



## **Brasenose College, Oxford**

### **Public Sector Equality Duty - 2025 Report**

#### ***Introduction by the Principal, John Bowers KC***

*At the heart of our College is academic excellence. We are also a caring and inclusive community and the two features go hand in hand. Diversity has for long been central to our values and heritage. For example, Brasenose has in recent years offered an international fellowship. Such fellows as Nicholas Kurti and Sir Otto Kahn Freund who came as refugees enormously enriched and enhanced our reputation.*

*Today we make provision for students or academics at risk or stateless, for example from Syria or Ukraine.*

*To maintain its success and enhance its achievements, Brasenose depends upon the excellence and diversity of its staff and students. Equality of opportunity is applied to the processes of selection and retention of staff and students.*

*Our aim is to treat all with respect and fairness to promote an inclusive institutional culture that recognises the benefits of a diverse learning community for students and staff alike.*

*As a discrimination lawyer, I have been involved in several of the leading cases on the public sector equality duty. I have also sat as a judge in some of the cases. It therefore gives me great pleasure to write this introduction for what is a very important document. As a College we are subject to the Equality Act 2010 as an education provider, employer and provider of goods, facilities and services.*

*I hope you will all take time to read the scheme carefully. It is important that everyone plays their part in this endeavour.*

*If you have any questions **please direct them to Julia Dewar, HR Director:** [hr@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hr@bnc.ox.ac.uk)*

#### **1. Background to the Single Equality Duty and College responsibilities**

This document sets out the College's statutory responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and covers the various elements of the Equality Act 2010. These include consideration of the eight protected characteristics defined in the Act: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, the Act covers marriage and civil partnerships with due regard specifically required to avoid unlawful discrimination in employment.

The aims of the **general duty** of the Equality Act 2010 underpin the Public Sector Equality Duty and Brasenose aims to meet these, namely to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Foster good relations between people from different protected groups, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different protected groups, including:
  - removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
  - meeting the needs of people with protected characteristics;
  - encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in areas where their representation is low.

### **Responsibility**

The responsibility for consideration of equal opportunity matters currently rests with the Equality and Diversity Committee which meets once a term, and in turn reports to Governing Body which has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the general equality duty is met.

Representation on the E&D Committee is from members of the College community:

- Chair: The Equality and Diversity Fellow, who is also a member of Governing Body.
- Members: The Principal, the Senior Tutor, the Chaplain, the Dean, the Tutor for Graduates, two Tutorial Fellows, the Human Resources Director and the JCR and HCR Presidents and the student E&D Representatives. External advisers are also invited to share their expertise.

The E&D Committee is responsible for the promotion, development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Public Sector Equality Duty in relation to employees, students, visitors and others closely associated with the College. All staff with managerial responsibility have a duty to ensure they undertake to make themselves aware of the requirements and to take forward specific actions under this Scheme.

## **2. Progress on integrating equality and diversity into College procedures**

### **Reporting**

The College produces this report each year and reviews and updates its PSED Action Plan. The Specific Aims of the Action Plan are to ensure that all employees who have managerial responsibilities receive equality awareness training, and to enhance the College's analysis and review of equality data on employees to identify which areas may need further investigation or action.

The Report and Action Plan are both published on the College's website, in accordance with the reporting requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

### **Actions**

#### **Training**

A wide range of training in different formats has been provided on equality, diversity and harassment awareness each year, including for Officers of the College. In 2023 there was an emphasis on

managing diversity within teams, including specialist training sessions on mental health awareness, supporting neurodiversity in our community and working with people affected by trauma. In 2024 and 2025 the emphasis is on meeting the requirements of new legislation, with a focus on prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace.

All new employees are offered an online course in Equality and Diversity and on sexual harassment awareness (amongst others). Completion is logged, with refresher training offered on a 1- or 3-year refresher cycle.

All academic staff involved in student admissions should complete equality training and implicit bias training run by the University.

Delivery of training for academic staff and process improvements in recruitment to ensure fairness were agreed by Governing Body in summer 2018 following a comprehensive report by the then Chair of Equality Working Group. Training for Fellows and other academic staff was provided in January 2019, with further guidance in the published University APTF recruitment process guide. Training for academic staff on mental health issues amongst students was also provided in-house together with a range of training offered by MPLS, including neurodivergence.

