

EQUITY AND ACCESS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting No. [4/06](#)

To be held on Wednesday 25 October 2006

At 9:00am

****Video Conference Room
Building 75 (STRIP) Room G24,
Clayton Campus**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
EQUITY AND ACCESS COMMITTEE

Meeting No 4/06 of the Equity and Access Committee was held on Wednesday 25 October 2006, in the Video Conferencing Room, Building 75 (STRIP, opposite Microbiology building), Room G24, Clayton, and Video Conference facility from Building 2W, Room 263 Gippsland campus.

MINUTES

Ms Pearl Rischir
Executive Office

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| <p>1. ATTENDANCE</p> <p>1.1. Present
Dr Jill Brown (<i>Chair</i>), Ms Rosemary Viète, Dr Tanya Kantanis, Dr Janette Ryan, Ms Jill Robbins, Dr Rui Yang
(Attendees via Video Conference — Gippsland)
Ms Margaret Armstrong, Mr Steve Burns</p> <p>1.2. In Attendance
Ms Kay Gardner, Director, Equity & Diversity Centre, Mrs Tania Bull (Web Support Officer – Faculty of Education), and Ms Pearl Rischin (Executive Officer)</p> <p>1.3. Apologies
Assoc.Prof. Barbara Clarke, Dr Evan Kritikakos, Mr Roby Marlina, Ms Maree Mayne (Peninsula), and Dr Margaret Plunkett (<i>Acting Gippsland rep.</i>)</p> <p>1.4. On Leave
Dr Marie-Therese Jensen — OSP</p> | <p>ACTION</p> |
| <p>2. MINUTES</p> <p>2.1. Meeting No 3/06
The minutes of Meeting No. 3/06 of the Equity and Access Committee held on Wednesday, 23 August, 2006, were confirmed as an accurate record.
Moved by Rosemary Viète, and Seconded by Steve Burns</p> | |
| <p>3. MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>3.1. Gippsland Academic representative
A notice was forwarded to all staff members seeking expressions of interest to be nominated as the Gippsland campus Academic representative for the Equity & Access Committee, but did not receive any response.
Dr Margaret Plunkett will act in this role until a permanent staff member has been selected.</p> | |
| <p>4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <p>4.1. Discrimination & Harassment Grievance Advisor
Two staff members located at Clayton campus, expressed interest in becoming a Discrimination & Harassment Grievance Adviser (i.e. Ms Anne Savige and Ms Pam Harrison). However, since this meeting, Ms Anne Savige decided not to proceed, due to being seconded to another position for a few months.</p> <p>Ms Kay Gardner of Equity & Diversity Centre, who attended this meeting, advised that the EO Training comprises one half-day of face to face training as well as an</p> | |

intensive two day training course.

The Discrimination & Harassment Grievance Adviser is officially recognised by the University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor and is open to either Academic or General staff members. To do this training, a staff member must have agreement from their supervisor. The Adviser is not expected to solve issues, but to initially counsel and refer to an appropriate contact person.

It is an official position although there is no extra payment to staff. Advisors are expected to attend 3 meetings per annum, and are covered by the University's Insurance for their work in this area.

Jill Robbins (from Peninsula campus) expressed interest in becoming a Discrimination & Harassment Grievance Advisor to represent their campus.

Action: An email which will be directed to Peninsula and Gippsland staff for expressions of interest.

4.2. Practicum & Placement Issues

The following practicum and placement issues were discussed:

(i) The needs of International students

Ms Rosemary Viète reported that she and Roby Marlina were going to talk to Teri Foster (Manager, Partnerships & Professional Placements), who is the Faculty Placement Officer, by this December, to submit a small Program for International students of other language backgrounds, so that they have a better understanding of skills required.

(ii) Supervisors and Students discussion of documents previously attached to the last Minutes (No.3/06).

(iii) Discussion with Practicum Office — Jill Brown to report.

