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## Student Policies and Procedures

## Appropriate Relationships between Fellows, Bye-Fellows, Staff, Postgraduates engaged in teaching and Students

**Review Date: Lent 2025**

1. A personal relationship of a sexual or other intimate nature between a member of staff and a student, with whom that member of staff also has a professional connection, gives rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest. In particular, such a relationship creates, or may reasonably be perceived to create, a risk of favouritism or abuse of authority. It also undermines the relationship of trust and confidence which is intrinsic to interactions between staff and students.
2. Members of staff are under a duty to act with integrity and not to place themselves in a position of actual or apparent conflict. A personal relationship in the circumstances described above should consequently be avoided.
3. In the event that:
  - i. a personal relationship arises between a member of staff and a student with whom that member of staff also has a professional connection; or
  - ii. there is or has been a personal relationship between a member of staff and a student with whom that member of staff is due to have a professional connection;

the member of staff in question must disclose the relationship immediately to the Senior Tutor or (if the member of staff would prefer) to the HR manager who will speak to the Senior Tutor on their behalf. If a member of staff is unsure whether or not a relationship with a student should be disclosed under this policy, the member of staff should disclose it.
4. Following disclosure, the person to whom the disclosure has been made will ensure as appropriate that the student is aware of the disclosure and that alternative arrangements are put in place to avoid the member of staff having any professional connection with the student.
5. Failure to comply with this policy, or any arrangements which are put in place under it, may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
5. For the purposes of this policy:
6. 'member of staff' includes any fellow or bye-fellow of the College or person who is engaged by the College as an employee or worker and/or who holds a College office or post, as well as any person to whom the College makes available any of the privileges or facilities normally afforded to its employees and fellows. Where graduate students are working for the College in a teaching or related capacity, this policy will apply to them in that capacity as if they were fellows, bye-fellows, employees or workers of the College;

- i. 'student' includes any person pursuing a course of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma, or certificate of the University;
- ii. 'professional connection' means any arrangement where a person in his or her capacity as a member of staff has any academic, pastoral or administrative or similar responsibility for a student, including for supervising, tutoring, teaching, selecting, assessing, protecting, safeguarding, or providing a reference for, the student; and
- iii. 'personal relationship' means any association, however brief, of a sexual or other intimate nature, either in person or remotely (for example, via social media, email or text messaging).

## Alcohol Policy

### Review in Easter Term 2025

Murray Edwards College is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment in which students can live, study and work. This includes addressing the risks posed by alcohol misuse, informing students of their responsibilities to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others, as well as providing information, advice, guidance and support to those who request it.

In particular, Murray Edwards College aims to:

- Encourage and support a culture of safe drinking and mutual respect within the College community;
- Promote a community which is supportive and which recognises and respects different attitudes towards alcohol use;
- Work to create an understanding of acceptable behaviour and sanction the use of disciplinary action where appropriate;
- Assist students to make informed decisions about alcohol use;
- Recognise the link between responsible behaviour and an enjoyable learning experience and seek to promote a social environment in which all may benefit;
- Take very seriously the legal duty of care to students, staff and visitors and aim to provide a safe, healthy and high-quality work and study environment;
- Work with all relevant partners to deliver responsible commercial services where alcohol is available on site;
- Recognise that staff have a duty of care to be alert to indicators of student alcohol misuse and/or dependency and to take appropriate action when necessary;

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- Provide guidance and information to staff and students to help them develop the confidence to know what action to take if they are concerned about alcohol misuse which puts the wellbeing of students at risk;
- Provide support to students who are seeking help or have concerns about their alcohol use or that of their friends.

This policy is part of the College's work to help achieve these aims. The overarching premise is one of support and education, focusing on boundaries of acceptable and responsible behaviour.

### Respecting the Rights of Others

The College recognizes that there will be differing attitudes to alcohol amongst the student body and that a strong social emphasis on alcohol is insensitive to those whose cultures do not endorse the use of alcohol and to those who choose not to use it for other reasons. In a 2016 survey of Cambridge students, nearly a third of respondents indicated that they did not consume alcohol. The College will therefore strive to ensure that facilities and events are accessible for all students including those who choose not to drink alcohol, either due to personal preference, culture or because of religion or belief.

Students should ensure that the rights of those wishing not to drink alcohol are fully respected, regardless of the reason. The College will not tolerate disrespectful or exclusive behaviour which marginalizes students who choose not to consume alcohol.

Guidance on specific roles and responsibilities within the College is included in [Appendix A](#).

### Who is covered by the Policy?

This policy applies to all students of Murray Edwards College. It applies whether students are on College or University premises or elsewhere undertaking College or University study activities, including premises managed on behalf of the College or University by a third party.

### What is alcohol misuse?

Alcohol misuse is defined as the habitual or intermittent use of alcohol which causes detriment to an individual's health, social functioning and/or academic performance. It can impair the safety of themselves or of others, and affect attendance, time keeping, efficiency and conduct.

### What is alcohol dependency?

Alcohol dependency is considered to be the most serious form of drinking problem and describes a strong, often uncontrollable desire to consume alcohol. There are varying degrees of dependence and it is important to note that, unlike alcohol misuse, dependence doesn't always involve drinking excessive amounts. Alcohol dependency is an illness that can affect people physically and mentally, can have a negative impact on relationships and can lead to study or social problems.

### What is binge drinking?

Binge drinking is a form of alcohol misuse and is defined as drinking eight or more units of alcohol in one session if you are a man, and more than six units in one session if you are a

woman. Studies have revealed that drinking a large amount of alcohol over a short period of time may be significantly worse for our health than frequently drinking moderate amounts.

To reduce health risks from drinking, the [Chief Medical Officers \(CMO\) guidelines](#) recommend that people should not drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week on a regular basis and we should spread these units over three or more days and have several alcohol-free days a week.

Measurements of alcohol for some popular drinks are listed below:

- A standard glass of wine (175ml) at 12% abv is 2.1 units, and a large 250ml glass is 3 units.
- A measure (35ml) of spirit (40% abv) is 1.4 units.
- A bottle (275ml) of ordinary strength alcopops (5% abv) is 1.4 units.
- A shot (35ml) of spirits, typically between 35-40% abv, is 1.3 units.
- A pint (568ml) of low strength (3.5-4% abv) beer, or lager, is 2.3 units.
- A standard measure of port, or sherry, (50ml) is 1 unit.

## What is pre-loading?

Pre-loading is the practice of consuming alcohol at home or a friend's house before going out to pubs, bars or clubs or on to a College event. When people pre-load they are considered four times more likely to consume over 20 units on a night out (including pre-loading and pub/bar/club drinking). This level of consumption is strongly associated with increased health and safety risks.

## Health

The short and long-term effects of alcohol consumption are wide-ranging and can have a significant impact on a person's body, lifestyle and mental health.

## Personal safety

An estimated 23,000 alcohol-related incidents take place in Britain each week. The risks of short-term harms like accidents or injuries increase between two to five times when drinking five-seven units (equivalent to 2-3 pints of beer). Being out under the influence of alcohol therefore puts students at greater risk of harm. The College recommends that students familiarize themselves with useful tips to help stay safe whilst drinking by visiting the [Drinkaware](#) and [NHS](#) web resources.

See [Appendix B](#) for guidance in the event of alcohol poisoning.

## Peer pressure

It is irresponsible and dangerous to encourage or pressure others to drink any more alcohol than they ought or wish to. Participation in competitive drinking games including 'pennyng', the spiking of drinks with any/extra alcohol or pressurizing others to take part in an 'initiation' to student societies is strictly prohibited and any student engaging in such activities will be subject to the [College's disciplinary procedures](#).

## Violence or antisocial behaviour

For a small minority of students, alcohol can play a significant role in situations where violence or antisocial behaviour occurs. Violence and antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated and may be subject to the College's or University's disciplinary procedures. Excessive alcohol consumption will not be considered a mitigating factor.

Students should be aware that they are responsible for their own actions and will be held fully liable for any expense arising from breakages, damages or additional cleaning to College or University property resulting from antisocial behaviour.

Any Fellow of the College or the Porters may stop a gathering within College if it is causing disturbance to other members of the College or the neighbouring community, and they can also submit a report to the Dean and the Senior Tutor.

## Implications of alcohol misuse

The College has a legitimate interest in protecting the College community from the potential consequences of alcohol misuse. It is important to acknowledge that the actions of students whose behaviour causes damage to property, or harm to either themselves or others as a result of alcohol misuse will need to be considered fully when deciding on an appropriate course of action.

Therefore, in situations where the misuse of alcohol is significantly affecting a student's academic performance, conduct, relationships or future career choice, the situation may need to be considered under a specific College or University procedure, including but not limited to:

- Fitness to study
- Fitness to practice
- Intermission
- Disciplinary
- Harassment and sexual misconduct

Students should also be aware that, under the College and University Disciplinary Procedures, the effects of self-administered alcohol or non-prescribed drugs shall neither constitute a defence to a charge of misconduct nor afford a basis for mitigation of sanction. In addition, any breach of the Rules of Behaviour may be considered more serious if it took place under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances.