New students continue to be provided with training on consent and diversity.

### **Governance/Committees**

The E&D Committee is Chaired by Dr Anne Edwards, the Equality and Diversity Fellow, who is also a member of HR Committee, Welfare Committee and Governing Body. She has an awareness of diversity issues, and involvement in student welfare cases across the College and the University, including Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Training.

Student representatives attend the Equality and Diversity committee to represent the Junior Common Room (JCR for under-graduates) and Hulme Common Room (HCR for post-graduates) sharing best practice and raising issues. The Presidents are present as well as Equality and Diversity student representatives.

Awareness of diversity issues also continued to be raised at the Staff Consultative Committee, for example to consult on and raise awareness of fairness of treatment and benefits and in policy development. Staff suggestions are sought and reviewed termly.

### **Policies**

Policies are kept under review by HR Committee and Governing Body. The revised Flexible Working policy recognising day one rights was adopted in 2024, and other recent policies include the revision in 2022 of the Academic Staff-Student Relationship policy, and in early 2023 of the amended Harassment policy. Further change to this is under review with a separate Sexual Harassment policy to be introduced in 2025. Other policies are due for review in line with statutory changes, including for example the Shared Parental Leave policy, the College has supported early career academic staff (e.g. provision of sabbatical leave) and moved away from fixed-term contracts to permanent contracts wherever possible.

The Flexible Working policy, first introduced in 2011, continues to be applied widely with creative solutions which now include arrangements for hybrid working. Other examples include compressed hours, term-time working, job share and part-time hours to accommodate childcare

and other caring needs and disability (physical and mental health conditions). Part-time work represents over 30% of non-academic employment arrangements and around 50% of staff have some form of flexible working arrangement.

**Support – a range of examples include:**

- Surveys: A survey on racism targeted specifically for BAME support staff in December 2020 showed some reports of racism. The results indicated that staff understood how to report racism and trusted the College to take action. Since then, in 2022 College acted swiftly where an allegation of racism was made, taking actions including dismissal and providing support for staff. This sent a strong signal that this behaviour would not be tolerated.
- Feedback from staff on inclusion, diversity, culture and values at Brasenose was also gained as part of an engagement project in 2024 with discussion in small departmental groups. Some pulse surveys are scheduled for 2025.
- Applications for statutory domestic leave are approved annually for Brasenose staff (unpaid time off for caring responsibilities). Increasing numbers of staff take up this option each year.
- Translation services e.g. of letters and instructions for support staff (to help with inclusion). The College's online training platform can deliver in 40 languages.
- Agreement to extend research fellowships to compensate for absence caused by maternity to ensure an equal length of time is offered to Junior Research Fellows.
- Implementation of an age-related flexible retirement arrangement, with adjustments made to the role and working hours. Other adjustments for age, disability or caring responsibilities have been made including part-time work, hybrid working, flexibility with hours and job-sharing arrangements.
- Advice has been obtained from Occupational Health on suitable reasonable adjustments and phased return to work for disabilities and health conditions (including protected characteristics). Specialist support and advice received from organisations such as Dyslexia Action, the University Disability Unit and Access to Work e.g. for equipment and access workers. Other measures include reduced hours and reallocation of duties and time-off for hospital appointments.
- Upgrading graduate and undergraduate rooms to BS8300 and Approved Building Regs Document M standard following access audit. Current building works include full consideration of disability and access concerns and is an area kept under review.
- Continued use of a part-time Student Support Adviser available in College to provide student counselling and to signpost other available support.
- Provision of Employee Assistance provider to support wellbeing and mental health. Student Welfare support has increased significantly for undergraduates and postgraduates to take account of disabilities such as extra time granted for students in exams; the development of facilities to better enable wheelchair access for staff, students and visitors.
- Agreements to accommodate a welfare animal e.g. assistance dog or cat to help with anxiety or other conditions.

