

ALL SOULS COLLEGE**EQUALITY REPORT FOR 2015****(To March 2016)**Introduction

This report which, when finalised, will be published on the College website:

- (i) incorporates the gender statistics on current Fellowship and equality monitoring of recent elections in the tables that are updated annually on the College website (Tables 1 to 4 attached);
- (ii) reviews the College's performance against the [Equality Objectives](#) it agreed and published in March 2012 in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- (iii) reviews more generally the College's progress in fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act and in accordance with its [Equality Policy](#); and
- (iv) identifies for GPC and College consideration draft objectives for the period 2016-20.

Progress against Objectives agreed in 2012

Objective 1: To continue to take active steps to encourage applications from female candidates for Examination Fellowships and review critically the advertisement and conduct of the Examination Fellowship competitions to ensure that there is no accidental discrimination against female candidates or any other group with protected characteristics.

1. Although the number and proportion of eligible female applicants as reported in Table 3 has varied between 32.2% (2012) and 42.7% (2014), over the last four competitions female applicants have averaged 37% of eligible applicants, a modest increase from the average of 33.8% in the previous five competitions but well below the 50% that might be expected. Between 2012 and 2015, 3 female and 5 male candidates were elected to Fellowships by Examination. The small numbers of elections means that there must be some caution in using the statistics even over four examinations as one election can make a significant difference. Nevertheless the figures indicate that there continue to be problems both in attracting suitably high calibre female candidates to sit the examinations and in their success rate in this competition (2.6%, cf. 2.8% for male candidates in 2012-15 competitions) although the gap is smaller than it was between 2006 and 2011 when the female success rate

was just 1.9%, cf. 2.3% for male candidates. The College currently has 8 male and 4 female Fellows by Examination.

2. The College has continued to hold well-attended Open Evenings for potential women candidates each year and feedback from successful candidates suggests that these have been helpful in encouraging them to apply. It has also implemented other changes as a result of the recommendations from a small working group on protected characteristics and the Examination Fellowship which reported in early 2013 and again in early 2016. In their reports to the College, the Chairs of Assistant Examiners have all been careful to address gender issues, assess the impact of changes introduced and, where appropriate, make other recommendations for change which have either been adopted or themselves led to the adoption of further changes. Those that have been implemented since 2012 include:
 - (i) making the criteria for success in the competition more explicit and publishing them on the website advertisements;
 - (ii) drawing the competition to the attention of Tutors for Women and the relevant Directors of Graduate Studies;
 - (iii) reviewing applications by gender against the breakdown of Firsts in relevant Final Honours subjects and undertaking a more comprehensive analysis of female/male ratio of progression through the different stages of the competition as a whole and by subject;
 - (iv) the appointment of a College diversity officer (the Diversity Fellow) to provide continuity and integrate best practice in elections across different Fellowship categories;
 - (v) writing to encourage candidates who have done well but not been included in the final shortlist to reapply if still eligible.
3. The College has continued to consider carefully all applications for exemption from the usual eligibility criteria for this competition to ensure that there is no inadvertent discrimination against those with protected characteristics. It has also continued to make special arrangements in accordance with University advice to meet the needs of candidates with physical, mental health, or learning disabilities in the examination.

Objective 2: Following the completion of the 2012 Senior Research Fellowship elections, to consider whether further action should be taken to encourage and attract suitable women candidates to apply for future SRF competitions

4. While considering gender balance issues generally at each stage of the competition, the nature of the application and selection process for Senior Research Fellowships does not lend itself to such critical detailed review as the Examination Fellowship. It is nevertheless clear that women have continued to be seriously under-represented amongst the applicants in the two Senior Research Fellowship competitions that have been held since the 2012 report, accounting for only 21% of applicants for the posts advertised in 2013 and 26% of applicants for the posts advertised in 2015 for 2016 (an average of 23% of applicants overall), unchanged from the average in the previous three competitions. These positions are equivalent to statutory professorships in the University as a whole where the latest available [figures¹](#) indicate that although women comprised some 49% of University staff in Michaelmas Term 2014, only 20% of professorial staff were women. In the UK as a whole only 24% of academics in senior contract levels and 20% of professors were then women, suggesting that there is significant gender imbalance in the pool from which the College is looking for Senior Research Fellowships. It should also be noted that the 2013 posts advertised were in Classical Studies, Mathematics, Politics and International Relations, and Theoretical Physical Science as women are significantly under-represented in both Mathematics and Theoretical Physical Science.

5. The College considered carefully how to encourage applications from women, including advertising contact details for informal inquiries in each subject and amending the wording of the Further Particulars of the post in an effort to ensure that they supported and were consistent with the College's commitment to promoting diversity. The search committees were also alert to the need to encourage suitably qualified women to apply but in the competitions advertised in 2013 and 2015, only 70 women (cf.230 men) applied and a total of 5 men and 4 women were elected. As in the University as a whole, the success rate of the women who did apply in 2013 and 2015 was 5.8% (2.2% for men), continuing the earlier trend of the women who do apply having a significantly higher success rate than men, as do female candidates for senior appointments in the University.

