



DPIR

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS &
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion: New Staff Information



MATTHEW GOOCH: APRIL 2026

Introduction

We are delighted to welcome you to the Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) one of the largest and most distinguished departments of its kind in the world. With around 90 academic staff, we are proud to be a global leader in both research and teaching. In 2024, The Guardian ranked us the Number One university in the UK for Politics, recognising the excellence of our academic community and the strength of our programmes.

As you join us, you become part of a department with a rich intellectual tradition and a vibrant, diverse community. DPIR is home to major international research projects, a dynamic group of postdoctoral researchers, and a thriving network of visiting academics. Our research spans a wide range of disciplines and is grounded in real-world impact from shaping public debate to informing policy on national and global levels.

2025 marks an important milestone for the department as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. Although the University of Oxford pioneered the



world's first Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) undergraduate course in 1920, DPIR itself was formally established in 2000. As part of our anniversary celebrations, we launched the [25 in 25 Collection](#) a celebration of our people, research, and achievements over the past quarter-century. This includes special recognition of initiatives such as *Women in DPIR*, reflecting the breadth and diversity of our academic community and alumni.



At the heart of our department's mission is a deep commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). We are actively working to ensure that everyone - staff, students, and visitors can be their authentic selves and feel a genuine sense of belonging. As part of this commitment, we are preparing our application to the Athena Swan Charter for a Bronze Award. This important process reflects

our dedication to gender equality and to fostering a more inclusive, supportive working environment through a robust five-year action plan.

Whether you're joining us as academic, professional services staff, or a researcher, we hope you find DPIR to be a collaborative, forward-thinking, and inspiring place to work.

The University Commitment to EDI

Overview and Strategy

Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are central to Oxford's mission and success. The strength of our research, teaching, and global impact stems from the inclusive culture and community we build together.



The collegiate [University EDI Strategic Plan 2024-27](#) sets out our vision, priorities, values, and goals for advancing EDI across Oxford.

Charters and Frameworks

Athena Swan: The University of Oxford was a founding member of the Athena Swan Charter and has held an institutional Bronze award since 2006.



In February 2023, the University was awarded an institutional [Silver](#) for the first time, recognising the substantial progress made over the past five years in tackling gender disparities across the institution.

Race Equality Charter: Advance HE's Race Equality Charter aims to improve the representation, progression, and success of minority ethnic staff and students in higher education.



The Charter provides a framework for universities to identify and address institutional barriers, while promoting meaningful dialogue and action on race equality.

In February 2024, the University successfully renewed its [Bronze award](#), first achieved in 2018, reaffirming its commitment to advancing race equality.

Further Information: The University's [Equality and Diversity Unit \(EDU\)](#) is a useful source of information, resources, support and news on EDI matters.

The Social Sciences Division Commitment to EDI



DPIR is one of the departments within the Social Sciences Division (SSD).

SSD is dedicated to enhancing diversity in its community, scholarship, and teaching. It aims to foster an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and respected - empowered to be themselves and to engage fully in the life of the Division.



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across the Division is led by Associate Professor Nandini Goptu, Associate Head of Division (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion). She provides strategic direction and academic leadership on EDI matters, working to cultivate an inclusive culture throughout the Division.

Nandini is supported by Catherine Goodwin, Planning and Equality Manager, and Elisha Ward, EDI Officer and Project Manager.

Further information can be found on the [SSD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion webpages](#).



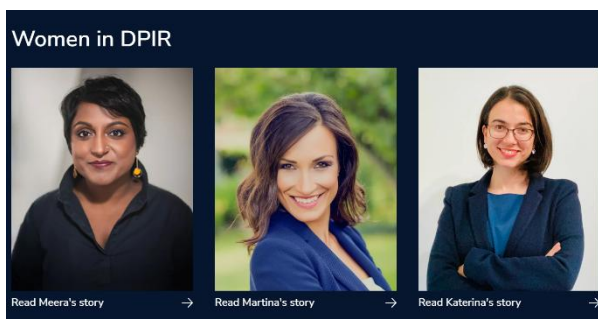
Department Commitment to EDI

“Equality, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental to Oxford’s mission and achievements as a university. The excellence of our teaching and research, along with the impact of our global engagement, is rooted in the culture and community we cultivate together”

DPIR Commitment

At the Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR), we are committed to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within a respectful and supportive working and learning environment. EDI is central to our mission, and we strive to ensure that all staff and students feel valued, respected, and able to be their authentic selves. This commitment aligns with the University’s [EDI Strategic Plan 2024-27](#), which sets out the vision, objectives, values, and targets for Oxford’s wider EDI efforts.

In 2025, DPIR celebrates its 25th anniversary, and as part of this milestone, we are proud to showcase the achievements of women in the department through our [women in DPIR webpages](#).



