

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

Approved by: Governing Body

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Introduction

Regent's Park College ("the College") celebrates and values the diversity of its community, including staff (academic, professional, administrative, operational), students (matriculated, non-matriculated, full-time, part-time, ministerial, undergraduate and postgraduate, registered visiting students), visitors, and contractors.

We aim to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and are supported to thrive. We also recognise that individuals may experience disadvantages based on multiple and intersecting factors.

This policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149), which place specific responsibilities on public authorities, including higher education institutions.

We are committed to encouraging Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) among our staff and students, and to eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of the policy is to:

1. Ensure equality, fairness and respect for all staff, students, visitors and contractors; and
2. Prevent unlawful discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

Definitions

- **Equality:** Ensuring individuals or groups are not treated less favourably on the basis of protected characteristics.
- **Diversity:** Valuing and respecting differences in individuals and communities.
- **Inclusion:** Actively creating environments where everyone feels respected, supported, and able to participate fully.
- **Harassment and Discrimination:** As defined under the Equality Act 2010, unwanted conduct or behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates a hostile environment.

Commitments

Regent's Park College is committed to:

- 1. Encouraging and advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion** across all aspects of College life—academic, professional, operational, and social—ensuring that the College remains a welcoming environment for all.
- 2. Creating an environment that is free from bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination**, and in which individual differences and the contributions of all members of the community are actively recognised, valued, and supported.
- 3. Promoting dignity, mutual respect, and freedom of speech and expression**, within the bounds of the law and in a way that does not violate the dignity or safety of others.
- 4. Valuing the contributions of all staff, students, visitors, and contractors**, and fostering a culture of mutual respect and active inclusion..
- 5. Taking seriously all complaints of bullying, harassment, or unlawful discrimination**, whether experienced by staff, students, visitors, or contractors, and addressing them promptly and appropriately in line with the College's harassment, grievance, and disciplinary procedures.
- 6. Complying with all relevant legal obligations**, including those set out in the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)**.

Public Sector Equality Duty

As a public authority Regent's Park College is committed to having due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

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- ii) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- iii) foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech

We will fulfil all our EDI commitments in the context of respect for the importance of academic freedom and freedom of speech.

Staff

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To provide equality, fairness, and respect for all in our employment—whether temporary, permanent, part-time, or full-time, and casual staff; and
2. to oppose and prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination, including in the following areas:
 - Pay and benefits
 - Terms and conditions of employment
 - Grievances and disciplinary procedures
 - Dismissal
 - Redundancy
 - Parental leave
 - Requests for flexible working
 - Recruitment, promotion, training, and other developmental opportunities

All employment decisions, including those related to recruitment, remuneration, and advancement, are made fairly—based on skills, experience, and potential—except where limited exemptions apply under the Equality Act 2010.

Opportunities for training and development are actively offered to all staff, who are encouraged and supported to fulfil their potential so their skills and talents can be fully realised for the benefit of the College.

All tutors, supervisors, and student-facing staff are expected to undertake EDI training to ensure fair, inclusive, and supportive teaching and supervision.

Employment policies and practices are kept under regular review to ensure fairness, legal compliance, and alignment with the principles set out in this policy.

We collect data on the composition of the workforce—on a confidential and voluntary basis—with regard to age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability, to support our equality aims, meet legal duties, and improve inclusion outcomes.

Students

The College actively encourages applications from the widest possible pool of prospective students.

All decisions regarding undergraduate and postgraduate admissions are based solely on the individual merits of each applicant, using criteria relevant to the course of study. The College follows the University of Oxford's Common Framework for undergraduate admissions and ensures that all staff involved in admissions receive appropriate and up-to-date training in fair and inclusive recruitment.

Scholarships, bursaries, and academic prizes are awarded transparently and in accordance with clearly stated criteria.

Student pastoral support and welfare services are subject to ongoing review to ensure they remain responsive and accessible to all students, including those from underrepresented, disabled, or marginalised groups.

We are committed to fostering a student experience that supports belonging and minimises structural barriers to progression, attainment and wellbeing for all students including underrepresented and marginalised groups.

Responsibilities

All staff, students, and members of the College community are expected to:

- Understand and observe the principles and expectations set out in this policy;
- Treat others with dignity and respect, both in person and in all forms of communication, including digital and online interactions; and
- Uphold the College's commitment to promoting good relations, advancing equality of opportunity, and eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Staff with supervisory, managerial, or teaching responsibilities have an additional duty to:

- Embed equality, diversity, and inclusion into the practices of their teams;
- Foster an inclusive environment for work, research, and learning; and
- Promote a culture where concerns can be raised safely and without fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Third Parties and Visitors

All contractors, consultants, visitors, and external partners are expected to act in accordance with this policy. Any individual engaging in behaviour contrary to our values of dignity and respect may be asked to leave College premises.

Governance

This policy has been developed and agreed by the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and approved by the Governing Body.

It will be reviewed every 2 years—or sooner if there are changes in relevant legislation or College priorities—to ensure it remains fit for purpose and effective in practice by the EDI committee, taking into account the feedback from the EDI forum

Raising Concerns

Anyone who experiences or witnesses behaviour that contravenes this policy is encouraged to report it through the College's formal complaints (students), grievance (staff) or harassment procedures. We are committed to protecting individuals who raise concerns in good faith from victimisation or retaliation.

Harassment, disciplinary and grievance procedures

The College's policies and procedures related to harassment and grievance can be accessed via the [Governance and Compliance I](#), section of the College intranet.

Information about how to raise a concern, seek advice, or make a formal complaint is set out in these procedures.

The student **non-academic disciplinary policy** and the **staff disciplinary procedure** are available [Governance and Compliance I](#). The staff disciplinary policy is available in the Employee Handbook at [S:\Admin\Staff](#) Resources.

Individuals who raise concerns in good faith are protected from victimisation and retaliation. There is a whistleblowing policy in the Employee Handbook.