

Newcastle University

Diversity Profile of Membership of University Committees

Date: 15 December 2009

Web Reference: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/governance/internal/>

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Purpose

An analysis of membership of the main University Committees found that the majority of members were men and there was an underrepresentation of women, compared to the staff and student profiles and, where relevant, the population of the local area. This Policy has been developed to set out the University's position on the diversity profile of its committees (including ethnicity, disability and other factors included in the Equal Opportunities Policy) which will lead to strategies to implement change.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students of the University and members of the public who are eligible to sit on the statutory bodies and other committees of the University. Appointment to the body or committee can be by nomination or election. It also applies to the Committees and other decision making groups operated at Faculty/Academic Unit or Central Service levels.

Policy Detail

1. The University's governance includes a series of decision making bodies and consultation bodies, typically committees. Membership includes members of

staff (mainly academic staff), students and members of the public in addition to ex-officio membership for staff in relevant positions in the University. These bodies are involved in advisory and/or decision making roles and wider consultation to ensure an integrated and comprehensive decision-making process. The balance of membership should reflect the diversity profile of the relevant category of staff.

2. Participating in the University governance gives members of staff and students the opportunity for wider participation in University life which will potentially contribute to their skills and experience and future career development. These opportunities should be made known to staff and students when vacancies arise or new committees and groups are to be set up.
3. Participation in Faculty/Academic Unit/Central Service Committees and other decision making groups should also aim to reflect the diversity profile of eligible staff. Membership at this level is where staff gain the experience, confidence, knowledge and exposure to progress to University level committees. Involvement is a valuable development opportunity for staff, and offers a major opportunity to the organisation to demonstrate its inclusivity.
4. University committees: The process of filling places will involve the following:
 - 4.1 Advertisements for nominations will be made more widely than only through the Heads of Academic Units – using other means such as University announcements on the website.
 - 4.2 Nominations will be processed through the Head of Academic Unit to the Governance office and then to the Chair of the relevant committee.
 - 4.3 The person being nominated may submit a statement about themselves and the Head of Academic Unit must submit a statement about the person and why they think the person would be suitable.
 - 4.4 Chairs of committees should be able to consider names they may receive from other sources.
 - 4.5 Monitoring data will be collected from anyone who applies/is nominated so that the profile can be reviewed on an annual basis and reported to Council in the Equal Opportunities Annual Report.
5. Faculty/Academic Unit and Services Committees
 - 5.1 The balance of membership on committees or working groups which are managed at Faculty etc. level should also aim to reflect the diversity profile of the constituency of staff from which members are sought.
 - 5.2 The method of identifying potential members and/or advertising the vacancies should enable staff to be aware of such opportunities.

Forms, Templates and Associated Documents

- The document “Newcastle University Governance, Management and Administrative Structures – Governance Office May 2008” is the starting point for the development of this policy. This is available on the website at: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/governance/internal/>
- The University Equal Opportunities Policy and the Gender, Race and Disability Equality Schemes. All are available on the Diversity website Policy Section at: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/diversity/policy/index.html>

Responsibilities

- The Registrar is responsible for the operation of the Governance system of the University.
- Any person or body involved in recommending or appointing, Chairs or members, to University Committees or other bodies must follow this policy.
- Members of committees are required to follow the University guidance on commitment to and participation in the operation of committees or other decision making bodies of which they are a member.

Approved By

Staff Committee and Diversity Committee followed by Executive Board

Acronyms, Abbreviations & Definitions

Statutory Bodies – the bodies determined by the University Statutes to govern the University.

Council – The supreme governing body of the University specifically charged with the management and control of the university’s finances, property and with reviewing the work of the University.

Senate – The supreme governing and executive body of the University in all academic matters.

Court – The role of the Court is to provide a channel of communication between the University and the community in Newcastle, the North East of England and beyond, informing different constituencies of the work of the University, and the University of the needs of these constituencies, which are relevant to its activities.

Academic Board – This is a non-executive body and may discuss and declare any matters affecting the University and enter into communication with the Senate and Council on such matters. Members are given the opportunity to raise any question with the Vice-chancellor who chairs the meetings.

Convocation – This is a statutory body responsible for appointing the Chancellor on the nomination of Court and Senate sitting in joint session and is involved in the approval of proposed changes to the statutes. It includes members of the alumni and elected members of academic staff.

Committee Structure – The statutory bodies have established committees as they see fit which contribute to meeting institutional aims by providing the means for consultation and comment in all aspects of University business.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment Screening form has been completed and submitted to the Diversity Team recommending a re-screening in 12 months time after a process for collection of data has been introduced, data collected and analysed.

Source:

Copies of this document are available on the Governance Web Site:

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/governance/internal/>

Approved by Staff Committee on 24.9.2009, Diversity Committee on 26 October 2009 and Executive Board on 15 December 2009