Somerville College

Single Equality Scheme

2012-2015

Somerville College
Woodstock Road
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www.some.ox.ac.uk

Registered Charity No. 1139440

Somerville College

Single Equality Scheme 2012-15

1. Introduction by the Principal

On behalf of the Governing Body of Somerville College, I am delighted to endorse the publication of this Single Equality Scheme for 2012-15.

We are committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity within the whole College community and that means students, academics, support staff and alumni. Our aim is that the College constituency will be representative of all sections of society and that all those within the College community will feel respected and able to give of their best. To that end our policy is that equality and fairness will be provided for all in our employment and for all those who study here. Discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination and our commitment to this principle extends to visiting students, guests, conference clients, and contractors carrying out work on behalf of the College.

All College members past and present, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for student entry or for employment, promotion, or training, will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All College members will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential. I am confident that their combined talents and resources will continue to help the College go from strength to strength.

Dr Alice Prochaska MA, DPhil, FRHistS
Principal

2. About Somerville College

Somerville was founded in 1879 to give women, who at that time were excluded from membership of the University, the chance to benefit from an Oxford education. Today Somerville College is one of 38 independent, self-governing colleges of the University of Oxford. The College has approximately 390 undergraduate students following three and four-year courses across a wide variety of disciplines, and 110 graduate students reading for masters and doctoral degrees. The College is governed by its Principal and a Governing Body consisting of professorial, tutorial and administrative fellows. The College has approximately 100 working within its academic community. Tutors are assisted by college lecturers, and the research community is also supported by postdoctoral research fellows. The College employs approximately 100 support staff whose role is to work together to support the provision of an inclusive, stimulating and safe environment in which the academic and research activities of the academic members and students may thrive. An active Alumni relations network supports a regular programme of events organised by the College throughout the year. Additional income to support the College's academic activities is raised through providing conference facilities and accommodation for educational and corporate clients and visiting students during the vacations.

3. Equality mission statement

Somerville College's mission is to promote scholarship through teaching and research. We offer places to undergraduates in line with the University of Oxford's agreed code of practice and to graduates admitted by the University of Oxford.

The College undertakes to work to remove any barriers, real or perceived, which might deter people of the highest ability from applying to the College, either as staff or students. The College aims to assist its students and staff in reaching their full potential, and to provide an inclusive environment which values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff, students and alumni are respected.

4. The Aims of Somerville College

1. To provide opportunities to pursue learning at the highest level to all those capable of making good use of them, recruited through an equitable process based on achievement and potential.
2. To encourage the intellectual maturation of individual students by encouraging them to engage their critical faculties and intellectual curiosity, develop their analytical skills, and articulate their views.
3. To support the research of its Fellows and to foster disciplinary and inter-disciplinary diversity.
4. To safeguard the security of the College's academic provision through increased endowment funds.
5. To work wholeheartedly within the collegiate University.
6. To be a good employer for all staff.

5. Where we are on equality

5.1 Equality Committee

The College established its Equality Committee in October 2007. The Committee's terms of reference are:

- to review the College's equality policies and progress against the Integrated Equality Action Plan.
- to review employment policies affecting academic members and support staff, such as harassment.
- to monitor equality statistics on race, gender, age, and disability, and other relevant areas covering staff and students for admissions, student progress and staff appointments.
- to review equality legislation and associated duties. The Committee has been responsible for the preparation of actions plans, including the Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme. The Committee has monitored the implementation and subsequent progress of these actions plans, and has been responsible for carrying out impact assessments.
- to review student welfare provision.

Representation at Equality Committee is from all members of the College community as follows:

- the Principal
- the Treasurer, Domestic Bursar, Human Resources Manager/Equality Officer
- the Senior Tutor, Academic Registrar, Tutorial & Graduate Officer
- one Academic Fellow (representing the Governing Body), one Academic Lecturer

- ➢ one JCR representative (for undergraduate students), one MCR representative (for graduate students)
- ➢ the Equal Opportunities Representative for Support Staff
- ➢ the Chapel Director

The Equality Committee reports to the Governing Body of the College and meets formally in Trinity Term of each year.

