

## The Staton Essay Prize, 2018

### **‘Empowerment’**

The Staton Essay Prize is an essay competition open to all students currently studying in Year 12 anywhere in the UK (or its equivalent in the EU and internationally). The competition focuses on the Humanities, reflecting the specialism at Regent’s Park College, in teaching and research across the Humanities and Social Sciences. It invites entrants to make connections across different subjects that they are studying at school, or to bring together a subject they are studying and a personal interest. The aim of the competition is to give school pupils the opportunity to explore connections between the subjects they study or are interested in, to develop their independent research skills and to encourage them to consider interdisciplinary courses at university.

### **PRIZES**

All entries will be acknowledged by letter in the autumn, and candidates whose work is commended by the judges will receive certificates. Three prizes will be awarded in total: £250 for the best essay overall, and a further two £150 prizes for the runners up. The three prize winners will be invited to a special awards dinner in College, to which they may bring guests, which usually takes place at the end of October.

### **HOW TO ENTER**

In NO MORE than 1500 words, answer ONE question from the list of 12 on the following page.

### **NOTES**

Your essay must bring together two or more subjects OR combine a subject you are studying with a personal interest.

Include a list of all the sources (including online resources and websites) that you have used to research and write your essay. This list is not included in the word count.

The competition will be judged by College tutors in the relevant disciplines. Unfortunately, essays will not be returned and the judges cannot provide feedback (written or verbal) to entrants.

The judges will be awarding marks for sophistication in the level of engagement between disciplines, clarity of thought and expression, and the careful choice of examples.

The judges’ decisions are final, and they reserve the right not to award a prize in any category if they consider that none of the entries reach the required standard.

Submit your essay electronically, with a completed title page, to: [essay@regents.ox.ac.uk](mailto:essay@regents.ox.ac.uk).

Please ensure that ONLY your initials and date of birth appear on EACH PAGE of the essay.

To download a title page for your essay, [click here](#).

The College cannot accept faxed entries.

**Closing date: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July**

1. Can a male author ever empower a female character he creates?
2. Does the empowerment of one group of people always mean the disempowerment of another?
3. Does history (or literature) exaggerate or minimise inequality?
4. Is it possible to be both empowered and poor?
5. What factor has been the most significant in the improvement of women's lives in the 20th century?
6. Under what circumstances have minorities been able to improve their standing?
7. Are tragedies always about powerful characters?
8. "I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature" (Maya Angelou). Does literature (or another art form) have any real power?
9. Is violence ever justified in the pursuit of empowerment?
10. How important are the use and validation of native languages in processes of empowerment?
11. Has the classical past empowered queer identity?
12. Is legal or cultural change more important in improving the lives of minority groups?