
SUBMISSION TO SEG HUMAN RESOURCES AND EQUITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 August 2013

FOR DISCUSSION: SUBMISSION REGARDING SEX AND GENDER DIVERSITY

TIMOTHY SCRIVEN, SUPRA QUEER OFFICER

2013/04

Recommendation

That the SEG Human Resources and Equity Committee note the report.

As you are no doubt aware, numerous students identify as neither male nor female. There is a diverse array of gender and sex identities of students at this university. Governments and institutions around the world have begun to take steps to recognise these differences. For example, a recent decision of the NSW Court of Appeal [1] ruled that not everyone must be listed as either a male or a female with the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. Further, a number of SUPRA's constituents have complained of being marginalised by various forms, surveys etc. which require the identification of oneself as either male or female. We note that being forced to misgender one's self can cause considerable distress.

A recent conference of queer students from around the country identified this as a priority in ending discrimination against gender and sex diverse people at university, and the CAPA and NUS Queer Officers are both supportive of policy changes in this area.

Significantly, the federal government has recently changed its guidelines to require all of its agencies to provide a third option in the gender category [2]. Further, in June the government passed sweeping reforms to the Sex Discrimination Act, giving full recognition to intersex and transgender people by broadening the grounds of discrimination covered by the Act [3].

It is SUPRA's view that the University should take immediate steps to recognise the diversity of its students. Therefore we propose that the University consider phasing out any policies, forms etc. which require the identification of oneself as male or female, and consult with the gender and sex diverse community around preferred alternatives, SUPRA will be happy to assist in this process.

We also request that we be invited to the next meeting of SEG Human Resources and Equity in order to discuss the way forward in these matters.

I am looking forward to working with the committee on achieving positive change in this area for the University and our constituents and thank the committee for its consideration.

Timothy Scriven
SUPRA Queer Officer

[1] <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/nsw/NSWCA/2013/145.html>

[2]

<http://www.ag.gov.au/Publications/Pages/AustralianGovernmentGuidelinesontheRecognitionofSexandGender.aspx>

[3] http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r5026