

## Equality and Diversity Report 2016/17

### 1. Introduction

This is Balliol College's Equality and Diversity Report for the academic year 2016/17. The report helps fulfil the College's reporting requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). To fulfil the PSED, bodies exercising public functions must have due regard to the need to:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimization.
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between those who do and do not share a protected characteristic.
- 3) Foster good relations between those who do and do not share a protected characteristic.

The characteristics protected under the Act and covered by the Duty are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; ethnicity; religion and belief; sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

### 2. Actions taken in the academic year 2016/17

#### Pursuing the College's Equality Objective on Gender

Balliol's Equality Objective during the academic year 2016/17 related to gender equality. Following initial scrutiny of data on the gender balance of Balliol's Fellowship and teaching teams, a Working Party on Gender was set up to consider a range of questions relating to the recruitment and retention of female academic staff. The group produced a report that was subsequently considered at Senior Academic Meeting and College Meeting, and a range of changes to existing policy agreed, with the specific aim of improving Balliol's recruitment of female academic staff. Agreed policies included:

- That attention be paid to how the characterisation of areas of specialization affects the gender mix of the likely pool of applicants when drawing up job specifications.
- A range of steps in relation to job advertisements: (i) that job adverts and further particulars include a bespoke wording which draws attention to the College's commitment to equal opportunities and the value of diversity with greater emphasis and detail than is the legal minimum or the rhetorical norm; ii) that adverts should contain a prominent reference to a female member of academic staff who can act as a contact for enquiries; iii) that recruitment materials should clarify and emphasise the College's policy on

career breaks, especially in relation to the eligibility of CDFs; and (iv) that such materials should also emphasise the childcare provision made possible by Balliol having its own Nursery.

- That the College should seek out and encourage applications from outstanding junior women, who have only recently completed doctorates; should encourage targeted applications from women for Career Development Fellowships; and should consider under what circumstances a lack of diversity within the pool of applicants, or of shortlisted applicants, for a post should result in the recruitment process being extended or re-started.
- That, consistent with the College's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, for so long as a significant gender gap remains within the Fellowship, a woman should be preferred to a man in a situation where a male candidate and a female candidate are deemed to be equally suitable for the position for which they have applied.

### **Balliol Interdisciplinary Institute Projects**

The Balliol Interdisciplinary Institute (BII) was established in to cultivate and support interdisciplinary research in Balliol College, straddling the humanities, the social sciences, and the physical and medical sciences. During the academic year 2016/17, the BII funded a number of new projects with significant potential to advance the College's agenda in relation to equality and diversity. These included the following:

*Intersections 2017: Identities and agency online*

*Machine Learning Techniques for Legal Practice: Automating Legal Aid for Refugees*

*Empire and the Politics of Pedagogy*

Work also continued on a number of existing BII projects, notably the Gender and Authority Network, jointly funded by the Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH): <https://womenandthecanon.wordpress.com>

Details on past and present BII projects can be found at <https://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/balliol-interdisciplinary-institute>

### **Appointment of PSED Lead**

Dr Daniel Butt, Fellow and Tutor in Political Theory and Vice-master (Academic), was been appointed Public Sector Equality Lead in February 2017. In this capacity, Dr Butt has attended the University Equality and Diversity Forum, to share best practice amongst the different parts of the University.

### **3. Action plan for 2017/18**

Proposed activities in 2017/18 include the following:

#### **A new equality objective on ethnicity and race**

As noted above, the College's existing equality objective relates to gender. We intend to revise this objective in 2017/18, and add a further objective specifically relating to race and ethnicity. This would seek to encourage both staff and student recruitment from BME applicants, and to promote consideration of issues relating to race and ethnicity within the College.

#### **Improve equal opportunity disclosure rates**

We will seek to improve our monitoring of equal opportunity data, so as to obtain as comprehensive as possible a picture of the make-up of the College.

#### **Continue existing initiative on gender in academic recruitment**

We will continue to implement our new policies on gender in academic recruitment, and monitor the gender mix of all levels of academic staff in College.

#### **Promote equality and diversity initiatives through the Balliol Interdisciplinary Institute.**

We will encourage project applications to the BII which specifically advance the College's interests in the promotion of equality and diversity.