

Regent's Park College: Single Equality Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Regent's Park College aims to provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected to assist them in reaching their full potential.

1.2 No prospective or actual student or member of staff will be treated less favourably than any other, whether before, during or after their study or employment at the college on one or more of the following grounds (subject to any legal constraints and in relation to the protected characteristics laid out in the Equality Act 2010): age; colour; disability; ethnic origin; gender reassignment; marital or civil partnership status; nationality; national origin; parental status; pregnancy or childbirth; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; or length or type of contract (e.g. part-time or fixed-term).

1.3 In order to realise its commitment, the college will:

- promote the aims of this policy;
- promote equality and good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- be proactive in eliminating discrimination, including harassment and bullying, through training and the production and dissemination of codes of practice and guidance;
- have regard to its obligations under relevant current legislation, and ensure that its policies, codes of practice and guidance mirror the same;
- make this policy, as well as all codes of practice and guidance available to all staff and students; and
- regularly review the terms of this policy and all associated codes of practice and guidance taking special account of the Policies and Codes of practice of the University of Oxford.

2. Policy Development and Review

2.1 The college has established an Equality Committee consisting of two Fellows, an external member of Governing Body, the College's Racial Justice Adviser, the Chaplain, the Principal's PA who carries HR responsibilities, one representative of the MCR, two representatives of the JCR, and the Principal in the chair.

2.2 The Equality Committee will have overall responsibility for coordination of policy development and the identification of priorities. It will meet once a term and will hold its annual review each Trinity Term. The Equality Committee will report to the Governing Body annually, and more often if required.

2.3 The College will ensure that specific provision for issues relating to equal opportunities is incorporated into strategic planning and policy development reviews.

2.4 Governing Body and all its committees will embed consideration of equal opportunity issues and the duty to promote equal opportunities in the development of policies and procedures at all levels.

2.5 The College will regularly review college regulations, student disciplinary procedures, and student complaints procedures to ensure that all procedures are fair and equitable and consistently implemented.

2.6 College staff disciplinary and grievance procedures incorporate procedures which are fair, equitable and consistently implemented.

2.7 The College has a code of practice on harassment for both staff and students based on the University code.

2.8 Colleges will review procurement and contracting with equal opportunities considerations in mind.

2.9 The College promotes good race relations between all racial groups within the college and keeps under review its outreach and admissions policies in order to prevent racial discrimination.

2.10 The College is aware of its obligations to extend accessibility for people with disabilities and has undertaken a disability audit and implemented most of its recommendations. A Disability Equality Scheme and a Gender Equality Scheme are also in place.

3. Student Support

3.1 The procedures for all room allocations are deemed to be fair and equitable. Allocation of rooms for third and some fourth year undergraduates is based on the JCR operated student ballot.

3.2 The JCR is briefed on potential equality issues when conducting their accommodation ballot, and procedures are in place for proper consideration of welfare and other issues when allocating rooms

3.3 College scholarships and prizes are awarded in accordance with their stipulated criteria and in line with the policy stated in 1.2.

3.4 Hardship funds are allocated by the University Student Support office based on evidence submitted in a HEFCE endorsed application form.

3.5 The College keeps under review its provision of student pastoral support and welfare services to ensure that these are equally accessible to all members of the college community.

4. Staff selection, recruitment and remuneration

4.1 The College observes the principles of the University code of practice for the recruitment and selection of college employees in order to ensure equality of opportunity.

4.2 The College maintains a remuneration committee which considers individual pay and grading changes, and determines salary levels for new posts on an 'equal pay for equal value' basis. The remuneration committee comprises the Treasurer and three other members of Governing Body – none of whom are in the employment of the college.

5. Consultation

5.1 The College regularly solicits the views of staff and students regarding the development and maintenance of this policy.

6. Admissions

6.1 The College works in partnership with the Admissions Executive to support the implementation of the Executive's action plan on undergraduate admissions.

6.2 The College has implemented the OCAE Code of Practice on Undergraduate Admissions as agreed by Conference of Colleges and the Admissions Executive

6.3 The College ensures that all those involved in undergraduate admissions receive appropriate briefing from OCAO on the implications of race equality in selection of students.

6.4 The College ensures that all subject selection panels contain at least one member who has participated in Oxford University seminars on student selection since 1992.

7. Graduate Admissions

7.1 The College selects only graduate students to whom the University has offered places or who have been through other University approved processes, and presumes that the offers accord to approved University academic policy, with reference to the appropriate legislation.

8. Monitoring and Impact

8.1 The College will publish the Equal Opportunities Policy and Action Plan on the College website and distribute copies to all staff and students and post on appropriate notice boards

8.2 Staff and student contracts will incorporate references to equality provisions and the college Equal Opportunities Policy

8.3 In consultation with relevant committees, the Equal Opportunities Policy & Monitoring Group will monitor and assess activities annually. Reports will include information on consultation undertaken as part of the assessment process. In such a small institution monitoring is difficult, but the Equality Committee will ensure that the following functions are subject to scrutiny in the course of each academic year:

8.3.1. Staff selection and career progression, grievances, discipline and access to training

8.3.2. Student admissions, progress and performance, complaints and discipline.

8.4 The Equality Committee will identify criteria against which the outcome of monitoring may be assessed.

8.5 In the event that the outcome of monitoring discloses potentially adverse impact on a group or groups, the Equal Opportunities Policy & Monitoring Group will bring this to the attention of the Governing Body for consideration and action including further research, where appropriate

9. Guidance, support and training

The College will review the training opportunities available to all of its staff and introduce additional provision where necessary or desirable – particularly to key managers and supervisors assist in the dissemination of information, briefing material, guidance and advice from the University.

10. Action Plan

10.1 The college is committed to developing its Single Equality Duty Action Plan by 6 April 2012, as required by the Equality Act 2010. When ready for implementation that plan will be published as an appendix to this document

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