

**EEO Case Studies:
Good Practice Guidelines
A synthesis**

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Foreword

The present study was undertaken as part of the co-operation between the Association of Commonwealth Universities and UNESCO to promote gender equality. To this end, it contributes to the research produced by the *Special Project on Women, Higher Education and Development* which comprises inter-university networks which focus on priority disciplines where the gender issue is critical: women in decision-making, women's rights, social inclusion, economic autonomy, science and technology, culture and poverty alleviation.

The Special Project was elaborated in response to the call for concrete action to implement the Beijing Platform of Action adopted by the 4th World Conference on Women in 1994. The purpose is to identify examples of good practice which help the access of women to social development and their full participation in this process.

The report which presents case studies from India, New Zealand and South Africa provides data on the history of Equal Employment Opportunity Offices, on their mandates and on practical management. It is hoped that these guidelines will assist other institutions in setting up similar initiatives best suited to the promotion of gender equality in their particular contexts.

UNESCO wishes to thank the authors of this report for their valuable analysis and also the ACU for its intellectual and practical co-operation which may help strengthen the management capacities of higher education institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

These Case Studies and Good Practice Guidelines were initiated under the UNITWIN Network for Women in Higher Education Management Programme, under the auspices of UNESCO, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Staff in Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) offices (or their equivalent) in three Commonwealth universities, were asked to prepare a Case Study which:

- outlined the reasons for the establishment of the EEO Office,
- its overall mandate and management, including reporting arrangements, in particular to the University Executive,
- an assessment of its impact based on both successes and shortcomings,
- proposals for future development to contribute to the change process in higher education, in particular by ensuring women play their full role, and
- making reference to national legislation on the subject of equal opportunities, specifically on whether there **is** any national legislation regarding equal opportunities for women..

It is noteworthy that the emphasis of the project is upon the establishment of **EEO offices** (rather than plans or models), and upon their efficacy in “ensuring that **women** academics, administrators and students play their full role in institutional development” (ACU, 1997). For the purposes of this Synthesis,

the term Equal Opportunity (EO) Office is used and includes Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), because the term EO more directly includes the recruitment of students into the University.

The three case studies were analyzed and synthesized by this author, with the objectives of identifying the key factors relating to the establishment, management and impact of the EO Offices, and proposing guidelines for good practice to assist universities wishing to set up similar units. Unless otherwise referenced, the information used in this Synthesis has been drawn directly from the Case Studies provided, and the references noted are to the page numbers in the relevant Case Study.

The support of the ACU in the development of these Case Studies and Synthesis is gratefully acknowledged.

About the universities

The authors of the Case Studies were drawn from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi India (JNU); the University of Cape Town, South Africa (UCT), and the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

JNU is a relatively young (established 1966) University which has risen to be a premier University in India, a country seeking to amend previous inequalities through a system of reserved places or reservations. Founded as a national tribute to the principles of the late statesman Jawaharlal Nehru, JNU espouses principles of national integration, social justice, secularism, democracy, an international orientation, and scientific approaches to problem solving. The University seeks to extend equal opportunities for all, in line with national legislation, and in so doing, seeks to

make a distinct addition to the national resources in higher education.

UCT is a relatively old institution with an historically liberal ideology, situated in a country in a state of transition from a restrictive and discriminatory environment to a more just and non-discriminatory state. At the University, academic freedom is viewed as an absolute principle, with differences whether political, cultural, personal or ideological to be tolerated, if not always strongly endorsed. It opposed apartheid and state interference in University affairs, at least in the later years of the apartheid regime. Contrary to the law, the University acknowledged it had responsibility to ensure that capable students of whatever race were not excluded on financial grounds, and as part of this acknowledgement, provided guaranteed places in residence for those students. UCT was among the first of South African universities to appoint a woman as Vice Chancellor.

The University of Auckland is the largest of New Zealand's universities, and is sited in a region with a relatively high proportion of Maori and Pacific Islander inhabitants. Other immigrants from Europe (other than from the 'traditional' United Kingdom sources) and Asia have settled too in the region, contributing to its diversity. The University has been at the forefront of EEO development, beginning its review of the participation of academic women in University affairs some years before legislation made such activities mandatory.

The three Universities differ substantially in total size, in the proportion of women among staff and students, and in the ratio of general staff to academic staff. A sample of the relative numbers (unfortunately for different years) follows.

UCT 1997 (p.1)	
Students	15486
Staff	4211
JNU (Tables 1,2,5)	
Students 1995 full-time	3832
Staff Academic 1993	389
Staff Administrative 1993	1285
University of Auckland 1996 (p.2)	
Students	25700
Staff Academic	1700
Staff General	1800

About the EO offices

The three Universities have different targeted groups for EO. While this is covered more extensively in later sections, below is a brief description of the different orientation of each Office.