Very serious cases involving potentially criminal activity may result in a matter being reported to the University and/or the police.

## Support for those with alcohol dependency

It is recognized that moderate alcohol consumption for many students will be an enjoyable and relatively harmless element of university life. However, in a University with a student population size as large as Cambridge, it is inevitable that some students will have or develop a problem with alcohol.



## Student Policies and Procedures

Alcohol dependency is an illness and if a student proactively and voluntarily discloses a problem with alcohol to the College, they should be reassured that they will be treated with sympathy and sensitivity and every effort will be made to assist them in finding the support that they need.

Support might be offered through the College Wellbeing service, Senior Tutor and Tutors or the [University Counselling Service](#). Referrals to external support agencies may also be considered.

Wherever possible, the disclosure of information by students will be kept confidential within the College welfare team, unless the student consents for such a disclosure to be shared or if the student or others are at serious risk of harm.

Whilst the College encourages any student with a concern about alcohol to disclose it to the College so that full pastoral and study support can be provided, it is recognized that not all students will wish to do so. Students wishing to seek help outside of the Collegiate University may find the following resources of help:

- [UCS self-help leaflet](#)
- Your General Practitioner
- [Drinkaware](#)
- Drinkline - the free national alcohol helpline. 0300 123 1110 (weekdays 9am – 8pm, weekends 11am – 4pm)
- [Alcoholics Anonymous \(AA\)](#)
- [Change Grow Live Cambridge](#)
- [Alcohol Change](#)
- [Addaction](#)

## Alcohol Misuse Policy: Appendix A – Roles and Responsibilities

### Students should:

- Be aware of this policy.
- Respect the wishes and beliefs of those who do not drink.
- Not engage in antisocial behaviour, violence, competitive drinking games or society initiations.
- Proactively and voluntarily disclose concerns if they are concerned about their alcohol use.
- Seek help or support if they have been asked to do so, including as part of a disciplinary sanction or fitness to study/practise process.
- Encourage other students to seek help where appropriate.

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- Access information about the potential impacts of alcohol misuse to physical and mental health and relationships.
- Alert an appropriate member of staff, such as their Tutor, to any problems relating to alcohol consumption that they see developing within the College, particularly where legal or health and safety concerns are an issue.
- Be aware of the behaviour of students around them and do their best to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing.

### All College Staff should:

- Be aware of the disciplinary procedures within the College for dealing with student alcohol-related issues, and know that they can speak confidentially to the Senior Tutor or the Deputy Senior Tutor if they have concerns about students.
- Encourage students to access appropriate support if there are concerns about their wellbeing in relation to alcohol.
- Be mindful of the potential impacts of excessive alcohol when conducting risk assessments on proposed events and activities.
- Ensure there is no misuse of/pressure to misuse alcohol during College social functions.
- Ensure non-alcoholic drinks are available at these occasions.

### College Fellows should:

- Be mindful that they are a role model to students and their own drinking behaviour and attitudes contribute to the overall College culture.
- Be mindful of the potential impacts of excessive alcohol when conducting risk assessments on proposed events and activities.
- Ensure there is no misuse of/pressure to misuse alcohol during College social functions.
- Ensure non-alcoholic drinks are always available at these occasions.

### Tutors and the College Nurse should:

- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of alcohol misuse and alcohol dependency.
- Alert students to the potential impacts of alcohol misuse.
- Through induction events and meetings, be alert to picking up students who come to University with a problem with alcohol to allow for early intervention and support.
- Follow up with students who have been identified by Porters or bar staff as potentially needing intervention/support.
- Act as a confidential self-referral facility for students.
- Provide information, advice and support to students presenting with alcohol-related issues (Nurse).

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- Adhere to confidentiality guidelines and data protection legislation when a student presents for support for an alcohol-related issue.
- Have in place systems of referral to the UCS and community-based alcohol support agencies (Nurse).
- Raise concerns to the Senior Tutor or Deputy Senior Tutor if a particular alcohol-related welfare issue is presenting repeatedly.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that students with alcohol-related issues do not present a risk to themselves or others.
- Monitor trends and patterns in alcohol use and consumption amongst the student body.

### Porters should:

- Be aware of the issues associated with alcohol misuse.
- Be aware that the Senior Tutor has responsibility for alcohol-related support services, and that the Nurse and Tutors are involved in the provision of this support.
- Liaise and communicate with the Senior Tutor in relation to concerns about student alcohol misuse.
- Report any alcohol-related incidents that contravene College regulations to the Senior Tutor/Dean.
- Be alert to the signs of alcohol poisoning and how to act in an emergency.

### JCR/MCR Welfare Officers should:

- Offer information about services available to students who have concerns about their alcohol use.
- Work with College staff and Fellows to encourage and promote a sensible approach to alcohol use within the College.
- Provide and support educational events, awareness campaigns and activities that promote student health and wellbeing in cooperation with other parts of the Collegiate University.
- Ensure that student-related policies reflect attitudes to alcohol which are conducive to student wellbeing.
- Ensure that social events are not themed around excessive drinking and that publicity for these events is not themed exclusively around alcohol.
- Ensure that facilities/events organized by the JCR/MCR are accessible for those students who choose not to drink alcohol for whatever reason, and that the suite of events available to freshers includes alcohol-free activities as standard.

### Bar staff should:

- Ensure that patrons are in a fit state to be served (no visible signs of drunkenness).
- Ensure that alcohol is not be served to anyone under the age of 18.

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- Ensure that any person who appears to be intoxicated is not served alcoholic drinks.
- Ensure that any customer attempting to buy alcoholic drinks for someone who appears to be intoxicated is refused.
- Ensure that patrons who appear to be intoxicated are asked to leave the premises.
- Report issues of antisocial behaviour resulting from excessive alcohol consumption to the Duty Porter.

### Alcohol Misuse Policy: Appendix B – Guidance in the event of alcohol poisoning

Alcohol poisoning occurs when someone has consumed toxic levels of alcohol over a short period of time. In the most severe cases, alcohol poisoning can lead to coma, brain damage and can even be fatal.

The signs and symptoms of alcohol poisoning include:

- confusion
- severely slurred speech
- loss of co-ordination
- vomiting
- regular or slow breathing
- hypothermia (pale or blue-tinged skin caused by low body temperature)
- stupor (being conscious but unresponsive)
- passing out and being unconscious

### When to seek medical help

If you suspect a fellow student may have alcohol poisoning and they are in College accommodation, contact the Porters' Lodge immediately for help. If they are not in College, dial 999 immediately to request an ambulance. While you're waiting:

- try to keep them sitting up and awake
- if they've passed out, lie them on their side in the [recovery position](#) and check they're breathing properly
- keep them warm
- stay with them and monitor their symptoms

Never leave a person alone to 'sleep it off'. The level of alcohol in a person's blood can continue to rise for up to 30-40 minutes after their last drink. This can cause their symptoms to suddenly become much more severe. You also shouldn't give them coffee or any more alcohol, put them under a cold shower or walk them around. These won't help someone 'sober up' and may even be dangerous.

# Drugs Policy

## Review in Easter Term 2025

Murray Edwards College is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment in which students can live, study and work. This includes reminding all members of the College that it can be dangerous to take any drugs other than under medical direction.

Most drugs come under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which makes it illegal to possess certain drugs and to supply them to others. They are classified as class A, B or C, depending on the presumed risk of harm they may cause:

- Class A Drugs (This category includes LSD, ecstasy, heroin and cocaine);
- Class B Drugs (This category includes amphetamines, barbiturates and other weaker opiates, ketamine and cannabis);
- Class C Drugs (This category includes a number of other weaker sedatives and stimulants).

The introduction of the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 means that it is also illegal to produce or supply psycho-active substances (previously referred to as 'legal highs') to anyone, or to possess them with the intention of supplying them.

The way drugs are legally classified does not reflect how harmful they are to your mental health. All drugs can all have a negative impact on you, whichever Act of Parliament they come under and whatever class they are given. Drugs affect the way you see things, your mood, and your behaviour. If you have mental health problems, you are more likely to experience negative effects with illegal drugs.

## Implications of drug misuse

While support is available for those with a drug dependency, it is important to note that possession, use and supply of drugs are regarded as a serious breach of the College's Rules of Behaviour, and any student involved may be subject to the [College's](#) or [University's](#) disciplinary procedures. This applies particularly to any student found to be using, dealing or in possession of any Class A Drug. It also applies to any student found to be dealing or repeatedly in possession of any of the Classes of Drugs above. The College's policy is to co-operate fully with the Police in any investigation. Students should also be aware that if the College were knowingly to permit drug offences to take place on its premises, it would itself be liable under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

## Support available

The College wishes to offer all possible support to students seeking medical or counselling help regarding drug taking. Those aware of being at risk of drug or other substance misuse are encouraged to seek advice from the College Wellbeing services, Counsellor, Nurse, Tutors, Senior Tutor or the [University Counselling Service](#). The Welfare Officers of the JCR, CUSU and the Graduate Union may also be able to offer advice. Students wishing to seek help outside of the Collegiate University may find the following resources of help:

- Your General Practitioner

- [NHS advice on drug addiction](#)
- [Change Grow Live Cambridge](#)
- [Frank](#) – honest information about drugs
- [Addaction](#)
- [Narcotics Anonymous](#)

Any student concerned about another student's dependence on drugs should encourage them to seek advice from one of the sources listed above.