## **Recruitment**

- Introduction of a new recruitment system in 2024 for non-academic staff vacancies, which is easier to use and has resulted in higher number of applicants. Removes some barriers to entry.
- Equality issues are considered at all stages of the recruitment process. Through our new recruitment tool – Pinpoint – we have the ability to anonymise candidates' applications for shortlisting for non-academic staff posts, but we are yet to implement this. Access requirements are taken into consideration and assistance offered to all interview candidates.
- The College has doubled the number of staff in non-academic posts from BAME backgrounds between 2018 and 2025. The Professional and Domestic staff now better reflect the diverse population of Oxford city.
- Use of wider methods for reaching under-represented groups e.g. local networks and social media to encourage applications from ethnic groups.
- Casual roles are advertised for fair selection purposes and to attract a more diverse pool of staff. Applicants for posts are interviewed following fair selection principles to ensure appointment against selection criteria, rather than just through informal or local networks to avoid nepotism.

## **Data Collection**

The collection of data and monitoring of the diversity of applicants for vacancies started in 2012, but remains incomplete because data is provided on a voluntary basis from candidates and new appointees. Better data has been gathered on non-academic staff but is harder to access for academic staff. The University surveys staff for diversity data biannually and Brasenose gathers data every few years.

Student data is gathered and analysed in depth to ensure compliance with College and University stated aims.

## **E&D Events/Initiatives**

- A budget is available to support diversity related initiatives, such as the annual Brasenose Equality Conversation, Principal's Conversations and multi-faith events.
- A series of events in 2024 and 2025 to mark the 50th anniversary of the admission of women as undergraduates have been scheduled, for example celebrating Women in Brasenose in STEM subjects. The anniversary will also be marked by an inscription on the College threshold
- Celebration of festivals or special weeks has been encouraged whether run by student bodies or the College.

#### 4. Equal Opportunities Monitoring in Recruitment

The on-going monitoring of equal opportunities data to ensure the College fulfils its remit to treat all Academic members and Support Staff equally within employment is important to inform policy decisions. The introduction of a recruitment portal with a purpose-built data gathering page has helped to gather statistical data from the various recruitment stages, where College is the lead employer. Data from joint appointment processes where the University is lead employer is not available. Continued improvement in this area is to be maintained e.g. through new processes and systems. Monitoring of student diversity data is undertaken by the University of Oxford on behalf of the College and is the subject of analysis and review by the Senior Tutor and Academic Committee for consideration of any further action to be taken. This data is available from the University Equality Unit.

### Public Sector Equality Action Review and Plan

### Appendix 1

Appendix 1 shows the Action Plan as previously agreed in committee (originally in 2012 and updated subsequently annually for display on the College website in compliance with the statutory duty).

Action	Progress: 2012-2020	Progress: 2021 - 2024	Person Responsible	Status
<p><b>1. Training for Managers of Support staff in equality awareness, diversity and cultural awareness.</b></p>	<p>Online diversity training is a requirement in induction with all new starters sent the link and reminders for completion. Training in the Equality Act 2010 is carried out annually for operational teams.</p> <p>External trainer provided training in 3 all-day sessions in 2016 and 2017 and 2018 for almost all managers, supervisors and customer facing staff.</p> <p>2020: Online training provided through webinars during pandemic, and further individual training in response to Black Lives Matter.</p> <p>Also introduced a member of staff as peer support for Welfare</p>	<p><b>2024</b> iHasco online E&amp;D training provided to all staff. In future - during induction and as refreshers.</p> <p>Prevention of Sexual Harassment training rolled out Oct 24.</p> <p>2024 Engagement project: increasing cultural awareness and focus on inclusivity including review/feedback on the College as a welcoming place to work.</p> <p>Staff pulse surveys to cover diversity, inclusion and culture scheduled for HT25.</p>	HR team	Ongoing schedule

	matters for domestic staff from BAME backgrounds as requested.			
<b>2. Training for GB in equality awareness.</b>	Training to raise awareness of diversity issues started in 2014, followed up in 2015. An Unconscious Bias course for Fellows and members of Governing Body in 2016. Since then, on appointment members have been emailed the link to the online E&D course for completion.	<b>2024</b> GB current and new appointees provided with E&D and harassment awareness courses	HR team	Ongoing with new staff and annual refreshers
		All governance committees are reminded of their responsibilities under PSED remit at the start of each academic year.	Principal	Ongoing
	iHasco courses on appointment with refresher training University online training available since 2016 in E&D together with course in unconscious bias.	Equality and Diversity Committee work to increase awareness and introduce new diversity initiatives in College.	HR team, Chair of E&D Com and Principal	Ongoing
<b>3. Diversity training for academics and managers involved in recruitment and selection of staff or students.</b>	Online diversity training is a University requirement for all with responsibility for joint appointments and admissions. All have been provided the link and a log of training completed kept by HR.  Representatives of GB have received training in Equality and Diversity. Further recruitment training was offered for other Fellows and Trustees of the College in	<b>2024</b> iHasco online E&D course made available to all. Modules available on recruitment best practice. New academic and non-academic staff complete the online diversity course.	HR	Ongoing