JNU does not have an EO designated office, nor a designated Officer for EO. Rather, the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes Cell (ST/SC Cell) was established to monitor the implementation of the system of reserved places for designated groups of both staff and students. Established in 1984, the Cell is claimed to be “in principle the equivalent of any EO/EEO office at any of the other Commonwealth universities elsewhere”(p.3).

At UCT the Equal Opportunity Office has responsibility for staff and students. Its vision sees the Office with responsibility for facilitating the development of “equity as a substantive and lived reality as experienced practically by staff and students, and as indicated by a race, gender and disability profile broadly corresponding to that of the wider South African population” (p.9).

The University of Auckland has perhaps the most targeted EEO Office. Student equity is handled by a separate Office of Equal Educational Opportunity (EEEdO), with which close liaison occurs; the Offices "are currently viewed as being interdependent". (p.6). The EEO Office has responsibilities for several groups of staff for whom special requirements should be recognized by employers, viz. Maori, women, ethnic and other minorities, people with disabilities, general staff, staff with family responsibilities, and part time temporary and casual staff. ".... women tend to be the most disadvantaged members in each group. Accordingly, many women carry a double disadvantage" (p.8).

REASONS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF EO OFFICES

Government policy and legislation

It is fair to say that at all three institutions, government policy and legislation played at the least, a facilitating role in the establishment of EO Offices. At JNU the Cell was established as a direct response to a directive from the University Grants Commission to strengthen the machinery for implementation policies. The Cell has been funded by the UGC, with additional resources for specific tasks, supplied by JNU.

At UCT, the process of establishing EO preceded government directives. Nevertheless, the developments were consistent with emerging democratization in South Africa. As the student body changed at UCT, the question of composition of staff became equally pressing. The provisions for equal opportunity enshrined in the new Constitution, the Labour Relations Act (1995) and the Gender Equity Team within the Department of Education, among other factors, can only help to hasten the process of changing the staff profile of the University.

At the University of Auckland, government legislation and University developments were closer together in time, and the process might be seen as one of interaction. For example, the State Sector Amendment Act 1989 identified Maori, women, ethnic and other minorities, and people with disabilities as groups whose special needs should be recognized by employers. To these, the University added general staff, staff with family responsibilities, and part-time, casual and temporary staff.

Emerging recognition of concepts of 'fairness'

At JNU the impetus for EO appears to have come from the Constitutional right to equal protection and equal rights, guaranteed to every citizen. This concept of fairness was to ensure "that each member of the community may enjoy equal opportunity of using to the full his natural endowments" (p.1)

UCT recognized early that unequal opportunities and lack of diversity were serious problems. However, "The reality is that different aspects of what combine to form UCT's approach to equal opportunity/employment equity/ diversity, emerged for different reasons at different stages"(p.6). The process has been "characterized at UCT more by fits and starts than by a big bang....Plans have been forged at different points in a process which has evolved unevenly" (p.8).

The first EEO Policy at the University of Auckland aimed to "increase the fairness of all procedures and practices in employment....(and) confirmed the University's opposition to unfair discrimination" (p.5). The appointment of a Pro Vice Chancellor (EO) in 1997 for the first time brought together comprehensive management of equal educational opportunities within the University, and provided strong links to the EEO initiatives.

Pressure from internal and external sources

Pressure from interested parties and groups also appears to have been a reason for establishment of EO. Whilst these pressure points appear to have arisen in response to specific issues and events, their cumulative effect seems to have been significant.

At UCT intensification of the anti-apartheid struggle, and student involvement therein, was an early factor in EO. A black staff lobby group, and a non-racial "progressive" staff pressure group were also key factors. "...a small but effective lobby group of women ..took up a number of issues affecting women staff" (p.5). Forecast difficulty in obtaining international support, questions from international visitors, and African National Congress expressions about the importance of equity, are also cited as major factors.

At the University of Auckland the 'Gibbs Report' was produced by an ad-hoc group set up by the University Council to review the status of academic women at the University. It seems fair to assume this occurred as the result of some internal pressures for reform.

At JNU, pressure seems to have occurred most directly and consistently from the UGC, for example in its questioning of the composition of the Standing Committee and in its requirement for an Annual Report on the implementation of the reservation policy.

Under use of available resources

A powerful reason for the development of EO could have been the dawning recognition that large reservoirs of talent were not being used. Nevertheless, specific statements about this are difficult to locate in the case studies, although the case study for the University of Auckland notes that "a growing number of employers in the private sector have elected....(EEO practices) because they consider it to be good business practice" (p.1). UCT notes as a problem, the failure to tap the huge reservoirs of talent and rich diversity available, and points out that one of the

consequences of this selective staff profile is the lack of role models for students and other staff (p.7). This could imply that better use of existing resources is a result of, rather than a reason for establishing, equity programmes. Further specific inquiries would be necessary to clarify expectations and cause and effect indicators about this factor.

MANDATES AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The mandates for EO Offices at the Universities of Cape Town and Auckland express similar sentiments, and follow similar development processes and strategies to achieve their objectives. JNU has an externally given and different mandate, and uses different strategies to achieve its goals.