Objective 3: To continue to collect and update annually the currently published data on the ethnic background of applicants for College Fellowships and staff posts.

6. The College has continued to collect and update annually the data on the ethnic background of applicants for College Fellowships and staff posts. In the case of applicants for College Fellowships, the data is collected as part of the on-line

¹ *University of Oxford: Equality Report 2013/14*, Section B: Staff equality data

application process and processed separately from the applications but response rates have varied with an average of 18% of applicants in the Examination Fellowship competitions held since the 2012 report (10% for Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships, 15% for Senior Research Fellowships, and 19% for Visiting Fellowships) declining to answer the question about their ethnic background. Information about applicants' ethnic background is not available to Fellows until after the end of each competition and the data on how applicants from different backgrounds have progressed within each competition are seen only by members of the General Purposes Committee because of the need to avoid disclosure of sensitive personal information about Fellows who could be readily identified individually from the data. Overall, between 12 and 13% of those applying for College Fellowships, including Visiting Fellowships since 2012 have declared themselves to be from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background.

7. For staff posts, the equality information is collected in hard copy or from e-mail applications and manually collated. Procedures have been reviewed to make it clearer to applicants that none of those involved in the decision making about applications were able to access the information. Nevertheless in the last year 20% of applicants for administrative staff posts, where all applicants were reminded to return the questionnaire if not submitted with the main application, declined to complete the form or answer the question. Many of the applications for domestic staff positions are submitted on paper and with the higher numbers involved, individual follow-up is not normally feasible. Some 39% of applicants for positions on the domestic staff declined to complete the form or answer the question so the resulting data is not a reliable indicator of overall BME applications, appointments, or success rates. But some 11% of applicants for administrative posts and 16% of applicants for domestic staff posts declared themselves to be from BME background and although none of these were appointed to the 4 administrative posts in 2015, 20% of those appointed to domestic staff positions declared themselves to be BME. This suggests that, in so far as it is safe to draw any conclusions from the data, BME candidates for domestic staff appointments have a reasonable success rate but there might be grounds for concern with administrative staff appointments if this pattern continues over a number of years.

Objective 4: To review data on, and reflect on the process of, elections or appointments internally to assess critically the College's performance in promoting a diverse Fellowship and workforce which does not discriminate on any unjust basis including but not limited to protected characteristics.

8. Promoting a diverse Fellowship but at the same time ensuring that all elections to Fellowship are strictly on merit has been a key priority for the College, particularly in the Examination, Post-Doctoral Research, Senior Research and Visiting Fellowships which account for most of the College's academic expenditure. The

Warden and the senior Fellow with responsibility for the management of each of these competitions have ensured that at the critical early stages of the advertising and selection process (long shortlisting, shortlisting) the Fellows involved in these stages of the process have been aware of and given appropriate regard to the gender balance of applicants. The appointment of a Diversity Fellow in 2013 who is closely involved with these processes has also helped improve awareness and understanding of diversity issues more generally in the College.

9. The results of the 2015 Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship competition which resulted in the election of 6 male candidates and no women also prompted further critical internal reflections on our processes in that competition. Over the last 5 competitions, men have accounted for some 61% of eligible applicants (63% in the two competitions since 2012) and 60% of the 20 elections made but although the success rate of women and men over the five competitions is the same (1.1%), there was a marked discrepancy in the two most recent competitions where the success rate of men was significantly higher (1.6% men; 1% women), reversing the pattern of previous competitions in which women had had a higher success rate than men. For the next competition to be launched later this year, the College intends to follow the practice of pausing for reflection if there is significant imbalance from the original application ratios at the long short-listing and final shortlisting stage. It also intends to seek independent references on more candidates at the long short-listing stage in an effort to ensure that good female candidates are not overlooked.
10. Following a review by the Remuneration Committee, the College has also substantially increased the housing allowance paid to Examination and Post-Doctoral Research Fellows who live out, a development which is intended to assist those with family responsibilities as was the decision to continue the payment of the housing allowance during maternity leave for a period of up to twelve months. This, combined with the College policy of extending the Fellowships of those taking parental leave or needing to intermit their Fellowship for illness, means that those taking maternity leave are not thereby under such pressure to return to work early for financial reasons or to avoid losing time in a fixed term research fellowship, at what is likely to be a critical career stage.

Objective 5: To promote awareness and understanding of equality issues amongst College staff through the provision of appropriate training or refresher training by 2014 at the latest.

