



EQUITY AND ACCESS COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting No.4/2005 of the Equity and Access Committee held on Wednesday, 26 October 2005, 9.00 am - 11.00 am in Room G08, Clayton campus.

Marie Jones
Executive Officer

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Dr Jill Brown (Chair), Dr Anne Kennedy, Dr M-T Jensen, Dr Barbara Clarke, Amanda Crichton, Ed Irons

1.2 In Attendance

Marie Jones (Executive Officer)

1.3 Apologies

Sue Webb, Monique Osborn, Velleda Bradford, Rosemary Viète, Maree Mayne, Evan Kritikakos, Tanya Kantanis, Janette Ryan, Isabella Lablache.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of Meeting 2/2005 of the Equity and Access Committee held on Wednesday, 17 August, 2005 were confirmed as an accurate record. Meeting 3 was cancelled due to the illness of the acting Chair (Anne Kennedy).

Moved: Dr M-T Jensen

Seconded: Dr A Kennedy

Jill Brown (Chair) opened the meeting by welcomed newly elected staff representative Amanda Crichton to the Equity & Access committee.

3. BUSINESS ARISING

3.1 Posters for Distribution

Information brochures for each campus to display on notice boards with the name of a contact person for each campus were distributed at the meeting.

3.2 Fieldwork Placements – Dr Anne Kennedy

A senior Placement Officer appointment will be made by the Faculty and it was agreed by the committee that the appointed person could be invited to join the Equity & Access committee in 2006 to help monitor any equity issues for students. The 5 week placement blocks (e.g. distance of placements, cost of transport, the impact of certain issues on family etc.) is also an equity issue for some students.

3.3 **Equity Bursaries 2006 (Sue Webb)**

Sue Webb was unable to attend but forwarded a document from Lynda Cladwell, Manager, Coursework Scholarships outlining the committee's consideration of our submission for Strategic Equity Initiatives for 2006. The document (attached) is a summary of the approved initiatives. (Doc 3/1/2005).

Initiatives approved for 2006

Education – Rural bursaries	\$2500 x 4 = \$10,000
Work Placement bursaries	\$ 500 x 10 = \$ 5,000
Total value	<u>\$15,000</u>

3.4 **Letter of thanks to Velleda Bradford (Jill Brown)**

The Chair on (behalf of the Committee) prepared and read out a 'letter of thanks' to be sent to Velleda Bradford (Gippsland student rep) for her representation and hard work during her term on the Equity & Access Committee.

3.5 **Report from the September Workplace Equity Committee (Jill Brown)**

- Brochure re online training in equity/diversity issues to be distributed to all staff.
- The Chair suggested Zane MaRhea be invited to run an activity at a staff meeting or maybe Faculty Day
- Survey staff re work-related equity issues
- Issues of performance management etc to be put on agenda for discussion at meetings in 2006 as an equity issue for staff
- Judith Cooke (Equity & Diversity Centre) has revised the Divisional Plan - work life feedback from us and others. A note to be put in EdNews to inform staff.
- Three priorities for 2005 –
 - i) Improve communication – Notice boards, web links, posters etc.
 - ii) Publicise Indigenous Student Bursaries
 - iii) Examine equity issues for students especially indigenous bursary students.Need for a nominated support person on each campus – Henry Atkinson may be able to offer advice on the best way to do this. The bursary scholarship students are achieving above average results.
- 6 indigenous communities have been visited by Zane and Henry and concern about accommodation and support for bursary students has been expressed. Recommendations need to be made by the committee. Home stay could be a possibility. Maybe \$2500 fund could be used to subsidise accommodation. Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies (CAIS) also to be approached for support.
- Zane and Henry to be invited to first meeting 2006 to discuss ways in which this committee can support their work. (Draft report of recommendations attached).

3.6 **Equity Issues for Research Students seeking extensions**

The equity issue of pro rata extension time for part-time students (3 months) compared to full-time students (6 months) was taken to the Monash Research Graduate School and was successful in that part-time students are now given up to 12 months extension time, with 3 monthly reviews.

