Equality Report 2016-2017

Introduction

The College

The Queen’s College is one of 38 independent, self-governing colleges within the collegiate University of Oxford. The College is an education provider, an employer and a provider of conferences and events. As a result, the College has a broad range of members and users and so a broad range of responsibilities with regard to equality and diversity.

Our approach to equality and diversity is outlined in more detail in our Equality Policy https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/sites/www.queens.ox.ac.uk/files/Equal-Opportunities-Policy.pdf

We follow closely policy and procedures of the central University, but also set our own objectives in line with local priorities. These are largely set by the Governing Body taking into account recommendations from other committees (including Domestic, Academic, Equality, Estates and Finance, Development), and with input from the Decanal Office, the JCR and MCR, and representatives of the College staff. This enables representation from the widest possible cross-section of the College constituency.

Legal Position

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination in employment or the provision of training and education in respect of a number of protected characteristics. It also introduced the concept of a general equality duty, which covers protected characteristics identified in the Act (with the exception of marriage and civil partnership). The general duty has three main aims:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- To foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those involved

In addition, the Act introduced a number of specific duties which require the College (which is deemed to be a public authority for these purposes) to:

- Annually publish information to demonstrate our compliance with the general equality duty to include information of employees and service users of the College who share a protected characteristic
• Publish objectives setting out how we will meet the requirements of the Act, at least every four years
• Ensure the published information and objectives are made available to the public

Purpose of this report

This report is The Queen’s College's equality report for the 2016-2017 academic year and seeks to demonstrate how the College is meeting its commitments under the Equality Act 2010. In addition, progress with longer term objectives for the period 2016-2020 is reported. The report outlines its activities and achievements. This has been analysed and used to:

• Identify any areas for further improvement
• Inform the setting of targets and indicators for the existing equality objectives
• Identify additional objectives

Public Sector Equality Duty – Objectives and Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Background

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) the College is required to report on progress against objectives at least annually and to set itself new objectives at intervals of no greater than four years. This document fulfils the requirements of the PSED for April 2016 to April 2020.

Our Vision

The Queen’s College is fully committed to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination in all of its activities, and in respect of students, staff, visitors, contractors and relationships with the wider community and general public.

We are committed to treating all people with dignity and respect, irrespective of any protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic origin and nationality), religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation). (N.B. Marriage and civil partnership are also protected in respect of employment only.)

Our aim is to be an institution where everyone can be themselves and reach their full potential in an environment of fairness and trust.

Objectives and Targets for 2016-2020

Training

• Create a training framework to ensure that all staff are aware of their role with regard to the PSED and are fully supported in delivering this
• Ensure an ongoing programme of training for students who occupy positions of responsibility in the student body and in College clubs and societies
Recruitment and Selection

- Review the categories used for collecting data on protected characteristics, how the information is used, and ensure our compliance with GDPR
- Review of recruitment procedures to ensure continuing compliance and best practice

Access

- Ongoing programme of improvements to make The Queen’s College estate as accessible as possible, to include invisible as well as visible disabilities, and within the constraints of listed building status
- Review of procedures to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of accommodation, bursaries, prizes, scholarships and hardship funds, given the constraints of trusts involved
- Ongoing review of the processes and training in support of the University’s common framework on admissions and access for students

Consultation

- Ensure ongoing consultation regarding the Equality Policy with all relevant groups in College
- Liaise with the University Disabilities Advisory Service (DAS) regarding Equality Committee advice

The University has the high-level commitment to embed equality and diversity across all of its activities. These include the twin aims of:

- Working toward an increasingly diverse staffing profile
- Providing equality of opportunity for all students to achieve and demonstrate their full academic potential

…and these aims are embedded in all College policies and procedures.

The College also has its own local priorities and has set its own specific equality objectives.

Report on progress with our long term ‘specific and measurable’ equality objectives

Provision of accessible and gender neutral facilities. College has made very good progress to provide dedicated accessible and gender-neutral facilities on the main College site. College now has a purpose-built stand-alone fully accessible toilet on the main College site. In addition, new fully accessible facilities have been constructed in new buildings on the main College site, including in Shulman Auditorium. The new basement addition to the 17th century library, completed in April 2017, provides fully accessible facilities and non-designated toilets.

