

Contents

1. Equality gap narrowing – slowly – in HE
2. Age Discrimination – agreements, advice, etc.
3. Skill's annual higher education Conference
4. A Toolkit on the Disability Equality Duty (DED)
5. '24-7' Work-Life Balance Survey
6. HIV and your Disability Scheme
7. Same but Different
8. Who's in Charge?
9. Get in Touch

Changes are coming thick and fast in the equality field. Equality Extras will largely concentrate on short news items, with links to other resources. More detailed analysis will appear in Equality News.

1. Equality gap narrowing – slowly – in HE

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has published its report, 'The higher education workforce in England: A Framework for the future.' It deals with changes in the workforce during the ten year period 1995-2005. It claims that in this period the workforce increased by 20% and the total number of full-time equivalent academic staff grew by 17,000 to 97,000. During the period, the proportion of women in academic posts rose by 9% to 36%, and the proportion of women professors has doubled, but is still only 19%. The proportion of academic staff from black and minority ethnic backgrounds grew much more slowly, rising from 6% to 8%.

The gender pay gap is still a big issue, with the mean salary for male academics £5,000 more than for female academics. 18% of men earn more than £50,000, but only 6% of women do.

The full report, with much more detail, is available on the HEFCE website at www.hefce.ac.uk

2. Age Discrimination – agreements, advice, etc.

The Age Regulations have just come into force. Answers to questions about them appear in the September Equality News. In FE, the Joint Agreement on Age Equality in Employment has been reached between the AOC and the recognised FE unions. This covers the whole ranges of issues, from recruitment, through workplace culture to retirement. It has been sent out to colleges and can be found at www.ucu.org.uk/media/docs/b/e/feagree_age_1.doc

HE members might want to use it as a model to negotiate a policy locally.

ACAS have issued an advice leaflet for employers on their new rights. It can be found at: www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1044

UCU have conducted a survey of 1,000 HE lecturers covering topics including age discrimination. It found that 40% of lecturers under 35 feel they have experienced age discrimination, as do 30% of those aged over 50. Recent figures show that accordingly to the DfES, there were 132,486 FE teaching staff in England in 2004-5, of whom 47,311 (35.7%) were aged 50 plus. In the same year HESA figures show 158,885 academic professionals in HE, of whom 49,830 (31.4) were aged 50 plus.

3. Skill's annual higher education Conference

Skill (the national bureau for students with disabilities) will be holding its annual higher education conference for staff who plan and provide services for disabled students. The Conference will be on the 27th – 28th November in Leicester. It will of course focus on the new Disability Equality Duty. To register an interest, email sally@skill.org.uk

4. A Toolkit on the Disability Equality Duty (DED)

Meanwhile, for those in FE, the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) has produced a toolkit on implementing the Disability Equality Duty. This set of seven documents is designed to provide practical advice, tools and examples drawn from practice. You can download the toolkit by visiting the LSN website at www.lsneducation.org.uk click on 'Publications' and enter the word 'equality' in the 'Quick Search' option.

5. '24-7' Work-Life Balance Survey

The '24-7' Work-Life Balance Survey is an annual survey jointly run by the Work-Life Balance Centre in Leicestershire, the Centre of Industrial Relations at Keele University and Coventry University. The survey is an internet based questionnaire, which will run from 28th September – 15th November 2006. The findings will be published in February. The survey asks workers to highlight the problems they find with their 'work-life balance'. The survey website is:

www.24-7survey.co.uk

An analysis of last year's report can be found at: <http://uin.org.uk/content/view/70/66/>

6. HIV and your Disability Equality Scheme

This is the title of a free practical guide from the National Aids Trust. It advises on how to address HIV discrimination and inequality, and how to draw up a disability equality scheme that addresses the needs of people living with HIV. To obtain copies, visit www.nat.org.uk or call 020 7814 6759

7. Same but Different

The HEFCE-funded project 'Same but Different' has just been completed, and deals with different issues around student diversity (sexuality, mature students, disability, etc). The resource pack – a printed work-book and DVD – has been sent to all equality and diversity officers in all UK universities. It is available for sale. More details can be found at:

www.coventry.ac.uk/samebutdifferent

8. Who's in charge?

There have been a bewildering array of government ministers with responsibility for different areas of equality during the Blair years. We are moving closer to a less diffuse approach however. Age and disability are still the responsibility of the Department for Work and Pensions, now headed by John Hutton. All other areas of equality have been moved to the new Department for Communities and Local Government, headed by Ruth Kelly (a highly controversial appointment when it was realised she would have responsibility for equality).

This new department will have oversight of the setting up of the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR), due to become operational in October 2007. On 8th September, Ruth Kelly announced another highly controversial appointment – Trevor Phillips as Chair of the CEHR for the next three years (at an annual salary of £160,000). He will step down as Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) as soon as arrangements have been made to replace him. The CRE is currently not supposed to be assimilated into the CEHR until April 2009, but watch this space. As the Department for Communities and Local Government will be responsible for the CEHR, presumably age and disability will also be moved under its auspices when the CEHR becomes operational.

9. Get in Touch

To contact the Equality Unit for more information about anything in this email, please use the following contacts:

Administrative matters

Pauline Bartlett or Tracie Coals eqadmin@UCU.org.uk, 0207 837 3636 Ext. 3227

Race and Religion or Belief

Chris Nicholas – cnicholas@ucu.org.uk, 0207 837 3636 Ext. 3273

Disability and Age

Charlotte Nielsen – cnielsen@ucu.org.uk 0207 670 9719

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Kate Heasman – kheasman@ucu.org.uk 0207 837 3636 Ext 3225