



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Christ's College is committed to equality of opportunity and to a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity. This commitment is underpinned by the College's Mission and the Equality Act 2010.

The College values diversity, recognising the particular contributions to the achievement of the College's mission and strategy that can be made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

This policy is not contractual.

The College's Equal Opportunities Statement can be found on the College website and supplements this Policy.

## **2. AIMS OF THIS POLICY**

The Policy is designed to ensure that current and potential College members are offered the same opportunities regardless of a protected characteristic, or indeed any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of their role. We seek to ensure that no-one suffers, either directly or indirectly, as a result of unlawful discrimination. This extends beyond the individual's own characteristics to cover discrimination by association and by perception.

We recognise that an effective Equal Opportunities Policy will help all College members to develop to their full potential, which is in the best interests of all parties. We aim to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity.

We expect everyone who works or studies at the College to be treated, and to treat others, with respect. Our aim is to foster an environment free from harassment, intimidation or discrimination in any form that may affect the dignity of an individual.

We further recognise the benefits of admitting and employing individuals from a range of backgrounds as this creates an environment where creativity and valuing differences in others thrives. We value the wealth of experience within the community in which we operate and aspire to have a culture that reflects this.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

Protected characteristics are specific attributes safeguarded against discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. These include sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including ethnic or national origin, nationality, or colour), disability, sexual orientation, age, or religion or belief.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and can take different forms:

- Direct discrimination - treating an individual less favourably than another on grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination - imposing on an individual requirements that are, in effect, more onerous than they are on others. This would include applying a condition (which is not warranted by the requirements of the position) which makes it more difficult for members of a particular group to comply than others not of that group.
- Harassment - Unwanted conduct which has "the purpose, intentionally or unintentionally, of violating dignity, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment" for the individual.
- Victimisation - Treating a person less favourably because they have committed a "protected act". "Protected acts" include previous legal proceedings brought against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at tribunal or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer or their alleged discriminatory practices.
- Discrimination by association – Treating an individual less favourably than another because they associate with someone who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by perception – Treating an individual less favourably than another because they are perceived as belonging to a particular group, for example to a particular religion or belief, irrespective of whether or not this is correct.
- Any other act or omission of an act, which has the effect of disadvantaging one person against another, purely on the above grounds.

On all occasions where individuals are required to make judgements, for example about disciplinary matters, selection for employment, admission, training, promotion, pay increases, awards, etc., it is essential that merit, experience, skills, and temperament are considered as objectively as possible.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS POLICY**

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this Policy rests with the Bursar, on behalf of the College Council. Heads of Department have a crucial role to play in promoting equality of opportunity in their own areas of responsibility.

All individuals, irrespective of their job or seniority, will be given guidance and instruction through our induction and other training as to their responsibility and role in promoting equality of opportunity and not discriminating unfairly or harassing colleagues, job applicants or ex-staff members, nor encouraging others to do so, or tolerating such behaviour. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against an individual found to be in breach of this Policy.

## **5. ADMISSIONS AND EMPLOYMENT**

The College is committed to policy and practice which require that:

- Student admission to the College and progression within undergraduate and postgraduate studies will be determined only by personal merit and by performance; and
- Academic and non-academic staff entry into employment with the College and progression within employment will be determined only by personal merit and by the application of criteria which are related to the duties and conditions of each particular post and the needs of the College.

Subject to statutory provisions, no student, member of staff, applicant for admission as a student, or applicant for appointment as a member of staff or Fellow will be treated less favourably than another because they belong to a protected group.

We aim through written instruction, appropriate training, and supervision, to ensure that all those who are responsible for recruitment and selection are familiar with this Policy and apply it in conjunction with our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Selection for employment will be conducted on an objective basis and will focus on the applicants' suitability for the job and their ability to fulfil the role requirements. Our interest is in the skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude, and the potential of individuals.

Job Descriptions, Person Specifications and Further Particulars will be regularly reviewed to ensure that criteria are not applied which are discriminatory, either directly or indirectly, and that they do not impose any condition or requirement which cannot be justified by the demands of the post.

Questions asked of candidates will relate to information that will help us to assess their ability to do the job. Questions about marriage plans, family intentions, religious or political commitments, caring responsibilities, intention to join our pension scheme or to opt out, or about any other issues which may give rise to suspicions of unlawful discrimination will not be asked. Selection tests will be specifically related to the role and measure an individual's actual, or inherent, ability to do or train for the position.

Advertisements should encourage applications from a broad spectrum of candidates and should not be stereotyped. All adverts will normally state: "Christ's College is an equal opportunity employer".

