

UWS UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND

GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Introduction

The University of Paisley Gender Equality Scheme was published in June 2007. The scheme was developed by a short life working group led by the Dean of the School of Media, Languages and Music and was based on extensive consultation with students and staff. Since the scheme was published the university has merged with Bell College, Hamilton to form the University of the West of Scotland. In preparing this report we have taken account of Bell College's Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan. The working group held a review meeting to monitor progress on implementing the scheme in November 2007 and was then disbanded. The Equality and Diversity Board has taken over the responsibility for managing the scheme.

This report charts the progress to date against the published action plan, notes any additional initiatives and looks forward to the next reporting cycle.

1. Equal Pay

The University published an Equal Pay Statement in September 2007. The statement (copy at Appendix 1) reaffirms our commitment to equal pay and notes the progress made in pay and grading modernisation and the Impact Assessment of our Job Evaluation scheme.

The statement set objectives for a three year period including a commitment to undertake a full pay review before June 2010.

2. Data Collection and Reporting

As part of the overall Equality and Diversity strategy we have a commitment to improving equality data collection and reporting. We published the first University wide report in February 2008 and this included data on student and staff gender distribution. A further piece of research has been undertaken to examine the effect of merger on the staff gender balance in the new university.

3. Policy Reviews

With effect from 1st September 2007 all new policies have been subject to equality impact assessment. A number of existing policies and procedures have been reviewed, or have been subject to impact assessment:

- The Staff Harassment policy has been reviewed and is currently awaiting consultation with Trade Unions.
- Following merger, harmonised terms and conditions were introduced for support staff following negotiations with the recognised trade unions. A programme of harmonisation of employment policies has been set in place
- Over 500 staff have attended equality and diversity training. This included discussion of gender issues
- Student progression and retention data have been produced for each School and action plans have been developed
- Impact assessments have been carried out on a range of policies including the student complaints procedure, work based learning policy, staff recruitment and selection policy and recruitment advertising policy.

4. Future Plans

Work has commenced on a review of flexible working policy and practice. This will report in summer 2008 and further development of existing provision is anticipated. We will also review and, where necessary, enhance policies for staff recruitment and selection and student admissions.

The staff development and career review process will also be reviewed, with part time employees and gender issues being considered. This will tie in with a planned review of management development and implementation of an improved mentoring programme for staff.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

Implementation of the GES action plan is monitored by the Equality and Diversity Coordinator and progress reports on the GES are made to the Equality and Diversity Board and to Senate on a regular basis.

We have made a solid start to our work on Gender equality and look forward to reporting further progress in the 2009 annual report.

Equal Pay Statement

This institution supports the principle of equal opportunities involving concern with the principles of equality and the management of diversity in employment and believes as part of those principles that male and female staff, those from different racial groups, those with or without disabilities, those of different sexual orientations, different religions or beliefs, and different ages should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

We understand that equal pay between men and woman is a legal right under both domestic and European law; and that other legislation is in place in the UK, on race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, part-time and fixed-term employees, which includes pay as part of its remit.

We believe it is in our institution's interest and in accordance with good practice that pay is awarded fairly and equitably.

We recognise that in order to achieve equal pay for employees doing equal work we should operate a pay system which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and age: and which does not discriminate unfairly between those on different contractual arrangements.

The University has already taken steps to implement this commitment by:

- Undertaking a pay and grading modernisation project which has developed a fair and non-discriminatory grading structure underpinned by the Hay job evaluation scheme and which has been externally validated by an Equality Impact Assessment .
- The development of an Equality Impact Assessment Process which enables Policies and Procedures to be checked to identify any discriminatory impact and required actions across all the strands of equality.

Next steps include:

- An equal pay review covering all staff
- The development of policies on starting pay, contribution pay and market supplements
- A gender profile of job roles to identify any areas of occupational stereotyping and any actions necessary to discourage gender occupational segregation
- The development of an Equal Pay Policy which covers all legislative equality requirements

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