5.2   Integrated equality and diversity

The College's Integrated Equality and Diversity Policy was published by the Equality Committee in 2008 and an Integrated Equality Action Plan was drawn up to monitor progress against its Disability Equality Scheme, Gender Equality Scheme, and the Race Equality Action Plan. A summary of the Integrated Equality Action Plan is attached at Annex 1. **The integrated plan will be superseded by the Somerville College Single Equality Action Plan 2012.**

5.3   Consultation and engagement

Ongoing consultation and engagement of academic members, students and support staff on equality matters has taken place through meetings of the Junior Common Room (JCR) (undergraduate students), Middle Common Room (MCR) (graduate students), Somerville Staff Liaison Group (representatives from academic members and support staff), Equality Committee, and Governing Body. The College will continue to engage with these groups on equality matters and consider how they are affected by policies and procedures and the priorities for action as identified in the annual Action Plan.

5.4   Accessibility

5.4.1   Disability services-based audit

A disability services-based audit was completed in 2009 which summarised works completed in College from 2000 to 2008 and identified further works planned for 2009 onwards including the following areas:

- ➢ awareness and assumptions about disability need
- ➢ difficulty of obtaining information from multiple sources
- ➢ regard for unseen disabilities
- ➢ signage
- ➢ sound enhancement, especially in lecture rooms
- ➢ arranging meetings with due regard to accessibility of venues
- ➢ sufficient information available about access
- ➢ equal opportunities shortfall in employment/recruitment
- ➢ continued improvement in physical access to buildings and services.

The College will continue to review its practices to key issues relating to disability and access as identified and expressed to the wider Collegiate University by special interest disability groups.

5.4.2   Accessibility of written materials

Recommendations for improving the accessibility of written materials were issued to all College members through the College's Equality Committee in 2010.

5.5 Equal Opportunities Monitoring

Collecting and analysing equal opportunities data helps the College to ensure that its Academic members and Support staff are treated equally within employment and enables the provision of appropriate services. It also helps inform policy and decision-making.

Equal opportunities monitoring data held by the College for current Academic members is currently limited to age and gender. Equal opportunities data for the College's Support staff currently includes age, gender, disability, and race and these data are also held for applicants for Support staff posts. Equal opportunities monitoring data is shown at Annex 2.

We recognise the need to do more to enhance the collection of equal opportunities data and to actively encourage and improve disclosure rates and this objective will be included within the Single Equality Action Plan for 2012. Owing to the relatively small number of Academic members and Support staff employed by the College, we do not intend to collect equal opportunities data in relation to sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This is because any data collected is likely to be statistically small and we consider there is a high risk individuals may be identified if these data are published. However, the College will consider **all** the equality strands within its policy and decision-making processes.

The College has a zero tolerance policy with regard to discrimination and harassment and bullying on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics, and we believe that our management practices and recruitment processes are sufficiently robust to support our equality and diversity policies.

We aim to publish improved equal opportunities data for Academic members and Support staff in Hilary Term 2013 and annually thereafter. Any data collected on any of the other protected characteristics (in addition to sexual orientation or gender reassignment) that have the potential to identify individuals will not be published.

Monitoring of equal opportunities data for students is undertaken by the University of Oxford. At the time this document was first published (26 January 2012), equal opportunities data was not available to the College for analysis and inclusion within the Single Equality Scheme.

The College intends to publish data based on student ethnicity, disability and gender, once these data are available, in the form of an addendum to this Single Equality Scheme.

5.6 Monitoring progress, evaluation and reporting

We intend to continue to consult and engage with College members in developing our Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan through meetings of the Junior Common Room (JCR) (undergraduate students), Middle Common Room (MCR) (graduate students), Somerville Staff Liaison Group (representatives from academic members and support staff), Equality Committee, and Governing Body.

We will also set up review groups, focus groups and representative groups to address specific areas as will be identified in the annual Equality Action Plan.

Due regard will be given in this consultation and engagement process to meeting the **general duty** of the Equality Act 2010, namely to:

- ➢ eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- ➢ advance equality of opportunity between people from different protected groups, including:

- o removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- o meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics;
- o encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in areas where their representation is low.

- ➢ foster good relations between people from different protected groups, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

We aim to meet our **specific duty** by publishing relevant, proportionate information that demonstrates our progress against our equality objectives. Our first set of objectives will be published by April 2012 within our Single Equality Action Plan and will be evaluated on a regular basis thereafter at an interval of no more than four years.

