Murray Edwards College

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2014 – 2018

Murray Edwards College provides excellence in the education of outstanding young women from all backgrounds. It provides opportunities for these young women to develop the skills and confidence to lead the way in the world, to be independent minded, and to take on the challenges they will meet in life and achieve their ambitions.

This is done through core teaching and also through the Gateway Programme for personal development. In future, there will also be greater support for young alumnae.

The College is a warm community; it is open and friendly, maintaining the traditions of a Cambridge college but at the forefront of innovation. Its focus is on meeting the needs of women from all backgrounds within the wider co-educational environment of the University.

The College will continue to promote its uniqueness and wants to be recognised as having something to say about women’s issues, without being strident or excluding men. The Fellowship and staff are both male and female.

This strategy sets out the College’s intent for the next five years. Each of the aims will be backed up by a clear implementation plan.

“The College is incorporated and shall be conducted with the following objects (inter alia) to advance education, learning and research in the University.”

College Charter, June 1972
OUR MAIN AIMS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS ARE:

1. To pursue educational excellence by seeking to ensure that every student is able to achieve their full academic potential, and for this to be expressed particularly (but not exclusively) in their Final examinations. We aim to sustain an intellectually inspiring environment, which enables each student to take responsibility positively for their own learning and progress.

   We will:
   - Continue to put a strong focus on merit based diversity.
   - Seek to increase the number of high-quality candidates who apply to Murray Edwards College as their first choice.
   - Give increased attention to STEM subjects, where young women in school and university are often under-represented. The intent is to make sure young women can achieve the highest levels.

2. To attract the most academically talented women for graduate study at Murray Edwards College and enable them to excel.

   We will:
   - Continue to grow the graduate body, take students in all subjects and recruit strongly internationally.
   - Give a special focus to fundraising for bursaries for UK students, where funding is limited, especially in arts and humanities.
   - Undertake a thorough review of affordable accommodation, including family accommodation, and consider how we can fundraise for subsidies.
3. To give each undergraduate and graduate student the tools and confidence to identify and achieve their individual aspirations, and consider how to support young alumnae.

We will:
- Continue to grow the Gateway Programme and Internship Initiative as they currently exist for sixth-formers and undergraduates.
- Develop a programme for transferable skills to provide real benefits for graduate students.
- Develop a specific mentoring programme for alumnae for the period from five to fifteen years after graduation, when young women face the most difficult life choices and also begin to meet difficulties in developing their careers.

4. To ensure that the Fellowship continues to develop as a vibrant, well-rounded academic community.

We will:
- Review the composition of the Fellowship, bearing in mind not only teaching needs, but also the need for diversity in terms of seniority and subject spread.
- Work to encourage the career development of all Fellows, especially college teaching officers.

5. To make the College much better known and understood.

We will:
- Take every opportunity to explain the purpose and relevance of Murray Edwards College and promote the outcomes we achieve, whether in educational excellence or in Fellows’ research and other contributions to the University and wider world.
- Continue to position the College as a place where people have something to say about the status of women, including both men and women in that debate.
- Continue to innovate in our outreach to young women and schools, particularly by developing and delivering a social media strategy which explains and promotes the purpose and relevance of Murray Edwards College in the 21st Century to young women, their families and their teachers.
6. To maintain the ethos of the College as inclusive, friendly and modern and to make sure the environment and life of the College continues to be vibrant and innovative.

We will:
- Set out a clear and realistic estates strategy to make sure that our buildings remain safe and fit for purpose.
- Maintain our commitment to the Art Collection, to music in College, to the openness and ethos of our gardens, and to cultural life generally as opportunities arise.
- Ensure that all staff and Fellows continue to understand and promote the College’s ethos and feel part of it, through good communication and management throughout the College.

7. To secure the College’s financial ability to deliver these objectives.

The College’s endowment and corporate capital are there to ensure the College can continue to exist in perpetuity. At present, the College’s income from these sources and from student fees (noting that undergraduate fees do not cover the full cost of educating undergraduates) is used in full, and income and expenditure are in balance. However, to deliver our aims over the next five years, new funds need to be sought.

We will raise funds for:
- The refurbishment of the two wings of Orchard Court and Fountain Court. The Orchard Court refurbishment is likely to cost up to £11 million.
- Endowments or more time-limited support for Fellowships, especially those where we have key teaching gaps.
- Bursaries and subsidies for graduate students, especially those from the UK where funding is now very limited.

We will also be seeking funds for a number of smaller projects including:
- Developing and delivering a Gateway Programme for graduate students and a mentoring scheme for young alumnae.
- Redeveloping the College website and delivering a social media strategy.
- Improvement in the College Archives and record keeping.
- A permanent curator for the New Hall Art Collection.