

QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

EQUITY BOARD

MINUTES

Equity Board met in the Council Room, Room U214, Level 2, U Block, Gardens Point Campus, at 3:00 pm on Monday 4 July 2005.

Present

Ms R Christie (acting Chair); Ms B Atherton, Dr D Battistutta, Ms K Brickell, Ms D Eden, Dr E French, Ms S Garske, Ms M Kelly, Mr S Pincus, Dr B Senadji, Ms C Young; Mr M Hills (Secretary).

Apologies

Dr J Carr, Dr C Dallemagne, Dr C Dickenson, Ms R Field, Ms D Redfern.

Absent

Mr A Perrau.

By invitation

Ms J Lampert, Ms S Phillips.

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

Equity Board noted the above apologies and noted that Ms Christie was acting Chair in place of Dr Dickenson.

The acting Chair, Ms Christie, welcomed Dr Atherton as a new member to the Board. It was noted that Ms Lampert was attending for Dr Carr.

Ms Christie called for starring of additional items on the agenda. No additional items were 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 3 March 2005 were confirmed.

3. PRESENTATION

3.1 Indigenous Employment and Development 01/00264

Equity Board was briefed by the newly appointed Indigenous Employment & Development Officer, Ms Phillips, on the University's current and proposed Indigenous employment and development strategies and initiatives.

Ms Phillips informed members that the University had secured her services to ensure a strategic focus and a regeneration of the Indigenous Employment and Development Strategy. Ms Phillips drew the Board's attention to the strategy's five broad objectives and the 31 supporting strategies.

In her presentation, Ms Phillips made the following comments.

- The collection of comprehensive equity-related data across the University was still an issue. It was noted that new functionality within the QUT Virtual web portal allowed for staff members to enter their equity-related data.
- Statistics indicated that the University had fallen behind many other universities in this area. It was imperative for the University to improve on its performance through the development of 'built in' as opposed to 'bolted on' strategies.
- The three principles embedded in the *QUT Blueprint* (Regenerate, Engage, Experiment) provided a sound platform for the revision of the Indigenous Employment and Development Strategy.

- There was opportunity for staff and supervisors at the 'ground' level to promote and better understand the principles underpinning Indigenous employment and development.

Ms Christie thanked Ms Phillips for her presentation. During discussion, the following points were made.

- Mentoring for existing and new staff was already a feature of the current Indigenous employment strategy. However, it might be possible to further enhance the scheme through the utilisation of the Indigenous network (resource permitting).
- There was potential for the Indigenous initiatives to be incorporated into various Alumni activities.
- It was noted that the University should be careful of a possible over-exploitation of Indigenous staff and students in its pursuit of favourable statistics and marketing.
- The challenge for Equity Board members was to work effectively at the 'ground level', especially in employment related issues, by developing their respective divisional or faculty-level plans to incorporate Indigenous perspectives.
- It was agreed that it was important to research ways to empower supervisors with the correct operational knowledge in relation to Indigenous issues.
- Technically, faculty and divisional-level Plans should have Indigenous issues embedded within them. It was suggested that each faculty and division representative on the Board approach Ms Phillips for assistance in this area when future plans were developed.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chair

There was no report.

4.1.1 Business arising from minutes - Post-meeting action sheet for Equity Board's 3 March 2005 meeting

Equity Board reviewed the status of the following outstanding post-meeting actions from the meeting held on 3 March 2005.

PMA Item 5.1.1 - Review of vouchers program

99/00921

Action: Investigate the need for a review of the effectiveness and mechanisms of the vouchers program and update the Board at a meeting in 2005.

Action Officers: Equity Coordinator.

Outcome: The Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, informed the Board that this action would be incorporated into the review of the broader Low SES program.

PMA Item 9.1 - Student Guild membership to Equity Board sub-committees

02/00

Action: Ensure Student Guild membership categories on the Board's sub-committees are filled as soon as possible.

Action Officers: Committees Membership Officer.

Outcome: The Secretary, Mr Hills, undertook to request for the Committees Membership Officer to forward the membership list to the Student Guild for consideration.

4.2 Equity Board Sub-Committees

4.2.1 Low-SES Student Equity Committee

99/00921

There was no report.

4.2.1.1 Minutes of meeting – 1 March 2005

99/00921

Resolved to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Low-SES Student Equity Committee's 1 March 2005 meeting.

4.2.2 Disability Services Committee 95/00786

There was no report.

4.2.2.1 Minutes of meeting – 15 April 2005 95/00786

Resolved to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Disability Services Committee's 15 April 2005 meeting.

4.2.3 Cultural Diversity Committee 96/00803

The Chair, Cultural Diversity Committee, Dr Battistutta, informed the Board that the Committee had reviewed its Action Plan for 2005. The Committee agreed that it would channel its energy towards enhancing existing initiatives and strategies.

4.2.3.1 Minutes of meeting – 30 August 2004 96/00803

Resolved to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Cultural Diversity Committee's 30 August 2004 meeting.

4.3 Divisions / Faculties

4.3.1 Division of Administrative Services

There was no report.

4.3.2 Faculty of Business 04/00530

Equity Board was briefed by Dr French on recent equity-related activities in the Faculty of Business. Dr French tabled a document outlining these activities. During her briefing, the following points were made.

