



**THE LEARNED SOCIETY OF WALES**  
**CYMDEITHAS DDYSGEDIG CYMRU**

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

## **Proposed Review of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Remit**

**Professor Emerita Terry Threadgold**

### **1. Introduction**

In 2014, the Council of the Learned Society of Wales approved the Report and Recommendations of the **Gender Balance Working Group** led by Dame Professor Teresa Rees. The equality focused report and recommendations that were published, together with the benchmarking data against other learned societies, was designed to address the need to “ensure an appropriate balance within the fellowship” in terms of age, subject and geographical distribution, but particularly gender. Specifically, the review addressed “the under-representation of women among nominees” and came up with a series of practical recommendations about how the society could “...ensure more women of suitable quality were nominated” for Fellowship consideration, thereby increasing the representation of women among the Fellowship.

In June 2017, the Appointments, Governance and Nominations Committee recommended commissioning a wider review focusing on the “**diversity of fellowship in the Society**”, and invited Professor Terry Threadgold to lead.

The Learned Society of Wales recognises and values the diversity and different perspectives that people from different backgrounds bring. The aim of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Review 2017 is to ensure that the Society has the practices in place to ensure fairness and equality in all its workings.

### **2. Purpose of the Review:**

1. As diversity applies to every sphere of Society activity, the main purpose of this review will be (and in keeping with the 2010 Equity Act) to ensure that no group connected with the society is treated unfavourably on the grounds of ethnicity, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour religion or belief.
2. By recognising and valuing such differences, a second aim to ensure that deserving talent within any community is encouraged to join the Fellowship and that nominations are treated with equal fairness.

Given the broader remit, the following scope of the review is suggested:

- (1) Consider diversity defined in terms of the 2010 UK Equality Act, but also taking in to consideration the geography and specific nature of Welsh Higher Education Institutions;
- (2) Consider the outward looking face of the LSW (including the constitution and role/s of its Fellowship, its interactions with and support of other stakeholders and its contribution to Welsh Universities and to Wales);
- (3) Consider any of the society’s internal structures, process and practices that impact on the diversity of the fellowship.

In focussing on equality, diversity and inclusion, the review takes seriously the statement from The Royal Society of Edinburgh publication: *Tapping all Our Talents* in the 2014 report: “Learned Bodies must also ensure that their own house is in order, by providing fair and inclusive working environments for their own staff as well as balanced and transparent processes for their elections and awards” (p. 14).

It is also expected that the review will take into account the results of the current stakeholder and Fellows Survey which includes the broader questions of ‘What is a Fellow for?’ and ‘What should the priorities of the Society be?’ where these relate to questions of diversity and inclusion and issues of engagement.

Similarly the review will consider how internal society structures support and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion.

Specifically the **terms of reference** (key objectives) of this review will include:

- **Ensuring that the Society is fully compliant with the regulatory context governing these issues in Wales.**
- **Providing practical recommendations that support the cultural and organisational change necessary to ensure the equality, diversity and inclusion the LSW seeks to support.**
- **Provide the Society with a new policy covering equality, diversity and inclusion designed to ensure that the Society complies with its obligations under equity legislation.**

### **3. Actions of the Review**

#### **3.1 – Steering group**

There will need to be a small engaged Steering Group required to support the review’s work. This may include some members of the previous Working Group on Gender but also some new members of Council and Fellows from the wider Fellowship.

Possible Steering group:

**Council:** Ole Peterson, David Boucher, Nancy Edwards, Sioned Davies

**Scrutiny Committee Chairs:** STEMM – Ieuan Hughes and Rob Beynon; Arts, Hums and Social Sciences – Gareth Rees and Kevin Flynn

**Secretariat:** Amanda Kirk

It may be useful to co-opt one or two external members (not necessarily Fellows) to this group who have relevant experience of diversity matters.

In the interests of transparency, inclusion and engagement it will be important that the Fellowship is informed of the review and its remit, and that a general invitation be issued to Fellows seeking their involvement.

*The Chair of the Review will provide regular updates to the Executive Committee and CE and the final paper and recommendations will be considered by Council.*

### **3.2 – Role of Fellows**

As the review is mainly designed to “encourage a greater representation of diversity within the fellowship” this review will focus on the question of who Fellows should be, what they are for, and how they can be better engaged with and aware of the diversity agenda. These questions are key to the inclusion and nurture of diversity and the society’s efforts to do everything to widen the current field.

A skills audit of the current fellowship is suggested to provide the society with current knowledge of resources of talent and any gaps within it. This might also provide the Society with the information needed to engage fellows in new ways in supporting learning in Wales.

Depending on staff and Fellowship resources and engagement some activities that might be considered include:

- establishing a new proactive nomination committee to support the Society’s fellowship elections and to encourage nomination of candidates from all under-represented areas,
- mentor schemes for potential fellows encouraged to advise potential nominees,
- increasing the outreach work of fellows (e.g. museums in Wales),
- involving other industries and partners,
- supporting initiatives designed to improve diversity of representation in STEM in Wales.

### **3.3 – Outcomes of 2014 Review**

A review of the outcomes of the 2014 report will be a good starting point. What has been achieved? This may include an update of the data sets published in the 2014 report as a means of comparison.

The current review will also need to include a wider data set relating to all the protected characteristics listed in the 2010 Equality Act and to the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. It is unlikely that there will be much data available in relation to these (See the Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel Report on REF 2014). However, it is common, given the membership for Life in Learned Bodies and the academic cultures from which fellows are nominated and elected that there can be a preponderance of (older) male members (*Tapping All Our Talents*, 2014 report p. 14) and now of (older, white) male and female members.

If there is a real absence of this kind of diversity it should be noted and action taken where appropriate, and possible, to change it. This would almost certainly involve re-examining the criteria for the nomination and appointment of fellows and ensuring that these are not excluding valuable but different forms of learning and scholarship, looking again at the whole question of re-nomination and introducing the kind of transparent criteria and benchmarking which would allow for explicit and focussed feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

### **3.4 – Internal structures, process and practices**

A review of the society’s internal structures, policies and working processes with a view to ensuring they are transparent, inclusive and as equitable as possible. This will include the way:

- the office works
- committee structure and membership
- communication flows within the organisation
- transparency about the way decisions are made
- and in particular the nomination, appointment of, and feedback to unsuccessful fellows.

Existing policies will need to be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose. Some are notably missing. There is no Welsh Language policy and no Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy for the organisation.

#### **4. Time Frame**

Depending on finalising the remit and securing relevant members of a small steering group it is hoped to have the review complete and ready for the Easter Council meeting 2018.

#### **Summary**

The above outlines a proposed remit and scope of the planned review of diversity. Actions of the review 3.1-3.4 will need to be explored further in order to ensure diversity is at the heart of the Society and its work. To do this the review will need to consult widely with the existing fellowship and officers. The report once written will need to ensure that recommendations are prioritised and can all be implemented within the current context and importantly within the perimeters of the society existing resources.

