

QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

EQUITY BOARD

MINUTES

Equity Board met in Room Z1124, Level 11, Z Block, Gardens Point Campus at 2:00 pm on Thursday 3 March 2005.

Present

Dr C Dickenson (Chair); Dr D Battistutta, Dr C Dallemagne, Dr J Carr, Ms R Christie, Ms R Field, Dr E French, Ms M Kelly, Mr S Pincus, Ms D Redfern, Dr B Senadji, Ms C Young; Mr M Hills (Secretary).

Apologies

Ms D Eden, Ms S Garske, Mr A Perrau, Dr J Synott.

Absent

Ms C Brickell.

By invitation

Ms D Dobinson, Ms K Hansson, Ms J Healy, Ms M Mackinnon, Ms G O'Brien.

1. APOLOGIES, WELCOME AND FINAL STARRING OF AGENDA 02/00295

Equity Board noted the above apologies.

The Chair, Dr Dickenson, welcomed members to the first meeting of 2005. Dr Dickenson welcomed Dr Senadji and Ms Redfern to the Board as new members from the Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering and QUT Council. Dr Dickenson noted that Ms Hansson was attending on behalf of Ms Garske who was an apology.

Dr Dickenson called for starring of additional items on the agenda. In addition to items 1, 2, 3.1, 4 – 4.3, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1 – 7.3, item 5.1 was starred. All items remaining unstarred were noted or adopted as appropriate.

No conflicts of interest were declared at the opening of the meeting.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of Equity Board's meeting of 28 October 2004 were confirmed.

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 2005 Quality Review / AUQA Audit 04/00194

Equity Board was briefed by Mr Wilson, Manager (Communications) AUQA Audit Project, on developments in relation to the upcoming Australian Universities Quality Assurance Review (AUQA). Mr Wilson tabled a printout of the presentation slides.

During his presentation, Mr Wilson presented brief biographies of the five member audit team. Mr Wilson also presented an overview of the proposed schedule of business of the audit which was to commence in mid-April 2005 which included an audit of the University's offshore activities in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Mr Wilson informed the Board that a information dissemination program would commence across the University shortly to raise awareness of the impending audit. Mr Wilson further informed the Board that a series of workshops was scheduled for staff to assist in their preparation for the audit.

The Chair, Dr Dickenson, thanked Mr Wilson for his presentation. Dr Dickenson encouraged members of the Board to prepare for the AQUA Audit through familiarisation of the AQUA portfolio, especially the People & Culture section, and through the attendance of appropriate workshops. Dr Dickenson noted that elements within the portfolio in relation to equity issues included sections on:

- Reconciliation,
- Low-SES students and the impact of scholarships,

- gender balance within the staff and student population, and
- women and academic promotion.

The Board noted that it was likely that the audit panel would interview members of the Board on the University's position on Indigenous and Low-SES issues as these elements were referenced in legislation.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

03/00054

The Chair, Dr Dickenson, informed members that Ms Christie had recently been the recipient of an Outstanding Contribution Award for professional staff. Equity Board congratulated Ms Christie on her achievement.

4.1 Board Orientation

95/00831

Equity Board was briefed by the Chair, Dr Dickenson, on committee meeting procedures. It was noted that future meetings would not require all representatives from faculties and divisions to provide a report at each meeting. Instead, faculty/divisional reports would be presented on a rotating basis. The Secretary, Mr Hills, undertook to develop a reporting matrix for future meetings.

Resolved to note the orientation materials detailed in the submission, including the Board's terms of reference.

4.2 Business arising from minutes - Post-meeting action sheet for Equity Board 28 October 2004 meeting

Equity Board reviewed the status of the following outstanding post-meeting actions from the meeting held on 28 October 2004.

PMA Item 5.1 - Low-SES Student Equity Committee

99/00921

Action: Draft correspondence in relation to strategies which minimise the cost to students of having to purchase too many text books or print too much material. Circulate for comment prior to dissemination to the wider University community.

Action Officers: Chair / Equity Coordinator.