Jill Brown reported that there were three main areas discussed in the meeting with Teri Foster

1. Difficulties for students with family responsibilities
2. Difficulties for International/NESB students
3. Difficulties of lower income students

Teri suggested that a change be made to the special consideration form to cover practicum issues, which should be broader so as to accommodate students who have family responsibilities (i.e. child-care, collecting and dropping off school aged children, elderly parents, or ill family members).

It was suggested at the last Equity & Diversity meeting that the title of "Special Consideration" form should be changed to a more appropriate name, i.e. "Relevant circumstances".

One of the main issues for students was the expectation that they be able to give up work for a block of 5 weeks for practicum.

Teri had suggested that there are two possibilities:

- Plan A – 5 days per week **or**
- Plan B – 4 days per week over 5 weeks and the remaining 5 days to be negotiated by the Placement Schools.

That means students who need to continue working during their practicum placement would have 3 days available for work (including the weekends).

Teri will put together a form for Plans A & B.

(iv) Indigenous student support

Concern was expressed that Indigenous students may experience difficulties during practicum. The Practicum Office needs information re appropriate placement for these students.

(v) Janette Ryan mentioned that there is a problem for students with a disability when going out on teaching rounds, which should be raised with Teri Foster.

(vi) Steve Burns (Student representative, Gippsland campus), mentioned that there are continuing problems with both placements and the internship year. A number of students have not been placed for their internship year which is to start in January. The lists received from schools had not been complete — and some schools that should have been listed were missing.

Steve had met Teri this month and raised some of these issues and she is very keen to help sort them out.

4.3. Off-shore issues — J. Robbins

Jill Robbins spoke about issues associated with off-shore teaching.

An email was sent to all staff at Peninsula asking for comments regarding teaching off-shore. A number of responses were received, many of which stressed the positive aspects of these programs. However there were also concerns raised with regard for equity for both staff and students involved.

Rosemary Viète suggested that, due to lack of Language and Learning support for international students, it would be good to have an initial workshop for all off-shore programs with follow up activities.

Jill was thanked for bringing these issues to the attention of the committee.

Recommendation: That the Equity & Access Committee suggest Faculty Executive Committee consider a Working Party to compile feedback/comments from staff involved in off-shore programs.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Guest Speaker: Ms Kay Gardner, Director, Student and Community Services, (Equity & Diversity Centre)

Ms Kay Gardner briefly discussed her role with the Centre and highlights of the Equity & Diversity Centre and its activities. Kay also thanked the committee members for their participation during the year. Kay mentioned that one of their major activities was to raise awareness of the top five potential equity risks in each Faculty.

Attached Documents:
4-E&A02/06
4-E&A03/06 &
4-E&A04/06

Equity & Diversity Centre provides services to all campuses and tries to consult off-shore as well.

The client base of registered students has increased considerably since 2000.

The Equity & Diversity Centre has produced a recent paper on deferred exams for students with a disability, and would like to get an informal response for an “exceptional circumstances” clause to do with disability arrangements.

Kay briefly discussed and distributed the following papers for circulation:

- (i) Deaf World seminar in Caulfield campus on 30th November (*attached document No: 4-E&A02/06*).
- (ii) Advancing Indigenous Employment Report – from Inclusive Practices Workplace Equity Committee (*attached document No: 4-E&A03/06*).
- (iii) EO Online Training – Tally of trained staff (*attached document No: 4-E&A04/06*).

Kay Gardner suggested that it might be worthwhile inviting Ms Kathy Racunica, Manager, International Student Support, to attend the next Equity & Access Committee meeting. Kathy could then discuss what Equity Services they can provide.

5.1.1. End of Year Celebration — Equity & Diversity Centre

Kay Gardner advised that all members are invited to an end of year celebration by the Equity & Diversity Centre, to be held on 4 December between 12:30 – 2:00pm, located at the University Club.

5.2. Equity Report 2006 — J. Brown

Jill Brown advised that in the past the Equity Report was compiled principally by her, with support from a small number of other committee members, but as she is on leave early next year, she would like other members to take carriage of the report.

