



1. This policy covers intimate or close personal relationships between students and members of staff of St Catherine's College (the College). It does not form part of any person's employment or student contract with the College and may be amended by the College at any time. It has been made by the Governing Body of the College as a Regulation under Clause 3 of College Statute I.
2. For the purpose of this policy: a 'close personal' relationship is a relationship involving financial or emotional dependence, whether conducted in person or online; an 'intimate' relationship is a consensual sexual or romantic relationship of any duration, including a one-off encounter, whether conducted in person or online; a 'member of staff' is a tutor, fellow, Director of Studies, College Advisor, Senior Common Room member, employee, or other person engaged by the College in any capacity or to whom the College offers any of the privileges or facilities normally available to its employees; a 'student' includes a matriculated, visiting or associate student of any category; and 'professional responsibility' includes academic, pastoral, administrative or other responsibility.
3. College members of staff must not enter or be in an intimate or close personal relationship with any student they have a professional responsibility for who is (a) under the age of 18 or (b) an adult known or suspected to be vulnerable to exploitation owing to a disability or health-related issue. Such relationships are inappropriate and may constitute a criminal offence.
4. Other intimate or close personal relationships between College members of staff and students they have a professional responsibility for are also inappropriate. They give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest on the part of the staff member, create a risk of unequal treatment and abuse of authority, and undermine the integrity and culture of the College as a place of learning based on values of professionalism, respect, trust and confidence. This is particularly true for relationships between undergraduate students and their tutors or Directors of Studies, owing to the special nature of the undergraduate tutorial experience and relationship.
5. For the reasons given in section 4, Directors of Studies must not enter or be in an intimate or close personal relationship with any undergraduate student whose studies they are responsible for. Tutors also must not enter or be in an intimate or close personal relationship with any undergraduate student they teach in the tutorial setting. Any Director of Studies or tutor who acts in breach of this provision can expect to face disciplinary action.
6. If an intimate or close personal relationship outside the scope of sections 3. and 5. arises between a member of staff and a student for whom the member of staff has, or anticipates having, a professional responsibility, the member of staff is required to disclose the relationship immediately to the Personnel Advisor ([personnel@stcatz.ox.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@stcatz.ox.ac.uk)) or Master ([masters.office@stcatz.ox.ac.uk](mailto:masters.office@stcatz.ox.ac.uk)). If in doubt, the member of staff should disclose the relationship. Any member of staff who fails to disclose a close or intimate person relationship as required by this section can expect to face disciplinary action.

Following the disclosure of a relationship under this section, the Personnel Advisor or Master will inform the student of the disclosure and take such actions as they reasonably consider appropriate having regard in particular to the interests of the student and of the wider College community; sharing information about the relationship on a need to know basis only. In all cases this will include ensuring appropriate arrangements to prevent the member of staff from having any professional responsibility for the student.

7. Any College member who has concerns about an intimate or personal relationship between a College member of staff and student is also encouraged to seek advice regarding it from the Personnel Advisor or the Master.
  
8. Finally, students are reminded of their ability to raise matters of concern to them at any time under paragraph 1.3 of the Information and Regulations for Members of College (<https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/regulations/> or under Concerns and Complaints Procedure here: <https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>). This includes matters concerning a relationship between a College member of staff and student, whether or not it has previously been disclosed in accordance with this policy. Unprofessional or inappropriate conduct towards any College student or member of staff is unacceptable and may involve harassment or bullying. Any student or member of staff who feels they have been subjected to conduct of this type should seek advice immediately from a College or University Harassment Advisor (details at <https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/about-us/policies/harassment-help-and-advice/>), or alternatively, from their Director of Studies, College Advisor or the Dean (for students) or their supervisor, the Master or the Personnel Advisor (for members of staff).

*Approved by the Governing Body on 16 June 2021*