:

- Statistical data on gender breakdowns, on achievements against Equity Performance Indicators, and performance against Indigenous measures;
- An Equity Update for the preceding period (on ongoing strategies and new strategies that have been introduced);
- An Indigenous Education Statement, developed by Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies (CAIRS) (containing information on the level of success in achieving the goals of the ATSI Education policy).

3. REFERENCES AND FOLLOW UP

Two people can provide a lot of additional information on these and other matters:

- Prof Mike Innes, as former Chair of the GED
- Prof Roger Thomas, Director of CAIRS.

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