Progress against the Single Equality Action Plan will be formally monitored and evaluated by the College's Equality Committee in Trinity Term each year, reported to the College's Governing Body, and published on the College's intranet and website annually.

5.7   Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the College meets its obligations under the general duty and the specific duty lies with the Governing Body.

The College Equality Committee is responsible to the Governing Body for the promotion, development, implementation, monitoring, prioritisation and review of the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

All College Committees are responsible for ensuring that this Scheme is embedded in their duties and functions in relation to all College members, and for taking forward specific actions identified within this Scheme that lie within their remit.

Managers are responsible for ensuring this Scheme is embedded in their duties and for taking forward specific actions identified within this Scheme that lie within their functional area of work.

The Treasurer will provide Governing Body with a report on the progress of Action Plan on an annual basis.

6. Equality Scheme and Action Plan Review

We will review our Single Equality Action Plan every 12 months and carry out a full evaluation of the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan within four years to help set a new agenda for action.

Summary of progress against the Integrated Equality Action Schemes (2007-2011)

A. Equality & Diversity	Progress made	Completed	By whom
1. Integrated Equality & Diversity Policy	Integrated Equality & Diversity Policy (2008) written and approved by Governing Body	HT 2008	HR Manager & Treasurer
2. Publish the Integrated Equality & Diversity Policy	Integrated Equality & Diversity Policy (2008) • published on College website • issued to Support staff line managers • taken to the Somerville Staff Liaison Group	MT 2008	HR Manager
3. Update the employee handbook for Support staff	Policy published in the revised Employee Handbook for Support Staff (v.3 2009)	TT 2009	HR Manager
4. Provide training to Support staff managers	Diversity training provided for Support staff managers, supervisors and administrators (Jigsaw at Work, 19 &20 March, and 27 July 2009)	MT 2009	HR Manager
	Discrimination, harassment & bullying training provided to Support staff managers (Peninsula Business Services, 8 June 2010)	TT 2010	HR Manager
	Dignity at Work (equality awareness, diversity and cultural awareness) training provided for Support staff managers by the Oxford Colleges' Domestic Bursars' Committee (Peninsula Business Services, 17 November 2011)	MT 2011	Domestic Bursar

Key:

MT = Michaelmas Term (Autumn)	TT = Trinity Term (Summer)	GES = Gender Equality Scheme
HT = Hilary Term (Spring)	EQC = Somerville College Equality Committee	DES = Disability Equality Scheme
	GB = Governing Body	

B. Disability Equality Scheme	Progress made	Completed	By whom
1. Review access audit recommendations	Further progress made in improving the facilities available to disabled staff and students, particularly in providing an additional Disabled WC.	HT 2009	The Treasurer
2. Report on access works completed and measures introduced	Full report compiled	HT 2009	The Treasurer
3. Conduct a services-based audit and compile a DES Action Plan	Services based audit completed. Areas covered included: • Works programmed for 2007-09 • Remaining physical barriers • Auditory/visual barriers • 'Major' policies, plans and practices identified as high priority for impact assessment • Staff training levels and future needs • Procurement processes and agreements	MT 2009	The Treasurer
4. Governing Body to agree Action Plan	Action Plan agreed by Governing Body	HT 2009	The Treasurer
5. Review current procedures for data collection with a view to improving response rates	Consultation carried out with support staff, academic staff and students via representatives and committees	HT 2008-10	The Treasurer
6. Seek professional advice	Meeting held with the University of Oxford Occupational Health Service to explore how to improve response rates	MT 2008	The Treasurer & HR Manager
7. Review current mechanisms for involving disabled staff and students in the development of the DES	Mechanisms for maximising the input of those with disabilities to the DES reviewed through consultation with various College constituencies.	TT 2009	Equality Committee

