

Encouraging Equality and Cherishing Diversity at Westminster College, Cambridge

The Governors, staff and students of Westminster College believe that all people are created in God's image and are loved by God¹. We know that both within and beyond the Church relationships go wrong and people are hurt by the attitudes of others and the decisions we make for ourselves. God's good intention for creation and humanity is distorted². In his ministry Jesus showed God's love and restoration of right relationships by his openness to all people, including the marginalised³.

As part of the United Reformed Church we affirm our commitment to show the same openness to all people in today's world. We intend in spirit and in deed to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all spheres of our activity and are committed to behaving as an equal opportunity organisation and community. We acknowledge that people are called to be diverse and lively, inclusive and flexible through the sharing of the gospel of Christ. We base the following statement and commitment upon those adopted by the URC's Mission Council in 2006 and reported to the URC's General Assembly in 2008⁴. The Governors of Westminster College approved this statement and commitment in July, 2018.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Statement and Commitment

Westminster College is a Resource Centre for Learning (RCL) serving the United Reformed Church, and works within the theological and organisational frameworks set by the URC's General Assembly.

Westminster College recognises that exclusion and discrimination can occur on many grounds including those currently recognised in law: age; gender; gender reassignment; skin colour; race; ethnic origin; nationality; religion or belief; disability; sexual orientation; child or domestic care arrangements; pregnancy and maternity arrangements; marital or civil partnership status. Discrimination can be direct - where a person is treated less favourably for a reason unconnected with their ability. Discrimination can be indirect - when a condition, rule, policy or practice applies to everyone but disadvantages a particular group of people. Westminster College, with the whole United Reformed Church, seeks to eradicate less favourable treatment in these areas by endeavouring to:

- promote respect for other people and treat everyone fairly.
- encourage the use of inclusive language and images in our teaching, conversations, worship, literature and publicity.
- challenge any discriminatory attitudes and actions of members of our college community and take steps to bring them to an end.
- address the inequalities of opportunity faced by people in under-represented groups by identifying and removing barriers to participation in all aspects of college life.
- challenge all forms of harassment, bullying or victimisation within the college and beyond, taking steps to bring these to an end. (Harassment consists of words or actions which are unwelcome, unwanted and offensive to the person receiving them and which create an atmosphere of intimidation, hostility or humiliation for that person. Such behaviour can include embarrassing or offensive jokes, unwelcome physical contact or sexual advances, the expression of racist or homophobic views, lewd comments, etc.).

We will ensure that this statement and related policies are known by the college community and that all students, staff and volunteers at Westminster understand their responsibilities for abiding by this statement and implementing related policies. To this end, we will regularly offer education and training in the principles and practices identified in this statement of equality and diversity.

¹ Genesis 1:26-31

² Ephesians 2:1-10

³ E.g. Zacchaeus the tax collector in Luke 19:1-10 and the Samaritan woman in John 4:4-42

⁴ For the agreed and related URC texts see: <https://www.urc.org.uk/equal-opportunities.html>