



Equal Opportunities

1. Introduction

Newnham College was founded to provide a liberal education for women. Its student body is female and, by its Statutes, only women may be elected into a Fellowship. This complies with legislation on sex discrimination, given in the Equality Act 2010, Section 5(3) of the Employment Act 1989, and Article 3 of the College Charter.

2. Statement of Policy

2.1 The College is committed to an active approach to equality of opportunity, one which encourages an inclusive culture and values diversity.

We recognise that discrimination is unacceptable and although equality of opportunity has been a long standing feature of our employment practices and procedure, we have made the decision to adopt a formal equal opportunities policy. Breaches of the policy may lead to formal disciplinary proceedings and, if appropriate, disciplinary action.

2.2 This policy has been developed with regard to the Equality Act 2010, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and its predecessor organisations.

2.3 The aim of the policy is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity (including the relevant times for those undergoing IVF treatment), race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (the "Protected Characteristics") or the fact that someone is a part-time worker or a fixed-term employee.

2.4 The College also recognises that all employees should normally receive equal pay for the same work, work rated as equivalent or work of equal value.

2.5 The policy will be implemented in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements and full account will be taken of all available guidance and in particular any relevant Codes of Practice.

2.6 We will maintain a neutral working environment in which no employee or worker feels under threat or intimidated. (See "Dignity at Work" in "Policies & Procedures: Staff".)

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The College Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College meets its obligations under employment legislation and that the principles of equality of opportunity are given due regard in its strategic planning.

- 3.2 Responsibility for the implementation and review of the policy as it relates to different sections of the College community will be allocated as follows:
- The Bursar and Domestic Bursar (for non-academic staff)
 - The Senior Tutor and the Bursar (for members of the teaching staff)
 - The Senior Tutor, the Graduate Tutor, Tutors, Assistant Tutors, Assistant Graduate Tutors and Directors of Studies (for current students)
 - The Admissions Tutor, the Graduate Tutor and the Senior Tutor (for candidates for admission to the College)
 - The Principal and Convenors of the Fellowship Electors (for candidates for Junior Research Fellowships).
- 3.3 All members and employees of the College who have managerial responsibilities have a duty to put the Equal Opportunities Policy and its procedures into practice and to follow appropriate procedures if breaches of the policy occur. They should ensure that all staff know about their responsibilities and receive guidance and training as appropriate.
- 3.4 All members and employees of the College have responsibilities to respect the Equal Opportunities Policy and to keep up to date with the requirements of the law and to take up training opportunities.

4. Forms of Discrimination

- 4.1 This policy sets out basic definitions of direct and indirect discrimination and refers staff to a Dignity at Work (anti-harassment) policy.
- 4.2 Discrimination by or against an employee is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- 4.3 Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the Protected Characteristics referred to above. Discriminating against someone because of a wrongly held perception that they possess a particular Protected Characteristic or because of their association with someone with a particular Protected Characteristic will similarly not be tolerated by the College.
- 4.4 Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same Protected Characteristic at a particular disadvantage.
- 4.5 Harassment related to any Protected Characteristic is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Dignity at Work policy.

4.6 Victimisation is also prohibited. This is detrimental treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

5. Recruitment and Selection

5.1 The recruitment and selection process is crucially important to any equal opportunities policy. We will endeavour through appropriate training to ensure that employees making selection and recruitment decisions will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these decisions, except where legally permitted.

5.2 Applicants will not be asked questions about health and disability before a job offer is made, except where these questions are necessary to:

- (a) establish whether the candidate can comply with a requirement necessary to the selection process;
- (b) establish whether any reasonable adjustments are required for the selection process;
- (c) establish whether the candidate will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned;
- (d) monitor diversity;
- (e) take positive action;
- (f) ascertain whether a candidate has a disability where this is an occupational requirement of the job.

5.3 Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy.

5.4 Job descriptions, where used, will be kept under review to ensure that they are in line with our equal opportunities policy. Job requirements will be reflected accurately in any personnel specifications.

5.5 We will adopt a consistent, non-discriminatory approach to the advertising of vacancies.

5.6 All applicants who apply for jobs with us will receive fair treatment and will be considered solely on their ability to do the job.

5.7 All members of staff involved in the recruitment process will periodically review their selection criteria to ensure that they are related to the job requirements and do not unlawfully discriminate.

5.8 Short listing and interviewing will normally be carried out by more than one person where possible.

5.9 Interview questions will be related to the requirements of the job and will not be of a discriminatory nature.

- 5.10 We will not automatically disqualify any applicant because he/she is unable to complete a standard application form.
- 5.11 Selection decisions will not be influenced by an applicant's association with someone with a Protected Characteristic nor any perceived prejudices of other staff.

6. Training, Promotion and Conditions of Service

- 6.1 All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation.
- 6.2 Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.
- 6.3 Senior staff will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

7. Termination

- 7.1 We will monitor redundancy criteria and procedures to ensure that they are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 7.2 We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures are carried out fairly and uniformly for all staff, whether they result in the giving of disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1 We will maintain and review the employment records of all employees in order to monitor the progress of this policy.
- 8.2 Monitoring may involve:
- the collection and classification and examination of information regarding the Protected Characteristics of all applicants and current employees including the distribution of employees and the success rates of applicants; and
 - recording recruitment, training and promotional records of all employees, the decisions reached and the reason for those decisions.
- 8.3 The results of any monitoring procedure will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy. Consideration will be given, if necessary, to adjusting this policy to afford greater equality of opportunities to all applicants and staff.

9. Complaints / Breach

- 9.1 Any member of staff or job applicant who believes that they may have been discriminated against, contrary to the terms of this policy, is encouraged to raise the matter in accordance with the College's Grievance Procedure or in the case of a job applicant by writing to the Bursar.

- 9.2 Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedures. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and may result in dismissal without notice.
- 9.3 The Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures are set out in the Staff Handbook.