Mandates

At JNU, the mandate is given by the UGC. “In brief, the function of the SC/ST Cell is to operate, monitor and take necessary steps to improve the implementation of the various provisions of reservation policy and to keep liaison between the University, SC/ST groups on the campus and the Government bodies. To carry out these functions properly, the Cell is expected to maintain all records pertaining to SC/ST students, teachers and non-teaching employees as well as other underprivileged groups” (p.4).

Notably different from the policy development priorities of the other two EO Offices, the ST/SC Cell’s role is firmly oriented toward effective implementation of government policies, systematic follow-up, and the maintenance of information bases. There is a brief to organize specially structured courses, and the University itself has given additional administrative functions to the Cell.

At UCT the problem was perceived as evidenced by the gross disparity between the profile of the wider South African

population, and that of the University's staff. The underlying causes have been structural racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, and failure to use the talent and diversity available (p.7). "The vision is of an institutional culture that is free of all forms of discrimination (including harassment), that nurtures all and that not only tolerates differences but values diversity for the richness it brings to all human endeavour" (p.16). The goal of the Office is "to make a decisive difference, through playing a challenging and supportive role, to UCT becoming an institution in which equity is a substantive and lived reality as experienced practically by staff and students, and as indicated by a race, gender and disability profile broadly corresponding to that of the wider South African population" (p.9).

At the University of Auckland, the task is expressed as "to make good intentions a reality, by effective planning, evaluation and monitoring of all employment procedures" (p.1). Excellence in equity and in the products of a diverse staff performing to their highest potential are central to the University commitment to excellence. Education is viewed as an essential precursor to diverse groups gaining access to employment. An important function of an effective EEO programme is seen as the provision of good role models for students from under-represented groups, breaking down stereotypes of roles and positions in which people expect to see Maoris, women and other disadvantaged persons.

Development strategies

Both UCT and the University of Auckland identify 'Equity' and 'Excellence' as fundamental goals, and follow a similar development pattern that tries to be holistic in approach. Broad mission statements or goals are followed by designation of 'target audiences', specific targets and objectives and strategies to

achieve those, and methods of measuring progress. All require co-operation and liaison with other people and offices within the University. Throughout, there is an emphasis upon the development and change of institutional culture and people. To enable this to occur top down involvement and support are vital, and both Universities cite support from their Vice Chancellors as essential to the processes of change.

All three Offices are responsible for collecting and collating data, and reporting on results. However, the JNU Office is responsible for a wider range of data collection and administrative functions, than the other Universities, one of which mentions data collation and analysis as an area requiring improvement. A critical difference may be that data collation and analysis is seen as being useful for policy development and planning at UCT and the University of Auckland, a role different from that at JNU whose target is the achievement of specified numbers and percentages of persons in registered categories.

MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Internal reporting

Two 'tracks' for internal management and reporting occur in many universities. The first internal management track is through the officers of the University, to the Vice Chancellor and his Executive Group. This last often includes Deputy and Pro or Assistant Vice Chancellors, the senior University Registrar and the Chief Financial Officer or their equivalents, that is, the most senior staff members responsible for the operations of the University, and who report directly to the Vice Chancellor. Reporting to this group usually occurs through the Head of Department or Section to the relevant Executive Group member, and is called 'operations reporting' herein.

The second route lies in the system of Committees, often Committees of Council or Advisory Committees, which report back to the University Council, by formal report from the Chairperson or through the Vice Chancellor. The Chairs of these Committees are often, but need not be, members of the Vice Chancellor's Executive Group. These Committees can play a significant role in linking with outside bodies, and as opinion leaders within the University community. Reporting through that track is called 'committee reporting' in this Synthesis.

Effective internal reporting, which has in part the function of promoting awareness of issues and gaining congruence of University goals and objectives, as well as providing information,

needs to occur through both tracks (where they exist) in the University.

Operations reporting

At the first stages of the development of EO at UCT, a Deputy Vice Chancellor who was a member of the Executive Group, was given general responsibility for overseeing the Employment Equity Policy, and monitoring progress in staff development for blacks and women in all staff categories. Some two years after its establishment, the Equal Opportunity Office was relocated to the Human Resource Management Department, and reports through the Head of that Department. However, easy access to the relevant Deputy Vice Chancellor remains.

At the University of Auckland, the EEO Office is located within the Human Resources Department, and the EEdO Office, in Student Affairs. Both are linked through a Pro Vice Chancellor (Equal Opportunity). The Pro Vice Chancellor is part of the small Executive team that comprises the Vice Chancellor and four others. That arrangement is reported to give a high profile to EEO and EEdO matters.

At JNU, decisions about the number of reserved places (reservations) are made by the Executive Council of the University, having regard to directives from the Ministry of Education and Culture (now the Ministry of Human Resource Development). Directives from the UGC relate to the machinery for implementing and monitoring the policies. The SC/ST Cell reports through its Deputy Registrar to the Registrar who acts as Liaison Officer for SC/ST Cell matters within the University.