	2019. Refreshers offered every 3 yrs.			
<b>4. Review current procedures for data collection to improve response rate of monitoring form and methods for improved data collection.</b>	<p>Amendments were made to the Recruitment Monitoring form and to the timing of the request for completion which led to improved level of completion to assist better reporting and recording.</p> <p>Changes to recruitment processes were introduced leading to more available recruitment data at each stage for analysis. Stats are provided in Appendix 2.</p>	<p><b>2024.</b> Move to new recruitment system (Pinpoint) for non-academic staff with better data capture and reporting. More complete records on academic staff are being developed.</p> <p>Coaching and training of managers/supervisors in recruitment together with the standardisation of processes has continued.</p>	<p>HR team</p> <p>HR team</p>	<p>Report to E&amp;D Com Oct 2024 on data available</p>
<b>5. Review procedures for recruitment and selection to ensure equality of opportunity</b>	<p>Procedures for recruitment were reviewed by the Vice-Principal and agreed by Governing Body for academic staff and by HR for non-academic departments to ensure consistency and best practice using competency-based interviews.</p>	<p><b>2024</b> Recruitment and selection procedures reviewed for academic and non-academic staff with changes made e.g. name blind applications used at shortlisting stage, and recommendations around use of references. Example of interventions - recruitment process paused to ensure female member on panel or to encourage female candidates if none so far applied.</p>	<p>Chair of E&amp;D, Principal and HR</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<b>6. Analyse data from recruitment monitoring forms</b>	<p>Recruitment data has been gathered and reviewed depth, with a commitment to review on an annual basis. Reports to E&amp;D Com</p>	<p>Further collection and analysis of data for ongoing review + assessment</p> <p><b>Autumn 2024:</b> Reported on data to E&amp;D Com.</p>	<p>HR Manager</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<b>7. Access/ Disability audit.</b>	<p>An accessibility audit was completed with recommendations. Priority action was completed and further action kept under review</p>	<p>Before start of academic <b>year 2024/25</b> further actions and schedule of works to support access and other disability matters were identified and carried out.</p> <p>Some issues outstanding to be addressed.</p>	<p>Domestic Bursar</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



		Reasonable adjustments in place for phased return for disabled staff under advice from Occupational health. E.g. hearing loop installed	HR team	Ongoing
<b>8. On-going review of new policies/ initiatives to consider equality impact.</b>	New policies reviewed with consideration of equality impact e.g. Transgender policy introduced 2019 Several family-friendly policies introduced with equality impact assessments completed.	<b>2024 new policies:</b> day 1 right for Flexible working and change to Paternity leave (split weeks) approved and implemented.  2021 New policies introduced (with impact assessments completed) e.g. Part- time policy for academic staff, shared parental leave.	HR team  HR team	Ongoing
<b>9. Consideration of equal opportunities data to assess whether action needs to be taken to address unfairness in any of the protected characteristics.</b>	Examples of actions taken include extension of recruitment to target a more diverse pool of applicants.  Ensuring diverse recruitment panels.  Many initiatives introduced, including women’s dinner and networking events and to activities to improve cross-cultural awareness. Consideration of caring responsibilities and flexible and hybrid working widely introduced.	No complaints of unfairness in recruitment. Better gender mix in Professional and Domestic teams and among academic staff at senior level. Better understanding of imbalance of power following ‘Where do you draw the Line’ training and #MeToo campaign nationally.  Case management: An informal approach to encourage raising of issues so they can be addressed (if people wish to avoid making a formal complaint).  Action plans and risk assessments developed to encourage increasing awareness of employer responsibilities e.g. regarding sexual harassment. Improved mental health awareness and support for staff and students following Covid.	Dean and HR team	On-going