In addition, gender-neutral toilets, showers and baths are widely available in all College premises. On the main College site, we provide mainly non-designated facilities for students, staff and visitors who prefer to use these. One of these, recently
refurbished, was reassessed before work began and the decision made that these remain a non-designated facility, providing two toilets and two shower rooms.

**Improving accessibility to and within the main College site**

We have had mixed success in implementing this objective. By installing a lift, we have made the communal rooms on the first floor of the main building fully accessible. This required a great deal of planning, given that the main site is a Grade 1 listed building. A ramp from the high street entrance was completed in 2016 to allow both front and rear level access to the College. One of these gates, at the rear of the College, known as the library late gate, has an intercom to the Lodge, allowing visual and voice communication that means anyone can seek assistance from the Lodge for entry to the College.

However, restrictions have made it impossible to achieve the objectives with regards to making other communal facilities in College fully accessible, such as the Beer Cellar and the Junior Common Room. These remain long term-objects and in order to meet them we have agreed to commission consultants to brief on a masterplan for the College estate, including a holistic and comprehensive plan for providing access for persons with disability.

Additional progress towards meeting our long-term objectives is outlined below in the report for the academic year 2016-2017.

**Summary and report on actions taken in the academic year 2016-2017 to support our equality objectives**

**General Activities**

- We wish to use “blind” gender-neutral selection procedures where possible for positions in College following the recent successful process for Head Porter recruitment
- We continue to improve our processes for recruitment and induction to ensure that our policies regarding harassment and equality, for example, are an integral part of the process
- We have started to conduct exit interviews when staff leave giving them the opportunity to give feedback on their experiences at Queen’s. This has been particularly useful for driving change within the organisation
- We have provided training for managers who are responsible for recruiting others in understanding protected characteristics and in unconscious/implicit bias
- We have implemented active decision-making processes, guided by the PSED, for every committee meeting and meeting of the Governing Body
- We are an active part of the “Target Oxbridge” programme of access/outreach focusing on the BME students in London boroughs such as Lewisham
- Engagement with College Staff led to requests for specific training in certain equalities issues. College has identified appropriate providers to deliver training appropriate to the different needs of College staff. College has been working with our preferred providers to design and deliver an appropriate programme. The outcome will be reported in the next period of reporting and thus this objective has been partially fulfilled
• Equality-focused training for students at The Queen’s College occurs during induction sessions at the start of each academic year. In addition, specific events organised by the JCR or MCR focus on equality-related issues, such as gender issues, women in science, consent workshops, are held throughout the academic year. Student representatives attend the Equality Committee meetings every term.

• The College has established the following procedures to support disabled students which start from the admissions exercise. If the student indicates on their UCAS form a known disability, the College Office follows up by direct contact asking for details of any special arrangements which might be required. These are put in place for when they come for interview. Once they have made their offer, the disability advice service (DAS) put in place assessments for the students via eVision so that it can be accessed and acted on by College. The College DAS liaison person contacts College to discuss provision for students normally just before the start of the new academic year or when required. The DAS supply Student Support Plans which is shared with relevant tutors, the Library and Steward/Domestic Bursar so that they can make any special arrangements for the student concerned optimising conditions for a student’s accommodation, study and social life. Special exam arrangements are organised by the academic administrator through application to the Exams and Assessments Office for public examination or locally in College for in-house Collections.

The Queen’s College takes seriously the requirement to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and during the academic year 2016-2017 produced a flyer which is widely displayed around College and on the website. The flyer makes the various processes for dealing with harassment more transparent and provides details of sources of help and advice for students and staff who believe they are being harassed. These have been prepared with wide consultation of all members of the College community and ensure that everyone knows how to identify harassment, how to report it and how to get help for dealing with it. The flyer reinforces focused training for College staff and training during the annual induction for all new undergraduate and graduate members of College.

