

## **EQUALITY & INCLUSION POLICY**

### **EQUALITY AND INCLUSION POLICY STATEMENT**

Lady Margaret Hall was founded in June 1878 to educate women at Oxford University, which for the best part of eight centuries, had been exclusively male. The idea of righting that wrong ran into formidable opposition from those who believed that admitting women to this university was both undesirable and dangerous. It was more than 40 years before women were allowed to take degrees.

In 1978, one hundred years after its foundation, the College decided it would serve the cause of equality better by no longer limiting its exceptional educational resources to women only. This was an example of the College's characteristic ability to respond to the particular needs and new challenges of contemporary society.

The College has a continuing commitment to inclusiveness and in 2016 it once again showed its pioneering spirit by launching a Foundation Year for students from under-represented backgrounds, the first such initiative in Oxford or Cambridge.

Equality is therefore at the heart of College and LMH believes that equality of opportunity should be extended to all members of the College community, no matter the different qualities or characteristics an individual has. In taking our commitment seriously, we aim to not only comply with the relevant legislation, but also to take whatever additional steps we can to ensure the equality of opportunity. To that end, we are committed to a programme of action to make this Policy fully effective. The College encourages diversity amongst its fellows, students, employees, members and visitors, recognising the particular contributions to the achievement of its educational purposes that can be made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

### **THE COMMITMENT**

Whether we are employees or students, we all have a role to play in creating an equitable environment and making LMH a place where:

- a person's individual characteristics are respected and catered for; and
- people are treated equally, fairly and with respect.
- so that everyone has equal access to the same opportunities.

This policy covers all students, prospective students, employees, prospective employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers and agency workers. We are required to have this and related policies by law. However, we think it is important to have them for other reasons, in particular, their alignment with the College's history and values.

Our policies in this area are underpinned by the following legislation:

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty has two main aims:

To promote equality of opportunity in relation to each of the 'protected characteristics' as described under the Act and

To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to all of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment and age).

Lady Margaret Hall is committed to providing a learning, working and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its members are respected, and which is free from prejudice, intimidation and all forms of harassment, including bullying. We seek to ensure that no-one suffers, either directly or indirectly, as a result of discrimination.

This applies in the College, outside the College (when dealing with clients, suppliers, students at other parts of the University or other work-related/study contacts), and on work-related/study trips or events including social events.

## **STUDENT BODY**

In relation to students, the College aims to provide education of excellent quality for all its students, whatever their background. In pursuit of this aim, the College is committed to using its best endeavours to ensure that all of its activities are governed by principles of equality of opportunity, and that all students are helped to achieve their full academic potential. This statement applies to admissions, to the curriculum, teaching and assessment, to welfare and support services, as far as the College takes the lead in these matters, and when it does not it will act in its support capacity to its best endeavour.

## **STAFF**

In relation to employees, the college aims to provide an environment in which everyone has access to the same opportunities, whatever their role. The college is committed to using its best endeavours to ensure all of its activities are governed by principles of equality of opportunity, and that all employees are helped to achieve their full professional potential. This applies to recruitment and progression, which we will ensure are determined solely by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant salary scale, as well as welfare and support services. We will support career development and progression to ensure diverse representation and participation at all levels.

## **COMMUNICATION OF THIS POLICY**

All employees and students will be made aware of this Policy and a copy of the Policy will be included in the Student Handbook and on the College website and intranet and given to all students and employees on joining us.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Governing Body and its Committees**

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with the senior management and Fellows of Lady Margaret Hall. Direct responsibility rests with the College's Equality Committee.

## **HR Manager**

The HR Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation and monitoring of the College's Equality & Inclusion Policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework for non-academic staff. The HR Manager reports to the Treasurer and Governing Body and reports job application and disciplinary and grievance monitoring statistics annually to the Equality Committee.

Similarly, the Senior Tutor is responsible for the day-to-day operation and application of the College's Equality & Inclusion Policy for LMH students and academic staff. The Senior Tutor reports annually to the Academic Policy Committee and Governing Body concerning student admissions and progress.

## **Departments**

Departmental managers within the College are also responsible for the day-to-day implementation and delivery of this Policy. The College will provide relevant training for all employees on their responsibilities and duties under this Policy.

## **All employees and students**

We expect everyone who works and studies with us to be treated, and to treat others, with respect. All members of the College have an individual responsibility to ensure that they comply with this Policy.

## **DEALING WITH DISCRIMINATION, VICTIMISATION OR HARASSMENT**

If employees or students see unacceptable behaviour, they need to treat the matter seriously. This may involve pointing out to a colleague the effect their behaviour has on others and getting them to stop. Any intervention should be handled appropriately without offending or inflaming the situation. It may be helpful to seek guidance from a Harassment Advisor as appropriate. If this approach fails, or in more serious cases, or if the person who is subject to the behaviour prefers, it may be necessary for managers or tutors to consider investigating and taking formal action within the normal disciplinary or separate harassment procedures. In the case of an employee complaint, guidance should always be sought from the HR Manager or Senior Tutor as appropriate.

If an employee or student considers that they have been treated unfairly they should raise the issue with their line manager or Personal Tutor/College Advisor in the first instance. If this approach does not rectify the matter or if the employee or student prefers, the grievance procedure should be followed.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Lady Margaret Hall takes seriously any breach of this Policy. Any breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedures for staff or students as appropriate. Serious cases of deliberate discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal or removal from College. The College encourages any current student or employee who has a complaint concerning a breach or potential breach of this Policy to bring such a complaint to the College using either the relevant grievance procedure or where appropriate following the procedure contained in the College Harassment Policy and Procedure. Support is available from the student and staff Harassment Advisors.

College members or employees who believe they are subjected to discrimination should be able to seek advice and support in confidence. The HR Manager, Senior Tutor or Harassment Advisors are available for these purposes.

Allegations regarding a potential breach of this Policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with detailed procedures. Individuals who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations of a breach in this Policy which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

All individuals will be personally accountable for their behaviour, actions and/or omissions, in cases of complaint or harassment.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

This policy is supported by the following other policies and procedures:

- Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure

These policies need to be updated regularly. You can help by telling us what new things we may need to include and how they can be improved. We are always interested in good practice. If you can help us, please let us know.

If you would like this document in other formats such as large print, audio CD or in another language, please [contact hrmanager@lmh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:contact_hrmanager@lmh.ox.ac.uk)

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