



## **Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Spurgeon's is an evangelical College in membership with the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Evangelical Alliance and the Micah Network. As a confessional College, it is committed to studying and understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ as witnessed to by the Scriptures, and the challenges of the world in which this gospel is to be proclaimed.

The values of the College are set out in its Governance Handbook and are directly drawn from and aligned with biblical principles. In particular:

- We believe in the inherent moral equality, dignity and worth of every individual;
- We value the unique distinctiveness of each member of the College community;
- We celebrate the richness of being a diverse and inclusive community;
- We believe that as a community meeting daily for worship we must be careful to listen to God and discern his will and purpose;
- We will promote the general wellbeing of all members of the student community and College staff;
- We are committed to assisting every student in reaching their potential.

The promotion of diversity and equality is, therefore, an important part of the College's mission. It will continue to actively promote diversity and equality opportunities in its student selection and training policies and in its employment policies, practices and procedures.

### **2. Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy**

It is the policy of Spurgeon's College that all people, irrespective of their religion, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, marital status or sexual orientation will be treated equally.

The College's procedures will:

- Ensure that students are assessed solely on the basis of the quality of their work and that staff are appointed solely on the basis of their merits and abilities.
- Foster an environment in which all staff and students can realise their full potential through the development of their skills and abilities, regardless of their background;

- Ensure that all students, staff and applicants to the College are treated with respect and dignity and receive fair and equal treatment in all aspects of their applications, employment or learning;
- Ensure that all staff comply with the College's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy through the provision of appropriate training.

Exceptions to the College's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy relate to the specific confessional nature of Spurgeon's. They are:

- Where the nature of the training or employment with the College is seen, clearly, to require membership of, or links with a Baptist church, a Christian commitment, or sympathy with the objects of the College and this requirement is so stated; the College shall be entitled to have regard to any such requirement;
- Where the nature of the employment with Spurgeon's College has specific occupational or training requirements, these shall be stated in any advertisement or literature and taken into account during the appointment process;
- Where the nature of the training or employment involves preparation for service in Baptist churches, staff and students will observe and work within the Guidelines contained within the Ministerial Recognition Rules of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

### **3. Diversity and Equal Opportunities Objectives**

The following are examples of specific actions that are being taken by the College and which will be reviewed at regular intervals, to ensure that diversity and equal opportunity initiatives are successful.

- This Policy will be communicated widely within the Baptist community;
- All literature on the selection of students and on the appointment of staff will include a statement on diversity and equal opportunities;
- All application forms will be monitored;
- Selection criteria, job descriptions and person specifications will be kept under regular review to ensure that they are justifiable;
- All applications for employment will be given equal consideration, with selection being based on aptitude, merit and ability;
- Those responsible for the interview and selection of students, staff and employees will be trained in the operation of the Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy;
- All candidates for employment and prospective students will be asked questions at interview to ascertain if they understand and affirm the purpose and reasons for this Policy.

#### 4. The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The Act lists nine “Protected Characteristics”, as follows:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and Civil Partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion and belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual Orientation.

#### 5. Responsibility of Staff and Students

The co-operation of all students and staff is essential for the success of this Policy. All students and staff also have a responsibility not to discriminate against any groups or individuals. The overall responsibility for achieving the objectives of this Policy and ensuring its compliance, however, rests with the Governors of the College.

Where it is believed there has been inappropriate behaviour further guidance can be found in the College’s Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaints Policy documents. Behaviour or actions on the part of students or staff which do not comply with this Policy will be considered as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

<b>Document control box</b>			
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