



THE LEARNED SOCIETY OF WALES CYMDEITHAS DDYSGEDIG CYMRU

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY – CELEBRATING SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVING THE NATION
YR ACADEMI GENEDLAETHOL – YN DATHLU YSGOLHEICTOD A GWASANAETHU'R GENEDL

Diversity and Inclusion Review: Progress to Date

In June 2017, the Appointments, Governance and Nominations Committee, following on the approval of the recommendations in 2014 of the **Gender Balance Working Group** led by Dame Professor Teresa Rees, recommended commissioning a wider review focusing on the “**diversity of fellowship in the Society**”, and invited Professor Terry Threadgold to lead. The remit for the review was approved by Council on 25th October 2017.

A steering group was approved at that meeting and subsequently enlarged following an email to Fellows asking for expressions of interest.

The Steering Group has met twice and three working groups have been established:

1. Human Resources and Governance
2. Nomination and Election
3. Strategic Equality Plan

The work of the Steering Group has been integrated wherever possible into that of the group developing the new Strategic Plan which now foregrounds Diversity as a value of the LSW.

The work of the review has continued since that time and it is anticipated that a draft interim report will be presented to Council for its approval at its June meeting in 2018.

This paper is designed to give the Fellowship as much information as possible about the direction that review is taking and about likely actions and recommendations. Note however that the Steering Group has not yet signed off on everything presented here and that Council may also want some changes.

Fellows are invited to feedback to Professor Threadgold on any aspect of what is proposed in this paper before the interim report is sent forward.

Summary of Progress to date

Preliminary Research

1. Literature and Evidence

The Steering Group has completed a preliminary literature review, a review of Strategic Equality Plans, Athena and Race Charter Action plans from Welsh institutions, and looked at the reports available on women in STEM. We have also been benchmarking against other comparable learned societies, updating our own LSW statistics on gender and inclusion, reviewing the success of measures introduced following the Rees Report in 2014 and considering the results of our own LSW survey of Fellows in 2017.

This will provide the basis for the introduction to the report and the background against which our own current issues need to be evaluated and dealt with. One of those issues is:

2. The Role of Fellows: Engagement

One of the findings of the 2017 survey carried about by the LSW was that those fellows who responded (only 87) were not always clear about the role of fellows or about the society's aims and purpose. One of the society's perennial difficulties is how to engage all of its fellows in its activities. There is a group of very active people who make the organisation what it is and has become in the years since it was founded: but many fellows do not actively engage. Attendance is poor at events designed to bring fellows together and people are not always willing to give of their time to assist with governance and development.

This is a real issue. The Society can only be as good and as active as its fellows. Engagement is of mutual benefit. Fellows help the society to deliver on its aims and that in turn makes it possible for the society to deliver more for its fellows.

Recommendation

Other learned societies are more explicit than the LSW about the expectations and responsibilities of fellows. We ask fellows to 'contribute' which some do. One recommendation therefore is that the LSW develop a clear statement of expectations and responsibilities which all newly elected fellows and all existing fellows should sign up to.

3. Skills and Diversity Audit: who are our Fellows?

The Steering Group have developed a Skills and Diversity Audit to be circulated to all Fellows. The results of this will provide us with a data base of information about our fellows which will allow us to engage fellows in an informed and constructive way.

This has been piloted by the members of the Steering Group and circulated to Council members for feedback.

To 'encourage a greater representation of diversity within the fellowship' we need to understand better than we currently do what kinds of skills, experience, scholarship and diversity characterise the fellowship now. This will help us to understand where there are gaps in our talent and resource

pool and in representation so that we have the potential to move forward in an informed and prioritised way.

But we need all fellows to actively engage with the audit if it is to provide us with the kinds of information we need to take forward with your collaboration initiatives like: the pilot schools program, the idea of a young academy, building networks of fellows with similar interests, communicating more effectively and widely with all Fellows in town hall like meetings around issues of contemporary importance.

We need you to want to be part of these activities and to really contribute to what the society can do. But first we have to know who you are, what you can offer us, what we can do for you and who is missing from our fellowship at present. This audit will help us to understand these things.

Recommendations

Will follow once the audit has been completed and analysed and the results published.

4. Interviews and Focus Groups

Professor Threadgold has interviewed all Scrutiny Panel Chairs and carried out three focus groups to date in Aberystwyth, Bangor and Swansea.

The results of these interviews and focus groups, along with the survey results from 2017, are feeding directly into the work of the three Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups.