Outcome: The Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, informed the Board that this action was still in progress. It was noted that the functionality already existed on the OLT site to minimise costs. However, the Board acknowledged that there was more that needed to be done to address this issue. Ms Kelly stated that the issue would be resolved by the commencement of Semester 2.

PMA Item 6.8 - Annual report from Equity Board to the Vice-Chancellor

95/00831

Action: Develop draft document to guide the implementation and reporting of Equity initiatives in the faculties and divisions in line with the QUT Blueprint and relevant strategic plans. Circulate to members of the Board for endorsement. Incorporate document in submission to the Vice-Chancellor's Committees Review Panel under Item 6.1.

Action Officers: Chair / Equity Coordinator / Ms Young / Secretary.

Outcome: The Board noted that this action was currently in progress. Ms Kelly noted that it was an important report for the University and that the template was envisaged to be used by faculties and divisions as the main reporting tool in the future.

4.3 Electronic dissemination of agenda papers

03/00081, 95/00831

The Chair, Dr Dickenson, requested Equity Board to consider trialling the electronic dissemination of agenda papers for the next meeting. Dr Dickenson informed members that this method of committee papers delivery was progressively being utilised across University-level committees.

The Board gave approval for the trial to proceed. Dr Dickenson indicated that members who would still like for a printed agenda to be sent to them should contact the Secretary.

5. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

5.1 Low-SES Student Equity Committee

99/00921

Equity Board was verbally briefed by the Chair, Low-SES Student Equity Committee, Dr Dallemagne, on recent activities of the Committee.

Dr Dallemagne informed the Board that the Committee was encouraged by the efforts of University staff towards the realisation of Low-SES student equity initiatives and schemes, such as the computer program which continued to receive positive feedback.

The Board noted that the Committee had yet to fill its membership category from the Student Guild. The Secretary, Mr Hills, undertook to approach the Student Guild, through the University Membership Officer, on this matter.

It was queried whether the current vouchers program and mechanisms needed to be reviewed as there appeared to be a lack of cohesion to the program across the University. The Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, acknowledged the concerns and undertook to investigate the need for a review of the effectiveness and mechanisms of the vouchers program and update the Board at a meeting in 2005.

5.1.1 Minutes of meeting – 28 October 2004 99/00921

Resolved to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Low-SES Student Equity Committee's 28 October 2004 meeting.

5.2 Disability Services Committee 95/00786

There was no report.

5.2.1 Minutes of meeting – 22 October 2004

Resolved to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Disability Services Committee's 22 October 2004 meeting.

5.3 Cultural Diversity Committee 96/00803

There was no report.

6. 2005 EQUITY BOARD PRIORITIES

6.1 Summary reports – Chairs, Faculty and Divisional Equity Committees 04/00530

The Chair, Equity Board, Dr Dickenson, invited Chairs of each Faculty and Divisional Equity Committees to provide a summary report on recent equity related activities within their areas.

Division of Finance and Resource Planning Equity Committee

The Chair, Division of Finance and Resource Planning Equity Committee, Mr Pincus, verbally informed members that the Committee was in the process of a membership revision due to gender imbalance. Mr Pincus indicated that the Committee and the division had developed several equity initiatives of which the outcomes would be outlined in the Committee's next report to the Board.

Division of Research and Commercialisation / Division of International and Development Equity Committee

In the absence of the Chair, Division of Research and Commercialisation / Division of International and Development Equity Committee, Ms Garske, Ms Hansson verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the division which included the following points.

- The Committee was encouraging managers across the two divisions to access the youth employment program. To date, two Indigenous staff had been recently employed through the program. In addition, the program had yielded positive results towards the recruitment of short-term staff.
- Two equity awareness sessions for professional staff had been scheduled for April 2005. The sessions would target professional staff at level HEWA4 to HEAW8.

Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support Equity Committee

The Chair, Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support Equity Committee, Ms Young, tabled a document titled, *'Report on the Divisional Equity Action Plan 2003-4'*. Ms Young verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the division which included the following points.