As part of our efforts to advance gender equality and improve the working environment, we are preparing to apply for an Athena Swan Bronze Award. This process involves a comprehensive self-assessment and the implementation of meaningful, sustainable changes.

To support this work, we have established an Athena Swan/EDI Self-Assessment Team (SAT), which reports to the General Purposes Committee (GPC). To ensure senior-level commitment and to embed EDI within our governance structures, both the Head of Department and the Head of Administration and Finance are members of both the SAT and the GPC.

The SAT brings together representatives from across the department and is responsible for developing and delivering our Athena Swan action plan, while also driving forward broader EDI initiatives.

We recognise that building an inclusive culture is an ongoing journey. While we are still in the early stages of this important work and have much to learn, we are committed to creating a truly diverse and inclusive community.



To further support our EDI efforts, DPIR has a dedicated EDI Officer, Matt Gooch, who is jointly based with the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID). Matt brings valuable expertise to support both departments' EDI initiatives.

Matt works in DPIR on Wednesdays (in-person) and Thursdays (remotely).

Why does this impact you?

EDI serves as a catalyst for cultural and attitudinal change. By utilising feedback mechanisms such as surveys, we continuously assess, refine, and enhance our policies and practices to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in the daily operations of the department.

We are currently:

- Introducing social activities to strengthen the department's sense of community.
- Embedding EDI training for new faculty and for those who either support undergraduate interviews (e.g., by organising or assisting with the process) or directly participate as members of interview panels.
- Ensuring that EDI is discussed and considered throughout the recruitment process, including during decision-making.
- Launching an initiative to diversify and 'decolonise' our curricula, with the support of graduate students.



Further Information can be found on the [DPIR EDI webpages](#) or the [DPIR Wellbeing webpages](#).

EDI Resource for Teaching and Learning

To support your teaching and learning, you may find the following resources helpful:

IncludED: Taking steps to help all our students maximise their academic potential through inclusive education: These pages bring together in one place the resources that exist across the University to support you in creating a more inclusive learning environment at Oxford.

Racially Inclusive Teaching Toolkit produced by Oxford's Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

ODID's Inclusive Classrooms Film and Guidance Notes

Neurodivergent Education for Students, Teaching & Learning (NESTL): NESTL TOOLKIT and NESTL Interactive Course (Canvas)

The Responsible Knowledge Exchange, Engagement and Impact (RKEEI) Framework for research collaboration, partnership and impact work, produced by the Social Sciences Division.

Code of Conduct for Ethical Fieldwork and Supplementary Toolkit developed by researchers at the School of Geography and the Environment.



Image: © Tom Weller Photography

EDI Training

As part of the Department's commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion we ask that all staff members complete the following required online courses:

- [Implicit bias in the workplace](#)

This course introduces the topic of implicit bias and its origins, considers how it might manifest itself in our behaviour, and provides practical tips and reflections to help you reduce the risk of bias in your own work.

- [Harassment in Higher Education](#)

To meet new legal duties under the Worker Protection Act 2023 (from October 2024) and the Office for Students' Condition E6 (from August 2025), the University has introduced required training to help prevent staff and student harassment. This supports our People Strategy, EDI Strategic Plan, and Harassment Policy, reinforcing a respectful, inclusive environment for all.

Additional EDI Training

Wider training is available to improve knowledge and skills including:

- [Equality and Diversity Briefing](#)

This practical course, recommended for all University staff, explores the meaning and importance of equality and diversity, and how each employee can help foster an inclusive culture.

- [Introduction to Inclusive Teaching](#)

A course to help teaching staff recognise and minimise the barriers that hinder students' learning and participation.

- [Inclusive Leadership](#)

Knowledge and tools to build inclusive teams, where everyone feels able to be themselves.

- [Tackling Race Bias at Work](#)

This course helps participants understand workplace racism, engage in open discussions about race, and take action to address racism and bias.

Details of all [People and Organisational Development Courses and Programmes](#) are available on their webpages.

Staff Networks

Networks provide an opportunity to connect with others who share common interests.

The University has several networks including:

[BME Staff Network](#)
[LGBT+ Staff network](#)
[LGBT+ Allies](#)
[Anti-Racism Ally Network](#)

[Disabled Staff Network](#)
[Oxford Women's Staff Network](#)
[LGBT+ Role Models](#)
[Neurodiversity at Oxford](#)

Further Information about the networks can be found on the [Equality and Diversity Unit's webpages](#).

DPIR Branded Rainbow Lanyards: You can show your support as an LGBT+ ally by picking up a lanyard available at the DPIR Reception in Manor Road Building.



Accessibility

The University of Oxford is committed to attracting individuals with exceptional potential to study and work here. This includes people living with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

Some individuals may acquire a disability or health condition during their time at the University. While not everyone will require additional support, others may benefit from 'reasonable adjustments' that help them thrive in their roles.