C. Gender Equality Scheme	Progress made	Completed	By whom
1. Gender Equality Scheme	Gender Equality Scheme and objectives published	MT 2007	The Treasurer
2. Carry out an equal pay audit and gender audit and report to the Governing Body	Equal pay audit completed. Further audits to be carried out annually in HT as part of the annual pay review process for Support Staff, and reported to GB.	TT 2008 Ongoing	HR Manager & The Treasurer
3. Review all current College policies for Support staff	Policies for support staff have been reviewed to ensure gender equality objectives are being met.	MT 2008	HR Manager
4. Ensure that statutory committees and other meetings are scheduled with regard for the family and caring responsibilities of the committee members.	Review of meetings schedules with regard for the family and caring responsibilities of the committee members.	Ongoing	Equality Committee
5. Allocate a training budget to enable the commitments in the plan to be fulfilled.	Training budget allocated to enable the commitments in the plan to be fulfilled.	Ongoing	The Treasurer
6. Review the Gender Equality Scheme	GES to be reviewed in the context of any review of the University of Oxford's Gender Equality Scheme.	Ongoing	Equality Committee

D. Race Equality Action Plan	Progress made	Completed	By whom
12. Publish Race Equality Action Plan	Equality Committee reviewed the draft Race Equality Action Plan. Agreed by Governing Body on 5.3.08.	HT 2008	The Treasurer
13. Strategic planning	(a) Incorporate race equality planning into strategic planning and policy development (b) Make specific provision for race equality issues in strategic plans for 2008-09	Ongoing	The Treasurer
14. Development of policies and procedures **(a) Committees**	Governing Body and all committees considered race equality issues and the duty to promote race equality in the development of policies and procedures	TT 2008, and ongoing	The Treasurer
(b) Students	Review student disciplinary and complaints procedures for fairness, equity and consistency of implementation.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
(c) Staff disciplinary and grievance procedures	Review staff disciplinary and grievance procedures for fairness and equity and consistency of application.	MT 2009, and ongoing	HR Manager
(d) Code of practice on harassment for staff and students	College Harassment and Bullying policy for staff reviewed and updated Updated policies issued to all managers with line management responsibilities.	MT 2008 TT 2009	HR Manager The Treasurer
	Code of practice on harassment for students to be reviewed.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
(e) Review College procurement policies	Raised with line managers at heads of department meeting. Review completed.	MT 2008	The Treasurer

15. Student support **(a) Allocation of student accommodation, distribution of bursaries, scholarships and hardship funds**	Review procedures to ensure fairness and equity, taking due account of the relevant trust provision where appropriate.	Ongoing	The Treasurer & Senior Tutor
(b) Provision of student pastoral support and welfare services	Review provision to ensure equality of accessibility to all College members	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
16. Staff recruitment and selection	Review procedures for recruitment and selection in order to ensure equality of opportunity	MT 2010	HR Manager
17. Consultation **(a) Somerville Staff Liaison Group**	An Equal Opportunities Staff Representative has been appointed to represent race and all other equality issues at SSLG & Equality Committee	Ongoing	HR Manager
(b) Consultative forums for ongoing development and maintenance of the race equality policy	Set up appropriate consultative forums involving ethnic minority staff and students	Ongoing	HR Manager
18. Undergraduate admissions **(a) Implementation of the Admissions Executive Action Plan and OCAE Code of Practice**	The College has worked in partnership with the Admissions Executive to support the implementation of the Executive's action plan on undergraduate admissions. The College has implemented the OCAE Code of Practice on Undergraduate Admissions as agreed by Conference of Colleges and the Admissions Executive.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
(b) Selection of undergraduate students	Those involved in undergraduate admissions will be briefed on the implications of race equality	Ongoing	Senior Tutor

(c) Subject selection panels	All subject selection panels will contain at least one member who has participated in Oxford University seminars on student selection since 1992.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
19. Selection of graduate students	Those involved in graduate admissions will be briefed on the implications of race equality	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
20. Guidance, support and training **(a) Staff training opportunities**	Training opportunities available to all of its staff to be reviewed and additional provision provided where needed.	Ongoing	HR Manager
(b) Guidance and advice from the University	Assistance to be provided with dissemination of information, briefing material, guidance and advice from the University	Ongoing	HR Manager & Senior Tutor
21. Race Equality Action Plan	The College will review its publications to promote access and participation among students of diverse ethnic and faith groups.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor
	The College is actively engaged in recruiting candidates for admission from all races and backgrounds equally.	Ongoing	Senior Tutor

Equal Opportunity Monitoring

Equal opportunities data for Academic Members and Support Staff are shown and considered separately below. The applicant pools for posts in these groups are distinct from each other: Support staff are recruited primarily from within one of the five local authority areas of Oxfordshire[1] whereas Academics may be recruited from across the UK, from within the European Union, or internationally. Therefore direct comparisons between the profiles of the two groups are not considered helpful.