- The Divisional Equity Plan was due for revision this year.
- Planned activities for 2005 included training for first line staff in equity and cultural diversity principles and issues; and ensuring appropriate web accessibility across the division's web presence.
- The division donated \$20,000 towards increasing the number of students that could be supported by bursaries.
- The Committee had worked with the Division of Administrative Services Equity Committee on Indigenous staff recruitment strategies and initiatives which had resulted in positive outcomes.
- There were now four Indigenous staff employed in the division.
- The division undertook to ensure all staffing officers attended relevant equity training.

Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Built Environment and Engineering Equity Committee, Dr Senadji, verbally reported that the restructure of the faculty had reached its final stages and that an Equity Committee would be formed in the near future. Dr Senadji indicated that the newly formed Committee would review the faculty's strategies and initiatives towards the recruitment of women as well as raising awareness of professional and academic staff on equity related issues.

Faculty of Business Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Business Equity Committee, Dr French, verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- The single biggest issue that faced the Committee over the last few years was the lack of infusion of equity principles in staff across the faculty as this involved substantial cultural change and adjustment. The recent appointment of a new Dean was seen as an opportunity to expedite this change process. However, it was noted that it had taken two years to reach the current stage.
- It was noted that the new Dean, Prof Little, appeared to be supportive and pro-active in advancing equity initiatives across the faculty.
- A budget of \$30,000 had been allocated for a total of six grant approvals in 2005. However, to date, there had been only two grant applications of which both were accepted. The Committee was in the progress of developing strategies to encourage more applications.
- The issue of student inequity was still of prime concern to the Committee. At its next meeting, the Committee planned to investigate strategies to recruit students from rural areas.
- Student Equity Ambassadors had been appointed across the faculty. The Committee was investigating possible marketing initiatives to promote these officers to students.

Faculty of Education Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Education Equity Committee, Dr Carr, verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- The Faculty equity budget for 2005 was \$8,000, an increase of \$3,000 from the previous year. This was viewed as a positive step towards the faculty's commitment to implementing equity initiatives.
- The increase in the equity budget meant that it was possible to employ a part-time equity officer for the faculty.

- The Committee's aims for 2005 included raising awareness about cultural diversity. A video had been developed to further this aim.
- The Committee continued to offer support for Low-SES students as well as encouraging applications of research grants in relation to Q-STEP.

Faculty of Health Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Health Equity Committee, Dr Battistutta, verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- For 2004, the faculty's \$15,000 equity budget concentrated mainly on providing support for financially disadvantaged students within the faculty. It was noted that there were several issues with the mechanisms for administering the vouchers program.
- 2005 would be an opportunity to build upon the progress made in 2004 towards Reconciliation.
- The female mentoring program in 2004 was a success and it was envisaged that this program would continue into 2005.
- A 2005 workplan for the Committee had yet to be finalised. However, the Committee had undertaken, as one of its main objectives, the development of strategies towards the provision of support for financially disadvantaged students.

Faculty of Information Technology Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Information Technology Equity Committee, Ms Christie, reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- The 2004 Equity Awards event was successful and would be repeated in the second half of 2005.
- The recently appointed Dean of the faculty had expressed his support towards the implementation of equity related initiatives and strategies within the faculty.
- A review of teaching methods in IT21 was currently in progress.
- A female Indigenous Contact Officer had been appointed.
- The main aim for the Committee in 2005 was to build upon previous successes towards recruitment of female students as well as Indigenous recruitment.
- The state-wide '*girls in IT*' program was based largely on the faculty's model.

Faculty of Law Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Law Equity Committee, Ms Field, verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- The faculty continued to strive towards increasing Indigenous recruitment through such initiatives as a pre-Law information session that catered for the Indigenous community. The faculty had also undertaken an investigation of the impact of the Nelson Reforms on the recruitment numbers of Indigenous students to the faculty.
- The faculty was interested in the development of a compact between the faculty and the Oodgeroo Unit on similar lines to the Faculty of Education.
- The Committee's main aim for 2005 was to commit to an undertaking to train professional and academic staff in assisting students with psychiatric disabilities.

Faculty of Science Equity Committee

The Chair, Faculty of Science Equity Committee, Dr Dallemagne, verbally reported on recent equity related activities within the faculty which included the following points.

