**Race, Diversity and Access Working Group: final update on actions**

This note provides a report on progress in the year since the Governing Body established the Race, Diversity and Access (RDA) Working Group. The restrictions imposed as a result of the pandemic have delayed some actions, but the College has invested in significant steps that will ensure it continues to maintain momentum towards the original objective of the RDA work, of further improving the ways in which the College enables all its members to flourish.

The Working Group completed its task when it gave its report to the Governing Body in Michaelmas 2020. In taking forward the actions arising from that work, the College’s aim is to ensure that considerations of race, diversity and access are fully embedded across its activities and its governance. In order to do this most effectively, it is using the existing arrangements of individual officer responsibilities, and committees, covering all aspects of College life and reporting to the Governing Body, as opposed to continuing with a separate working group. The Equalities Committee will conduct an annual stocktake of this work.

This note is not an exhaustive account of the relevant actions over the last year, but summarises the key ones, and those with most potential to shape the future.

**Tackling Under-Representation**

The College has changed the standard wording for advertisements for academic posts and College staff, to make it clearer that it welcomes applications from groups currently under-represented. It checks whether panels are diverse and, because it is not possible for panels routinely to represent all those currently under-represented in the relevant field, it ensures that panels actively note their duty to consider matters of diversity, including race.

Importantly, during 2020/21 the College has invested in new HR systems, that mean it can now collect information about applicants and, on a fully anonymous basis, better understand where the greatest problems are and, over time, assess whether the steps it takes do successfully contribute to better outcomes. This new information therefore complements that available on student applications. For 2021/22, the College has also employed a statistical expert to work over the summer to help it understand what information it can get and use, in a fully rigorous fashion. This information will be used by the Personnel, Academic and Equalities Committees as part of their annual review cycles.

In one area, that of Graduate studentships, the College has bid to join two schemes that are designed to tackle specific areas of under-representation. It is waiting to hear about the outcome of its bid for four scholarships on the University’s Black Academic Futures scheme, and has been successful in its bid for a Commonwealth Shared Scholarship[[1]](#footnote-1) in collaboration with the Blavatnik School.

**Awareness Raising, and the College’s Intellectual Life**

The College has used the delay imposed by the restrictions of the pandemic to identify potential facilitators and trainers to work with College communities in 2021/22. These are still being finalised, but will include awareness raising work with the JCR and MCR, at their request, and events available to all other parts of the College, including discussions about what it means to be a supportive bystander in the face of any form of potential discrimination. In addition, the Equalities Committee has committed to hold an open session each year, to help review developments and continue to encourage debate and awareness across the College.

In September 2020 Queen’s was pleased to announce the creation of the Brittenden Fellowship in Black British History and, in March 2021, the appointment of Dr Meleisa Ono-George to that Fellowship.

In 2021/2, it plans to run an exhibition or event exploring the – sometimes unexpected - ways in which those associated with the College engage with matters of race across their disciplines and career stages.

July 2021

1. Eligible candidates will come from one of the following Commonwealth countries: Bangladesh, Cameroon, Eswatini, The Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia [↑](#footnote-ref-1)