

EDI Public Sector Duty Sub-Group

Draft Terms of Reference

Background

Since 2014 there has been a positive duty on public sector bodies, including third level institutions to have regard for the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work (S.42, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014). UCD on behalf of the University sector commissioned a consultant to carry out a project to support the implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in the Irish University Sector. The purpose of this initiative was to commence the initial phase of the Duty which is to undertake an equality and human rights assessment collaboratively across the seven institutions, recognizing there is likely to be significant commonality of experience. The assessment drew on the experience of the groups protected under equality and human rights legislation to better understand the challenges and opportunities the sector faces in effectively implementing the duty.

This assessment template has now been developed and serves as the basic template for each HEI in its implementation of the Duty, which individual HEIs can further tailor to include equality and human rights data and information of relevance to establishing the issues and that pertain to their geographical region and/or draw from research conducted by their HEI (or another local organisation).

Purpose

The EDI Public Sector Duty sub-group is being established to prepare an implementation plan on the actions the University will take to implement the Duty including the development of a user-friendly toolkit. The existing template identifies the key areas that might be addressed in such a plan and provides some indication of how these might be implemented under the headings of: enabling implementation; address; key moments for implementation; and the Report step.

Objectives

The objectives of this group include:

- To review the assessment templates developed by the consultants as follows:
 - Template for Equality and Human Rights Values Statement
 - Template for Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues
 - Template for Implementation Plan
- To develop an implementation plan on the actions the University will take to implement the Duty and a user-friendly toolkit based on the templates
- To review the Equality Impact Assessment tool and how it is embedded in the policy development process and extend into processes more widely.
- To raise awareness of the Public Sector Duty across the University to support implementation and identify any training requirements for key stakeholders

- To identify how the remaining HEA funding can be most effectively used across the sector to promote implementation and understanding of the public sector duty
- To keep abreast of legislative and other developments in this area
- To ensure progress made regarding Implementation of the Duty is tracked adequately and incorporated into the EDI Annual Report on steps taken and progress made.
- Engage and collaborate with other relevant groups in UCD and with external organisations such as the IHREC and IUA to continue the sectoral engagement

Membership

It is essential that this group consists of key stakeholders across key functional areas and those with responsibility for governance in UCD. It will include diverse representatives across the University and equality grounds. An awareness raising session on the public sector duty will be provided to the members to ensure all are equipped to deliver on the work of the group.

Members will be appointed through expressions of interest and nominations.

Frequency of meetings: The group will meet quarterly or more frequently as required

Reporting to: The Group will report and make recommendations to the EDI Group

Supported by: EDI Unit