The Chair made a recommendation to the Faculty Resources Committee (Illana Snyder) that the extension should also apply to Masters students. The Resources Committee will make it an agenda item for discussion at the NRGS committee meeting.

3.7 Judith Cooke – Equity & Diversity Centre to be invited to staff meeting

The Chair has contacted Ros Winter (Campus Coordinator) and recommended that Judith Cooke be invited to a Faculty staff meeting in 2006 to update staff on the services offered by the Equity & Diversity Centre.

3.8 Faculty Day (Jill Brown)

Darlene McGown (PA to Dean) has also been notified by the Chair that the staff from the Equity and Diversity Centre are available to speak to staff at all meetings etc. concerning any equity issues. Barbara Clarke will also flag this with the Faculty Committee as a possibility – maybe included in a Faculty Day program in 2006.

3.9 Staff Study Costs (Ed Irons)

Ed Irons met with the Faculty Manager to represent the issue of terms of support for general staff study with attention to a possible inequity in the Education Faculty compared with other faculties. It was specified that the university allows only for reimbursement of full fee places and the Faculty cannot contradict that policy – thus it will be a requirement that staff undertaking programs enroll and pay full fees before a reimbursement is considered. It was also specified that the Faculty's funds are limited and that cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis with a view to fair distribution of resources. The Faculty is more partial to offering study leave. In consideration of applications for study support, the Faculty accepts two reasons for seeking funding – professional development (enhancing work in daily job) and career development (training for future directions possibly beyond the Faculty). Funding applications need to be supported by stating training reasons in performance management documentation and signed off by a supervisor as relevant to current job role.

Action: Jill Brown will raise this at the Monash Equity meeting –

- Is it possible for faculties/university to offer staff reduced charges if study is undertaken to benefit their work role.

4. New Business

4.1 Prayer Room

Lesley Farrell's class (Muslim students) need to pray in their break (5pm – 8pm) and have asked if we have a specific place/room. Jill Brown contacted Margaret Hegney (Equity & Diversity) and the Religious Centre about this issue. The Religious Centre is open for all denominations from the hours of 8.30 am – 5 pm, however they may agree to staying open late for certain days/evenings if a letter of concern is sent to the Religious Centre with details of times, days etc.

Action: Jill Brown to prepare letter to be sent to Religious Centre with relevant recommendations.

4.2 Overlap of Committee/s Membership

It was agreed by the committee to write to all members re their availability for attendance at meetings in 2006. Replacements/proxies will be required for members unable to attend meetings.

Ed Irons has retired as the general staff member on the committee – he is willing to become the Clayton student representative member if we are unable to find a replacement.

4.3 Equity Report

The end of year Equity and Access report from this committee is due to be sent to the Equity and Diversity Centre by 12 December, 2005. Amanda Crichton agreed to help the Chair compile the report.

4.4 Dean's Report to Monash Equity Committee

The Dean also has to present a report to the University Equity Committee by 14 November and has asked our committee to prepare a document outlining the main priority areas for 2006.

Action: Jill Brown to prepare information and send to Dean.

4.5 Priority Areas for 2005/2006

- Work-related equity issues for staff
- Practicum – students/staff matters (move towards internal practicum placements).
- Indigenous Issues – staff/students

5. Campus Reports

5.1 Clayton

No report.

5.2 Peninsula

It was felt that the students are not being represented. The committee discussed how to recruit the students to the appropriate committee/s and the possibility of having a Liaison support person at each campus. Also information about the importance of having a student representative on the Equity & Access committee could be included in the orientation packs.

The committee thought a student representative poster with photo and contact details of the representatives could be displayed on notice boards at each campus to make students aware of whom they could approach about equity issues.

5.3 Gippsland

No report

6. Other Business

The committee thanked Dr Anne Kennedy who is retiring from the Faculty at the end of 2005, for her hard work as a member of the Equity & Access Committee representing the Peninsula campus. The committee also expressed their thanks to Dr Jill Brown for her constant hard work and commitment as the Chair of the committee.

7. **Next Meeting**

Meeting dates and times for the Equity & Access Committee in 2006 to be advised as soon as they become available.

As an equity and priority issue, the committee strongly requests all committee members to be present and available for meetings.