To date no equal opportunities data has been collected by the College in relation to academic recruitment and data available for the purposes of this report, i.e. gender and age, has been obtained from payroll records. Please note that the data below includes Academic Members in receipt of a College stipend but does not include tutors carrying out external tuition for the College (who are not employees of the College).

Some equal opportunities data has been collected within Support staff recruitment and is included in the comment below. As stated in the Single Equality Scheme 2012-15, we intend to widen the scope of data collected for both Academics and Support Staff and this is included in our Single Equality Action Plan for 2012.
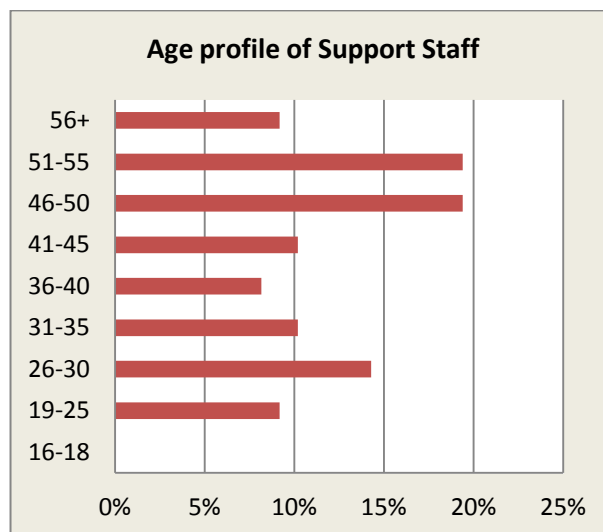
1. Age

The College employs people across a wide range of age groups. The profile of ages for Academic Members and Support staff is shown below.

Chart 1. Age profile of Academic Members as at January 2012

Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department

Chart 2. Age profile of Support Staff as at January 2012

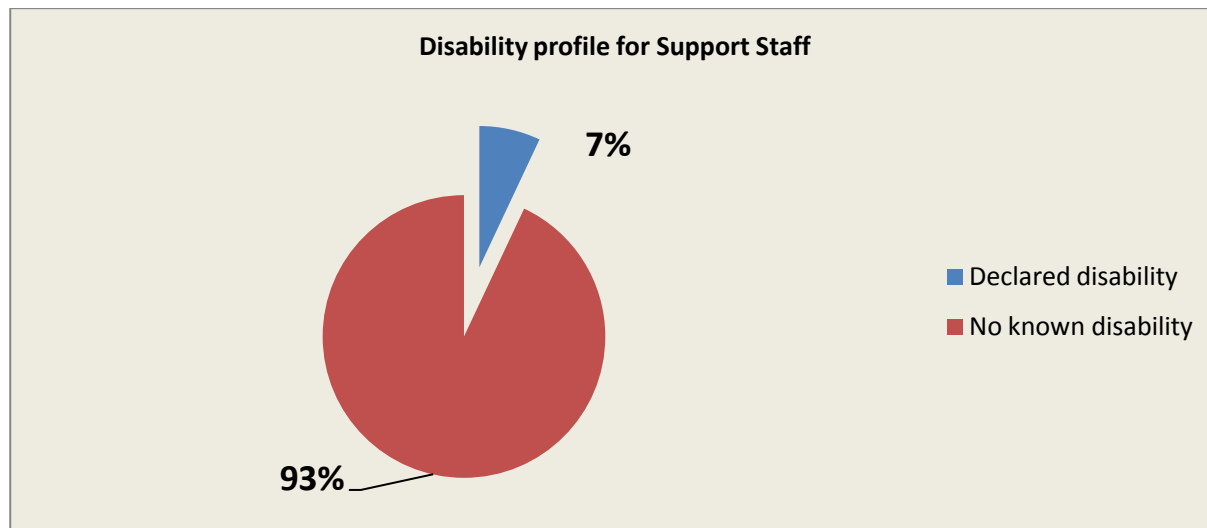Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department

A total of 290 applicants applied for Support staff posts in 2011. Three vacancies attracted a high volume of applications from these age groups in particular so that the applicant data are skewed towards the 18-25 years (26%) and 26-30 years (24%) age ranges. Overall applicants from all age ranges apply for Support staff posts.

