

Equality Act 2010 - how we fulfil our first specific equality duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, public bodies, of which the College is one, have both general duties and specific equality duties.

The **general duties** are to have due regard in decision-making to:

1. Eliminate discrimination
2. Advance equality of opportunity, and
3. Foster good relations between people from different protected groups

The **specific duties** are:

- i. To publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty by 31st January 2012, and subsequently at intervals no greater than one year from the last publication.
- ii. To prepare and publicly publish at least one specific and measurable objective that the College thinks it should achieve to meet any of the three aims of the equality duty by 6th April 2012 and at subsequent intervals no greater than four years.

This report satisfies the College's first specific duty by providing **examples** of how the College meets the general duties. It updates the report first published in January 2012 and updated in January 2013, January 2014, January 2015 and January 2016.

The main example to report for 2016 was the launch of LMH's Foundation Year programme. This programme is designed to take academically able students from under-represented groups and, through a combination of academic and personal support, enable them to progress onto degree courses at top universities, including Oxford, and to fulfil their potential.

Below are other examples of how LMH meets its public sector equality duty in relation to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act.

1. Policy Development and Review

The College has an Equal Opportunities Policy, which is published on our website <http://www.lmh.ox.ac.uk/>, and copies are issued to all new employees and casual workers.

Governing Body and all its main committees consider the duty to promote equality in the development of policies and procedures at all levels.

The College has an established Equality Committee, a subcommittee of Governing Body. It is responsible for advising Governing Body on the development, implementation, monitoring, prioritisation and review of policies, procedures and practice to support the College's Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to staff, students, visitors and others closely associated with the College. The Committee meets at least annually and its members are:

- Principal (chair)
- Treasurer
- Vice Principal
- Senior Tutor
- Tutor for Graduates/Chaplain
- Domestic Bursar
- HR Manager
- 2 representatives from JCR
- 2 representatives from MCR and
- 2 staff representatives.

The College reviews annually its policy on harassment and its Code of Conduct on Professional Relationships, for both the academic staff and support staff, and ensures that copies are available on the College intranet.

A set of College Values for support staff, including Fairness (covering equality) are widely referred to on a regular basis. For example, they are used during recruitment, appraisal and for recognising the achievements of staff.

2. Student Education and Support/Welfare

Accommodation Committee checks annually that its procedures for allocating student accommodation meet the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Grants & Bursaries Committee checks annually to ensure that its procedures for distributing bursaries, scholarships and hardship funds meet the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Welfare Committee reviews its provision of student pastoral support and welfare services annually to ensure that these are equally accessible to all members of the College community.

Specific examples:

1. Several graduate students have taken up roles providing peer support; these roles are expected to assist ethnic minorities, among others. There is also a Male Welfare Officer and a Female Welfare Officer for graduate students; a Male Welfare Officer and a Female Welfare Officer for undergraduate students; a JCR Equality Committee comprising officers for: Faiths and Beliefs, International Students, LGBTQA, Gender, Disabilities, Social Backgrounds and BME; and an Equalities Representative and LGBTQ representative for graduate students.
2. The University's Counselling service is free and available to all students.
3. During exams, Jewish students have requested not to sit exams on a Saturday. They are now able to defer to a Sunday. Exams during Ramadan were scheduled to assist those fasting.
4. A Gender Equality week was organised and run by undergraduate students in 2013; another was held in early 2014, a third in early 2015 and an Equality Week for students and other College members took place in early 2016 and in early 2017.
5. The College flew the 'Rainbow Flag' at the request of undergraduate and graduate students in February 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017.
6. Accommodation request forms are issued to students to ask if they have any special needs or requests.
7. Most special dietary requirements are accommodated.
8. Formal student meals are offered with the choice of a no-alcohol table.

3. Staff Recruitment, Selection and Support/Welfare

Finance Committee reviews the College's procedures for the recruitment, selection and support/welfare of College administrative staff every three years in order to ensure these procedures meet the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Policy; Academic Policy Committee similarly reviews its procedures for academic staff every three years.

Specific examples:

1. All support staff vacancies are advertised internally.
2. External advertisements for jobs are published to a wide audience using various media.
3. The College's family leave policy was reviewed, and the benefits enhanced, to provide 26 weeks leave at full pay for all qualifying staff.
4. The College has trained harassment advisors who provide staff members with help, support and guidance in order to resolve any harassment issues.
5. The College has robust procedures for managing absence and providing support for staff who have any long-term health issues. Support has included providing alternative work or temporary light duties for members of staff who have been unable to return to their full range of duties. Some staff members have been funded to receive physiotherapy or counselling, as required.

4. Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions

The College ensures that all those involved in undergraduate and graduate admissions have received appropriate training on the implications of equality in the selection of students.

Academic Policy Committee monitors the College's undergraduate and graduate admissions procedures annually.

Specific examples

1. During the admissions process, shortlisted students who have disclosed a disability are contacted by the College to ask what adjustments they need putting in place for their visit.
 - a) Several candidates requested, and were allowed, additional reading time for pre-interview reading, in liaison with their schools.
 - b) Several candidates were provided with en-suite rooms on disability grounds.
 - c) Interviews were arranged so that a student with a disability did not need to stay overnight.
 - d) A personal supporter was provided for students with mental health problems and Asperger's syndrome during interviews.
 - e) A graduate candidate with visual disturbances relating to noise was provided with a room in a quiet area of College.

5. Facilities/Access/Particular Requirements

The College continues to work to improve facilities and access for disabled students, staff, guests and visitors and to meet the particular requirements of members of these groups.

Specific examples:Students

1. Students who have been offered a place by the College are initially contacted by the University's disability office regarding any disability and what, if any, special provisions they are likely to need. The College disability contact co-ordinates adjustments with the department and the disability services. Special bedrooms are available for students who are hearing impaired or mobility impaired. Two additional bedrooms for mobility impaired graduate students have been provided in the new Donald Fothergill Porters' Lodge building.
 - a) Accommodation and facilities were provided for a guide dog and for a carer.
 - b) Accommodation was adapted for a student with mobility problems.
 - c) Specific arrangements have been made to ensure that disabled students can have tutorials in a ground floor room.
 - d) Jewish students were allowed to amend their contractual check-in and check-out dates to suit their religious requirements.
2. Training workshops on Disability and Deaf Awareness have been offered to LMH students to help support LMH disabled students.

Staff

1. The College offers English language training at various levels to all staff who do not have English as their native language.
2. Staff were encouraged to take part in Wellness Week and were given paid time off to attend various activities. The emphasis was on mental wellbeing. The charity Mind attended to offer advice and guidance on mental health.
3. Mental Health awareness sessions were provided to any interested members of staff (and students.) The sessions were intended to help remove the stigma of mental health issues and focussed on support for maintaining good mental health.

Conference Delegates

1. A Conference delegate was granted extended access to her room after departure in order to allow her to conduct religious rites.
2. Conference menus were adapted to meet the specific religious needs of a particular conference group.
3. Halal and kosher options were provided for a number of formal dinners to meet guests' requirements.
4. Alternative arrangements for feeding conference guests were made when Ramadan fell in the long days of June and July 2016.
5. The Chapel was made available to a Conference where the organisers wanted to be able to conduct religious services during their event.
6. Guests with mobility issues have been accommodated in the disabled room on several occasions.
7. Car parking spaces have been altered so that guests with particular needs can use the space that suits them best.

General

1. Baby changing facilities have been put into one toilet block.

6. Consultation

The College ensures that minority staff and students are represented in existing and specifically established consultative forums and that these groups are consulted in the development and maintenance of the Equal Opportunities Policy e.g. LGBTQ student representatives.

A new Support Staff Consultative Forum was set up in 2015. The Forum consists of representatives from all Support Staff areas and meets to obtain the views of staff on College initiatives and policy developments.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

The College monitors the following processes:

- a) Staff selection, appraisal and progression
- b) Staff grievances, harassment, discipline and access to training

The College continues to ensure that the results of the following processes are subject to equal opportunities monitoring:

- a) Student admissions, progress and performance
- b) Student complaints, harassment and discipline

8. Publishing Arrangements

The College publishes its Equality Policies widely; in the Handbook, on the website, via notice boards and by discussion in staff meetings. The Equality Committee reports the results of monitoring and consultation to Governing Body.

The College reviews its publications and web pages on an ongoing basis to promote access and participation among students from minority groups.

9. Guidance, Support, Awareness and Training

The College annually reviews the equal opportunities training opportunities available to all of its staff, and introduces additional provision where necessary or desirable – see examples given above. The HR Manager assists in the dissemination of equal opportunities information, briefing material, guidance and advice from the University, as appropriate. During 2015, the role of the College's support staff Equality Advisors was reviewed to make clear the role's responsibilities in promoting equality throughout the College.

A cultural awareness event called 'World at LMH' has been held for all students and staff for four years running and has been a great success.