Committee reporting

At the University of Auckland, the EEO Coordinator reports on progress to an EEO Advisory Committee of Council, which is chaired by the ProVice Chancellor (EO). This Committee reports to the Vice Chancellor and the University Council, which gives a high profile to EEO activities. In addition, four of the EEO Advisory Committee members serve on the University Council, which helps to ensure that Council members are knowledgeable about EEO issues and activities.

The EEdO Office is placed within Student Affairs, and reports through the Equal Education Opportunities Committee (EEdO Committee) that is also chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor (EO). This arrangement provides a valuable link with EEO activities, and encourages informal links that appear to be frequently used by the two Offices. The EEdO Committee reports through the Education Committee and the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) to Council. Reporting through the Education Committee would provide opportunities to keep the academic body of the University informed and involved with equity initiatives and issues.

At UCT, the question of University governance is under review. The new University Transition Forum is viewed as significant and relevant, and through its standing committee, interacts directly with the main University decision-making bodies, i.e. Council, Senate, and Student Parliament.

JNU has a Standing Committee that meets twice yearly to report to the appropriate University authority. The Committee was constituted in accordance with a directive from the UGC, and its membership revised in 1993 after inquiry from that body. From that time, the Vice Chancellor has been Chairperson, and membership comprises the Registrar, the Coordinator of

Evaluation (examination controller), and three teachers, one from each level of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor. The Deputy Registrar of CELL acts as Secretary to the Standing Committee.

Placement of EO office in the institution

As previously discussed, the EEO Office at the University of Auckland is placed within the Human Resources section, and the EEdO Office, within Student Affairs.

At UCT, the EO Office was established 1992. Initially its EO Officer reported directly to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Office being an independent unit that was outside the mainstream University departments. Two years later the Office was relocated into the Human Resource Management Department. As the writer notes, “Optimal location for an EO is debatable but probably dependent largely on the specific institutional context” (p.8). While ostensibly the EO Office is located structurally further from the Vice Chancellor’s Executive Group, its easy access has continued, and the writer believes the Office fares better as part of mainstream activities, rather than being in an “ambiguous, free floating location” (p.8). Direct links to other staff development people and the recruitment office have been of value.

At JNU, the Cell is located within the Registrar’s section, and undertakes University functions such as group insurance, health services, and various advances or grants for staff, as well as SC/ST activities in accordance with the UGC directives.

Staffing

At UCT, staff in the EO Office comprises an EO Officer and a Field Officer. Administrative support is obtained from a shared (with Human Resources) secretary. The addition of the Disability Unit to the EO Office added a Unit Director, two secretaries and a part-time Project Coordinator.

The case writer believes the small staffing is an advantage. “Strategically it is unhelpful to have a centralized EO function which is expected single-handedly, as it were, to pursue and deliver on all EO-related problems and needs”. EO issues must be mainstreamed with all concerned sharing responsibility for their planning, development and implementation. In his view, the EO Office should be “striving to work itself out of a job” (p.9).

Staffing at the University of Auckland’s EEO Office is equally limited. It comprises an EEO Coordinator and an EEO Office Manager. The EEd Office comprises an EEdO Coordinator and an EEdO Office Manager. That Office also has positions dealing with Maori and Pacific Island students, women in engineering and science, and staff and students with disabilities.

Staffing at the JNU Cell is more numerous, reflecting the data collection and the implementation responsibilities of the Cell. It comprises the Deputy Registrar, a Section Officer, a Statistical Assistant, a general Assistant, a Junior Stenographer, and a Peon. Provided by JNU for the additional tasks it requested, are a Senior Assistant and a Junior Assistant cum Typist.

External reporting

The Universities report, or seem likely to be required to report on their EO or similar activities to external (government) bodies.

At JNU, the Report prepared by the Standing Committee, together with an Action Taken Report, are sent to the UGC and Government of India, as well as to the appropriate University authority. The Standing Committee meets twice yearly. A 1988 UGC instruction requires the preparation of an Annual Report on implementation of the reservation policy, with copies to the UGC and the Education Ministry. However, the case writer notes there has been difficulty in complying with this last requirement, and in fact only one Annual Report has been published. (p12).

The University of Auckland must report annually to the New Zealand Ministry of Education about the performance of its EO programme, providing a summary of its EO activities for the year, and an account of the extent to which the programme objectives had been met. Additionally, it was required to report on how barriers to student progress had been eliminated, how the creation of unnecessary barriers had been avoided, and to provide an account of the programmes established to attract students from under-represented groups. The results of these Reports are collated and published annually by the University, and used to monitor the University's EEO Plan.

South Africa is still in the process of transition toward a fairer, more open and just society, and its legislation and legislative bodies reflect that state. Several bodies such as the Commission on Gender Equality and the Directorate of Equal Opportunities have been established and have begun work. The current situation is described in the Case (p.18).

