Race Equality Charter application

Thank you for having your say!

During Michaelmas term staff and students received a request to take part in the Equality Challenge Unit’s Race Equality Charter (REC) surveys. As a member of the REC, the University has agreed with other Universities across the country to consider race equality through the nationally approved REC framework. The process requires that all participating institutions use a set questionnaire to survey their staff and students on their experiences of work and study at the University.

We are extremely grateful for the candid responses regarding your experiences at the University. Your views have helped us in identifying the key issues for the University to focus on in advancing race equality through an institutional three year REC action plan.

Watch this space for more information on the REC application this year and feedback to the University community on our three year action plan.

For more information about the Equality Challenge Unit have a look at their website: www.ecu.ac.uk.

For more information about race equality at Oxford see: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/race or follow us on Twitter @OxfordRace.

VC’s Diversity Awards

We are delighted to announce the inaugural Vice Chancellor’s Diversity Awards, which will be presented on Tuesday 8 May. This is our chance to celebrate the amazing work going on around the University to promote equality and diversity and to inspire others. We are pleased to confirm that we will be joined by June Sarpong, broadcaster, activist and author of Diversify, who will deliver the keynote speech. The Vice Chancellor will award prizes in four categories:

- Individual Champion or Role Model (nominated by others);
- Innovation in promoting E&D in the workplace or in the student body (self-nominated);
- Promoting E&D through public and community engagement (self-nominated);
- Promoting E&D in learning and teaching (self-nominated).

So if there is someone who has inspired you, or has championed a cause close to your heart, please nominate them for ‘Individual Champion or Role Model’. If you are involved in any activity or initiative to promote greater equality or diversity in your workplace, please nominate yourself so we can share your good practice with the rest of the University.

Nominations close Friday 23 February.

You can find full criteria on our website at: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/vc-awards.

Community engagement

As part of an ongoing project funded by the Van Houten fund, we are working towards promoting the University as a preferred employer among the local BME community.

On 24 January 2018 we will be partnering with our colleagues in Recruitment and Employee Development, and a local social enterprise, Aspire to hold a Personnel Services Recruitment Workshop on recruiting from hard to reach groups across Oxford.

The workshop aims to increase knowledge about how to engage hard to reach groups and provide a networking and professional development opportunity for University staff working in recruitment.

For more information about this event and to register visit: https://tinyurl.com/y8avgd9g.
Successful bids to the Diversity Fund

We are delighted to announce the nine successful bids to the Diversity Fund 2017–18. The Fund has been set up to support projects that promote equality and diversity in a sustainable way. This year’s bidding round was very popular – we received 29 bids at a value of over £400,000. Bids were assessed by two panels of diversity and equality experts, who were impressed by the scale and scope of the bids.

The successful bids are:

- Assistive software for students in examinations
- Beyond Boundaries
- Curriculum Diversity
- Engaging BME audiences with GLAM
- Engaging Chinese students with counselling
- Oxford and Colonialism
- Raising awareness of sexual violence in the LGBT+ community
- Staff mental health project
- Suffrage Centenary programme

You will be able to find more information about these bids in the coming months on our Diversity Fund webpages: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/df.

Spotlight on Religion and Belief

Muslim Prayer Room – refurbished washroom facilities

For a number of years the University has provided a space for staff and students practicing Islam to gather and pray. During this time Estates Services have undertaken various refurbishments to improve the facilities for all, for instance re-carpeting the room. Their most recent work has been on the washroom facilities seen below, where Muslims can perform Wudu (ritual washing) before prayer. We continue to work with the University’s Islamic Society (OUISoc) to ensure the facilities are operating smoothly and to raise awareness of their presence among staff and students.

For further information on the University's Muslim Prayer Room please visit OUISoc’s website here: http://ouisoc.org/prayer-room.

Equality and Diversity Training

Congratulations to Linacre College, where every member of staff has completed Equality and Diversity training - either online or face-to-face. Find the online training here: tinyurl.com/traineandd.

