

Lincoln College Oxford
Gender Equality Scheme

April 2007

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1. Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

This Gender Equality Scheme aims to promote equality of opportunity for all men and women working and studying at Lincoln College, or applying to do so; foster an environment in which unlawful discrimination and harassment are not tolerated; and encourage full participation within the collegiate community.

The Scheme summarises the current position, identifies some examples of steps taken to promote gender equality and communicates the College's key objectives. It will include an Action Plan that sets out how the College plans to progress the issues affecting gender equality over the next three years: at present this Action Plan is still in development.

The key objectives identified in preparing this Scheme are as follows:

- Encourage more women to apply for academic posts.
- Monitor levels of achievement between the genders with particular reference to the University's research into the causes of the gender gap in final examination results in certain subjects.
- Engage more women in decision-making processes.
- Build on the existing framework to foster gender equality.

As the Gender Equality Code of Practice makes clear, the focus going forward should be on ensuring that outcomes do not reflect a gender bias. Some of the more intractable gender equality issues facing this the College, and the University at large, are matters of national relevance that confront all employers and providers of higher education. Whilst the public focus may be on equity for women, eliminating discrimination on the grounds of gender against men is also on the agenda. The College will continue to strive to be a community in which men and women participate fully and equally.

1.2 Preparation of this Scheme

This Scheme has been prepared by the College's Equality Committee, under the chairmanship of the Bursar. Advice has been taken from departments of the University, from the Conference of Colleges Legal Panel and from external legal advisors and personnel consultants. The Scheme should be regarded as a work that is continually in progress. It is expected that it will be changed and added to over time. The Equality Committee will take the lead in this process, but all members of the College community are expected and are invited to contribute to making this an evolving set of practicable policies.

2. Context

2.1 Legal context: general and specific duties

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (“SDA”) forbids discrimination on grounds of gender, which includes gender, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity; and marital status, which includes civil partnerships.

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act to place a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; and
- to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

This ‘general duty’ came into effect from 6 April 2007. To support progress in delivering the general duty, there is also a series of ‘specific duties’ set out for public bodies listed by the Act, including universities. These specific duties are summarised below:

- To prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, to consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap.
- To gather and use information on how the public authority's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.
- To consult stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- To assess the impact of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To implement the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- To report against the scheme every year and review the scheme at least every three years.

The first Scheme had to be published by 30 April 2007.

2.2 Institutional context

Lincoln College is one of 39 colleges which, with 7 permanent private halls, comprise the University of Oxford. The College defines its role in terms of its mission statement, as follows :

- Provide an exceptional residential education for high-ability undergraduates selected solely on academic grounds from a diversity of backgrounds;

- Maintain the most rigorous standards of undergraduate education provided by the College's Fellows, including tutorial-based teaching in the context of the Fellows' leading research in their respective fields;
- Promote and support to the highest levels of excellence post-graduate teaching and research;
- Through its Fellows engage in advanced and innovative research of international quality;
- Provide exceptional facilities and services and manage them effectively and responsively for the benefit of all members of College;
- Assist the collegiate university in the furtherance of its educational mission;
- Reach out to all those who form part of the College's wider community of members and friends, and to the public that helps support its activities both regionally and nationally;
- Enhance and pass on to posterity its inherited assets and values;
- Maintain and increase College resources, and to maximise their effective use in the pursuit of academic excellence through both teaching and research;
- Seek greater financial independence to enable it to develop its academic strategy, while remaining within the scope of the mission of the collegiate University as a whole.

This Gender Equality Scheme relates to all activities, services and facilities provided by the College.

The College has an Equality Committee which is the main body in College dedicated to delivery of all of the College's diversity and equal opportunities objectives. The Equality Committee is convened by the Bursar and meets once per Term, regularly in seventh week and reporting to the third Governing Body meeting of Term. The Committee's Terms of Reference read as follows:

The Equality Committee is a committee of Lincoln College. It is responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring, prioritisation and review of policies, procedures and practice to support the College's Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to employees (Fellows and staff) students, visitors and others closely associated with the College.