Any member of the College concerned about illegal drug use should refer the matter to the Senior Tutor, or to any Tutor.

## Fitness to Study

**Review Date: Subject to review by University**

### General Support

In all cases in which a student is experiencing difficulties of any kind, the College will work with that student to ensure that she receives the support that she needs. This will usually involve a combination of the student's Tutor, the Senior Tutor, the Executive Graduate Tutor, the College Nurse, the College Counsellor, the University Counselling Service and the Disability Resource Centre. The College will always encourage students to engage fully with their own GP, and with other external agencies which can provide additional specialist support. The student herself carries the main responsibility for engaging with services and support which are offered.

In the majority of cases, even when a student is experiencing difficulties, the College will support the student if she is keen to continue with her studies. In such cases, the co-operation of the student in formulating a support plan is crucial. This plan will be drawn up with the student, the student's Tutor and the Senior Tutor (or Executive Graduate Tutor in some graduate cases), and the student will be asked to agree to it. If appropriate, the College Nurse may also be involved, and the student can also ask for other relevant parties to be involved if she wishes. If the student does not engage with this plan, then further review will be necessary.

If a student wishes to suspend her studies and intermit, then the College will normally be fully supportive of this. The student should speak in the first instance to her Tutor, and then to the Senior Tutor. When a student returns to College and to the University after a period of intermission, in addition to meeting with her Tutor, she will also meet with the Senior Tutor (or Executive Graduate Tutor in the case of a graduate student) as a matter of course. The purpose of these meetings will be to ensure that a plan is put in place to ensure that the student has all the support she needs to resume living and working in the College and University.

In a minority of cases, a student may not wish to intermit, but the College may have such substantial concerns about a student's own well-being, or the well-being of those around her, that it might be necessary to consider suspending the student's studies. These cases will

involve the student posing a risk to herself or to others. While the College has a disciplinary procedure, it is not suitable for such cases to be dealt with in this way, hence the importance of the Fitness to Study procedure detailed below.

## Fitness to Study Procedure

The procedures described in this document must be read in conjunction with the relevant provisions of the College's Statutes and Ordinances (in particular Statute 26 and Ordinance 35) and, where applicable, the University's Statutes and Ordinances. Similarly, the provisions and decisions of the Faculty or Department in which a graduate student is studying must also be taken into account. If a decision by the College would require alteration to a student's standing for an examination, the College will consult the Secretary to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee ([eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:eamc@admin.cam.ac.uk)) for qualifications under its remit, or Emma Rixon ([emma.rixon@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:emma.rixon@admin.cam.ac.uk)) for qualifications which are the responsibility of the Board of Graduate Studies.

## Purpose and Scope of the Procedure

Whilst at University, all students should be able to study and perform to the best of their ability in a safe and comfortable environment. The reality of College and University life means that students not only work but also live in close proximity to each other.

The term 'fitness to study' as used in this document relates to the entire student experience, and not just a student's ability to engage with their studies. For example the College expects its students to be able to live in harmony with others, and not conduct themselves in a way which has an adverse impact on those around them. This procedure is not designed to address academic performance issues (which should be dealt with under the normal academic assessment and monitoring procedures) except where poor academic performance is resulting from a fitness to study issue.

## Stage 1- Case Review Group

If the usual discussion with relevant parties within the college, as detailed above, has not been successful, Stage 1 of the Fitness to Study procedure can be invoked. In the case of graduate students, the principal Research Supervisor and/or the Course Director will be informed about the College's concerns and the nature of the case review, and, where appropriate, they will be asked to provide a written report on the student's progress and performance and any concerns that might relate to the case review.

A meeting of a Case Review Group shall be convened by the Senior Tutor, made up of the student's Tutor and the Senior Tutor and to include if appropriate: the Director of Studies; Supervisor in the case of Graduates or Course Director if there is no Supervisor; College nurse or another member of the College support services. The Executive Graduate Tutor will also be included in the review group in the case of graduate students. The student may be accompanied to this meeting by a student or other friend or representative if they so wish. Representatives such as the University Mental Health Advisor or a member of the Disability Resource Centre may also attend for information and advice if felt appropriate by the Senior Tutor or by the student herself.

In both Stage 1 and Stage 2 the student's Tutor should be the point of contact with the student and should ensure that the Senior Tutor is kept informed of all communications. The Senior Tutor should be the main point of contact with all other agencies and individuals and should

## Student Policies and Procedures

keep records of the whole process. The Senior Tutor will appoint a deputy if unavailable to act at any stage.

Before the meeting, a medical assessment may be sought from a qualified practitioner familiar with the Cambridge University system and the spectrum of student difficulties, or from the University Occupational Health Service. The student will be encouraged to consent to this, as it will ultimately enable the College to address the student's difficulties in the most effective manner possible and make an accurate assessment of risk, and how best to support the student.

The medical assessment will be used to determine the following matters:

- the nature and extent of any medical condition from which the student may be suffering;
- the student's prognosis;
- the extent to which it may affect her fitness to study and manage the demands of student life;
- any impact it may have or risk it may pose to others;
- whether any additional steps should be taken by the College, in light of the medical condition, to enable the student to study effectively;
- whether the student will be receiving any ongoing medical treatment or support.

The student will be asked to authorise full disclosure to the College of the results of any medical examination. The College recognises that any such information disclosed will constitute "sensitive data" for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be handled, processed and stored accordingly.

Should the student refuse to undertake a medical examination, or disclose results, the College may continue this procedure based on the information already in its possession.

The student will be given at least 7 working days' notice of the convening of a Case Review Group and informed of the purpose of the meeting. This period may be shortened in emergency on the advice of the Senior Tutor. The student will also be provided with any documents that will be considered by the Group, and asked to provide any documentation she may wish the Group to consider, in good time for the meeting.

As detailed above, the student may be accompanied at the meeting by a Students' Union representative, a fellow student, or other advisor. The student may choose to be accompanied by a parent or carer if she wishes, but this decision should be taken by the student. A support worker, if required may also accompany disabled students. The student should notify the Senior Tutor at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting if they are to be accompanied and by whom.

Should the student choose not to attend, she is welcome to send the individual who would have accompanied her to observe on her behalf. The meeting will proceed even in the student's absence.

The purpose of the meeting will be to ensure that:

- the student is made fully aware of the nature of the concerns that have been raised;
- the student's views are heard and taken account of and the best way to proceed is agreed upon;



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- the student is fully aware of the possible outcomes if difficulties remain.

The Case Review Group will order its proceedings at its own discretion depending on what is most appropriate for the particular student.

The Case Review Group may decide (a) that no further action is required beyond support detailed above; or (b) to formally monitor the student's progress for a specified period of time. In this case an action plan will be agreed with the student, outlining any steps, which the student will need to take, and/or any support to be provided to the student, to address the concerns identified.

Regular review meetings with the student will be arranged with a nominated member of College staff (usually either the Tutor or Senior Tutor, or possibly the Executive Graduate Tutor or College Nurse), to ensure that the action plan is being appropriately followed and that reasonable support to enable the student to study effectively is being provided.

It will be made clear to the student that her engagement with the action plan is essential, and her own responsibility, and that failure to engage with the plan will lead to initiation of the second stage of the procedure. Or (c) to recommend that special academic arrangements or support are put in place. Such recommendations should be agreed with the student's department (and in the case of a graduate student with her Research Supervisor and/or Course Director) and by the student and approved by the relevant University authority.

The student will be informed that unless these arrangements remedy the concerns to the College's satisfaction, their fitness to study may be considered at Stage 3 of these procedures. or (d) with the consent of the student, to agree that their studies be suspended for a period of time with appropriate application to the relevant University authority. or (e) to refer the case to the appropriate Senior member of the College, to be considered under Stage 2 of this procedure.

This will only be appropriate in the most serious of cases, where for example evidence of a serious risk to either the health and safety of the student or others has been identified, and it is thought that suspension or exclusion of the student may be the appropriate course of action, or where a particular course of action has been recommended but the student does not agree.

The decision of the Case Review Group, together with a concise record of the meeting, should be sent to the student within 7 working days from the date of the meeting, and a copy kept on the student's personal file. The decision will be communicated in such a way that support is available to the student at the time either from the student's Tutor or Senior Tutor. A copy of this documentation should be sent to the student's Department where relevant and, in the case of a graduate student to her Research Supervisor.

### Stage 2 - College Review Panel

This stage of the procedure will only be implemented following a referral from a Stage 1 Case Review Group, or if in the opinion of the Senior Tutor (having consulted as appropriate) initial concerns are raised, which are sufficiently serious as to warrant the consideration of the student's suspension, or exclusion (e.g. if they pose a potentially threat to the health and safety of themselves or others, or disruption to the working of the College and/or University).

