

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### 1. Underlying Principles

- 1.1. The College was founded in 1932 by Charles Baring Young: having already established Kingham Hill School (1886) and the Kingham Hill Trust (1912) to provide education for disadvantaged children, Baring Young donated his estate in Southgate to found a college for young people who wished to train for Anglican ordination but could not afford a residential university course. Since 1932, the College has grown considerably: it now offers education to a higher academic level than originally envisaged; in support of a wider range of ministries; to an increasing number of people; and for the benefit of a wider variety of students. That said, however, the College's essential orientation remains the same:
  - 1.1.1. In its Memorandum of Association, the Kingham Hill Trust continues to place a particular emphasis on the needs of those who are economically, socially or personally disadvantaged;
  - 1.1.2. Likewise, the College believes that every individual has value as one made in the image and likeness of God, no matter what their background, personal characteristics or immediate situation.
- 1.2. As an organisation, we are therefore committed to the principles of equal opportunity, and to treating all members of our community with fairness, dignity and respect in a manner consistent with the College's Christian ethos and mission. As well as being a matter of biblical principle, this is a legal obligation. We therefore require all staff and students to respect and act in accordance with this policy.
- 1.3. In addition to this, the College believes that diversity brings benefits: after all, we all have different experiences, gifts and skills. We seek to be united in celebrating and learning from our differences as we fulfil our mission purpose.

### 2. Application

- 2.1. This policy relates to all aspects of employment, study and academic life, including advertisements, recruitment, pay, terms and conditions of service, training, secondment, re-deployment, benefits, promotions, grievance and disciplinary procedures, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, course validation and admissions practices.
- 2.2. People who are not employed by the Kingham Hill Trust but who are involved in the College's activities, such as visitors, speakers, external contractors etc., are expected to operate within the terms of the general policy.
- 2.3. The policy applies to the treatment of existing workers and students, in addition to those applying to work or study at the College.

### 3. Discrimination

- 3.1. It is important to us that the learning environment is free from discrimination. In line with our Code of Conduct (issued to all new staff and to all new students at enrolment, and which all staff and students sign annually) we expect all staff and students to have respect for everyone with whom they come into contact. This means that we treat all people with courtesy and respect, involve and listen to

others and show consideration and empathy for their well-being. We value others for their contribution irrespective of personal differences, fostering a positive learning environment for our students.

- 3.2. All forms of racism, partiality, or discrimination are at odds with our Code of Conduct and belief that humanity is created in the image of God. In that light, Oak Hill College has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism, and rejects every other form of racism.
- 3.3. Discrimination occurs when someone directly or indirectly treats a person or a group of people less favourably. Their behaviour may be also be unlawful when it relates to a protected characteristic.
- 3.4. Any reference to 'discrimination' or similar in this policy means unlawful discrimination relating to a protected characteristic.
- 3.5. Although there may be circumstances which justify differential treatment, and which are not unlawful (for example: to appoint a Christian to a position where there is a genuine occupational requirement for the post-holder to be a Christian; to comply with a matter of doctrine; or to make an adjustment in order to accommodate a person with a disability), we will not tolerate discrimination.
- 3.6. Direct Discrimination: Direct discrimination occurs where one person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example would be if someone were not appointed to a position or offered a place at College because of their race.
- 3.7. Indirect Discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs when a requirement or condition is applied generally, but has a detrimental impact upon a group that share a protected characteristic. An example would be requiring staff to be over a certain height, which would make it disproportionately harder for women to be appointed.
- 3.8. Disability – Reasonable Adjustments: The Equality Act 2010 sets out an additional obligation upon employers to make "reasonable adjustments" so that a disabled employee or student (or applicant) is not substantially disadvantaged. We will accordingly make reasonable adjustments to ensure equal opportunities are available to all people with disabilities.
- 3.9. Disability-Related Discrimination: The Equality Act 2010 also prohibits disability-related discrimination, that is, treating someone less favourably because of something relating to a disability. An example would be dismissing an employee or penalising a student in an assessment context where reasonable adjustments for a known disability had not been made.
- 3.10. Objectively justified: There are special circumstances where it is appropriate to discriminate if the requirement can be objectively justified. For example, to recruit to ensure continuity due to wider age range of employees.

#### **4. Harassment**

- 4.1. We are committed to providing an environment free from harassment.
- 4.2. Harassment is, in general terms, unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another, whether intended or unintended. This may take a number of forms, and includes any kind of sexual harassment.
- 4.3. Harassment may be unlawful, particularly where the harassment occurs because of a protected characteristic.

## 5. Christian Ethos

- 5.1. As a Christian organisation, the nature and context of some employment positions may mean that personal characteristics, such as religious beliefs, will lawfully and properly inform decisions. However, this does not detract from the principle that we are an Equal Opportunity employer and recognise the benefit of employing a diverse workforce. All applicants who can fulfil the role and meet any occupational requirement are welcomed. They will be assessed against the job description and any person specification.

## 6. Our Responsibilities

- 6.1. Where there are breaches of this policy, we will take appropriate action. For employees, this may include taking steps through the disciplinary procedure; serious incidents may be treated as gross misconduct. Reflecting on the seriousness with which we view discrimination, if an allegation of discrimination is made in bad faith, that will also be viewed seriously.

## 7. Your Responsibilities

- 7.1. Everyone has an essential role in ensuring the success of this policy, with their own duties and responsibilities.
- 7.2. Line Managers and those with responsibilities for students have a particular responsibility to ensure that everyone is respected and that workplace decisions are made for right and justifiable reasons.
- 7.3. We expect everyone to:
- 7.3.1. Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity
  - 7.3.2. Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices witnessed or experienced
  - 7.3.3. Not induce or attempt to induce others to practise discrimination
  - 7.3.4. Not treat anyone less favourably as a result of them having reported or provided evidence of discrimination (“Victimisation”)
  - 7.3.5. Not subject others to harassment
- 7.4. If you are concerned about any breaches of this policy, employees can raise concerns through the Grievance procedure; students can raise concerns through the Student Complaints and Grievance procedure; and students applying to study can raise concerns through the Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy.

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