The College will ensure that all policies, including compensation, benefits and any other relevant issues associated with terms and conditions of employment, are formulated, and applied without regard to a protected characteristic or indeed any other characteristic unrelated to the performance of the job. These will be reviewed regularly to ensure there is no unlawful discrimination.

We will not discriminate against individuals who have left our employment by providing references that are not based on factual information nor fail to provide one based on a protected characteristic.

We reserve the right not to follow comprehensive advertising and recruitment processes when recruiting casual workers, including but not limited to supervisors, invigilators, admissions helpers and casual operational staff members. However, the College will still ensure that individuals are treated fairly and in line with legislation.

## **6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

All academic and non-academic staff members are encouraged to discuss their career prospects and training needs with their Head of Department or Line Manager. Opportunities for promotion and training will be communicated and made available to all staff on a fair and equal basis.

The provision of training will be reviewed to ensure that part-time staff members, shift workers, remote workers or those returning to work following a break are able to benefit from training. No age limits apply for entry to training or development schemes.

## **7. RETIREMENT**

College Fellowships for those whose main employment is with the University are subject to holding a qualifying University position (unless they are entitled to become a Life Fellow). The University's retirement age is 30th September of the academic year in which the Fellow/academic staff member reaches 69 years of age. Fellows/academic staff members are referred to the University's HR website, <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policiesprocedures/1-retirement-policy> for more information.

The College does not have a compulsory retirement age for its employees or workers.

## **8. PROTECTED GROUPS**

Protected groups are defined in the Equality Act 2010 as sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including ethnic or national origin, nationality or colour), disability, sexual orientation, age, or religion or belief. The College recognises all religious and philosophical beliefs, as well as the lack of religion or belief, and the right of all members of its community to discuss and debate these issues freely. College members are therefore entitled to teach, learn and carry out research in a culture that values vigorous debate.

## **9. COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

If any person admitted as a student or appointed as a member of academic or non-academic staff believes that they are experiencing unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation in their admission, appointment, or progression through the College on the grounds of any of the above protected characteristics, they may make a complaint. Their complaint will be dealt with through the agreed and relevant procedures.

When dealing with general disciplinary matters, care is to be taken that individuals who have, are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, are not dismissed or disciplined for performance or behaviour which may be overlooked or condoned in other employees or workers.

## **10. EQUALITY ACT 2010, PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY**

The College will take active steps to meet its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on a protected characteristic, whether actual, perceptive, or associative;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **11. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE**

The College will take active steps to promote good practice by:

- Subjecting its policies to continuous assessment in order to examine how they affect protected groups and to identify whether its policies help to achieve equality of opportunity for all these groups, or whether they have an adverse impact;
- Monitoring the recruitment and progress of all students, and academic and non-academic staff, collecting and collating equalities information and data

as required by law or for the furtherance of the College's equalities objectives;

- Promoting an inclusive culture, good practice in teaching, learning, and assessment, and good management practice, through policy, training, and the development of codes of best practice;
- Taking positive action wherever possible to support this Equal Opportunities Policy and its aims; and
- Publishing this Policy widely.

## **12. POSITIVE ACTION**

We recognise that passive policies will not address the discrimination experienced by many groups of people. To this end, if certain groups are under-represented within our College, we will actively seek to encourage applications from those groups. This applies to student admission to the College and academic and non-academic staff entry into employment.

The decision, however, as to which applicant is offered a post or College place will be based entirely on the merit of the individual.

## **13. CARE+ COMMITTEE, REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE**

In support of this Policy, the College has a Care+ Committee which meets termly and whose membership includes students, academic staff and non-academic staff members.

Its remit is to:

- Improve equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the College community as a whole.
- Consider data on EDI and report annually to Governing Body.
- Encourage a strong sense of community amongst and between Fellows, Staff and Students.
- Act as a sounding board for proposals and suggestions to promote a welcoming, respectful and caring community within the College
- When appropriate, suggest potential actions arising from EDI monitoring to Governing Body, or the relevant College Committee.

Progress against EDI actions and initiatives will be reported and discussed by the Care+ Committee on a termly basis.

Personal details and EDI data provided by staff members or job applicants for the purposes of equal opportunity monitoring, and considered by the Care + Committee, are confidential. They will not be used for any other purpose.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Date of Next Review</b>
May 2022	New policy.	May 2024
May 2024	Rebranding applied	May 2025
February 2026	Policy rewritten in line with University's Equal Opportunities policy. Council approval May 2026.	February 2027