- It was noted that the Dean, Faculty of Science, continued to be supportive towards the implementation of equity related initiatives and strategies within the faculty.
- The recent seminar on disability issues was well received. Psychiatric disability issues were also discussed.
- It was noted that two students under equity schemes had received awards for outstanding academic achievement in the field of physics.

Resolved:

- (i) to note the report from Faculty of Information Technology Equity Committee; and
- (ii) to note the tabled report from Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support Equity Committee.

6.2 Equity Board 2005 Priorities setting and discussion

95/00831

Equity Board discussed possible business priorities for 2005. The Chair, Dr Dickenson, commended the various existing equity initiatives across the University at the faculty/divisional level. The Board agreed that it would be desirable for the Board to undertake a higher level of involvement in broader equity issues across the University.

Discussion yielded the following suggested priorities for the Board to undertake in 2005.

- A review of the recruitment strategy towards such programs as QSTEP and Low-SES. The review should include an investigation of finding the correct balance of entry limits for Low-SES students. Dr Dickenson noted that members of QUT Council were recently interested in this issue.
- Employment of Indigenous academic staff, including research staff. It was agreed that the role of the Board was to provide strategic guidance towards initiatives in raising the employment levels of academic staff.
- Employment of Indigenous professional staff. It was agreed that the Board should work towards the continuation and enhancement of the successful employment scheme initiated in 2004.
- An investigation into ways in which the Board could contribute towards training academic and professional staff in facilitating conflict resolution between themselves and staff/students with a psychiatric disability.
- A review of on campus child care arrangements.

The Equity Coordinator undertook to develop a 2005 Equity Board priorities list for the Board's consideration at the next meeting.

7. SUBMISSIONS

7.1 Response to Vice-Chancellor's Committees Review Recommendations

04/00324

Resolved to endorse the response to recommendations of the Vice-Chancellor's Committees Review Panel as detailed in the submission, for forwarding to the Review Panel.

7.2 Scholarships Update 2005

03/00159

Equity Board considered a submission in relation to a report on scholarships for low-income students in 2005. The Acting Chair, Ms Christie, invited the Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, speak to the submission.

In her brief, Ms Kelly noted that the report indicated an overall positive outcome for scholarships funding due to increases in the allocation of Commonwealth Learning Scholarships (CLS), an expansion of the University's financial support towards the recruitment and support of low-income students, and the proposed expansion of the Equity Endowment Fund.

However, Ms Kelly stressed that the challenge facing the University now was to ensure that future recruitment strategies for low-income students were robust and innovative enough to ensure continued success. To this end, Ms Kelly invited expressions of interest from members of the Board and Low-SES Student Equity Committee to participate in the proposed Low-SES Recruitment Working Party.

Resolved:

- (i) to note report on scholarships for low-income students in 2005; and
- (ii) for members of Equity Board and Low-SES Student Equity Committee to forward their interest to participate in the low-SES Recruitment Working Party to the Equity Coordinator.

7.3 Nomination of Chairs to Equity Board sub-committees 02/00295

Equity Board considered a submission in relation to the nomination of Chairs to three of its sub-committees. During discussion, the following nominations were made.

Resolved:

- (i) to nominate Dr Battistutta to Cultural Diversity Committee in the category, '*One member nominated by and from Equity Board, as Chair*' for the term concluding 31 December 2007; 02/00404
- (ii) to renominate Ms Field to Disability Services Committee in the category, '*One member nominated by and from Equity Board, as Chair*' for the term concluding 31 December 2007; and 02/00209
- (iii) to renominate Dr Dallemagne to Low-SES Student Equity Committee in the category, '*One member nominated by and from Equity Board, as Chair*' for the term concluding 31 December 2007. 02/00334

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There were no items for information.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Student Guild membership to Equity Board sub-committees 02/00

The Secretary, Equity Board, Mr Hills undertook to liaise with the University Membership Officer in ensuring Student Guild membership categories on the Board's sub-committees were filled as soon as possible.

10. NEXT MEETING

Meetings for the remainder of 2005 have been scheduled for 1 September and 17 November.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 4:10 pm.

Confirmed Date