

# Equity & Diversity

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**In line with the Human Rights Act (1993), the University considers it to be axiomatic that there should be equality of opportunity in employment and education for all of its staff and students, irrespective of background. Thus it is accepted that age, gender, ethnicity or disability should not disadvantage or hinder appointment, professional development, promotion, advancement or successful study.**

Formal oversight of equity and diversity rests with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) and the Directors of Student Services and Communications, and Human Resources who jointly hold the Equity and Diversity portfolio within the Senior Management Team. In fulfilling these responsibilities, they are advised in policymaking and operational matters by members of the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee (EDAC) and the Human Resources team. Colleges and Service Units also have their own Equity and Diversity Committees. Equity and diversity issues underpin the core business of the University and hence are considered to be of concern to every member of the University community. The overall aim of Equity and Diversity is to make the University a place where equity is an integral part of the culture and in which diversity is celebrated.

In December 2012, the University of Canterbury Council endorsed Rautaki Whakawhanake Kaupapa Māori – Māori for Strategy Development. This is the inaugural strategy of its type for the University and targets key aspects of equity and diversity. This is built on work over recent years of the University which has focused on ensuring equity in the recruitment, selection and promotion of staff. The success of this initiative was most clearly represented in the increase in the number of women holding senior academic posts<sup>1</sup> in the University<sup>2</sup>. In 2012, women comprised 26.7% (22.4% in 2010) of senior academic staff. This represented the most significant percentage increase of any university in the period 2010 to 2012. Women occupy major leadership positions at the University including the Directors of Student Services and Communications, Learning Resources, and in three of the five academic colleges.

During 2012, the EDAC provided input into policies and decisions affecting a wide spectrum of University activities including:

- The implementation of the centralised timetabling system
- The development of the 2014 academic term dates
- Changes to the on campus childcare facilities available to students and staff
- The initiation of an accessibility review to ensure that all remediation and betterment projects undertaken by the University accommodate those with disabilities
- A review of the staff composition to ensure that progress continues to be made towards gender, ethnicity and disability balance
- Production of student equity reports

In 2012, the financial situation of the University has become progressively clearer. In this context, there is a pressure to ensure that the University applies its scarce resources to maximise the benefit. To that end, the EDAC has recommended that a strategic review of its function and structure is implemented to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and contributes to the realisation of our strategic intent. This review will conclude in 2013.

<sup>1</sup> Professors and Associate Professors

<sup>2</sup> New Zealand Census of Women's Participation, Human Rights Commission, pp137–139.