As a first step in this stage the Senior Tutor shall consider whether interim suspension of the student pending further action is appropriate, including from College accommodation. In such

cases, the visa status of an international student is then compromised and the University's International Student Team will be informed immediately.

The Senior Tutor shall then convene a Review Panel, which shall be chaired by a senior member of the College Governing Body (appointed by the President) with no previous involvement in the case. The Review Panel will normally comprise the Chair, the student's Tutor, the Senior Tutor, and another independent member of the College Governing Body. The Executive Graduate Tutor will also sit on the panel in the case of graduate students.

The Chair will fix a date for a formal meeting of the College Review Panel to discuss the case and invite the student to attend to discuss the concerns and all relevant issues. A member of the College Tutorial Office staff will act as Secretary to the Panel. Wherever possible the student will be given at least 7 working days' notice of the meeting of the College Review Panel. The student will be informed of the purpose of the hearing. The student will also be provided with any documents to be considered at the meeting, and asked to provide any documentation she may wish the Panel to consider in good time for the meeting. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by a Students' Union representative, a fellow student or other adviser. The student may choose to be accompanied by a parent or carer if she wishes. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker where required. The student should notify the Senior Tutor at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting if they are to be accompanied and by whom. Should the student choose not to attend, she is welcome to send the individual who would have accompanied her to observe on her behalf. The meeting will proceed even in the student's absence.

The purpose of the meeting will be to consider the evidence available, including the student's perception of these concerns and to reach an appropriate decision, action plan or other outcome.

The Review Panel will order its proceedings at its discretion and may call witnesses and institute enquiries to assist its deliberations. The panel may request further medical assessments of the student's fitness to study. It will also consider any previous risk assessments. The Chair of the Review Panel will ensure that all parties have access to all documents. The decision it arrives at shall be confirmed by the Chair of the Review Panel having obtained a collective decision from members of the Panel.

The student shall be notified in writing of the decision, with reasons, within 7 working days of the meeting of the College Review Panel. The decision will be communicated in such a way that support is available to the student at the time either from the student's Tutor or Senior Tutor. A graduate student's Research Supervisor or Course Director (as appropriate) and Department, and the Board of Graduate Studies will be informed of the decision.

The decision may include one or more of the following:

1. To formally monitor the student's progress for a specified period of time. In this case the Panel will provide the student with an agreed action plan, outlining any steps which the student will need to take and/or any support to be provided to the student to address the concerns identified. Regular review meetings with the student will need to be arranged with a nominated member of staff (to ensure that the action plan is being appropriately followed and/or that reasonable support to enable the student to study effectively is being provided). The student will also need to be informed of the consequences of any breaches of the action plan.

2. That, following consultation with the academic Department, and subject to the approval of the relevant University authority, special academic arrangements are put in place - or an interruption of studies is agreed. The student will be informed of the consequences should these arrangements fail to remedy the concerns identified to the College's satisfaction.
3. To recommend that the College exercises its statutory power to suspend or exclude the student.
4. Any other action considered to be appropriate and proportionate.
5. Any decision regarding suspension or exclusion should be communicated by the Senior Tutor to the relevant University authorities and to any support services who have been involved with the student.

### Return to Study

In some cases where a student has temporarily left the College under the provisions above, a proposed return date may be agreed in advance, assuming that the student is able to provide satisfactory evidence that she has recovered sufficiently to return to College. The procedure that will be followed here will be that usually followed when students who intermit return to Cambridge, and will require the approval of the Applications Committee. In the rare cases in which a proposed return date has not been specified, after a break from study the student may make a request to the College for permission to return to the course. The decision as to whether to ask the University permission for the student to be put in standing to return to study will then be made by the Senior Tutor who will request authorisation for the student to return from the relevant University authority.

To this end, the Senior Tutor, in consultation with relevant organisations such as the University Counselling Service, the University Mental Health Advisor, and Disability Resource Centre. etc., will identify the issues of concern that the College may have in respect of the student's fitness to study. The Senior Tutor will also contact the relevant medical professional for an assessment of the student's ability to manage the demands of returning to studying at Cambridge University, drawing attention to the nature and extent of the student's previous problems and the College's concerns about them.

The student will only be permitted to return if, after receiving medical advice, the College and relevant University authority are satisfied that the individual is fit to study and able to comply with any conditions imposed on their return.

In cases where the College has any continuing concerns about the individual's fitness to study, it may require a second medical opinion. In this case a student may be asked to submit themselves for medical examinations by doctors/specialists, including the University Mental Health Advisor, nominated by the College, at the College's expense to allow the situation to be properly evaluated.

In any case where a student returns to study following the implementation of the fitness to study procedure, the College should hold an initial meeting with the student to discuss what support measures need to be put into place for the student's return and establish a return to study plan. This initial meeting should include the student's Tutor, the Senior Tutor and the Director of Studies. At this meeting regular review meetings will be planned with the student to monitor and support a return to study plan. The student will be expected to provide their

continued co-operation in this respect and such review meetings may continue for part or all of their remaining time at College. There should be a written record of what is agreed for the return to study plan and a copy given to the student. The Senior Tutor should ensure that, where appropriate, a copy of the plan is sent to the relevant support agencies, who have agreed to help implement the plan and that any necessary support from agencies external to the College is put in place. The Senior Tutor should make arrangements for monitoring that the support plan is being delivered and accepted.

### Right of Appeal

If the student is not satisfied with any decision made in accordance with the Fitness to Study Procedure, they should follow the College complaints procedure within 14 days of the receipt of a letter outlining that decision, at any stage in the proceedings.

### General Matters

The College will take account of relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act, the Mental Health Act, the Human Rights Act, the Equality Act 2010 and the general rights and expectations of a student of confidentiality. In cases where Stages 1 or 2 of the Fitness to Study Procedure have been invoked, the Chair will make a decision about whether the student's emergency contact should be informed, and discuss with the student whether any statutory services should be contacted.

The College acknowledges that as a result of implementing this procedure it will receive personal sensitive data and data of a confidential nature pertaining to the student and other third parties, and shall ensure that all such data is handled, processed and stored accordingly.

## Students not meeting Professional Requirements (Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Law)

**Review Date: In line with the University review**

Students taking Medicine or Veterinary Medicine are required to pass 2nd MB examinations, normally via Tripos papers, to be eligible for clinical school places. Failure to pass these even after resitting closes the professional career path.

Students taking Law also normally secure exemption from certain professional examinations while taking their undergraduate course; however, there are other routes to these and failure to pass them while an undergraduate does not block the professional career path.

## College Policy

A student failing to obtain the normal professional requirements while an undergraduate may still continue to complete her BA course, as a reasonable basis for seeking employment subsequently.

MVST students not meeting 2nd MB requirements after their first year are encouraged to consider changing to a non-clinical Tripos as likely to lead to a better final result. They should also have their attention drawn to the (small but significant) possibility that they might still be able to secure professional qualification by restarting at another institution; the College will provide a transcript and an account of their circumstances to any institution considering them.

MVST students not meeting 2nd MB requirements after their second year but being class in the Tripos are not thereby automatically prevented from continuing to any Tripos Part, but the more competitive Natural Science subjects, commonly taken by such students, will not be open to them, and they may like to consider NST Part II (General) Natural Sciences as well as MVST Part II.

Tutors should normally seek permission for an additional resit only when seriously hindered preparation can be urged and supported with documentation dated before the resit. An application embodying their view and a statement of the facts, must however be made if the student insists on it.

## Student Complaint Procedure

**Review Date: Easter Term 2025**

### Background

The College welcomes comments and suggestions from students about any aspect of College provision. Students wishing to make a suggestion or comment about the College's provision, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally at the point of delivery, or by contacting the person in charge of the relevant area, or where it seems appropriate by raising the matter with the Senior Tutor, their Director of Studies, or Tutor.

Occasionally, however, students may wish to make a complaint about College provision. The College subscribes to the guidelines agreed by the Senior Tutors' Committee for the handling of student complaints, and this document sets out the procedure for making a complaint to the College. For further information, please speak to your Tutor or the Senior Tutor.

### 1. Glossary of key terms

1.1. In this procedure the following terms shall have the meanings set out below:

## Student Policies and Procedures

**Case Handler** A member of the College who determines whether a complaint is eligible to be investigated and who conducts any subsequent investigation under the Formal Resolution stage

**Complainant** - The Student who has made a complaint under this procedure

**Complaint Officer** - A trained member of staff who decides whether a complaint is upheld or dismissed under the Formal Resolution stage

**Completion of Procedures Letter** - A letter that confirms the end of the College's proceedings following which a student may be able to raise a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator

**Reviewer** - A trained senior College member who decides whether a complaint is upheld or dismissed under the Review Stage

## 2. Scope and Principles

2.1. This procedure applies where a student member of the College wishes to express dissatisfaction, either about the College's action or lack of action, or the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the College. The procedure has three stages: Informal Resolution, Formal Resolution and Review.

2.2. This procedure cannot be used to make a complaint relating to the following:

- a. University provision, for which the student should consult the relevant University complaint procedures ([www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk](http://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk));
- b. A decision made by an academic body regarding student progression, academic assessment or awards, for which the student should consult the University examination review and examination allowances procedures.