What are reasonable adjustments?

Under the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments are changes or modifications that employers, service providers, or education institutions must make to remove or reduce disadvantages faced by disabled people, ensuring they are not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people.

Examples of reasonable adjustments?

Adjustments should be tailored to the individual's specific needs - there is no single solution that works for everyone. That said, common adjustments for staff may include:



- Flexible working, including working from home or adjusted working hours.
- Modifying the physical environment (e.g., ramps, accessible toilets).
- Specific adjustments to office lighting/ventilation.
- Noise cancelling headphones or specialist computer accessories.
- Providing accessible materials or assistive technology.
- Offering alternative means of communication (e.g., large print, coloured paper).

The University's commitment to an inclusive culture recognises that individuals are diverse and may work in different ways. Supporting disabled staff often requires creativity and flexibility and many of the suggested approaches may be helpful to anyone, regardless of whether they have a disability.

Workplace Adjustment Plans

These provide a clear, agreed record of the support and adjustments required by disabled staff, helping to ensure an inclusive and supportive working environment. Under the Equality Act 2010, employers have a duty to remove or reduce barriers faced by disabled employees. These plans offer a structured framework for open and sensitive discussions between staff and managers, particularly where individuals may feel unsure about raising their needs or where roles or management have changed. By documenting agreed adjustments, Workplace Adjustment Plans ensure clarity for all parties and reduce the need for repeated reassessment.

Templates and guidance are available, and further information can be obtained from the Staff Disability Advisor (staffdisability@admin.ox.ac.uk).

How to Access Support

- Occupational Health Service: supports employee health and wellbeing by promoting a healthy workplace and helping prevent ill-health, in line with University policies.
- Staff Disability Adviser: provides advice and support to disabled staff, including those with neurodivergent conditions. The adviser can help you to explore available support and potential reasonable adjustments.
- An overview for disabled staff and students: Useful too if you are supporting someone.
- Neurodivergence: Information about different neurodivergent conditions and how to support staff with those conditions.
- Neuroinclusive Workplace Guide, developed by Georgia Broome, Communications Manager, Department of Computer Science
- Social Sciences Division EDI SharePoint page on Neurodiversity collates resources and information from across the University.
- Neurodiversity at Oxford: supports, celebrates, and empowers neurodivergent staff and students.

The department encourages you to discuss any need you have for reasonable adjustments or other support with your Line Manager, Supervisor, or the DPIR Human Resources Team.

If you're looking for information on building accessibility, please try the Access Guide or the University's interactive map.

Bullying and Harassment

(also known as Dignity and Respect)

Department Commitment

We are committed to fostering an inclusive culture that promotes equality, values diversity, and ensures a respectful environment for work, study, and social interaction where everyone's rights and dignity are upheld.

Bullying, harassment, and victimisation are not tolerated, and all members of the Department are expected to treat one another with respect, courtesy, and consideration.



Policies – Staff and Students

DPIR operates under the University of Oxford's [Policy and Procedure on Harassment](#), which also contains information and advice on seeking support for a matter relating to harassment.

You can also refer to the [Harassment Procedure flowchart for University Staff \[pdf\]](#) and [Harassment Procedure flowchart for Students \[pdf\]](#).

Support

- [Harassment Adviser](#): The University has around 490 Harassment Advisers across departments. It is recommended to speak with an adviser before taking further steps, as they can help you explore your options and decide how to proceed.

Our Department Harassment Advisers offers confidential support to staff and students facing harassment, bullying, or other inappropriate behaviour. Contact details can be found on the [DPIR webpages](#).

If you would prefer to speak with someone outside the department, please reach out to the central [Harassment Support Team](#).

- **Line Managers/Supervisors or DPIR Human Resources Team:** who can help you explore your options and determine the most effective way to move forward.
- If you experience or observe behaviour that violates our standards or conduct, we encourage you to complete the [Code of Conduct Survey](#) to report your concerns. This survey is a confidential tool designed to help us identify and address issues within our own community.

Other sources of support includes, for students, the [Oxford SU Student Advice Service](#) and [Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service](#). Together, we can maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

- [Report + Support](#): is an online platform that offers guidance on bullying and harassment, allows users to report concerns (named or anonymously) and helps the University improve support and prevention efforts. The platform also functions as a way of seeking a Harassment Advisor outside the department.



Sexual Harassment

[Strengthening Sexual Harassment Prevention](#): In accordance with the Worker Protection Act 2023 (effective from October 2024), the University has a legal obligation to take proactive measures to prevent the sexual harassment of staff. To support this, required training has been introduced for all employees.



Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023

This training also helps ensure compliance with the Office for Students' Condition E6 (effective from August 2025), which requires institutions to take effective action to prevent and address harassment affecting students.

