



University of Wollongong

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Minutes September 2010

Minutes for the Employment Equity & Diversity Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 15 September 2010 at 2pm in Administration Room 304

Present: J Patterson, L Wright, B Webb, A Frazer, P Crookes, N Crittenden, Y Kerr

In Attendance: J Wallis, J Damcevski, M Harrison and D Riordan

PART 1: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from C Woodroffe, J Steele, T Thongdang, A McKnight and P McFarlane.

1.2 Confirm Minutes of Last Meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

1.2 Welcome

Joanne Damcevski was welcomed as the permanent Indigenous Employment Officer. Michelle Harrison, who will be relieving L Wright in December 2010, and Dominic Riordan, Policy and Governance were also welcomed to the meeting.

PART 2: BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Bullying Prevention Policy & Website

A copy of the Bullying Prevention website and the Draft Bullying Prevention Policy were tabled. D Riordan, Policy and Governance, advised that as the Grievance Policy is also due for review it may be timely to combine the two policies. It was agreed this idea would simplify matters, particularly for complainants, as long as the concept of bullying was not watered down.

L Wright advised that by law, universities are not required to have a Bullying Policy although universities are looked upon more favourably if they do hold a Bullying Policy.

Although some members had concerns about combining the policies, they were prepared to explore the option. Therefore it was decided that L Wright and D Riordan will draft an overarching harassment, bullying and grievance policy for discussion and comment. The current draft Bullying Prevention Policy will be held in abeyance.

ACTION

L WRIGHT
D RIORDAN

2.2 Reconciliation Action Plan – update

The Vice Chancellor agreed to fund the support of an administrative officer for one day per week for one year. Joanne Damcevski, Indigenous Employment Officer, has taken on this role.

Four focus group meetings have been held with good results. Further consultation will now take place with important stakeholders both within UOW and the wider community.

ACTION

A FRAZER
L WRIGHT
J DAMCEVSKI

PART 3: REPORTS

3.1 Director's Progress Report

The director's report was noted.

3.2 EOWA (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency)

UOW were successful with their 2010 report and received a 3 year waiver from reporting to EOWA. The next report is due in 2013. L Wright will prepare a report to EOWA for the Employer of Choice Citation. This report is due by 15 October 2010. A project officer has been employed to assist in the Gender Pay Equity Analysis which is a new section of the application.

ACTION

L WRIGHT

PART 4: NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Disability Action Plan beyond 2010

The Disability Action Plan is due for review. L Wright and P McGoldrick, Disability Services, have discussed the matter and feel that a working group be formed with a view to developing and monitoring the action plan over the next three years. Y Kerr advised she would be happy to be a member of the working group.

After discussion it was agreed that L Wright, P McGoldrick, Y Kerr, with a staff member from Buildings and Grounds, form this working group. L Wright will report to the EED Committee regarding staff matters and P McGoldrick may report about student matters to the Social Inclusion Committee.

ACTION

L WRIGHT
Y KERR

4.2 EED Mail out

It is a requirement from Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA), every two years, that the Vice Chancellor send out a reminder to all university staff that sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

A copy of the Vice Chancellor's reminder letter to all staff, together with a flyer advertising web resources from the Employment Equity and Diversity Unit and an updated Disability Data Collection form was tabled. This package is being distributed late September 2010.

4.3 Pregnancy & Work Survey

Every two years, to coincide with EOWA's requirements, a pregnancy and work survey is forwarded to staff that have had maternity leave in the last two years. It was noted that the 'At Home and in Touch' package had been discontinued with only the two checklists being retained. These checklists will be reviewed with the option to expand them to include matters related to workloads and part time work. This could include strategies to implement when returning to work, ideas for discussion with supervisors etc. M Harrison advised the HR advisors have a lot of contact with staff before they return to work.

The suggestion of a mini-induction when returning to work after a six month or longer break was well received. This concept could also be included in the checklist.

It was suggested that the survey in 2012 explore more thoroughly the level of satisfaction in coming back to work part-time.

ACTION

L WRIGHT

4.4 EO Online Statistics

In some faculties statistical results for completion of EO Online have either increased or decreased depending on the movement of staff within the faculty.

Discussion surrounded the issue of the requirement to complete EO Online in the first six months of employment. Strategies for enforcing this were highlighted.

It is a requirement for probation that EO Online must be completed. The Chair will confirm with J Croft, Promotions Officer, that a tick box has been added to the probation application for academic staff. L Wright will discuss with D Reynolds the probationary requirement of EO Online for general staff being included in Softscape.

All new staff receive an email on startup of a new email account that completion of EO Online is a requirement.

L Wright emphasises this in induction presentations for all staff.

ACTION

J PATTERSON