



Academic Staff Harassment Procedure

1. Introduction

The University and Balliol College are committed to maintaining a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all members of the university community including visitors are respected.

Harassment is a serious offence which is subject to the College's disciplinary procedures. Where necessary, complaints of harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour, including all forms of sexual and racial harassment, will be investigated in line with the appropriate procedures.

In this Procedure, the term 'academic staff' refers to persons defined as such in Statute X of the Balliol College Statutes, together with all tutors, lecturers and those who provide academic supervision or advice for the College.

2. Procedure

Informal Stages

2.1 Wherever possible, complaints of harassment will be resolved promptly and effectively through informal means, so that good working relationships and normal social interactions can be resumed as quickly as possible.

2.2 Any academic staff member can make a complaint about another academic staff member. All such complaints should be addressed to the Master in the first instance. Staff can discuss confidentially whether there is a complaint to be addressed and options for addressing it.

2.3 For complaints against academic staff, or against College members who combine student status with academic teaching or supervision positions, the procedure will follow the stages detailed in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Student Complaints Procedure, a link to which can be found in the [College Handbook](#); with the substitution of 'member of the Balliol community' for 'student' and 'Master' for 'Dean'. Complainants in this situation are advised to seek informal advice from the Master, a Vice-Master or a Harassment Adviser during Stage One (paragraph 5).

2.4 If an allegation of harassment is made about a teaching member of the Balliol community by one of their current students or academic advisees, the Master will be informed without delay. The Master will as soon as possible take a decision about whether or not alternative provision will be made temporarily for that student or advisee and others within the College who are taught or advised by the same employee. This will be made without prejudice as to the facts of the case: the Master should, if possible, seek legal advice and may consult the Visitor and/or other advisers before taking such a decision.



Formal Stages

2.5 Formal complaints against academic staff will need to be put in writing to the Master, or if concerning the Master, to the Vice-Masters, one of whom will then act as the Senior College Officer handling the complaint. A complaint will be heard provided that it is genuine and reasonable; any frivolous grievance or vexatious or malicious complaint (College Harassment Policy 4) will be summarily dismissed.

2.6 In place of Stage Three of the Student Complaints Procedure, complaints against academic staff which progress beyond Stage Two of the SCP will follow the procedures laid out in Statute X of the [College Statutes](#) [*Academic Staff, all parts*].

2.7 Complaints by academic staff about student members should be addressed to the Dean, who will deal with them under the Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedure, a link to which can be found in the [College Handbook](#).

2.8 Complaints by academic staff about non-academic staff should be addressed to the Domestic Bursar, who will deal with them under the Non-Academic Staff Harassment Procedure.

2.9 Complaints by academic staff about University members who are not covered by the Balliol College Harassment Policy should be addressed by reference to the [University's Harassment Policy](#). The College Harassment Officers can advise and support academic staff personnel on how to do this.

3. Contacts and Links

You can talk either to the Master, phone (2 77710); or to the Harassment Officers appointed by the College (see [College Handbook](#) 1.5.2, 5.2); or ring the University's confidential harassment number (2 70760); or email harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk and ask for referral to someone outside the College.

Harassment Officers are there to listen and advise. Any further action will be your choice.

Further advice on dealing with harassment may be found on the [University website](#). A printed copy may be sought from the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office by telephoning (2 70238).

4. Definitions and Guidance

Definition of Harassment

- A person subjects another to harassment where they engage in unwanted and unwarranted conduct which has the purpose or effect of:



- violating that other's dignity, or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other.

- Harassment may involve repeated forms of unwanted and unwarranted behaviour, but a one-off incident can also amount to harassment.

- Harassment on the ground of sex (including gender re-assignment), race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation or age may amount to unlawful discrimination. Harassment may also breach other legislation and may in some circumstances be a criminal offence, e.g. under the provision of Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Examples of bullying and/or harassing behaviour

- Offensive comments or body language
- Verbal or physical threats
- Insulting, abusive, embarrassing or patronising behaviour or comments
- Humiliating, intimidating, and/or demeaning criticism
- Open hostility
- Deliberately undermining a competent person by overloading with work and constant criticism
- Isolation from normal work or study place, conversations, or social events
- Publishing, circulating or displaying pornographic, racist, homophobic, sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive pictures or other materials
- Unwanted physical contact, ranging from an invasion of space to a serious assault

Please note:

Reasonable and proper management instructions issued properly, or reasonable and proper review of a member of staff's or a student's work and/or performance will not constitute harassment or bullying.

Behaviour will not amount to harassment if the conduct complained of could not reasonably be perceived as offensive.

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