In addition, certain matters are covered by other procedures of the College and/or the University, and the College reserves the right to refer the matter to those procedures for investigation and appropriate resolution. These include:

- c. Complaints against one or more members of the College or University as individuals (which may instead be addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures);
- d. Complaints relating to serious harassment or sexual misconduct perpetrated by other students, which with the Complainant's permission will be handled under the College or University Procedure for the handling of student cases of harassment and sexual misconduct.

2.3. Before making a complaint, Complainants should read the procedure. All Complainants are encouraged to seek support from a College Tutor, a member of the Students' Unions' Advice Service, or other advisor of the student's choosing.

2.4. A Complainant may be invited to attend a meeting under paragraph 3.2, 4.7 and 4.10 as part of this procedure. A Complainant who is invited to attend a meeting will be entitled to choose whether or not to attend the meeting, noting that non-attendance may affect the acceptance of grounds for a Review of any formal complaint decision on the basis of incomplete evidence. The Complainant is also entitled to be accompanied by someone of the Complainant's choosing, providing that such attendance is notified in advance of the meeting. During any meeting, the

## Student Policies and Procedures

Complainant is entitled to ask for breaks during the meeting, to allow an opportunity for the Complainant to consult any accompanying person in private.

2.5. This procedure is an internal process and does not have the same degree of formality as a court of law. It is not necessary or appropriate for Complainants or the College to be legally represented at any meetings that form part of the procedure, except in exceptional circumstances.

2.6. This procedure can only be used by a student who has been affected by the subject matter of the complaint. Complaints should be made by Complainants themselves in order to ensure their views are accurately represented, unless a compelling case is made to demonstrate that the Complainant cannot act on their own behalf, and the College has received a statement in writing that the Complainant authorises a third party to act on their behalf in full. In this circumstance, the College will communicate only with the authorised representative and therefore any reference in this procedure about communication to or from a Complainant refers instead to the Complainant's authorised representative.

2.7. Group complaints can be submitted, but a single group representative must be identified, authorised by each member of the group, with whom the College will correspond and who will be responsible for liaising with the other Complainants. In such cases, references in this procedure to the 'Complainant' shall be construed as referring to more than one person. The College may separate group complaints where it considers that the issues raised impact Complainants differently or where Complainants are seeking different remedies.

2.8. The College reserves the right to decide on whether or not to accept formal complaints that are made anonymously. Anonymous complaints will not normally be accepted, as this may limit the investigation and communication of the outcome. Exceptionally, an anonymous complaint may be considered if there is a compelling case, supported by evidence, for the matter to be investigated.

2.9. Complainants will not be disadvantaged for raising a genuine complaint. The College will act reasonably in considering complaints under this procedure and decisions will be made fairly and transparently. The Case Handler, Complaint Officer and Reviewer must have had no material involvement in the matters raised as part of the complaint or in the earlier stages of the procedure and will be independent and impartial.

2.10. Case Handlers, Complaint Officers and Reviewers will be appointed by the Senior Tutor. The Complainant will be advised who will take on these roles and be given the opportunity to raise any concerns with the person making the appointment relating to real or potential conflicts of interest.

2.11. Any reference in this procedure to a College officer or other named role includes a deputy appointed by that officer or role-holder to exercise the functions assigned to that officer under this procedure.

2.12. Complainants are required to raise a complaint as soon as possible and within the required timeframe (see paragraph 3.1, 4.1 and 5.1), to ensure effective remedies can be provided without further disadvantage to the Complainant. Complaints or evidence submitted outside this timeframe will not be accepted unless there is a valid reason for delay, supported by evidence, which will be judged on a case-by-case basis by the Case Handler, Complaint

Officer or Reviewer, as appropriate. Delays as a result of revising or studying will not normally be accepted as a valid reason for delay.

2.13. The College aims to process any formal complaint through Formal Resolution and any Review within 90 calendar days. The 90 calendar day timeframe requires Complainants to comply with any timescales set down in this Procedure. There will occasionally be circumstances when, for good reasons, the College will need to extend the timeframe and in these circumstances the Complainant will be notified and kept updated as to the progress of their complaint.

2.14. The College will only share the information and evidence submitted in a complaint with members of staff where it is strictly necessary in order to process, investigate and consider the complaint. All information received from a Complainant will be handled sensitively and in accordance with the Policy on the use of personal information under the Student Complaint Procedure.

2.15. The Case Handler, Complaint Officer or the Reviewer may terminate consideration of a complaint if it is considered to be frivolous or vexatious. Examples of vexatious complaints are those which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive; insist on pursuing unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes and/or requests which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance. If a complaint is terminated then the Complainant will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter.

2.16. Complainants, their advisors and staff of the College are required to communicate respectfully and reasonably at all times whilst using the procedure. Abusive or threatening behaviour and language including unreasonable persistence, unreasonable demands, lack of co-operation or any aggression or threat of aggression will not be tolerated. If, following a warning, a Complainant behaves in an unacceptable manner; the Case Handler, Complaint Officer or the Reviewer may terminate the Complainant's request without further consideration. If a request is terminated then the Complainant will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter.

2.17. When using this procedure, Complainants are encouraged to provide details and evidence of any disability and/or any reasonable adjustments which may be appropriate in light of their disability. Where it may be helpful and with the consent of the Complainant, an appropriately trained staff member may be asked to provide a decision regarding reasonable adjustments. When notified of a disability, the College will always consider whether reasonable adjustment to the procedure are required, based on the needs of the individual.

### 3. Informal Resolution

3.1. Complainants should raise complaints, in writing or in person, with their College Tutor, or with the staff member concerned as soon as possible and normally within 28 days of the matter occurring, to ensure that the matter can be investigated properly.

3.2. Following being informed of a complaint, the College Tutor or staff member should respond to the complaint in a timely manner and normally within 21 calendar days of its receipt. The response should be in writing and should include information about the ability to raise a formal complaint if the Complainant remains dissatisfied with the response. Where a response cannot be provided within 21 calendar days, the Tutor or staff member will write to the Complainant within that period to indicate the reasons for delay and when a response is likely to be provided.



The Tutor or staff member may invite the Complainant to a meeting as part of an investigation, but is not obliged to hold such a meeting.

## 4. Formal Resolution

4.1. Where a Complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome or the timeliness of the Informal Resolution, or declines to engage with Informal Resolution, or where Informal Resolution is inappropriate, for example because the issues raised are serious or systemic, the Complainant can raise a complaint under Formal Resolution. Complainants should raise a complaint by submitting the [Formal Complaint form](#) normally within 28 days of either (a) the informal response to the complaint; or (b) the matter of complaint first arising, where the Complainant reasonably considers Informal Resolution is inappropriate. The Case Handler shall determine whether the period of 28 calendar days should run from a later date in recognition of a Complainant's further reasonable attempts at Informal Resolution; or whether it is reasonable for the Complainant not to have attempted Informal Resolution.

4.2. The Formal Resolution form should set out the Complainant's concerns clearly and succinctly and provide all relevant evidence to substantiate the issues raised. The Complainant should also outline what in their view would constitute a suitable outcome and remedy for their complaint. Evidence may include independent medical evidence, reports by professionals, financial information or witness statements.

4.3. A Case Handler will consider the completed Formal Resolution form and any accompanying evidence and will make one or more of the following determinations:

- a. the complaint in whole or in part is eligible to be investigated using this procedure;
  - b. the complaint in whole or in part should be referred for consideration under an alternative procedure;
  - c. the complaint in whole or in part is ineligible to be considered by the College, for example because it is out of time, is not a matter that can be resolved by the College, lacks substantive content, or is considered malicious, vexatious or frivolous;
  - d. the Complainant should attempt Informal Resolution before investigation of the complaint under this stage of the Procedure.
  - e. Where matters raised within the complaint would be more appropriately considered under alternative College procedures, the Case Handler will inform the Complainant which matters will be considered under which procedure. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend one procedure pending the completion of another.
- 4.4. Where a determination is made under paragraphs (b)-(d), the reasons for this and information about the options available to the Complainant will be provided in writing to within 7 calendar days. If the Complainant disagrees with the determination under paragraph 4.3, the reasons for the disagreement should be provided by the Complainant, in writing and within 7 calendar days of receiving the determination, to the President, Senior Tutor or Bursar who will review the determination within a further 14 calendar days. Where a complaint cannot be considered further by the College a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued.

4.5. Some complaints may require the College to take swift action, for example where the issues raised have detrimental consequences for the Complainant's or another College member's health and safety (including mental health) or where external time limits apply for

## Student Policies and Procedures

example, in meeting regulatory requirements for the completion of courses. If this is the case, the College undertakes to deal with the Complaint and any determination as swiftly as practicable.

4.6. Where a determination is made under paragraph (a) the Complainant will be informed and the Case Handler will conduct an investigation, requiring such written statements and evidence from witnesses and Institutions concerning the events and applicable procedures, as are appropriate.

