



[This document reproduces in full the College's 'Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure'. This Procedure is contained in the Information and Regulations for Members of the College, available on the College website at <https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/about-us/policies>. Related College policies and procedures, including the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy and the Personal Relationships Policy, may also be found on this same webpage.]

### 1.3 Student Concerns and Complaints procedure

This Section describes the procedures that exist for current students to raise a concern or make a complaint about a College matter arising or subsisting while they are a student member of the College, including:

- The conduct of a student member, tutor, (other) Fellow, or (other) member of College;
- Accommodation or other College domestic facilities or services;
- The provision of College-based teaching;
- The College's Statutes, By-Laws or Regulations.

Any student who is considering raising a concern or making a complaint and would like guidance or support in doing so is encouraged to seek it from one or more of the following:

- For matters concerning harassment or bullying – a College or University Harassment Advisor (see <https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk/about-us/policies/harassment-help-and-advice/>);
- Your Director of Studies or College Advisor;
- The Oxford Student Union (see <https://www.oxfordsu.org>).

#### 1.3.1 Informal Procedures: Raising a concern

If you have a concern about a matter involving the College, you are encouraged to raise it as early as possible with the appropriate person (for guidance see Section 1.3.2). You may do so orally or in writing. If you do not feel comfortable raising the concern yourself, you are encouraged to ask one of the JCR/MCR representatives to raise it on your behalf. When raising a concern you should consider any particular outcome you would like to see and make the person with whom you are raising your concern aware of it.

- a. A person with whom you raise a concern (directly or through a JCR/MCR representative) may wish to discuss it with you and/or make enquiries of others. (If there is anyone with whom you do not wish your concern to be discussed, you should make this explicit when raising the concern.) In some cases they may refer your concern to someone else within the College whom they regard as more appropriately placed to respond, or decline to deal with the concern informally. If the person with whom you raise your concern declines to deal with it informally, you will need to pursue it as a formal complaint.
- b. A person with whom you raise a concern will inform you of whether they propose to take any action in response to it and, if they do, what that action is, within a reasonable period of the concern being raised. What constitutes 'a reasonable period' will depend on the nature of the particular concern. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of raising a concern, you may pursue it as a formal complaint.

### 1.3.2 Formal Procedures: Making a complaint

For information about making other types of complaints please refer to the University Student Handbook, published on the University's website at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook>

- a. You may make a formal complaint about any College matter at any time, regardless of whether you have first raised the matter informally as a concern. There are three stages to a complaint, the first two of which will be followed in all cases.

#### Stage 1: Initiation

- b. Complaints must be made in writing and clearly identified as a complaint. The letter initiating the complaint should describe in detail the nature of the complaint, the facts giving rise to it, and your preferred outcome. A copy of that letter and all subsequent correspondence regarding your complaint (including any appeal) will be kept in a College Complaints Register accessible to the Master. The Master may also grant access to individual files contained in the Register to any other College Officer where such access is in the Master's view necessary to enable the Officer properly to perform their duties as such.
- c. Complaints must be addressed to the appropriate Officer, as follows:
  - i. For complaints involving a tutor, (other) Fellow, or the provision of teaching, the Senior Tutor;
  - ii. For complaints involving a student member, the Dean;
  - iii. For complaints involving College accommodation or domestic/administrative staff, facilities or services, the Home Bursar;
- d. If for any reason you do not wish your complaint to be dealt with by the Officer identified above, you may direct it to the Master with a written explanation of why you would like someone other than that Officer to handle it. It will be for the Master to decide whether someone other than the Officer identified above should deal with your complaint, and if so who. You will be informed of the Master's decision in writing.
- e. Unless otherwise indicated, references to 'Officer' in the following paragraphs are to the Officer responsible for handling the complaint in accordance with paragraphs c and d above, or to such other person whom the Master believes is more appropriately placed to deal with your complaint and to whom your complaint is referred by the Master for that purpose.

#### Stage 2: Investigation

- f. Subject to paragraph g, the procedure for investigating a complaint will be as follows.
  - i. The Officer will acknowledge the complaint in writing within two weeks of receiving it.
  - ii. The Officer, assisted by an administrative Officer or (other) member of staff, will invite you to a meeting to discuss the complaint and ask any questions they have regarding its content. That meeting will ordinarily take place within two weeks, and no later than one month, of receipt of the complaint. You may invite someone to attend the meeting with you, but must give the Officer seven days' prior written notice if the person you are inviting is legally qualified.
  - iii. After meeting with you, the Officer will investigate the matters raised in the complaint. In order to do so they may need to speak with others, and/or to seek clarification or further information from you.
- g. Where, in the opinion of the Officer, a complaint involving College accommodation or services provided by domestic/administrative staff (but not a complaint involving an individual member of staff), facilities or services involves a matter affecting a substantial

section of the College community, and on which JCR and/or MCR representatives have expressed a view, the Officer may at their discretion refer it to the Student Liaison Committee for resolution. In the case of such a referral responsibility for handling the complaint will rest with the Student Liaison Committee, and references in these procedures to 'Officer' will be read accordingly.

- h. The Officer will ordinarily make a decision about your complaint within one month of meeting with you. You will be informed of that decision and the reasons for it in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable, and in any case within two months of first meeting with the Officer.

### Optional Stage 3: Appeal

- i. If you are dissatisfied with the resolution of your complaint, you may appeal in writing to the Master. The letter initiating your appeal should describe in sufficient detail the reason for your appeal, and include a copy of the decision you are appealing against.
- j. The Master will acknowledge your appeal in writing within two weeks of its receipt, and use all reasonable efforts to make a decision in respect of your appeal and to notify you in writing of that decision and the reasons for it within two months of its receipt. That notification will take the form of a Completion of Procedures letter.
- k. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your appeal to the Master, you should speak to the Oxford Student Union (see <https://www.oxfordsu.org>) about the options open to you to pursue your complaint externally.