WORK

Each of the Cases describes the general work of the EO Office or the Cell. Each provides many examples of innovative strategies and practices to raise awareness of equity issues, to plan new initiatives, to monitor the implementation and development of the EO Plans, and to keep the profile of activities high among opinion leaders. Strategies range from arranging for provision of child care for students and staff, to development of a temporary workers' employment bureau, to rewording of advertisements for staff to let possible applicants know of reservations or EO policies, to introduction of personal safety measures. The lists are extensive and each Case provides stimulating ideas and strategies, the implementation of which provide some of the most rewarding work of an EO Office.

Much of the work of EO Offices is repetitive, such as attendance at Committee meetings, providing support for the introduction of new ideas and practices in faculties or university departments, offering training programmes, collecting and analyzing data, and so on. Monitoring of recruitment selection and promotion procedures, and finding ways to increase the pool of qualified applicants for positions, are prominent among these activities. Other activities may be undertaken on a periodic basis, such as reviews of promotion procedures or surveys of student exclusion regulations.

A key issue in equity work, is the mainstreaming of activities. As Frank Molteno writes, "Only if the EO issues are kept out in the mainstream with all concerned sharing the responsibility for

them, can there be any hope of the University's goals of employment equity and equal opportunity being attained." (p.9).

Without mainstreaming, in the Synthesis author's view EO work is too easily seen as 'not my responsibility', or 'the EO Office's problem'. To continue to raise EO issues in Departments whose main agendas are seen to be 'research and teaching' or 'provision of an essential service' can seem frustrating and unrewarding work. Yet winning the hearts and minds of the University decision-makers and community is essential work if universities are to gain the benefits of the diverse resources that are available to them.

POWER

Power is seen as a key variable in two of the Universities. The writer from JNU states that “Significant changes toward equality of opportunity or equality of employment opportunity are...impossible without a reallocation of society’s resources, including power” (p.13). The writer from UCT states “Who holds most power, where their interests lie and what ideology informs their understanding, are the decisive determinants of the direction which any organization takes. UCT is no exception” (p.4). In this writer’s view, power is an important issue in Universities as with other organizations, and its importance reinforces the need for EO principles and practices to be accepted and promoted at the highest levels within the University, and at managerial levels (whether academic or administrative) throughout the University. As the writer from the University of Auckland states, “(EEO) objectives will build on existing good will, and positively promote EEO as central to the University’s strategic goals and its effectiveness as an organization” (p.14).

CHANGE

A less apparent variable within the Case Studies is the process of change itself. All the Universities are undergoing changes to meet differing Government and societal expectations, changes in funding, and changes in world views and practices about equitable societies. UCT is perhaps most explicit about this, and its University Transformation Forum has considered quite major matters for change within the University (p.7). The JNU writer notes that “Changes which seem easier at the individual level are likely to be slower at the institutional level” (p.13).

It is noted that for change to succeed, one needs to ensure that attitude changes occur at the most senior levels of an organization, among opinion leaders and all those who are able to exercise power, to enlist their support for the change proposals. Persons effective in managing change, work on planning and introducing the change, overcoming resistance to change, educating and persuading people to accept the change, and identifying the need for and the benefits from the change (Manning, 1997). Viewed in this light, many of the strategies and innovations suggested by the Case writers have, as a corollary of the proposed direct benefit, the benefit of enlisting support for the EO programme as a whole.

WOMEN AND EO

This project is concerned with the establishment of EO Offices, and the enhancement of the role of that Office to ensure that women academics, administrators and students “play their full role in institutional development” (ACU, 1997). It is of interest to note, therefore, what place equity for women has had in the three universities for which Case Studies have been prepared.

In India, discrimination on the grounds of sex, among many other grounds, is prohibited by the Constitution. Further, a Constitutional Amendment to reserve for women thirty three per cent of seats in the Lower House of the Indian Parliament is being debated. A National Commission for Women’s Rights has been established, but as yet there is no positive discrimination for women similar to that for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and Other Backward Classes. In particular, there is no reserved quota for women in India.

At JNU, reserved places and other measures such as deprivation points and relaxed academic evaluation rules are available for physically handicapped and SC/ST candidates for student entry. There are no special clauses for women outside these more general provisions, save for an additional five deprivation points in the entrance examination. Reservations and other measures also apply for academic staff and administrators, but none apply specifically to women except those such as maternity leave given under the Constitution.

The few special provisions for the advancement of women in the University may be an influential variable in the lack of significant

change in numbers of women at the University. As the Case writer notes, "Without affirmative action and positive discrimination in favour of women, it is difficult to say whether women are getting equality of opportunity or not in the University" (p.10). A status report indicates that "while the overall number of women faculty increased between 1985 and 1995, the share of women remained constant. The increase in numbers was confined to the upper levels of Professor and Associate Professor" (p.11). At the Assistant Professor level the proportion of women decreased, a matter of concern given that this is the level from which future senior appointments are likely to be made. Among administrators, and similar to many other institutions, women are concentrated in the lower staff levels. The proportion of female students declined between 1994 and 1995.

