



Resources and General Purposes Committee

Equality and Diversity Update – September 2016

Since the Committee's last meeting on 6 June 2016, the Organisational Development teams have been extremely busy and we have also been faced with industrial action by Support Staff in relation to the 2016/2017 pay offer. To summarise recent developments for the Committee:

Website and Brand Positioning

Our new website is now live and feedback has been very positive. This represents a significant improvement in how we interact with the digital world and there are some exciting innovations, including a far more intuitive course search and some sector leading work in relation to using real economic modelling data for our region to highlight potential career paths for our students.

Intranet Update

We are also in the final stages of developing our new staff portal 'The Clan'. As discussed before, this will provide sophisticated opportunities to communicate with staff and for staff teams to collaborate and share expertise. We expect that the clan will go live in the next month or so, as we complete the final configuration needed to map staff accounts to the new system.



Board Recruitment

Our campaign for additional board members is now live and the relevant information can be found at www.thelanarkshireboard.com. We are seeking to recruit two additional members and have highlighted a specific need for employment law, HR or employment relations experience, to complement the skills mix of existing Board members. The site is live until 30 September 2016 and a further update will be available at the full Board meeting on 3 October 2016.

National Bargaining Update

Since the last meeting of the R&GP Committee, there has been little movement in relation to national bargaining. Although the pay award was revised slightly to mirror public sector pay policy by including the element of differentiating between staff paid more than £22k (who would receive £230 on pay points, plus £100 interim payment implemented already) and staff paid below £22k (who would receive £400, plus the £100 payment already implemented), this was rejected and, over the summer, UNISON balloted their members for industrial action. This was supported by the majority of members who voted, although the turnout represented less than a quarter of support staff within the sector. UNITE have not balloted and the GMB balloted to accept.

UNISON members took one day of industrial action on 6 September, which was supported by around 270 staff at New College Lanarkshire. No further industrial action has been communicated, although a meeting of the Employers' Association on 5 September did not result in a decision to improve the pay offer.

Advancing Equality and Diversity Group

As we are increasingly being required to mainstream equality and diversity into everyday practice, which involves every member of college staff and each team, group and committee, there is a view that a single separate equality group may not be the most effective means of supporting this activity. Instead, there is perhaps more to be achieved by focusing on how we support other groups and teams within the college to embed an ethos that supports equality and diversity into their own responsibilities. Over the next three months, we will be taking stock of whether to continue with the AEDG in its current form, which will include looking at good practice elsewhere.

I would be happy to meet and discuss this with any member of the Committee who wishes to contribute to this review.

SFC Gender Action Plan

On 12 August 2016, the SFC held a ministerial launch of their final SFC Gender Action Plan. This was attended by Zorena Shanks, Student Vice President and Nazia Ansari, HR Operations Manager.

As public bodies, colleges have had specific duties in relation to gender equality since 2007, when the Gender Equality Duty became law and required public bodies to have due regard to the need to **eliminate unlawful discrimination** and harassment on the grounds of sex, and to **promote equality of opportunity** between women and men. This was enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.

However, the SFC Gender Action Plan now highlights specific issues regarding male and female participation in further and higher education related to the continued gender segregation in key curriculum areas. While these are often the result of deep seated societal issues, the SFC recognizes that there is a role for colleges and universities in meeting these challenges.

The SFC plan states that, by 2020, there will be no curricular area with more than a 75:25 split across the genders. While NCL's student body is split around 50:50 overall, some of our teaching areas, such as care, engineering, automotive and dental can reflect a split of around 95:5 (or higher) in favour of one gender. It is also an issue in terms of staffing, as many of our curricular teams reflect the gender composition of the industries from which those staff have been appointed.

As a body funded by SFC, we will be expected to have our own Gender Action Plan and, and the expectation is that colleges will start to publish these from March 2017. This coincides with our wider legislative obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to publish our revised equality outcomes, progress reports and equal pay statements and, over the remainder of this calendar year, we will be considering what our response to this document should be.

Appointment of Equalities Representative (EIS)

A few weeks ago, I was informed that the EIS branch have asked Douglas Borland, one of our science lecturers to take on the role of equalities representative for the College. While this is a role within the EIS structure, it will be useful to engage Douglas on a range of equality and diversity activities that will benefit the wider college. Douglas has a real interest in this area and I have already had some discussion with him prior to his new role on specific issues.

I welcome his appointment and look forward to working with him.

CPD Week

Our annual CPD Week took place in week commencing 22 August, with sessions running across all main campuses and a copy of the timetable is attached for information. There were 1,246 attendances at a CPD session over the week, which represents a 100% increase on last year, although the spread of attendance was mixed. We will reflect on the timing of future events and we wish to look at providing more regular twilight sessions as part of an ongoing CPD programme.

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Sept 2016