The Committee is convened by the Bursar and chaired by him/her. The members of the Committee are: Senior Tutor, the Dean, the Chaplain, the Presidents of the JCR and MCR (or their representatives), Trade Union representative and other staff and students reflecting the diversity of backgrounds and experiences of College members. Members may be co-opted from time to time from amongst the College's Fellows, staff or students to represent particular interests.

The College has a policy and a code of practice for dealing with cases of harassment, including sexual harassment. The College appoints a Harassment Officer from among its Fellows to take responsibility for monitoring and resolving any reported cases of harassment. The College's regular pastoral resources (Senior Tutor, Chaplain, Bursar, student peer supporters) also provide support in cases of gender conflict. The JCR and MCR have executive committee members with particular responsibility for women's interests.

3. Key objectives

The objectives of this Scheme are set out below and are broken down further in the Action Plan.

1. Encourage more women to apply for academic posts.

Oxford University as a whole has identified that women form smaller and smaller proportions of people working in scientific and other academic disciplines as they progress through their careers. In 1999-2000 the University obtained funding from Universities UK's Athena project for a programme of positive action aimed at encouraging applications from women scientists for academic posts at the University. A key recommendation of Oxford's Athena project¹ was the establishment of Career Development Fellowships, a new type of post designed to provide a stepping stone for those embarking on an academic career. Two programmes have been run to date under the University's Human Resources Strategy offering these fixed-term fellowships with the aims of providing an intensive and supported career development opportunity for outstanding academics at an early stage of their career, and promoting equality of opportunity by helping to create a more diverse pool of potential candidates for future academic posts at Oxford or elsewhere. The Fellowships are advertised as particularly welcoming applications from women and ethnic minorities. Both programmes have attracted applications from, and recruited, women in high numbers (across the University 58% of applicants for the first tranche and 46% for the second were women; all 12 recruits to the first programme, and 7 of the 15 appointed in the second, were women). Eleven members of the first cohort have succeeded in taking the next step up the academic career ladder. The University's Task Force on Academic Employment is currently consulting on a range of propositions, including establishing the Career Development Fellowship grade firmly within the formal structure for academic employment at Oxford.

Lincoln College has participated fully in the Career Development Fellowship programme and has appointed one person (a woman) to such a post. The Career Development Fellowship having come to an end that individual has succeeded to a full Fellowship of the College, funded initially entirely from College resources.

In addition the proportion of women in the Fellowship has increased markedly in recent years (see 3 below). All elections to the Fellowship are on the basis of merit.

2. *Monitor levels of achievement between the genders with particular reference to the University's research into the causes of the gender gap in final examination results in certain subjects.*

Recent research across the University has noted that whilst women undergraduates perform well in final examinations, proportionately fewer are awarded first-class degrees. For many subjects at Oxford, the success rates in the award of firsts are broadly similar for men and women, but there are some subjects in both the Arts and the Sciences in which there are distinct differences.

At University level the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of Council is monitoring the situation and has supported further research to investigate the causes. The Oxford Admissions Study was commissioned by the University to assess the factors influencing success rates, including gender in final examination results. The research project, led by Professor Anthony Heath in the Department of Sociology, is tracking the progress of a cohort of students and results will be published in 2008 after the group has taken their final examinations in 2007. Drs Jane Mellanby and Ann Pasternak-Slater in the Department of Experimental Psychology are conducting research into the gender gap in finals at the English Faculty. It is hoped that the results of both projects will provide further understanding of the causes of the gender imbalance. In the meantime, the English Faculty has shared with current students information on the criteria for firsts and best practice in preparing for final examinations.

The College is undertaking its own monitoring exercises in order better to inform the University's efforts in this regard. Annual analyses of admissions and examination results are performed by the Senior Tutor.

3. *Engage more women in decision-making processes.*

All Tutorial and Professorial Fellows of the College are members of the College's Governing Body. This is the College's decision-making body. As more women have been elected to fellowships, so the proportion of women on the Governing Body has increased. In 2007 the Governing Body has five female tutorial Fellows, one female extraordinary Fellow and a female Senior Tutor (ie, 7 out of a Governing Body of 35)

The College is supportive of the University's Academic Leadership Development Programme, beginning its second year in 2007. This is aimed at academics, particularly women and those from ethnic minorities, who have some experience of holding office in their department or college and are interested in considering a leadership role. The aim is to develop a pool of diverse people prepared to take on leadership at head of department level and also in respect of the more senior academic leadership positions.