In South Africa the new Constitution asserts its values of non-racialism and non-sexism, and states that the state may not discriminate on the grounds of sex and/or pregnancy among many other grounds. It establishes an independent Commission on Gender Equality that reports to Parliament. An Office on the Status of Women has been established, and a National Gender Policy and a Gender Management System are being developed. Government Departments are establishing bodies and processes to eliminate racial and gender imbalances and other forms of discrimination.

The University has put in place anti-discrimination policies and programmes relevant in particular for women. For example, a Sexual Harassment Policy was adopted in 1988, and has developed into a Sexual Harassment Prevention and Support Service which offers counseling and support for survivors of sexual harassment and violence, and undertakes preventative educational work. A Committee of Inquiry into Sexual

Harassment in 1991 made several recommendations about how the University should address sexual harassment and violence on campus. An Educare Centre provides subsidized childcare for children of staff and students.

UCT has too some organizations and processes concerned with the progress of women. There is a branch of the Association of South African Women in Science and Engineering, and a small student organized Women's Movement. In previous years a Gender Forum has brought together persons with gender concerns. The recently established African Gender Institute has a mandate to lead the development of gender studies at UCT and to facilitate the engendering of curricula across the University.

The Case writer notes that the composition of the student body has changed faster than the staff profile, and that this has caused some problems. He further notes that the staff profile remains predominantly white male and that among academic staff, women comprise only 6% of full professors. Again, senior administrators are predominantly white males.

The Case writer conducted a number of interviews with senior women at the University who were "cautious to isolate gender as a factor in their experience". The Case writer's perception is that "women at the University – whether staff or students – have been making their voices heard to only a very limited extent.... Compared to the relative frequency of complaints about racism... complaints of sexism and discrimination against women are...less common" (p.21). Nevertheless, it was noted that some women experienced obstacles and that the University culture may be less supportive for more junior women. The value of having a woman in the Vice Chancellor's position as a role model and for her personal qualities, was noted to be "hugely validating" (p.22). And questions remain about the relatively few numbers of women

in senior positions, and about how the different life patterns of women's careers can cause difficulties because they do not fit into the standard 'career progression' patterns assumed for promotion and recruitment purposes. A summary of views seemed to indicate that while UCT had noted the issues and was committed in principle to changes, practice still fell short of rhetoric.

The Case writer at UCT assesses the impact of the EO Office as "distinct but limited", and explores reasons for that assessment (p.27). He argues that race and gender need to be addressed jointly, that race and gender oppression are linked empirically, and that programmes and policies need to address both (p.17).

The New Zealand Government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and followed that with establishment of an EEO Unit in the State Services Commission. Significant other legislation including the Human Rights Act reinforces non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, among other grounds, for example in terms of equal pay and employment contracts.

Among the three Universities considered in the Case Studies, the University of Auckland has perhaps the greatest representation of women among its staff and students. The student body at the University of Auckland is just over half female, and women staff members comprise 33% of academic faculty and 58% of general staff. Nevertheless, the Case writer notes the preponderance of women in part-time, casual and temporary positions. Further, there is still inequitable representation of women across faculties and in senior positions, and this means a dearth of role models and mentors for other women. She notes too that different career patterns such as broken service means that women may be older

than their male counterparts at equivalent positions, so that issues of ageism and family responsibilities are linked with gender.

The staff hierarchy at the University has included appointments at Assistant, Pro and Deputy Vice Chancellor levels, with briefs on EEO, and later, on EEdO. This has been accompanied by development and analysis of data bases to track student enrolments and progression, to measure how departments and faculties are progressing in achieving more equitable representation of students. The Case writer notes that “Not surprisingly, there are strong correlations between student intake, post-graduate enrolments and equitable staffing ratios” (p.6).

Some specific successes over the past six years are noted for the University of Auckland (p.12). Of particular interest to women is the overall increase in the number of academic women employed at the University, the employment of additional Maori and Pacific Island women lecturers, the introduction of childcare and holiday programmes for children, and the increasing emphasis on a family-compatible work place.

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

At JNU, it is proposed to restructure the Cell to focus on three areas: students, staff, and other matters such as housing and representation. Together with this, is a proposed further development of the databases for students and staff, to provide better information for example, for better identification and targeting of students in need of assistance. Other initiatives include more curriculum development for new courses and subjects, and more dissemination of information about SC/ST decisions taken by the Standing Committee. However, concern is expressed about pushing change too quickly beyond the institution's capacity to adapt (pp.11-13).

At UCT, the writer proposes several new developments. These are characterized to some extent by an underlying strategy to mainstream to a greater extent, EO principles and practices, for example by the development of Department and Faculty equity targets, by the establishment of an EO monitor network, and by the outplacement of trained Human Resource personnel (p.26). At the same time, the author notes that 'institutional learning' has been relatively slow, identifying 'over-busyness' as a factor in this (p.24). One has the sense that the EO Office is beginning to move from an ad hoc and remedial approach to immediately perceived problems, toward a comprehensive overview of the issues and the strategies to promote EO at all levels within the University.