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[1] Cherwell, Oxford, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire

2. Disability

As at January 2012, 7% of Support staff have declared a seen or unseen disability. For the period January to December 2011, 98% of applicants completed the section on the equal opportunities monitoring form relating to disability and of these 7% declared a seen or unseen disability.

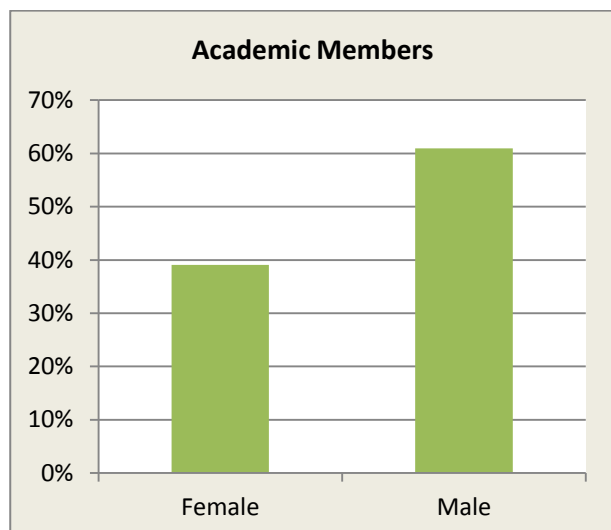**Chart 3**. Disability profile of Support Staff as at January 2012

Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department
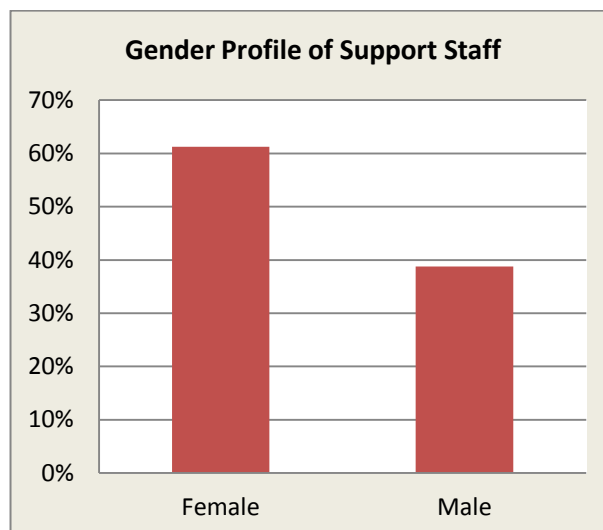
3. Gender

The gender profile of Academic Members shows that 39% are female and 61% male. Governing Body membership[2] has a gender breakdown of 45% females and 55% males.

Chart 4. Gender profile of Academic Members[3] as at January 2012

Chart 5. Gender profile of Support Staff as at January 2012

Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department

Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department

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[2] Governing Body membership comprises Tutorial Fellows, Professorial Fellows, Administrative Fellows, Additional Fellows, and Titular Fellows.
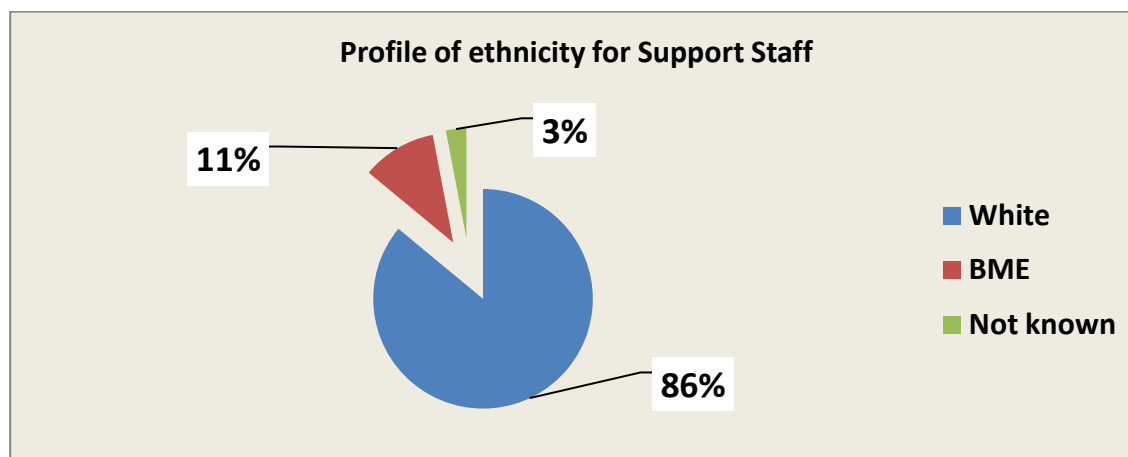
[3] Academic members includes Tutorial Fellows and Academics holding lecturership appointments

