EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The College intends to provide an environment for students, staff and Fellows free from bullying and unlawful discrimination (which can include harassment and victimisation) and to foster mutual respect and consideration.

The College recognises that its success depends equally on students, staff and Fellows. Capitalising on what is unique about individuals and drawing on your different perspectives and experiences will add value to the way the College operates.

The College will constantly strive to create a productive environment, representative of and responsive to different cultures and groups, where everyone has an equal chance to succeed. Everyone in the College has a responsibility to embrace and support this vision and must continue to challenge behaviour and attitudes that prevent the College from achieving this.

Using fair, objective and innovative employment practices, the College’s aim is to ensure that:

- you are treated fairly and with respect;

- you have the right to be free from harassment of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour, whether based on sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexuality, pregnancy, gender reassignment, marital status, civil partnership, bullying or any other form of unwanted behaviour; and

- you have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve your potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination. This includes ensuring that no-one suffers discrimination by association or perception.

Through the College’s policies and procedures, the College aims to ensure the diversity of the community it serves is reflected at all levels within the staff, students and fellowship.
Gender

Women and men are fully and properly represented and rewarded for their contribution at all levels of the College through:

- challenging gender stereotypes, for example that people of a certain gender are better or worse at undertaking particular roles; and
- supporting you to balance your life at work and at home.

Trans-Gender Status

People who plan to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone gender reassignment are protected against all forms of discrimination and harassment. The College will take positive steps to support a trans-gender person and ensure you are treated with dignity and respect.

Marital Status/Civil partnership

People are treated fairly and equally in the workplace irrespective of your marital or family status or civil partnership.

Race

The racial and cultural diversity of our community is represented at all levels of the organisation through:

- challenging racial stereotypes, for example that people of a certain race, nationality or ethnicity are better or worse at undertaking particular roles; and
- understanding, respecting and valuing different backgrounds and perspectives.

Disability

The abilities of disabled people are recognised and valued at all levels of the College through:

- focusing on what people can do rather than on what they cannot;
- challenging stereotypes about people with disabilities; and
• making appropriate adjustments in the workplace to help people with disabilities achieve your full career potential.

**Age**

Age diversity within the workforce is promoted and valued through:

• challenging age stereotyping; and

• recognising the benefits of a mixed-age workforce.

**Religion or Belief (including Political Opinions)**

People are treated fairly in the workplace, irrespective of religious or political opinions, by recognising individuals' freedom of belief and right to protection from intolerance and persecution. The right of the individual to practice their religion is also recognised and, where reasonable and practicable to do so, this will be facilitated.

**HIV**

Discrimination against a person on the grounds that you have, or are thought to have, HIV or AIDS is not acceptable, and confidentiality will be respected in line with the wishes of an individual with HIV or AIDS.

**Sexuality**

People are treated fairly in the workplace irrespective of your sexuality through:

• respecting different lifestyles; and

• challenging negative stereotypical views.

The College expects each member of staff to enter into the spirit of the policy and to ensure that a positive equal opportunities climate exists, by treating people on their merits and by disassociating themselves from any form of direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation, or sexual, racial or any other type of harassment.
To supplement this policy the College has a Harassment and Bullying Policy, which is included in this Handbook.

Further guidance on the standards expected of staff with regard to e-mail communications is contained in the College’s Internet and E-mail Policy, which is also included in this Handbook.

### Types of Discrimination

**Direct discrimination** arises when a person is treated less favourably because of assumptions (which may be unconscious and will not necessarily be motivated by prejudice or hostility) about the group to which they belong.

**Examples**

- A woman with young children is not employed because it is feared that she might be an unreliable member of staff.

- A Sikh applicant for a senior post is turned down because it is feared he will not “fit in” with an existing (all white) team.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs where an apparently neutral requirement is applied which is more difficult for members of certain groups to meet and which cannot be justified on objective grounds.

**Examples**

- A policy that no members of the workforce can work part-time could constitute indirect discrimination as many women can only work on a part-time basis in order to meet childcare responsibilities. It may not be justified, if the employer’s operational needs can still be met by more flexible working arrangements.

- A requirement for applicants to possess a GCSE in English as a selection criterion. This requirement would be harder to meet for those people who have been educated overseas and may not be justified if all that is really needed is the ability to demonstrate a reasonable level of literacy.
**Disability discrimination** occurs where a person is unjustifiably disadvantaged for a reason arising from a disability. It also occurs where an employer fails to make a reasonable adjustment to accommodate the needs of a disabled person. It is important to realise that it is not only people who are visibly disabled who fall within the definition of people who are disabled. A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Examples**

- A requirement for a member of staff to hold a driving licence for a job which involves little travelling.

- Failure to recruit someone with hearing difficulties without first considering whether suitable adjustments can be made to working arrangements.

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably because he or she has taken or intends to take action to assert the rights conferred by anti-discrimination legislation or because you have assisted someone else with a complaint (for example by providing evidence).

**Harassment** occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct (whether physical, verbal or non-verbal) based on your personal characteristics, or membership of a particular group, which has the purpose or affect of violating that person’s dignity. (See the College’s Harassment and Bullying Policy for more details.)

**Enforcement**

The College regards direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment as serious matters. Members of staff who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to the College’s Disciplinary Procedure. All breaches of this policy will be regarded as serious disciplinary matters, and will, if there has been victimisation, intentional discrimination or deliberate harassment, be regarded as potential gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.
Should you feel that you are being treated unfairly, you should raise a grievance through the College’s Grievance Procedure (Appendix D). If you feel it is inappropriate to approach your Head of Department or line manager, you should approach the Personnel Manager. In cases of harassment, the procedures set out in the College’s Harassment and Bullying Policy should be used.