



## **Brasenose College Racism Statement**

We urge our whole Brasenose College community to join together to stamp out racism. Collectively, we must actively promote, protect and advance equal dignity, respect, diversity of thought, good race relations and tolerance both in our own institutions and in the wider world we share in common.

At Brasenose, we take the issue of racial equality very seriously. Equality and fairness lie at the crux of the values we have adopted to guide our strategy and decision making.

Racist language or behaviour is a serious offence against College discipline, and all reported incidents will be investigated swiftly, professionally, and sensitively; those found to have committed such offences will face severe sanctions. We recognise that it is not always easy or straightforward for those abused or harassed to make a formal complaint. As no one should suffer in silence, our procedures allow sufferers to speak to our senior welfare officers in confidence, without necessarily having to proceed to a complaint.

Wherever possible we recommend a formal complaint be made as closure is often easiest through a fair, formal process consonant with justice. However, we respect that agency and choice remain in the hands of the complainant.

We recognise that we need to do more to make sure that all BAME, and especially Black, applicants, students and staff feel welcome, safe and supported and to firmly address racial bias. We are committed to continuous engagement with our students, staff, alumni and partners to pursue and achieve these aims. In the light of recent events following the death of George Floyd, as an institution, we are thoroughly reviewing what we do to make sure that racism is identified, dealt with and prevented across our community.

As a first step, we have written to our academics urging them to reach out to their students to support those who are experiencing difficulty, particularly at this time. Our academics will ensure that those who feel the situation has had an impact on their examinations are confident enough to apply to have those circumstances taken into account by their examiners.

We are committed to continue increasing the diversity of our welfare team. Brasenose has Machilu Zimba, who identifies as Black, available to support our students. Machilu is a trained harassment advisor and is part of Brasenose's Equality and Diversity Committee. She has kindly offered to help our students who wish to contact her: [machilu.zimba@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:machilu.zimba@admin.ox.ac.uk). A list of other harassment advisors, some of whom identify as BAME, can also be found at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork)

We have worked with, and welcome suggestions from, all members of our community to increase minority well-being in college with projects to diversify portraiture, to combat "stereotype threat", and to provide BAME mentors. To this end, we are forming a network of Diversity Volunteers amongst our alumni, many who identify as BAME, to provide support for our students. Our Diversity network will also guide and advise the College on BAME matters.

Brasenose is committed to achieving strong diversity within our community. We scrutinise our admissions data and work hard with allies like "Rare Recruitment" (an organisation founded by members of the UK's BAME community) to widen access to our University through projects such as Target Oxbridge. We actively encourage applications by visiting schools and hosting school visits, offering application practice and support. We recognise that we do not have enough black students: the actions we take are beginning to work, and we will not stop our efforts.

We scrutinise and review processes for staff appointments - we have effected change but recognise that this work is by no means complete.

We have a designated senior leadership role for equalities, held by Dr Anne Edwards who chairs our Equality and Diversity Committee, with a diverse membership and with expert external university representatives, including Machilu Zimba.

We have funded a scholarship for BAME students in Criminology jointly with the Law Faculty. This scholarship specifically addresses the fact that BAME citizens are over-represented in the criminal justice system as survivors and perpetrators but under-represented as lawyers and judges. The two inaugural students next year are jointly-funded by Brasenose and the Law Faculty.

The College has fully-funded a Masters in Education scholarship for Black UK graduates either wishing to train to become teachers or who are established teachers with aspirations to take up leadership roles in schools. We have this

week recruited the inaugural holder of this scholarship. Teachers can provide significant energy for improvements in the number of BAME applications to University.

Brasenose is proud to support these University-wide initiatives

- a. fundraising for scholarships for Black students
- b. reviewing, with students, Equality and Diversity training to ensure it is fit for purpose.
- c. supporting “Rare Recruitment” with its Target Oxbridge initiative in the form of funding and outreach support.
- d. Assisting the Oxford African and Caribbean Society in its Year 12 shadowing day
- e. Sponsoring the Onyx magazine – a platform for black writers and artists

We welcome suggestions for further progress and are committed to continued future action, working with our undergraduate and graduate student committees on this vital issue.

John Bowers QC

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