**Student Equality**

The Queen’s College is committed to providing an inclusive culture for its students which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which their rights and dignity are respected.

The College has demonstrated this commitment in a number of practical ways during the academic year 2016-2017.

• Providing dinners and social events to celebrate specific religious festivals
• Providing a comprehensive outreach programme to attract students of high academic potential, regardless of their background
• Providing a College Nurse, who is available to give pastoral support to students facing challenging personal circumstances
• Supporting students with alternative examination arrangements, including a significant number of exams being sat in College as part of providing reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities.
• Producing a student handbook and flyers which signpost students to support networks in College, within the University and without the University
• Supporting social groups, clubs and societies and allowing College premises to be used for these gatherings
• Supporting students by providing accessible accommodation
• Recruiting a female Chaplain in 2017

**Gender balance at The Queen’s College**

The Queen’s College employs 204 staff of whom 108 are female, 95 are male and 1 who prefers not to declare a gender. Included in these figures are 34 casual staff, for example graduates employed in the library, Beer Cellar staff, waiters in Hall and Junior Deans. Of these 19 are female and 15 are male.

**Diversity of Governance and Decision-Making**

**Governing Body**

The Queen’s College is a charity and is accountable to its trustees who form the Governing Body, and oversee all decisions made on behalf of the College. During the academic year 2016-2017 the Governing Body comprised 39 Fellows of whom 8 were female.

**Committees**

Although the gender balance of committees varies, women are well represented across the range of committees and all but three of the committees of The Queen’s College (Donations, Estates and Finance and Wine) had a female Fellow as a member in 2016-2017. Of the 29 College Officers and managers in place in 2016-2017, 12 were female.

**Senior Management**

Women continue to be well represented among the senior management of the College’s non-academic workforce. Of the 17 senior managers (grade 7 and above) in post at 31st July 2017, 10 were female.

**Review of Complaints and Disciplinary Action**

**Current Staff**

During the 2016-2017 academic year there were no formal grievances raised by employees about issues related to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

**Job applicants**

During the 2016-2017 academic year there were no complaints or Tribunal claims received from job applicants in relation to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

**Student Applications**

No serious concerns were recorded in relation to candidates applying to study at The Queen’s College with regard to discrimination, harassment or victimisation during the 2016-2017 academic year. Furthermore, there were no appeals to the University about
decisions made by The Queen’s College, on the basis that they had not been concluded adequately.

**Equality objectives set for the academic year 2017-2018**

1. To require all College clubs and societies to demonstrate procedures and processes that ensure fairness and equality of access for all College members.

2. To source appropriate training to improve awareness of, and engagement with, issues relating to equality and diversity and to implement this for all employees of The Queen’s College focusing initially on transgender awareness and training in unbiased decision making in all aspects of our academic and service provision to students.

3. To continue to improve access to The Queen’s College.

4. To review data concerning a possible gender pay gap.

5. To implement the collection of data concerning the number of complaints raised by students about issues of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

**Employment – key data**

The Queen’s College is a relatively small College and consideration by a number of different committees has led to the conclusion that our population is too small to obtain data using current methods of analysis that is relevant or statistically significant. We have set up a working party to discuss how to use the data we have collected, and an aim is to report this next Academic Year.

**Further information and sources of support**

**College**
Equality opportunities, policies and information:
https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/equality-information

Welfare [including College support networks]:
https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/welfare

Policies and procedures, including Academic and non-academic disciplinary procedures and rules
https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/our-policies-and-procedures

Diversity of Governance and Decision-Making, Governing Body
https://www.queens.ox.ac.uk/governing-body

**University**
The Disability Advisory Service:
http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability

Harassment Advisory Service and Harassment Advisors’ Network:
https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork/
The Equality and Diversity Unit: 
https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/

University of Oxford Equality Policy
http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/policy/equality-policy/

**Government**
Equality and Diversity
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/about/equality-and-diversity

**Other**
Peninsula HR support
https://www.peninsulagrouplimited.com/

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