The suggestion was made that the report be divided up into sections with different members taking on responsibility for portions of the report. Jill Robbins offered to collate the report.

Action: Pearl Rischin to send out the draft to all members of the committee for them to indicate the sections that they will work on. Responses back to Pearl ASAP.

Action: Pearl to forward all members copy of Draft Report to see which sections they will take on.

5.3. Equity Website — Ms Tania Bull

The Education Faculty's Web Support Officer, Tania Bull was invited to discuss the development of an Equity & Access website.

As a starting point, Tania demonstrated an on-screen display of the Law Faculty's Equity and Diversity website.

Rosemary Viete suggested that student representatives should be asked for suggestions on how they would like to see the website to appear.

As a starting point the committee will use the Law faculty website as a guide.

Staff need to have a link to the student page.

Tania requires the content before commencing with the Education Equity website.

Action: A website to be set up using the Law Faculty website as a guide. Pearl & Tania to work on this with guidance from committee members. The website to be in place for the 2007 academic year.

5.4. Faculty Day — Staff Equity Training

It was decided that Faculty day was not an appropriate forum for on-line equity training. Concern was expressed that very few staff members have completed the on-line training. It was decided that we approach Leah Zaks to attend staff meetings at each campus to inform people about the equity training and that a computer lab be booked to enable group completion of the training.

It was also suggested that this type of training could be included in staff member's Performance Management.

Action: Contact Leah Zaks to arrange her attendance at staff meetings and training days at each of the campuses.

Action: Contact be made with Leah Zaks to assist with training days at each campus.

5.5. Absence of Chair for period January — March 2007 — J. Brown

Jill Brown asked for a Committee member to chair the next meeting of the Equity & Access Committee.

Ms Jill Robbins offered to chair the next meeting.

Action: Jill Robbins to Chair next meeting

5.6. Occupational Health & Safety/Equal Opportunity Training for Sessional and Casual staff

It is a requirement that all staff, including casual and sessional staff, complete an Occupational Health & Safety/Equal Opportunity Training. There is concern from this committee that sessional and casual staff should not be asked to complete this during their own time.

Recommendation: Equity & Access Committee recommends to the Faculty Executive Committee that consideration be made to ensure casual and sessional staff are able to complete the Occupational Health & Safety/Equal Opportunity Training by having it built into their employment.

6. CAMPUS REPORTS

6.1. Clayton

Nothing to report.

6.2. Peninsula

Jill Robbins reported that some staff members had been in touch with her regarding Harassment and Grievance issues as there is no official contact person to handle these problems.

(See earlier discussions on this matter under item No. 4.1)

6.3. Gippsland

Margaret Armstrong reported that:

- Special consideration applications from students are currently being processed. (Some applications to with regard to childcare issues during placement); and
- staff grievances are problematic as there is no clear process for staff to adopt, which needs to be addressed *(discussed earlier at this meeting)*

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1.

No other business.

8. NEXT MEETING

8.1. Meetings for 2007

Meetings for 2007 of the Equity & Access Committee will be advised once the Faculty's schedule of Committee meetings has been finalised.

Membership

Dr Jill Brown (Chair) — Clayton

Ms Margaret Armstrong — Gippsland

Mr Steve Burns (student representative) — Gippsland

Associate Professor Barbara Clarke — Clayton

Dr Marie-Therese Jensen — Clayton

Dr Tanya Kantanis (University Transition program) — Clayton

Dr Evan Kritikakos (Acting Manager Student Services) — Clayton

Ms Maree Mayne — Peninsula

Mr Roby Marlina (student representative) — Clayton

Dr Margaret Plunkett — (Acting Gippsland rep.)

Dr Janette Ryan — Clayton

Ms Jill Robbins — Peninsula

Ms Rosemary Viete — Clayton

Dr Rui Yang — Clayton

Other distribution:

Mr Peter Lawford — Clayton

Professor Sue Willis — Clayton

Ms Leah Zaks — Equity & Diversity Centre

Ms Kay Gardner — Equity & Diversity Centre

Ms Anne Savige — Clayton