You can find out more information on the [department's policies and procedures webpage](#) or [University's webpages on Bullying & Harassment](#).

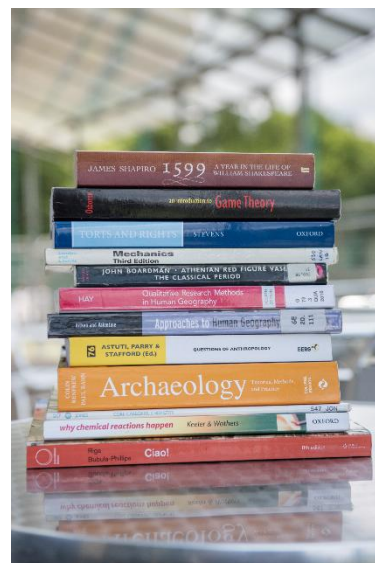
Useful Resources

Information for Parents

Whether you are planning to start a family, are expecting a child or already have children, the University has a range of family-friendly benefits.

Information for Carers

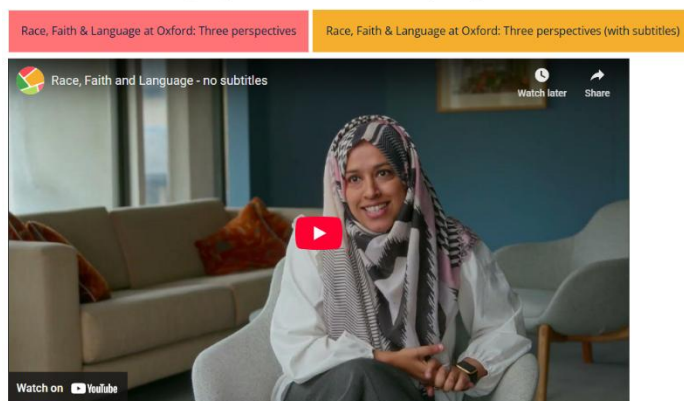
The University values the role of carers and aims to support staff with caring responsibilities wherever possible. These responsibilities can affect anyone, may arise unexpectedly, and can be short-term or long-term. You may be caring for relatives, friends, or family overseas or managing multiple caring roles at once.



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Inrehearsal Library (access via SSO) offers a range of curated boxsets on topics such as anti-racism, neurodiversity, and unconscious bias - designed to support learning and development in EDI for those seeking to deepen their understanding.

Discover Stories That Matter

Race, Faith & Language at Oxford: Three perspectives



The Social Sciences Division's EDI Team have produced three short films exploring the lived experiences of our diverse community.

Created by minoritised students and early career staff, each short film offers a personal perspective on life at the collegiate University, highlighting challenges and calling for positive change.

Themes include:

- Race, Faith & Language
- Gender Identity & Sexuality
- Neurodivergence

Off the Beaten Track: Stories of Diverse Journeys to Oxford: The Off the Beaten Track video series highlights the diverse journeys of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds into study and employment at the University of Oxford. Featuring stories from all four academic divisions, the series demonstrates how people from any background can forge their own path to studying, working, and thriving at Oxford.

Staff and Students Relationships Policy: Please take the time to review this policy. To protect both student welfare and staff interests, the University prohibits staff from engaging in intimate relationships with students under their responsibility, strongly discourages other close personal relationships that cross professional boundaries, and requires that any such relationships be formally declared.

Wellbeing

The department is dedicated to creating a supportive environment where everyone feels empowered to succeed and contribute fully as valued members of our community. That's why we've included a dedicated section on our website focused on wellbeing.

Thriving at Oxford: The University is committed to creating an environment where "everybody is supported to feel and perform at their best as part of the University community". A range of resources have been created to help look after yourself and your colleagues.



Mental Health Crisis Support: If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or simply need to talk to someone right now.

Spectrum.Life: Your 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): Spectrum.Life provides the University's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), offering staff access to confidential support and expert advice around the clock via phone, live chat, and an online platform, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Mental Health First Aiders: Trained by MHFA England, our department Mental Health First Aiders offer confidential, informal support to anyone in DPIR facing stress or mental health challenges, work-related or not. We're here to listen, discuss options, and guide you to further help if needed. Our current Mental Health First Aiders can be found on our website.

Practical Strategies to Support Good Mental Health in the Workplace: This 15-minute, practical course is designed to help you build awareness and confidence about workplace wellbeing. It covers why mental health at work matters, simple and effective self-care strategies, how to recognise when a colleague may be struggling, how to support others whilst keeping healthy boundaries and how everyone can contribute to a healthy and supportive workplace environment.

Menopause: At DPIR, we are committed to supporting staff and students experiencing menopause by providing access to resources, advice, and a supportive community. Our [webpages](#) provide access to University/Department resources, support networks and training along with some recommended reading.



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