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ECU



- Established 2001 in response to Bett and Dearing Reports
- Set up 'to promote equality of opportunity for all those that work or seek to work in the UK higher education sector'
- Funded by sector

Initial staffing and focus

- Director, 2 Policy Advisers, Comms Officer and Administrator
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation Regulations

2005 Review recommendations



- Assumption of student remit
- Change in legal entity
- Refocusing of activities on generating, supporting and implementing good practice
- Benchmarking of sector's equal opportunities performance
- Provision of guidance and support to HEIs as they benchmark for themselves
- The Unit's publications should be made available in Welsh
- Funding guaranteed until 2010

New structure and staff

- Board of Directors
- Strategic Advisory Co-ordination Group
- New Chief Executive
- Funding for 16 FTEs

2005 - Present



- Focus on implementation of race equality duty
- Preparation for age discrimination legislation
- Gender Equality Duty
- Provisions of Equality Act

Equality Act 2006

- Establishes the Commission for Equality and Human Rights
- Extends protection on grounds of religion or belief to goods, facilities and services
- Extends protection on grounds of sexual orientation to goods, facilities and services
- Introduces a positive duty on public sector organisations to ***promote*** equality of opportunity between men and women

Conditions for the creation of the CEHR



- Plethora of equalities legislation
- EU Directives
- Domestic laws
- Discrimination Law Review
- Equalities Review
- No dedicated Commissions for sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age
- Human Rights Act

Creation of the CEHR



The new body will

“ play a key role in building a new, inclusive sense of British citizenship and identity in which shared values of respect, fair treatment and equal dignity are recognised as underpinning a cohesive, prosperous society”

Patricia Hewitt

CEHR - role



- Tackle discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age from 2007
- Race from 2009
- Provide support for the Human Rights Act
- Address inequalities in public service provision

CEHR - Remit



- Provide information, advice and assistance on E&D, human rights and good relations across the board
- Issue guidance
- Conduct formal enquiries
- Challenge prejudice
- Promote good relations

CEHR - Consequences



- Loss of dedicated Commissions
- Move towards greater social cohesion
- Single point of contact for individuals, businesses and the voluntary sector
- Able to tackle multiple discrimination
- ‘State of the Nation’ report may shame/galvanise sectors into addressing E&D

What can ECU do for the HE sector?



- Inform and advise institutions on the implementation of good equalities practice
- Disseminate good equalities practice between institutions
- Disseminate statistics relating to equality areas
- Produce guidance documents
- Run workshops, seminars and conferences aimed at different levels of staff in HEIs