<b>10. On-going review of fair student procedures: e.g. admissions, room allocation, bursaries etc</b>	<p>The Senior Tutor has been reporting on these issues on an annual basis.</p> <p>On-going review of student procedures to ensure fairness and equity.</p>	<p>Report on admissions confirms BNC is in line with the University. Excellent record in providing support via student bursaries with 5% receiving some form of financial support.</p>	<p>Senior Tutor and Dean</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
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## Data summary narrative

## Appendix 2

### Data gathering

Brasenose College asks all applicants to provide their diversity data as part of the recruitment process, but it is not obligatory for candidates or selected appointees to complete this. The categories covered are ethnicity, gender, age and disability. Whilst many provide their data, some choose to withhold it. The College held only minimal diversity data in 2012, and it has taken more than a decade to gather some reliable records, although as it remains voluntary, it is not complete.

In line with our Public Sector Equality Duty desired aim, the College has tried to improve the data it holds e.g. by making it easier for new staff to provide it. The new recruitment system should make gathering diversity simpler and allow the College to identify whether bias is happening at any stage.

### Current position - Professional and Support staff:

#### Gender and age - Even distribution amongst staff and depts

#### Ethnic diversity among 120 non- academic staff:

**Headline increase: from 10% in 2015 to 23% in 2024 from BAME background.** (In 2024 Oxford city's BAME figure is **29%** (Source: Oxford City Council). In 2011 it was 22%).

Achieved by a number of different approaches including for example

- Wider placement of adverts, using local community groups in Oxford as well as local networks/and word of mouth within ethnic communities. An 'introductory bonus' introduced to reward staff.
- Staff from BAME backgrounds now at higher grades and within a wider selection of departments across College.
- Equality and diversity training for managers has been mandatory on appointment as part of cultural change and more inclusive leadership. Greater awareness of potential unconscious bias.

#### Surveys:

- 2025 Pulse surveys in development for roll out in Hilary term.
- 2024 Engagement project feedback demonstrated low level of harassment based on race or other protected characteristics among Professional and Domestic staff.
- 2020 A survey into racism for Professional and Domestic staff from BAME backgrounds showed no reported or witnessed experience of racism.

- 2019 The first Brasenose College staff survey included some questions specifically on harassment or bullying related to race. None reported.

## Current position - Academic Staff:

### GB and Tutorial Fellows Summary:

The rate of change is slow in terms of increasing the ethnicity profile, as turnover is limited, although Brasenose has been influencing the University as much as it can through the joint-appointment process. A letter from the Principal to the University panel in advance of interviews reminds them of the importance of fair selection and the desire to improve diversity. Increase in gender mix over the years.

**Supernumerary Fellowships and Research Fellows.** The College has greater flexibility over these appointments and significant changes have been made, especially in relation to gender profile.

**Lecturers:** Even gender mix in most subject areas and reasonable ethnic diversity mix across the staff.

## Diversity Data and Statistics

## Appendix 3

Governing Body	October 2024		July 2020		2018	
Female	14	32%	12	28%	10	25%
Male	31	69%	31	72%	31	75%
Total	45		43 100%		41 100%	
White British			19	44%	18	44%
Any other white background			7	16%	8	20%
BAME/ethnic			1	2%	1	2%
Declined to specify			12	28%	14	34%
No data held			4	10%		

Tutorial Fellows	Oct 2024		2020		2018	2015
Female	9	27%	5	17%	13%	7%
Male	24	72%	25	83%	87%	93%
Total	33		30			
	Oct 2024		2020		2018	2015
White British	13	43%	13	43%		
White other	6	29%	7	23%		
Total white	19	64%	20	66%	96% #	100% #
Ethnic group	2	7%	1	3.3%		
Declined/ no data	12	40%	9	30%		

# of those declaring their ethnicity

### Other Fellowships

	2024	2020	2024	2020

	<b>Supernumerary Fellows</b>	<b>Supernumerary Fellows</b>	<b>Research Fellows</b>	<b>Research Fellows</b>	
Female	6 43%	7 50%	9	9	56%
Male	8 57%	7 50%	11	7 7	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b> %

We do not hold ethnicity data for most Supernumerary and Research Fellows, as they are not employed directly by the College.