

Gender Equality Policy

Merton College welcomes diversity amongst its students, staff and visitors, recognising the contributions to the achievement of the College's mission that can be made by all individuals, regardless of gender or gender reassignment. The College aims to provide an inclusive 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. The College will work to remove any barriers which might deter people of the highest ability from applying to Oxford, either as staff or students.

The Equality Act 2006 places a positive duty on all public bodies including the College to promote equality between women and men and to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment. The College is required to have in place a Gender Equality Scheme (GES) setting out the ways in which the College will meet the general duty, outlined above, and specific duties:

- to prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- in formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- to gather and use information on how the College's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.
- to consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions and students) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- to assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- to implement the actions set out in its Scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- to report against the Scheme every year and review the Scheme at least every three years

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminating harassment and unlawful discrimination. The College will assess the impact of policies on students and staff, monitor their recruitment and progression and publish the results of impact assessments and monitoring.

Any unlawful discriminatory behaviour, including harassment or bullying by individuals or groups, will be regarded extremely seriously and could be regarded as grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion or dismissal.

Arrangements for consultation will be maintained for all aspects of the implementation and review of the College's Gender Equality Scheme. This includes staff and students.

Guidance, support and training will be provided to members of staff to ensure that the University's commitment to gender equality is fully realised.

The College has in place arrangements to monitor, by reference to different racial groups, the selection and recruitment of members of staff. The admission of students is monitored in the first instance by the University's Equality and Diversity Unit.

The College's Gender Equality Scheme sets out arrangements for monitoring in particular areas and reports on outcomes.

The Governing Body is responsible for securing compliance with the general and specific duties and for overseeing implementation of the Scheme.

The Equality Committee is responsible to the Governing Body for the promotion, development, implementation, monitoring, prioritisation, and review of equality policies generally.

The Senior Tutor (with respect to academic matters) and the Domestic Bursar (with respect to non-academic matters) have a duty to take forward specific actions under this policy as identified in the action plan in addition to the general duties under the Act.

The College's procurement policies will address, where appropriate the obligation to promote gender equality and equality between women and men.

The College will publish the Gender Equality Policy and Scheme. It may not normally be possible to publish monitoring and assessment data without identifying individuals, given the small level of annual recruitment of students and staff. Consideration is being given to compiling reports combining data from rolling periods of three or five years or longer.

Any student or member of staff who has a complaint concerning a breach of this policy may bring such a complaint to the College in accordance with the procedures set out in the College Handbook and Staff Handbook.