4. *Build on the existing framework to foster gender equality.*

The College's integrated Equal Opportunities Policy includes and emphasises gender equality as a key feature of the College's life. With guidance from the University's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit and other bodies, the College aims to identify issues and decide on the appropriate course of action. Centrally the

University, principally through the DEOU, monitors data and recommends action to address University-wide issues. The University will continue to raise awareness of the procedure for dealing with complaints of harassment and bullying, and review the systems relating to contracts with suppliers.

The college's remuneration structure is largely dependent on pay-scales determined nationally and by the University. A full pay audit undertaken by the University will seek to identify any gender gaps in remuneration. The college's own Remuneration Committee, comprised of alumni of the College, is charged with ensuring equality of treatment among Fellows irrespective of gender and other considerations.

4. Students

4.1 Undergraduate and post-graduate admissions

The University and Colleges have agreed a Common Framework for Colleges and Faculties which lays down key principles and procedures for undergraduate admissions and comes into effect from October 2007. This is supplemented by the Code of Practice for Undergraduate Admissions to the Oxford Colleges

The Graduate offices new admissions process (from 2004-05) enables monitoring of admissions via the Oracle Student System (OSS). A report from the Graduate Admissions Review Panel published in November 2006 has proposed that a committee be established to review graduate admissions arrangements annually for equity and efficiency. The Principles of the New Graduate Admissions Process govern admissions for graduate students.

The University and Colleges have developed access initiatives to encourage applications from students who are currently under-represented at Oxford at undergraduate level, such as students from the maintained sector, ethnic minority students and mature students. Lincoln College has access initiatives concentrated on Lincolnshire, Kent and Switzerland: all seek to encourage applications from women, and all admissions are determined on merit. There are also several highly successful student-led initiatives in operation, such as the Oxford Access Scheme and Target Schools.

5. Staff

5.1 Recruitment and retention

Lincoln College supports the University's "Human Resources Strategy To 2009: Rewarding and Developing People at Oxford" which is designed to reflect the University's key values as set out in the University's Corporate Plan, 2005-06 to 2009-10, and deliver objective (4) of that plan, namely to "attract, develop and retain academic staff of the highest international calibre and make Oxford University and its colleges employers of choice for all staff in the international, national and local environments". Strategy VII of the Corporate Plan sets out the principal personnel objectives in more detail, and the HR Strategy provides a comprehensive description of current and future activity.

The Task Force on Academic Employment is a key University initiative relevant to gender equality. Carrying forward many of the key personnel-related targets

included in Strategy VII of the Corporate Plan is the Task Force on Academic Employment. Chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Personnel and Equal Opportunities), it has been established to undertake a review of arrangements for academic employment in the Collegiate University and to make proposals for future structures for academic employment. The review will be comprehensive, including the effect of current and possible alternative arrangements on individuals' workload (in respect of teaching, research and other duties) and on the achievement of academic objectives for University appointments and joint appointments with colleges, career structure and career development, salary structures, and arrangements for tenure.

5.2 Staff benefits

The College' family leave arrangements are generous: maternity leave is well in excess of the statutory minimum; there is also recognition of wider family commitments, which has led to the development of policies on paternity, adoption and parental emergency leave. Flexible working arrangements and time off for domestic emergencies cover dependant adults as well as school age children. The College is able to participate in the University's childcare provision as outlined under Section 6.3.

5.3 Pay

The Gender Equality Code of Practice issued by the government identifies three main factors which contribute to the existence of a gender pay gap:

- pay discrimination (which is often inadvertent, but nonetheless unlawful)
- the impact of women's disproportionate share of caring responsibilities (which may result in women undertaking part-time work which is often poorly paid and restricts career continuity and progression)
- the concentration of women in particular occupations ('occupational segregation'), usually characterised by lower levels of pay than in those numerically dominated by men.

Pay scales at Lincoln College are set with reference to those used by the University at large. The University has undertaken equal pay audits since 2002 to review the pay of women and men doing work of equal value, identify any pay gaps and take steps to eliminate them. Past audits have reported the following:

- Overall there were no significant anomalies in basic pay by grade.
- Women were less likely to hold senior posts. This was particularly significant in relation to senior academic posts.
- Women were still concentrated in lower paid roles, e.g. clerical posts.