Help with travel to work

If you have a disability or long-term health condition which makes it difficult or impossible for you to use public transport or your own vehicle, you may be able to get assistance through the Access to Work (ATW) scheme. ATW may agree to pay for a taxi to bring you to and from work, so that you can use your limited energy to do your job, rather than being exhausted by the journey. For some people this is a regular arrangement, while for others it is an occasional arrangement for periods of severe weather, or during a period when their condition flares up. ATW does not normally require a contribution from the employer, although the employee may be asked to contribute the equivalent of the cost of public transport. You will need to provide medical evidence of your transport difficulties. For further information see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/resources/accesstowork or contact the Staff Disability Advisor, Caroline Moughton caroline.moughton@admin.ox.ac.uk.
LGBT History Month February 2018

Every year the University celebrates LGBT History Month with events and rainbow flags flying across the collegiate University. To keep up to date on all the activities for the month visit: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/sexualorientation/lgbthm.

This year’s annual Lecture, organised by the LGBT+ Staff Network, will be delivered by Asad Dhunna, a London-based marketing and communications director. He has written for various publications including the Guardian and the Huffington Post. Asad’s blog explores his faith and sexuality, and he also started the podcast Muslim Pride: asadd.net.

Asad Dhunna  
Date: 20 February 2018  
Time: 6pm  
Venue: Mathematical Institute  
To book: oxlgbthm2018.eventbrite.co.uk

Equality data: staff by age group

Age is one of the nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. When the University considers the equality and diversity of its staff, it looks at age alongside other factors such as gender and ethnicity to see whether there are any disparities in the recruitment, progression and retention of people in different groups.

There are over 13,600 staff working for the University (excluding those on variable hours contracts). Those in the main academic grades form 13% of the total, while researchers form 37%. Age-wise only 13% of all staff are under 30 while at the other end of the scale, just 8% are over 60. The pattern varies hugely by staff group: two-thirds of research staff but only a fifth of academics are younger than 40.

One of the University’s equality objectives is to ‘increase the proportion of women in senior roles’, particularly academics. The data provide an indicator of the University’s progress towards diversification of its academic staff: 64% of female academics are under 50 compared with 50% of male, and women now comprise 28% of academic staff.
Survey feedback: Promoting equality at Oxford

The most recent Virtual Staff Advisory Group (VSAG) survey invited members to tell us how departments act to promote equality and foster good relations between people with different ‘protected characteristics’, one of the University’s duties under the Equality Act 2010. The results highlighted the importance of promoting university policies widely as well as departments’ key role in raising awareness and celebrating diversity.

We would like to thank all those who took part and provided such a wealth of suggestions for practical ways to raise awareness and foster a sense of community. We invite everyone to read the survey report and consider how they too can contribute to promoting equality across the University.

To download the report and/or join the VSAG, please see: http://tinyurl.com/oxfordvsag.

Harassment Advisory Service

The University does not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation and expects all members of the University community, its visitors and contractors to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration.

If you feel that you have experienced harassment (including bullying), speak to someone. There are a number of people you can talk to confidentially. For more information visit our website: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice

Or get in touch:
Phone: (2)70760
Email: harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk

The Diversifying Portraiture Project

The Diversifying Portraiture Project culminated last term in a very successful exhibition, The Full Picture, at the Weston Library. The 24 commissioned portraits of staff and students will join the Exams Schools’ permanent art collection, where they will be hung alongside existing portraits in various rooms at the Schools.

The project, supported by the Vice-Chancellor’s Diversity Fund, began by cataloguing existing paintings from around the University that highlighted the range of pioneering figures whose achievements over the centuries challenged stereotypes of their time. You can find some of those portraits here: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/portraiture/portrayingdiversity. In the second phase, we asked current and former members of the University to nominate subjects for new portraits. A panel then chose 24 sitters from different genders, ethnicities, disabilities, socio-economic backgrounds and LGBTQ+ communities. Each of them have made – or are making – a major, positive difference to Oxford and the wider world. These new portraits and their stories will inspire future generations of staff and students who work in and visit the Exam Schools, and will we hope encourage others around the University to reflect on imagery in their own settings. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who worked on and contributed to this project.