The gender profile of Support Staff shows that 61% are female and 39% are male. The higher proportion of female staff may be attributed to the number of part-time domestic posts (29%) which tend to attract an overwhelmingly large proportion of female applicants. In 2011 the nature of posts advertised during the year may have resulted in the gender balance being slightly skewed towards males (59%). For example 84 applications were received from males for one particular post.

4. Ethnicity

The ethnicity of Support Staff is Black & Ethnic Minority (BME) 11%, White 86%, not known 3%.
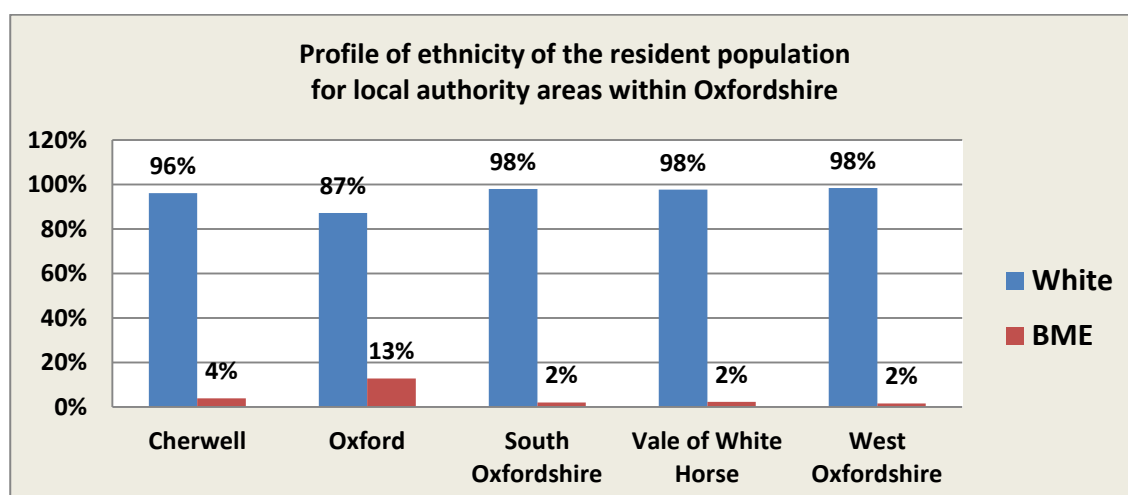
Chart 6. Ethnicity profile of Support Staff as at January 2012

Source: Somerville College Human Resources Department

Comparative data for the resident population in Oxfordshire[4] shows that the total resident population within the county of Oxfordshire is Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) 5% and White 95%.

Chart 6. Ethnicity profile of Support Staff as at January 2012

Source: www.neighbourhoodstatistics.gov.uk

The ethnicity profile of applicants for Support Staff posts in 2011 was BME 24%, White 76%, and 3% declined to specify.

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[4] Source: www.neighbourhoodstatistics.gov.uk. Dataset Ethnic Group KS006. Last updated 9.11.2004 [accessed 10.1.2012]

Definitions of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010

Definitions of the nine protected characteristics are listed below.

Age
Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability
A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment
The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership
Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity
Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race
Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief
Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex (Gender)
A man or a woman

Sexual orientation
Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes

Source: the Equality & Human Rights Commission (www.equalityhumanrights.com)