The introduction by the University of the single spine salary structure in August 2006, and its adoption by the College, has entailed a thorough review of pay for work of equal value across all staff roles. A further full pay audit is now due.

6. Matters affecting both staff and students

6.1 Harassment

Details of current arrangements for dealing with harassment and bullying are set out in the College's Policy on Harassment.

6.2 Training and development

The Oxford Learning Institute has primary responsibility for co-ordinating training. It is piloting 'Managing Diversity', an online training course for departmental administrators offering guidance on recent legislation and the practical issues of managing a diverse staff. The course on recruitment and selection has also been revised and introduced in a new online format, with extensive material on avoiding gender bias in judgements and on positive action in recruitment. The following programmes have been designed to promote or contribute to gender equality:

i) Springboard

To date, the Oxford Learning Institute has offered fourteen programmes of the award-winning personal and professional development scheme for women. The programme is always over-subscribed and the University has supported the licensing of five further in-house trainers. Monitoring of the intake has led to changes in its promotion, to attract women from staff groups that are under-represented, for example lunchtime taster sessions to which staff have been individually invited, and the use of venues on different sites across the University. Responses from participants have also helped to evaluate and develop the Oxford scheme: over 80% reported increased levels of confidence and assertiveness.

ii) Centre for Excellence in Preparing for Academic Practice

One of the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) funded by HEFCE², the Centre is located in the Oxford Learning Institute. It started work in September 2005 and will run for five years. The primary objective of the Centre is to prepare postgraduate research students and contract research staff for academic careers, and its methods combine research and the dissemination of best practice, and the development of training and mentoring programmes. The Centre is currently funding a pilot of the Springboard programme for postgraduate students; until now, this programme has been offered to staff only.

6.3 Childcare

The University offers 219 FTE subsidised workplace nursery places of which 161 are in premises provided by the University and managed by the company Kidsunlimited and the rest are at private nurseries run by Kidsunlimited (45 places) and Buffer Bear Ltd (13 places). The University operates two schemes offering tax savings for employee parents: a Salary Sacrifice Scheme for those holding a workplace nursery place and a Virtual Voucher Scheme for those paying for non-workplace approved childcare. A fund of up to £20,000 a year is available to provide

student bursaries to those experiencing hardship in paying workplace nursery fees. University parents can also take advantage of discounted holiday playscheme places.

7. Lincoln College in the community

The College organises Open Days for prospective students and has a number of access initiatives to encourage student applications.

8. Monitoring and reporting

8.1 Staff and student data

The College monitors undergraduate admissions (based on data provided by UCAS³) and the progression of students by gender, and reports these results annually to the Governing Body. With the introduction of the new Oracle Student System, a similar pattern will be introduced for graduates. This information is coordinated with that of the University and is published online. Data on gender is held on 99.9% of current students.

The College Bursary monitors staff data by gender. The results of this analysis and staff recruitment monitoring are reported to the Equality Committee. Data on gender was available for 100% of all job applicants and 100% of staff in post in 2006.

Current guidance from the Equality Challenge Unit and the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Wales (HEFCE) is that universities should only monitor sexual orientation of staff and students after extensive consultation with interested parties. Initial consultation with a group of staff and students has shown that there is a preference for sexual orientation not to be monitored by the College and there are therefore currently no plans to do so. This policy will be kept under review.

9. Impact assessment

The College will prepare a plan for facilitating equality impact assessments over the three-year span of this Scheme, to map, prioritise and then review existing and new policies and procedures.

Gender Equality Action Plan

Action	Review date	Person/Body responsible
Objective 1: Encourage more women to apply for academic posts		
Objective 2: Monitor levels of achievement between the genders with particular reference to the University's research into the causes of the gender gap in final examination results in certain subjects.		
Objective 3: Engage more women in decision-making processes		
Objective 4: Build on the existing framework to foster gender equality		

Review the University's Gender Equality Scheme at least once every three years	Trinity Term 2009	DEOU
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Key:

EPSC: Educational Policy and Standards Committee

DEOU: Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit

OLI: Oxford Learning Institute

PS: Personnel Services

PVC: Pro-Vice-Chancellor