- The faculty's 2005 equity goals remained the same as 2004.
- It continued to be a challenge to mainstream and infuse equity-related principles within the faculty.
- \$30,000 was allocated by the faculty towards its equity-related grant scheme. To date, \$25,000 had been awarded to five applicants.
- The faculty was considering the allocation of funding towards promotional material and schemes such as the faculty's equity web presence, ambassador schemes and a reinvigoration of the orientation program.
- The ambassador scheme was progressing well and the mentoring scheme for early career academic women was under development.
- The faculty was investigating how best to increase its support towards student equity.
- Projects for 2005 included ensuring greater inclusiveness of the faculty's Equity Committee within the faculty management structure and information sharing mechanism.
- It was noted that \$20,000 was raised within the faculty for support three victims of the recent Asian Tsunami.

4.3.3 Faculty of Education 04/00530

Equity Board was briefed by Ms Lampert on recent equity-related activities in the Faculty of Education. Ms Lampert tabled a document outlining these activities. During her briefing, the following points were made.

- The faculty had increased its equity budget from \$5,000 to \$8,000. This was a small, but significant, increase which allowed for funding towards a part-time faculty equity officer.
- There were two new scholarships announced in 2004. Overall, there was positive ongoing support the scholarships program.
- The faculty held a successful workshop on 10 June 2005 geared towards gaining exposure and discussion of equity-related issues within the faculty.

5. SUBMISSIONS

5.1 Equity Board 2005 Priorities 95/00831

Resolved to note the 2005 priorities for Equity Board.

5.2 Female Staff Data 2005 Preliminary Report95/00094,
99/01130

Equity Board considered a submission from the Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, in relation to preliminary female staff data for 2005. The acting Chair, Ms Christie, invited Ms Kelly speak to the submission.

During her briefing, Ms Kelly outlined the following points.

- It was the first time in a decade that data indicated a decline in representation of senior academic women across the University. However, it appeared that this was a result of more men coming in (particularly through non-advertised recruitments) and not that there was been a drop in women numbers.
- One barrier to 'grow-your-own' recruitment of women staff was the current push by the University towards its research aspirations. It appeared to be a result of vacancies being filled by men recruited through import instead of 'grow-your-own' recruitment strategies (e.g. through personal promotion process). This will have to be investigated further.
- The most worrying trends were in the level C and level D categories.
- Against other tertiary institutions, data indicated that the University had stalled in its progress and that other institutions were closing the gap.
- There were no issues with professional staff, only academic staff.
- This was not a crisis, but this trend was to be noted and monitored. There was not much the University could do at this stage but it was strongly advised that Equity Board members highlighted this issue to appropriate areas within their faculties and divisions. Prof Sharma's memo (attached to submission) should be taken by Board members as a template for communicating this issue within their respective areas.

Resolved to note the preliminary report on female staff data, at attachment 1 of the submission, particularly the decline in representation of senior academic women.

5.3 Annual Report to Vice-Chancellor – draft framework

00/00710

Equity Board considered a submission from the Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, in relation to the draft reporting framework for the annual report to the Vice-Chancellor. The acting Chair, Ms Christie, invited Ms Kelly speak to the submission.

Ms Kelly informed members that there was a need for a new reporting framework given that the equity Plan no longer existed within the current University planning environment. Ms Kelly indicated that it was a challenging process to draft a framework that enabled equity principles to be incorporated into existing top level plans.

During discussion, the Board agreed that the draft framework was too unwieldy and needed further revision and perhaps a change in structure that would better enable the plan to advise on implementation strategies across the University.

Resolved to note the draft guidelines and reporting framework for implementing equity at QUT.

5.4 EOWA (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency): the impact of education/training about sex-based harassment on reporting, waivers, and the Employer of Choice for Women award95,00506,
04/00003

Equity Board considered a submission from the Equity Coordinator, Ms Kelly, in relation to policy matters arising from changes within the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency. The acting Chair, Ms Christie, invited Ms Kelly speak to the submission.

In her briefing, Ms Kelly indicated that the revised requirements meant that the University currently would not meet EOWA's standards. Ms Kelly sought the Board's advice on whether the University should attempt to meet all the revised requirements this year and thus apply for the 'Employer of Choice for Women' 2005

award or concentrate on implementing long term strategies knowing that the University would have to miss the award for 2005.

It was noted that it important for the University to be awarded 'Employer of Choice for Women' as it was a strong marketing and recruitment tool. It was further noted that the University could not afford to be seen as 'behind' University of Queensland and Griffith University in this regard.

The Board advised that the University should attempt to comply with the new requirements by 2005 to enable it to apply for the 'Employer of Choice for Women' award.

Resolved to:

- (i) note and consider the background information contained in this memo and advice from EOWA regarding the education/training of all staff about sex-based harassment, at attachment A; and
- (ii) note and consider the options for providing appropriate education/training to all staff which meets the criterion set by EOWA.

5.5 Equity Initiative Grants within QUT in 2005 – a draft proposal 95/00196

Resolved to note the draft proposal for distributing Student Equity Grants within QUT in 2005 as detailed in the attachment to the submission.

5.6 Unit costs to students 95/00123

Resolved to note the draft memo from the Registrar to unit and course coordinators relating to the unit costs to students as detailed in the submission.

5.7 Preliminary Report on Equity Scholarship Schemes in 2005 03/00159

Resolved to note the Preliminary Report on Equity Scholarship Schemes in 2005 as detailed in attachment 1 of the submission.

5.8 Revised Terms of Reference for Cultural Diversity Committee 02/00404

Resolved to resolve to endorse for the Vice-Chancellor's approval the revised terms of reference for the Cultural Diversity Committee as detailed in attachment 1 of the submission.

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The were no items for information.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

8. 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 5:15 pm.

Confirmed
Chair Date