4.7. A Case Handler may or may not meet individually with the Complainant, persons who attempted to informally resolve the complaint or witnesses as part of the investigation, or collect further evidence, at the Case Handler's discretion and where the Case Handler believes it to be beneficial to do so. Where a meeting does take place a note-taker will be present. The written notes taken will be presented to those in attendance at the meeting for factual clarification, following which the notes will become the formal record of the meeting.

4.8. The Case Handler shall prepare a report containing the process that they have followed, the information they have gathered, the conclusions that have been drawn and any recommendations. The Case Handler should also consider whether mediation or conciliation might be effective at this stage.

4.9. Following investigation, the Case Handler will provide all of the materials to a Complaint Officer.

4.10. The Complaint Officer will consider all of the materials provided. In exceptional circumstances the Complaint Officer may conduct such additional investigations as are deemed required, or hold a meeting with any individual involved in the complaint, or hold a hearing. The Complainant will receive all of the materials considered by the Complaint Officer at least 7 calendar days in advance of any meeting or hearing.

4.11. Following consideration, the Complaint Officer will have the power to make one or more of the following decisions:

a. that further steps should be taken to resolve the complaint informally (for example, through mediation with the agreement of both parties);

b. to uphold a complaint in whole or in part and where appropriate require such remedies as necessary;

c. to dismiss a complaint in whole or in part where it is found that:

i. the College acted reasonably and/or

ii. the substance of the complaint was not justified; and/or

iii. the Complainant has not been substantively disadvantaged

4.12. The Complainant will receive confirmation in writing of the Complaint Officer's decision, along with the reasons for the decision and copies of all relevant material considered by the Complaint Officer at the conclusion of the investigation.

4.13. Regardless of the decision made, the Complaint Officer may make observations and recommendations to the College for consideration following the outcome of a complaint.

## 5. Review

5.1. The Complainant should confirm to the Complaint Officer whether they accept the outcomes of the formal complaint or whether they remain dissatisfied. If a Complainant is dissatisfied following the Formal Resolution decision, the Complainant can submit a Request for [Review form](#) within 14 calendar days of the Formal Resolution decision and evidence being provided to them. Alternatively, if the Complainant is dissatisfied with the decision but does not believe the reasons for the dissatisfaction would meet the grounds for a Review, the Complainant can request a Completion of Procedures letter.

5.2. The Review will not usually consider issues afresh or involve a further investigation. A Review can only be requested on the following grounds:

a. procedural irregularities that occurred during Formal Resolution, which were material or potentially material to the decision reached; and/or

b. the Formal Resolution decision is unreasonable, in that no reasonable person could have reached the same decision on the available evidence; and/or

c. the availability of new evidence, which materially impacts the complaint outcome and which, for valid reasons, could not have been submitted at an earlier stage. 5.3. A Review of the complaint is a two-stage process. On receipt of a Request for Review form, the Reviewer will consider whether there are grounds for a Review, based on an initial review of the Request and the evidence provided. If the Reviewer does not consider that the Request is eligible for review, the College will issue a Completion of Procedures letter.

5.4. If the Reviewer accepts there are valid grounds for Review, they will then consider in detail the Complainant's Request, the information considered during Formal Resolution, the decision and any new information. The Reviewer may request further information.

5.5. Following detailed consideration, the Reviewer will have the power to either:

a. uphold the complaint in whole or in part and require such remedies as necessary; or

b. confirm the Complaint Officer's decision. 5.6. The Complainant will receive the Reviewer's decision and the reasons for the decision, in writing, normally within 28 calendar days of submitting the Request for Review form. This is the final stage of the College's internal process and therefore the Complainant will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter. If a Complainant chooses to raise a complaint with the OIA, the Reviewer's decision will still be enacted unless a review outcome from the OIA recommends otherwise.

## Policy on the use of personal information under the Student Complaint Procedure

A copy is to be provided to the Complainant at the earliest contact and published on the College's website.

1. In order to deal with a Complainant's request it will be necessary for the College to process a Complainant's personal data in accordance with this policy. The overall purpose of processing

## Student Policies and Procedures

personal data in the context of the investigation and resolution of student complaints is to decide what steps can appropriately be taken in response to such complaints. Personal data will be disclosed only to those persons who need to see such data for the purposes of conducting an investigation, responding as part of an investigation, determining or recommending a resolution, or deciding what other steps can appropriately be taken. No person will be told any more about the investigation than is strictly necessary in order to obtain the information required from them. Such persons may include:

- staff handling, investigating and considering the complaint;
- individuals named or involved in the complaint, such as students, staff or external bodies;
- authorised representatives of other external bodies involved in the complaint;
- the College's legal advisors;
- relevant staff in the University; and
- a Complainant's authorised representative.

Documentation generated in the course of an investigation under the procedure will be disclosed in full to the Complainant except where information relates to an individual who has not explicitly consented to the disclosure of personal data.

2. The College will seek the Complainant's written consent before notifying the Complainant's College Tutor that a complaint has been submitted so that they are aware of the complaint and able to assist in providing support.

3. The College will seek the Complainant's explicit written consent before liaising with appropriate staff members, regarding support and any reasonable adjustments for disabled students.

4. Following completion of the procedure, the complaint, the documentation generated in the course of the investigation and the decisions made under the procedure, will be retained securely by the College for six years. This information will be used for the purposes of responding to any complaints regarding the application of this procedure as well as for compiling anonymous statistics regarding its use. Further, where any complaint is subsequently submitted under this procedure by the same Complainant, this information may be taken into account by the Case Handler, in reaching a decision under paragraph 2.14 or 4.3 of the procedure. The information may also be used if relevant for the purposes of conducting disciplinary proceedings or referral for consideration under another procedure under paragraph 4.3 of this procedure.

5. Nothing in this policy is intended to prejudice any rights of access to personal data which any person may have under data protection legislation as applicable at the time or otherwise.

6. Any questions or concerns about this policy should be directed to the Senior Tutor in the first instance.

## Student Confidentiality

### Statement to students on confidentiality

Students at Murray Edwards College are entitled to privacy, and those working within the College will do their utmost to respect confidentiality as far as is possible. The College complies with both the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, and information on this can be found [here](#).

This document clarifies what students can expect in terms of confidentiality (in particular, but not exclusively, within the tutorial system), and also sets out the limits to this. Any concerns about any aspect of these processes can be raised with the Senior Tutor.

## Tutors

Any student seeking advice on personal or welfare matters is encouraged to speak to their Tutor in the first instance. Students should be aware that any such discussion will not result in adverse consequences academically, in any later employment, or in any other ways. Information that a student shares with their Tutor may be discussed with the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor; it may also be shared subsequently with anyone taking over as the student's Tutor. Usually the student will be advised of this in advance. Sharing information in this way is an important part of providing adequate tutorial support and continuity. Tutorial staff may also become aware of information shared in this way through their roles in managing the Tutorial Office (such as processing applications for intermission or for sitting exams in special conditions). Information is not routinely shared outside the Tutorial team without the consent of the student.

## Other pastoral advisors

Tutors, the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor may share information about a student with the following individuals in certain circumstances: the College Nurse, the College Counsellor, the Mental Health Advisors at the University Counselling Service, Disability Advisors at the Disability Resource Centre. However, the student's consent to this will always be sought, apart from in the exceptional circumstances set out in the final section of this statement.

The College Nurse and College Counsellor are both bound by professional codes of conduct regarding confidentiality and do not share information with the Tutorial team without the consent of the student concerned, apart from in the exceptional circumstances detailed in the final section.

## Directors of Study, supervisors and other academic staff

Tutors, the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor will not share information with a student's Director of Studies, supervisors or anyone within their Department without the student's consent. There is a need to separate academic and pastoral support in the College. However, a Tutor, the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor may speak to these individuals should a student

give their consent, and there may also be occasions when a Director of Studies, supervisor or member of a Department/Faculty raises a concern with the Tutor, Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor.

### The President

Given their role in overseeing the College as a whole, it may sometimes be appropriate for the President to be informed of some tutorial situations. In general, any information that is shared in this way will not include identifying information about the student.

### Families and next of kin

Almost all students, whether undergraduate or graduate, are legal adults and are entitled to confidentiality. Families/guardians/next of kin will not be contacted without a student's consent, and Tutors, the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor will not pass on any information about a student to families/guardians/next of kin who contact the College. If such contact is received, Tutors, the Deputy Senior Tutor or Senior Tutor will listen, and reply in general terms without specific reference to information about the student concerned.

### Exceptions – duty of care and legal obligations

Murray Edwards College does, however, have a duty of care to all members of the College, the University and the wider community, and this may sometimes limit confidentiality afforded in cases where there is considered to be a serious and imminent risk of harm to a particular individual or to others, or where the College is under a legal obligation to disclose information.

Senior Tutor, 14.9.17.

# Summary guidelines to the student disciplinary procedure

## Introduction

Murray Edwards College is a diverse community of students, staff, Fellows and Bye-Fellows. In order to offer an environment where everyone can thrive and do their best, we ask that all members of our community (regardless of their role in the College) be treated with dignity, fairness and respect. We have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying, exploitation, harassment or intimidation. We expect all members of our community to respect principles of academic freedom and the pursuit of scholarship. We encourage freedom of speech and want you to feel comfortable expressing your views while respecting those of others. The following Rules of Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures underpin our commitment to sustaining and protecting this diverse community.

