

Somerville College Equality and Diversity Policy 2022

Somerville College is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.

Somerville embraces diversity amongst the members of its community and seeks to achieve equity in the experience, progression and achievement of all students, academic members and support staff through the implementation of transparent policies, practices and procedures and the provision of effective support.

The College recognises that equality should be embedded in all its activities and will seek to promote awareness of equality and foster good practice. Somerville is committed to a programme of action to support its equality policy, to monitoring its effectiveness, and to publishing information on progress towards its equality aims.

In exercising its policies, practices, procedures and other functions, Somerville College will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to the protected characteristics specified within it. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (in employment), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. In addition, our policy encompasses consideration of other circumstances including parental or caring responsibilities, contract type, and working hours.

In particular, Somerville College will:

Encourage applications for study and employment from the widest pool of potential candidates, especially where representation is disproportionately low;

Take steps to meet the particular needs of individuals from protected groups where these are different from the needs of others.

In respect of students, seek to attract applicants of the highest quality and potential, regardless of background. Decisions on the admission of students will be based solely on the individual merits of each candidate and the application of selection criteria appropriate to the course of study. The College participates in positive action initiatives which aim to enhance the ability of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to benefit from an Oxford education.

In respect of staff, ensure that recruitment practices, appointments, re-appointments, progression and promotion are determined solely by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post. Where possible in a small organisation, ensure diverse representation and participation at all levels.

Somerville College expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration and does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. College policies and

procedures are available on the policies section of our website www.some.ox.ac.uk College practices are also aligned to University policies which are available via www.ox.ac.uk

Scope of the Equality Policy

This policy applies to all members of Somerville College community, including students, academic members, support staff, applicants, associate members, and visitors.

All members of the College community are expected to act in accordance with this policy and to treat colleagues with respect at all times.

All visitors to the College, including contractors, and people operating on behalf of the College, whether on College premises or elsewhere, have a responsibility to behave in accordance with the principles of this policy.

Our commitment

Somerville College will:

- seek to embed equality in all its activities
- have regard to its obligations under relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- publicise this policy, and any relevant codes of practice and guidance
- use an evidence-based approach where possible to inform its activities to increase equality and to measure the impact of any changes
- develop Equality and Diversity objectives and plans of action, reporting regularly to the Governing Body Trustees of Somerville College on progress and effectiveness,
- monitor and publish data on its academic members, support staff, students and applicants; including statutory gender pay gap and equality reporting
- regularly review this policy

Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will determine the College's strategic objectives for equality and diversity and appoint suitable Committees, Working Groups or individuals as needed from time to time to ensure the objectives can be met. In addition, one or two members of Governing Body will be appointed as Equality and Diversity Champions

The Equality and Diversity Working Group and Equality and Diversity Champions

The Treasurer will provide leadership on equality and diversity and oversee the development of equality policy frameworks and their application in the College, working with College committees (all of which have a remit for equality issues), the Equality and Diversity Working Group, and relevant colleagues as appropriate.

The Equality and Diversity Working Group reports to Governing Body and will advise on initiatives and priorities for work on equality and diversity, covering staff and students and embracing all protected groups. The EDWG, supported by the Human Resources Department will work with the University's Equality and Diversity Unit (EDU) and external advisers to support equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination within the College's staff community.

In particular the Equality and Diversity Working Group will:

- keep up to date with existing and emerging equality legislation with a view to identifying relevant issues to be translated into policies appropriate to the College environment
- provide information and guidance to Governing Body and other College members as appropriate to enable them to discharge their responsibilities
- work with equal opportunities representatives and the Communications manager to facilitate communication to and consultation with specific groups of staff
- provide monitoring of key strategic issues to Governing Body and liaise with other Committees as needed
- support the creation and revision of policies related to Equality and Diversity
- provide advice and support relating to the employment of staff with protected characteristics
- provide support to students with a protected characteristics in close liaison with University support services
- work with student equal opportunities representatives and academic members to facilitate communication to and consultation with specific groups of staff.

Fellows and senior managers

Fellows and senior managers are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy and for supporting the delivery of Somerville College and the University's strategic objectives for equality and diversity within the College constituency for which they are responsible.

Managers

All managers are responsible for ensuring that equality is embedded in the work of their team.

All academic staff

All academic staff should promote an inclusive research and learning environment.

All support staff and students

All support staff and students have a responsibility to observe this policy.

Complaints

Somerville College regards any breach of this policy by any member of the College community as a serious matter to be dealt with through its agreed procedures.

The procedures for dealing with concerns about breaches of the policy are set out below.

Students

Applicants

For feedback on admissions decisions please refer to the undergraduate admissions pages on the University of Oxford website www.ox.ac.uk

Postgraduate admissions

Please refer to the postgraduate admissions pages on www.ox.ac.uk

Current students

Allegations of harassment and bullying are covered by University Policy on Harassment and Bullying.

Complaints about equality and diversity issues related exclusively to college matters should be taken up with the relevant college officers, namely the Treasurer, Senior Tutor, or Human Resources Manager.

Other complaints should be addressed to the Proctors.

Staff

Applicants

Applicants for employment should refer any concerns in writing to the chair of the selection panel in the first instance.

Current staff

Allegations of harassment and bullying are covered by the policies and procedures in the current staff handbook.

Other complaints should be handled under the relevant grievance procedure:

Review

Governing Body, on the advice of the Equality and Diversity Working Group, will review this policy on a three year cycle.

Further Advice

Further advice and information within the wider Collegiate University can be found on the University's website www.ox.ac.uk