At the University of Auckland, the writer believes that EEO planning and data processing are areas in need of improvement.

“Despite official requirements for faculties to write EEO plans, in most cases this has not been achieved, resulting in poor strategic planning. In other instances where planning has been done, it has lacked practical steps for application” (p.13). An expanded and refined data base will assist the monitoring of both target group head counts and percentages, providing better information to Department heads to assist their planning. The writer provides a number of new and specific objectives for EEO, which are planned to remedy the perceived inadequacies of the present programme (p.13).

GUIDELINES

The Guidelines below are suggested to assist organizations wishing to establish Equal Opportunity Offices. They are based upon the Cases already discussed, and the author's experience as Pro Vice Chancellor with responsibility for EO at her own University. The UCT Case also includes some suggestions based upon the author's experience of implementing EO, and the reader is referred to that (p.25).

Support from the top

Support and commitment from the top levels of the organization are vital. Successful implementation of EO is fundamentally a process of attitude change. Because change seems to be difficult for the human psyche, constant promotion of the benefits of the proposed change and support for the change from prestigious persons, are essential ingredients of EO implementation. It is notable that both UCT and the University of Auckland writers quote the support of their Vice Chancellors. Without that interest and commitment, implementation of EO is slower and more difficult as the UCT writer notes (p.27).

Attitude change is not often something that occurs quickly. The top level staff and the governing body of the University need to understand that some years are likely to elapse before major change becomes apparent. As noted below, changes are likely to become apparent sooner in the profile of the student body than in the staff profile. But small changes will be apparent early – an increase in the number of students in a designated category, more

women in the lower ranks of academia, perhaps other facilitative benefits such as better childcare arrangements. Reporting of these, and welcoming comments from Council and from top level staff reinforce the importance of equity initiatives to the University as a whole.

The Office should report to and be line managed by, the highest level of the organization, at least in its early stages. This can be directly to the Vice Chancellor or to a Deputy, Pro or Assistant Vice Chancellor, depending on the university structure. Reporting within the top academic structure gives credibility and validity to the Office, and sends a clear message to faculties and departments that equity is a matter to be taken seriously.

Government support

It is clear that a supportive government environment and legislation is of great assistance in implementing EO initiatives. The Synthesis author has not tried to implement initiatives without that support, but UCT has had that experience and staff from there may be willing to provide advice (p.4). At the least it would seem that lobbying to gain government support is a useful strategy, whether or not the government is supportive of EO.

Target staff and students

Initiatives about EO are important for both staff and students. The latter group includes the opinion leaders of the future, is likely to provide the postgraduate students and the staff of the future, and interacts with and influences present staff. The common experience of EO Offices is that the overall staff profiles change more slowly than student body profiles, in part because

staffing employment arrangements commonly are of longer duration than University courses.

EO Office

A dedicated EO Office with a small staff and a clear mandate are important factors in promoting equal opportunity throughout an organization. Without this, EO initiatives are easily lost when competing with other issues. As the UCT writer notes (p.24) and in this writer's experience, one of the major challenges of an EO Office is to remain focused upon EO, and in particular, upon strategies and plans to achieve equity throughout the organization.

The Case models show alternative organizational arrangements. At UCT, student and staff equity matters are handled through the same EO Office, a model that has worked well in this writer's experience. At the University of Auckland, student equity matters are handled through the EEdO Office, staff matters through the EEO Office. The Auckland model has the advantage of being very focused, with placement in Human Resources and Student Affairs respectively, giving the advantage of close links with other resources for the targeted groups. Effort and a formal link (such as the Pro Vice Chancellor (EO) are required, however, to maintain frequent and close communication and liaison between the two Offices.

Office staffing

Appointment of dedicated staff to the Office is essential. In both models, staffing is small, and the author agrees with the UCT writer, that a small focused staff is the preferred model. A person to act on staff equity matters, and a similar person to act

on student equity, with access to administrative support, seem to be minimal requirements. Administrative support should be such that allows the collation and analysis of data to measure performance. Additional part-time staff with briefs to act for specific targeted groups (such as staff and students with disabilities, women in science and engineering, designated ethnic groups) is an effective way to reach particular groups, if funds are available. Funding for additional staff members can often be obtained from external sources.

Staff members need to be cognizant of their roles as change agents and skilled in managing change, as well as being skilled in and knowledgeable about equity matters. A high level of interpersonal skills is essential, both in terms of presenting equity issues at all levels of the organization, and in terms of managing potentially difficult situations. Because of the high levels of skills required, arrangements are needed for professional development to occur, both to maintain existing knowledge and skills and to develop new ones.