All students of Murray Edwards College are bound by the Disciplinary Procedures of Murray Edwards College and of the University, and they undertake to observe both on matriculation. They are also subject to the Laws of England. These Rules of Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedure were agreed by College Council in 2019, and are intended to work in conjunction with the [University Procedures and Rules of Behaviour](#), agreed in July 2019.

If a Murray Edwards student is believed to have breached one of the College's Rules of Behaviour, they can be reported to the Dean, who will investigate the concern under the College's Disciplinary Procedures. If the behaviour of a Murray Edwards student is believed to constitute more serious misconduct, such as sexual or physical assault, or academic misconduct, they may be felt to have breached the University's Rules of Behaviour and the concern should be reported to the University's Disciplinary Procedure, which has the resources and the competence to investigate more serious concerns. If a student of Murray Edwards College is affected by the behaviour of a student from another College, and that behaviour is believed to constitute a breach of the University Rules of Behaviour, that case could be reported to the University's Disciplinary Procedure. Some breaches of behaviour may also constitute a criminal offence and the person concerned may wish to report the matter to the police. In matters where the college believes there is an immediate or serious risk to others, the College reserves the right to inform the police.

For further guidance on which Disciplinary Procedure should be used, students and other members of College may ask the Dean, the Senior Tutor, their College Tutor, or a member of staff at the [Office for Student Conduct, Complaints, and Appeals](#) (OSCCA).

## Principles

- These rules of behaviour and procedures have been written to comply with good practice outlined by the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).
- We recognise that being part of disciplinary proceedings may be stressful for those concerned, and that we have a duty of care to all our students. All participants, including the respondent, reporting person and any witnesses, have access to pastoral support either in College, from the University or external sources. All participants may

be accompanied by someone to support them during any hearing or meeting in the course of the proceedings.

- At every stage, participants will be made aware of the process and its possible consequences, and of the options open to them at every stage. They will be informed in writing of decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, at every stage of the process.
- All students have the right to appeal against any sanction imposed, whether by the Dean or the Discipline Committee. If they remain dissatisfied after the completion of the College procedure, they may further complain to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).

The full rules of behaviour and disciplinary procedures are necessarily detailed. Anyone wishing to report a concern, or whose behaviour is the subject of a concern, is advised to read the full Rules and Procedures ([Ordinance 37](#)). The following is intended as a summary to outline the process and principles that lie beneath it. Appendix A is a flow chart, which explains the procedure.

## Rules of behaviour

**1. All students are responsible for following the College rules of behaviour. Not knowing or forgetting about rules or their consequences is not an excuse for not following them. The following breaches of the rules constitute misconduct:**

(a) Disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social, religious or other activities of the College, whether on College premises or elsewhere, including interference with anyone's right to freedom of speech.

(b) Obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any member of the College, employee or authorised visitor, including the unlawful denial of any such person's right to freedom of speech.

(c) Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, abusive or offensive behaviour or language, including such language in any poster, sign, notice or publication whether on College property or on social media, aimed at any University person; or when engaged in any College activity or if directed to any member of employee of the College or any visitor.

(d) Fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the College, in connection with holding any office in a College club or society or in relation to being a student.

(e) Action likely to cause injury or impair health and safety on College premises.

(f) Improper discrimination against any person within College.

(g) Harassment of any member of the College, employee or authorised visitor – please see the [College policy on harassment and sexual misconduct](#).

(h) Damage to, or defacement of, College property or the property of members or staff of the College caused intentionally or recklessly, and misappropriation of such property.

(i) Obstructing the Dean in carrying out duties under these rules of behaviour or disciplinary procedures, giving false evidence at any hearing under the College disciplinary procedures or in



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any other way seeking to pervert the course of justice in relation to action under the College disciplinary procedures.

(j) Disorderly or unruly behaviour within the College, including any anti-social conduct resulting from the consumption of drink or drugs.

(k) Breach of the terms of the code of practice issued under the provisions of section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986 regarding meetings and public gatherings on College grounds.

(l) Knowing breach of any instructions issued by any person or body authorised to act on behalf of the College in the proper discharge of their duties.

(m) Breach of the Statutes and Ordinances of the College, and any rules and procedures established under the Statutes and Ordinances.

(n) Misuse or unauthorised use of College premises or items of property.

(o) Misuse or unauthorised use of the College computer system, including accessing prohibited material.

(p) Conduct which amounts to a criminal offence in English law where the conduct:

(i) took place on College premises or through the College's computer system; or

(ii) affected or concerned other members of the College community; or

(iii) is an offence of dishonesty wherever committed and the student holds an office of responsibility within the College.

**2. The effects of self-administered alcohol or non-prescribed drugs shall neither constitute a defence to a charge of misconduct nor afford a basis for mitigation of sanction.**

**3. The following definitions are applied under the rules of behaviour:**

(a) 'Activities of the College' include activities in which a student is participating that involve other organisations working in partnership with the College, in the context of a person's membership of the College.

(b) 'Instructions issued by any person or body authorised to act on behalf of the College' include requests to attend meetings, to provide identification upon request, and to share primary datasets or data analysis with a supervisor.

(c) 'The code of practice issued under the provisions of section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986' relates to meetings and public gatherings on College premises. The Code of Practice is available on the [University website](#).

(d) 'Rules and procedures established under the Statutes and Ordinances' include policies and procedures that govern student conduct, for example: harassment and sexual misconduct, freedom of speech, privacy, health and safety, social media, and College rules relating to accommodation and the payment of fees and fines.

4. Any breach of the rules of behaviour may be considered more serious if:

- (a) it took place under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances;
- (b) it was motivated by the [protected characteristics](#) or perceived protected characteristics of another;
- (c) the respondent has previously been found to have breached the same rule of behaviour;
- (d) the respondent has not complied with any sanction or measure under the student disciplinary procedure;
- (e) the respondent has breached precautionary action measures while the student disciplinary procedure has been ongoing;
- (f) the respondent has not provide the College with reasonable information upon request so that it can assess the risk the respondent may pose to the College community;
- (g) the respondent has attempted to conceal or destroy evidence, or coerce or intimidate officers, reporting persons or witnesses, in relation to that breach;
- (h) the respondent has abused a position of power of trust.

## Summary procedure

### Reporting a concern

Anybody can report a concern if they have good reason to believe that a Murray Edwards student has breached the rules of behaviour. You can speak to your tutor, to the Dean, or to a member of [Office for Student Conduct, Complaints, and Appeals](#) (OSCCA) informally for advice if you are not sure whether to report, or which procedure you can use, but the decision to report will always rest with the reporting person. The reporting person may be a member of College staff or College Fellow, a member of another College or University, or a member of the public.

If you have been affected by, or witnessed, behaviour by a student of Murray Edwards, which you believe contravenes our rules of behaviour, you can report a concern in writing to the [Dean](#). Include as much information and evidence as you wish. The Dean will consider the concern carefully, and may ask you to provide more evidence or information.

If appropriate, on minor matters, the Dean may seek to resolve the matter informally with those concerned, without the need to formally start an investigation.

If the Dean decides the alleged behaviour may have breached the rules, that it is appropriate to investigate it under these procedures, and that the same behaviour has not already been reported, the Dean will undertake an investigation into the alleged breach.

### The investigation

As part of the investigation, the Dean will normally ask to meet both the reporting person, and the respondent (the Murray Edwards student whose behaviour is the subject of the concern). Both the reporting person and the respondent may be accompanied by someone to support them. The Dean may ask to speak to witnesses, who may also be accompanied by someone to support them; witnesses may also be asked to submit written statements rather than attend a meeting. The Dean will consider collecting any relevant available evidence.

The investigation will also gather information about the seriousness of the alleged behaviour. Anyone who has been affected by the behaviour may be asked to provide an impact statement.

Written notes will be taken at all meetings, and the respondent and the reporting person will have an opportunity to read and comment on any notes relating to meetings they attended.

### The Dean's decision

At the end of the investigation, the Dean will produce an investigation report and will decide one of three different courses of action:

- 1. Impose a minor sanction.** If the rules of behaviour have been breached, it might be appropriate to impose a minor sanction of measure. Minor sanctions might include a fine to cover the cost of material damages, a written warning placed on the respondent's record, or some reflective or educative practice. It might also require the respondent not to contact the reporting person or witness. In imposing the minor sanction, the Dean will take into account the seriousness of the breach and its impact on others, as well as any remorse expressed.
- 2. Refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee.** This tends to be the case for more serious alleged breaches of the rules of behaviour, where a major sanction might be required.
- 3. Dismiss or refer elsewhere.** If neither of the other courses of action are appropriate, the Dean can either decide to take no further action or refer to another procedure, either within the College, or the University.