The Three Working Groups

1. The Governance and Human Resources Working Group

a. Human Resources

Responsible for reviewing all position descriptions and current roles to ensure clarity, consistency, transparency and inclusiveness and to resolve any inequities or uncertainties in the current arrangements.

This work aims to ensure transparency about the ways in which decisions are made.

Other areas under review include:

- Staff Development, appraisal and line management processes.
- Communication flows within the organisation.
- Harnessing of institutional memory so that key decisions are not lost or forgotten as key staff move on.

Recommendations:

Recommendations will follow on all of these issues. They will need to be supported by the Executive, and approved by the appropriate committees.

One that is already clear is that the HR function needs to be developed by the Finance Committee, whose Terms of Reference include Human Resources.

b. Governance:

Responsible for reviewing committee structure and membership across the organisation. We have nothing like gender balance on key committees at present and we must find ways of improving this.

Appointment of Scrutiny Panel Chairs and Members and Operation of Panels:

The General Secretary, Professor Alan Shore, has drafted, with input from the review, a set of guidelines for Scrutiny Panel Chairs, now being redrafted after initial feedback, to ensure consistency and transparency in the way panel chairs and members of panels are appointed and in the ways in which panels then operate. Once approved informally these will be available as draft guidelines for the 2018 nomination and election process. They will need to be approved by the Governance, Nominations and Elections Committee in June.

2. The Nominations and elections Working Group

This group, informed by Professor Threadgold's interviews with Scrutiny Panel Chairs, has been re-examining the criteria for the nomination and appointment of fellows to ensure that these are not unconsciously excluding valuable but different forms of learning, scholarship, and professional activity.

Recommendations (all to be approved by Steering Group and Council):

- Making the criteria for election much more explicit and much more diverse.
- The criteria of excellence to include explicitly contributions to Teaching and Scholarship, to Research and Research Impact, knowledge transfer activities, and to Engagement both within and beyond the HEI, including administrative and managerial support for all academic activities and recognising excellence wherever it occurs in the professions, the arts, industry, commerce or public service.
- Nominations required to address the criteria and the CV.
- Requiring a summary CV provided by the nominee and written to a template designed to give Scrutiny Panels and Panel Chairs the information they need to make often difficult decisions.
- Requiring well evidenced and independent referees' and assessors' reports, which address the criteria.
- Accepting that not all careers look identical and that allowing for that difference does not deny excellence.
- Accepting that being 'learned' is possible in early and mid-career and not just at the end of a career.

New Documents: There will be a set of new documents for the nomination and election process. These are designed to increase transparency and make criteria as explicit as possible. We know from the work of other learned societies that the more transparent the process is the more likely women and other under-represented groups are to accept nomination. Greater explicitness is helpful to both nominees and those nominating them (Rees 2014).

Feedback should be provided to all unsuccessful candidates through the nominator. Draft guidance on this to be approved.

Dormant applications which have been in the system for 3 or 5 years should not just sit there. The general consensus is that an unsuccessful nomination should receive feedback and then either be withdrawn or be re-presented with updates the following year up to a total of the three years currently possible. The current gap before re-submission would then apply.

Nominations Committee: The Nominations part of the Governance, Nominations and Elections Committee which is already constituted (following the Rees Report in 2014) to do what needs doing, should be reconstituted to actively find nominees and promote nominations. This work would include looking at the statistics on nominations and elections each year and deciding where balance (of e.g., gender, age, race, language, discipline, geography) is missing or patchy and using 'themes' based on these areas each year to promote different kinds of nominations. The committee must be much more pro-active than it has been and start doing what it currently says it will do.

The Cap on Election:

- The Society to review the current working of the cap on elections each year. In particular to consider:
- Whether the society needs to be less stringent about the cap when it have excellent nominations it is turning away.
- Whether there is a need to be flexible about the cap to encourage the kind of diversity the society values.
- How to manage the process if the cap were made more flexible.

Note: The RSE has already made the cap much more flexible to allow more diversity. The Cap was changed by Rees review for three years in 2014 to allow more nominations of women. The LSW Could consider doing something similar for: Rising stars with great potential, ethnic minorities, particular disciplines or areas of excellence, multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary activity.

Training for panel chairs and members. The approval of these changes would require some training and support for panel members and chairs.

Next Steps:

- **To write the interim report**
- To seek approval for the above from the Review Steering Group and Council.
- To analyse and report on the results of the Skills and Diversity Audit
- To convene the third working group to develop the Strategic Equality Plan.
- To write the final report.

TT: 02/05.2018