

EDI 20-4 Committee Management and Representation Policy

Purpose

Committees in the School of Chemistry are the primary place in which policies are developed, which are then taken to the School Exec for approval. The Committee Management and Representation Policy aims at enhancing participation and ensuring that all members of the School have an opportunity to contribute. Committees in the School can be male dominated, not by any conscious decision, but simply through lack of consideration. This policy aims to ensure that careful consideration of committee membership is undertaken each year, that gender balance is monitored and that the roles of female members are not overly burdensome. This is important as, due to their smaller numbers, female staff can find themselves on more committees for gender representation reasons.

Context

An import aspect of creating an environment that encourages the development of all staff is to ensure that participation on committees is representative and that roles are fairly distributed. Facilitating full participation also requires clear terms of reference and an up-front meeting schedule with appropriate meeting times (see the School's Meeting Hours Policy).

Commitment

The School of Chemistry commits to reviewing the Terms of Reference, proposed membership, meeting schedule and specific member roles for all principle committees (i.e. Executive, Research, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, Postgraduate and Safety Committees) at the start of each academic year (review by the EDI followed by approval by the School Exec). There will be a target of a minimum of 30% female representation on all committees, which is in line with the gender balance of staff members in the School. There should also be a minimum of 30% male representation on all committees, although any committee approaching this level is likely to be overburdening female staff.

Implementation

The Chairs of all committees for the next academic year will submit documentation related to the next academic year for consideration at the EDI's final meeting of the current academic year, as follows:

- Terms of reference
- Proposed membership (including student reps where known)
- Any specific member roles

The EDI will review this data in the context of overall committee membership, ensuring reasonable gender representation and that tasks (if assigned) are reasonably distributed across all of the committees. Feedback will be provided to Committee Chairs.

At the first meeting of School Exec in the next academic year (September), the Exec will be asked to approve the following:

- Terms of reference
- Proposed membership
- Meeting schedule
- Any specific member roles

Complaints

Complaints about committee membership, e.g., if someone feels that they are on too many committees (especially if they sit on a number of external committees), should be raised with the Head of School.

Version History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	October 2020	1st draft	Graeme Watson
1.1	December 2020	2nd draft incorporating feedback from Exec meeting on 22/12/2020	Graeme Watson

Impact

The impact of this policy is expected to be two-fold.

- 1) To ensure that committees have a better gender balance, with a target of a minimum of 30% female representation, which reflects the current gender balance of staff members in the School. It is expected that this target will rise if the number of female staff increases
- 2) To ensure that female committee members are not overburdened (especially when sitting on more than one committee).

How to measure impact

Survey questions

- 1) Are you aware of the policy and process?
- 2) Do you feel that the primary School Committees are gender balanced?
- 3) Do you know who represents you on the primary School Committees (Exec, EDI, Research, Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, Postgraduate, Safety) ?
- 4) Do the primary School committees work transparently?
- 5) Are meeting schedules of the primary School committees posted well in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts?

Details of gender representation on committees will be incorporated into all EDI annual reports.