The respondent will be told in writing of the Dean's decision and the reasons for it, and will also receive a copy of the investigation report. If the respondent is dissatisfied with the sanction imposed, they may appeal the decision to the Discipline Committee. If the respondent does not comply with the sanction, the Dean will refer the case to the Discipline Committee. If the reporting person is a student, and is dissatisfied with a decision to take no further action, they may make a complaint under the student complaints procedure.

### The Discipline Committee

The Discipline Committee consists of three members: a Chair (who is appropriately experienced for any particular case), a senior member (Fellow) and a junior member (student). A key principle is that none of the members of the panel should have an interest in the case, so do not normally have a close academic, welfare or social connection (such as Tutor, DoS or supervisor) with the respondent or the reporting person (if a student). The Secretary to the Discipline Committee will normally be the College Administrator.

When it is convened, the Discipline Committee and the respondent will be provided with a copy of the investigation report and evidence. The respondent is invited to attend, and can bring a supporter or representative to support them in the meeting. It may be possible for the respondent to attend by video link, or for the date of the meeting to be moved, at the Chair's discretion. The respondent can also request to call witnesses. This must be done at least 10 days before the meeting. Ultimately, the Chair of the Discipline Committee will decide if the witness can attend, or provide evidence in a different format. The reporting person would not normally be required to attend but may do so at the discretion of the Chair.

The Discipline Committee will normally ask questions of the Dean and the respondent. The respondent can also ask questions of the Dean and make a final statement. The Dean and respondent then withdraw.

After hearing the case, the Discipline Committee will consider the information that has been received and make one of the following decisions:

- (a) To dismiss the case
- (b) To find there has been a breach of the rules of behaviour

If there has been a breach of the rules, the Discipline Committee will consider any previous breaches of the same rule by the respondent, as well as any impact statements. The respondent and the Dean will be invited back into the meeting, and the respondent (or respondent's representative) can make a further statement in relation to mitigation. The Dean and the respondent then withdraw again, and the Discipline Committee determines whether to impose a sanction, which can be minor, or major.

**A minor sanction** includes: a written warning; a fine (covering the cost any material damages up to £250); an educative or reflective session; a written reflection or a requirement not to contact a reporting person or witness. If the reporting person or witness agrees, a written apology may also be requested.

**A major sanction** includes:

- (a) Temporary or permanent removal from College accommodation
- (b) Temporary or permanent exclusion from membership of the College
- (c) Deprivation of any award or emoluments of the College

### Right of appeal

If the respondent appealed the Dean's original decision to the Discipline Committee, and the Discipline Committee re-imposes the minor sanction, the case is closed. If the respondent is still dissatisfied, they now have the right to complain to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).

If the Disciplinary Committee imposes a major sanction, the respondent has the right of appeal to the College's Appeal Committee.

### The Appeal Committee

The Appeal Committee consists of three members: a Chair (who is appropriately experienced for any particular case), and two senior members (Fellows). The College Administrator serves as Secretary.

If the respondent wishes to appeal, they should write a formal letter to the President within 14 days of the Discipline Committee's decision. The grounds for appeal are outlined in section 7.2 of the Discipline Procedures. Normally the Appeal Committee considers an appeal in a private meeting, but may request further information of the respondent.

The Appeal Committee will consider all information provided, and decide:

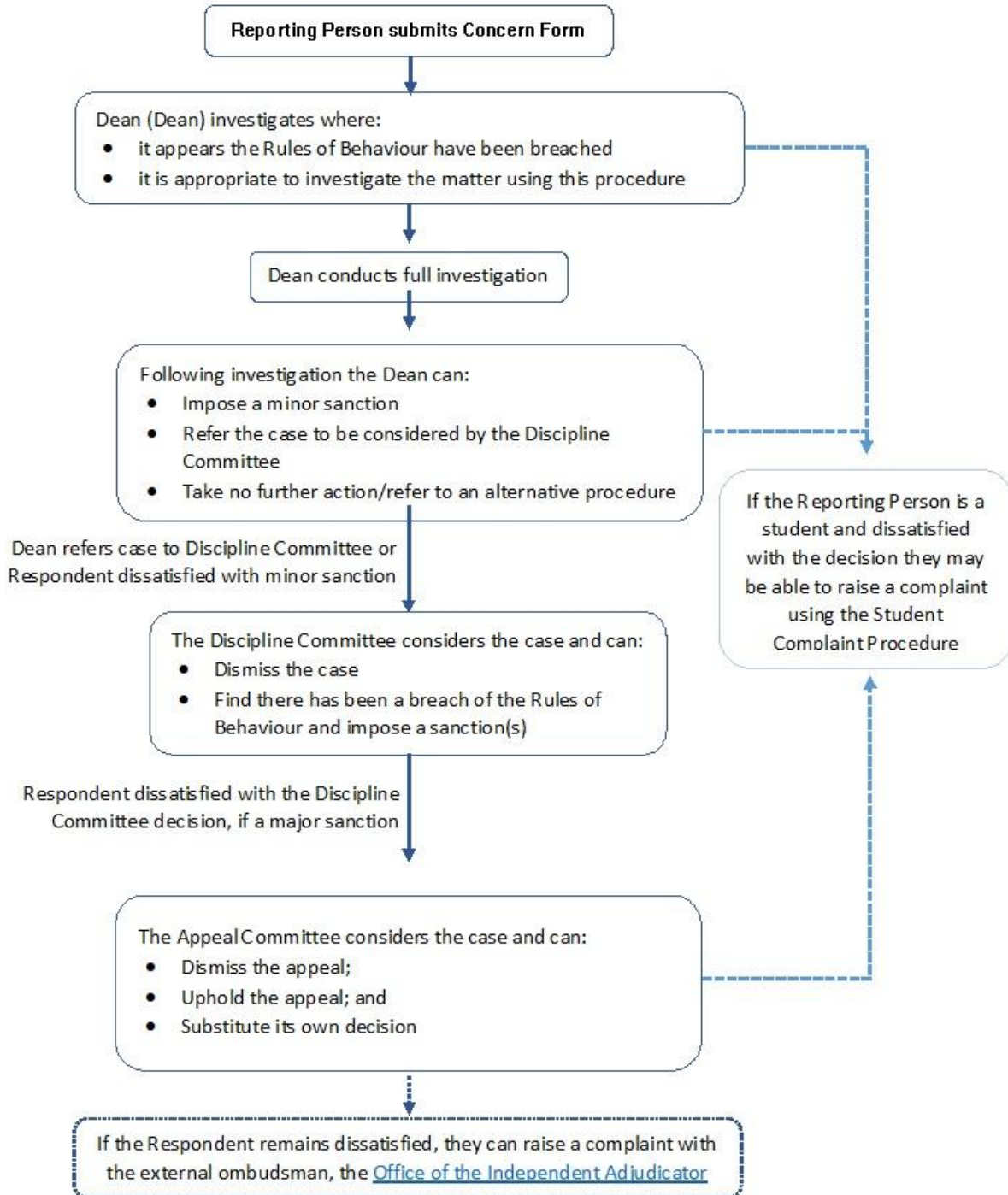
- (a) To dismiss the appeal

(b) To uphold the appeal

The College procedure is now complete. If the respondent is dissatisfied with the decision of the Appeal Committee, they may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Appendix A

**Flow chart of the template College Student Discipline Procedure**



Flowchart of the template College student discipline procedure

## College Statement on Gender Inclusivity

### **Review Date: Easter Term 2026**

Murray Edwards aims to foster an inclusive environment. We take pride in our open and friendly community, and seek to be innovative in our approaches. We were founded for the purpose of educating female students, and have stayed true to this aim because we believe that inequality still exists within the University and within wider society, both in terms of participation and achievement. We want to be at the centre of debates about this, and strive towards greater equality. We recognize that there are many forms of inequality within society, and that discrimination happens for many reasons, but our history and current strategic direction mean that we focus on gendered inequalities facing women.

We are not a women-only environment: our Fellowship has long been mixed, and the College staff has always been mixed. In addition, not all our current students identify as women. The College is supportive of our students who transition following their admission to the College or who do not wish to define themselves as either a woman or a man. Thus, whilst our student population are largely women, this is not exclusively the case. There is a recognition within the College that gender is not binary, and there are concerns that narrow gender identities and the expectations associated with them are damaging to both individuals and to wider society.

At the admissions level, we will consider any student who, at the point of application, identifies as a woman. This information is communicated to the College through the UCAS application where a student has selected the gender category “woman.” Currently, we only consider students who identify themselves as a “woman” at the point of application.

Further, just as we would consider any student who is a woman seeking to transfer to this College during their degree, we would consider any student who, at the point of requesting the transfer recognises themselves through the category “woman.” Where an applicant / transferee feels that their case does not fall within the parameters set out above, the College will consider their case on an individual basis.

Should a current student decide that they would prefer to be in a mixed college if transitioning to male or if rejecting a binary gender category, the College would be fully supportive of a transfer and do all that was possible to bring one about offering full tutorial support through the process.

*This statement was adopted by Council in Easter Term 2023, and is due for review in Easter Term 2026. If the recognition of gender categories on the UCAS form changes before the stated review date, the statement will be reviewed to reflect possible implications of such a decision and clarify the College's position with regards such a change.*