11. An externally-provided training course for new staff took place in March 2014 and another one is scheduled to take place in March this year. Harassment advisers and senior HR staff have also been trained for their role and the College senior management maintain constant vigilance to ensure that all College staff understand the importance of observing and promoting the objectives set in its Equality Policy

and seek advice and assistance where appropriate. The Diversity Fellow and others have also worked to increase knowledge and understanding of equality issues, including awareness of unconscious bias, amongst the Fellowship as a whole and sought to promote an organisational culture that is conducive to gender equality and a genuinely diverse Fellowship where all can thrive.

Objective 6: To take active steps wherever practicable to widen participation and encourage applications to all categories of Fellowship from candidates of under-represented and less advantaged groups, including but not limited to those with protected characteristics.

12. Apart from seeking to attract more female candidates and look critically at the College's procedures and processes in the different Fellowship competitions, the College's main effort has focused on the collection of data about the educational background of UK based candidates for the Examination Fellowship (independent or maintained sector) and the reinstatement of the collection of information about disabilities in the equality monitoring forms that candidates are invited to submit for all competitions. The College has not collected data about the secondary school background of candidates for other Fellowships.
13. Although a significant proportion of candidates decline to specify whether they are disabled (minimum 9% (2014 PDRF) to 22% (2014 VFs), the numbers declaring some form of disability ranges from 1.6% of applicants (2014 VFs) to 7.5% (2015 EFs). Although more data is required over a longer period of time to draw firm conclusions, the data so far available suggest that candidates declaring a disability have not fared as well as those who have not.
14. Table 4 figures suggest that the College has been reasonably successful in attracting applications from candidates who declare themselves to be from a BME background. In the Fellowships advertised since the 2012 report, they comprised between 12 and 18% of candidates in the various Fellowship competitions but while 27 Fellows and 76 Visiting Fellows have been elected during this period, only 2 candidates (1.9% of all appointments) have declared themselves to be from BME groups, suggesting that the College is currently failing to attract sufficiently high quality applicants for its Fellowships from these groups.

General Conclusions

15. The College has made some progress towards a more diverse Fellowship during the last four years with the numbers of women in Fellowship having increased from 18 (22.5%) to 23 (29.5%) of a slightly smaller Fellowship at 1 February 2016. Three of these additional female Fellows are holding University Academic Fellowships in whose appointment the College participates but does not itself control. There are

two more female Senior Research Fellows than in 2012 but only one more Examination Fellow and the number of female Post-Doctoral Research Fellows has reduced from five to three. Although the College's performance in relation to Senior Research Fellowships needs to be seen in the context of the slow progress towards better gender balance in senior academic appointments in general in the UK, it is clear that the College must continue to focus on trying to ensure that its advertisement and election processes do not inadvertently disadvantage women. Although our data and knowledge of how others with protected characteristics fare in our various Fellowship competitions is less in quantity and reliability, the data we have suggests that those with physical or mental disabilities or from a BME background are markedly less successful, suggesting that the College needs to consider critically what it can and should do to promote a truly diverse Fellowship.

16. The knowledge and awareness of diversity issues in the College has improved considerably in the last four years with the appointment of a Diversity Fellow and many others actively engaged in working towards the achievement of a more diverse Fellowship. They have devoted considerable effort and energy towards achieving this, both in outreach to potential women candidates for Fellowship, the collection and analysis of relevant data, and reminding colleagues of the importance of upholding equality principles in all aspects of College life.
17. The collection and analysis of data, including that which must remain unpublished for data protection reasons, remains of critical importance to our understanding of diversity issues and where policies and procedures require critical review to improve performance. The College might wish to consider what more can be done to maintain and perhaps improve response rates, both in relation to Fellowship elections where the data is collected as part of the on-line application process and for staff appointments where there is a high non-return or response rate to the equality questionnaires.
18. Although not the subject of a specific objective in 2012, the College has continued to work towards improving the accessibility of its buildings and facilities to those with physical disabilities (the installation of a stair-lift to facilitate access to the Old Library, the installation of a sound amplification system in the Chapel, the provision of a ramped access from the Fellows' garden to the College). Such improvements need to be a continued priority.

Objectives for the period April 2016-April 2020 as agreed by the SGM, March 2016

19. The GPC/College has agreed the following:

Objective 1:

To continue to promote and publicise the College's commitment to achieving a more diverse Fellowship with the aim of increasing the number of high quality applicants from under-represented groups, particularly women.

Objective 2:

To review and where possible improve the collection and analysis of data on applicants for College Fellowships and staff posts in order to inform the ongoing critical review of our policies and procedures for Fellowship election and staff appointments in support of achieving a more diverse Fellowship and staff.

Objective 3

To hold triennial reviews of the Fellowship Examination and to continue to monitor success rates and procedures closely.

Objective 4

To take appropriate steps, including the periodic review of all relevant policies, procedures and formal and informal training arrangements, to improve the understanding of all members of the College community of how they can contribute to upholding equality principles in all aspects of the College's activity.

Objective 5

To continue to improve the accessibility of College buildings and facilities to those with physical disabilities.

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