Placement of the EO Office

Both UCT and University of Auckland Offices began as independent units, outside the mainstream department structure of the University, and this has been the author's experience. Placement outside the mainstream at first, followed by later integration into mainstream structures has the advantage of providing a higher profile for the EO Office for its initial activities, and better allows for 'pilot study' type activities. It also has the advantage of providing senior guidance and support for activities which may be seen as unusual or unimportant, and at times may be controversial. Once the Office and its activities have become operational and accepted within the University,

placement within one or more larger Departments (depending on the model chosen) assists the essential mainstreaming of its activities.

Reporting

Clear reporting channels need to be established and used from the first stages of EO, both for operational and committee reporting.

Reporting to the highest levels of the organization, that is the Executive group **and** the Council or University governing body, is essential. This signals to the University that equity is an important issue. It ensures that information is disseminated at and from the highest levels, and allows for the full implications of planned strategies to be explored before implementation. It also helps the EO Office to gain the commitment of senior people within the organization, as they become more aware of the issues and the benefits of equity initiatives.

Mandate

The mandate for the EO Office should be clear and unequivocal, and needs specifically to include women as a target group for its equity initiatives. As the University of Auckland writer poignantly notes, ‘women tend to be the most disadvantaged members in each (targeted) group’ (p.8). Evidence from JNU suggests that to simply leave them to take their chances with other target groups does not seem to address their needs or aspirations for equity.

The mandate needs to include a brief to win support for EO initiatives throughout the organization. In the author’s view, winning the hearts and minds of senior managers and opinion

leaders, and the University community as a whole, is essential to fostering the institutional culture that allows equity to be accepted as fair, just and beneficial to all.

How do we start?

Both UCT and the University of Auckland now operate with a structured plan, goals and objectives and so on, as described below. However, it is noteworthy that both began with smaller initiatives addressed to specific problem areas or issues, and progressed ‘by fits and starts’ to a comprehensive plan. This has been my experience too, and it seems to me to have some advantages. Whilst conceptually a ‘grand plan’ is attractive, its size can be overwhelming, the perceived overall financial costs controversial, and the change too much for the University community to accept. There seem to be advantages in beginning with one or two clearly focused initiatives, gaining a record for successful and beneficial implementation, and then building upon those to reach an overall EO Plan. Most of the planning and the attitude changing initiatives described in the next section can be applied to specific initiatives as well as to a comprehensive EO Plan.

EO plan, goals and objectives, strategies and performance measurement

Both UCT and the University of Auckland use a structured sequence of planning, goal and objective setting, devising strategies and measuring results. This process is one the author used and has found successful. It is also one that has been required by government reporting agencies. Nevertheless, the author is conscious that such an approach may be regarded as yet

another instance of “western imperialism”, and that alternative methods of working may produce the desired results. Many feminists seek a more discursive approach, with goals, strategies etc being reached by a process of consensus seeking.

Given the ‘change management’ perspective of EO, and that discussion and debate are key factors in achieving attitude change, extensive discussion groups, forums, and other avenues for debate, and planning for University-wide consultation are most useful in my experience. A successful strategy has been to identify the influential groups and the opinion leaders within the University, and to plan to meet informally with as many of these groups as possible about the EO Plan. The ability of EO staff to be responsive to new ideas, flexible and adaptive in order that members of the University feel comfortable about contributing to the Plan, is important in this process. Dissemination of the Plan through the relevant University committees such as the Student Affairs Committee, Academic Board, Staffing Committee etc. follows. It is important to arrange for EO staff or the relevant Deputy or Pro Vice Chancellor to be present and to be able to speak about those Plans, and to seek the Committee’s support for the Plan.

Resolution of issues

The reconciliation of the concepts of ‘excellence’ and ‘equity’ is often important in the establishment phase of EO. ‘Affirmative action’ initiatives are at times seen as diminishing excellence, or as ‘reverse discrimination’ (see for example, UCT pp.4-6). In the author’s view, it is important that these issues be resolved early and at the senior level.

A particular issue for universities seems to be the recruitment of academic staff, where fears are often expressed that equity initiatives will lead to the recruitment of staff with lesser capabilities. The concept of 'increasing the pool of qualified applicants' seems to be of particular value in this context, especially if it is aligned with other strategies to reduce the institutional inequity that often exists 'because things have always been so'. The UCT Case includes a number of these initiatives (pp.10-14). Other common issues relate to the admission and progression of students, and the non-conforming career patterns of women.

Each university must resolve these issues in the light of its own culture and values. To this author, the important factor is that the issues are debated and resolved at the top levels of the organization, so that an acceptable EO initiative and strategy can be brought forward.

AND FINALLY

The implementation of EO principles and practices is a challenging and rewarding task. It can provide clear benefits to the University with commitment to its implementation. A greater range of diverse knowledge, skills and attributes are available to the University. If these are valued and used, they will enable the University to better position itself in the constantly changing, better-educated and increasingly interactive world environment. It is recommended as a most worthwhile and beneficial endeavour for a University to undertake.

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