



## College Policy on Personal Relationships

### Introduction

1. The Master and Fellows of Balliol College hope to build and maintain an environment within the College which minimizes hierarchical aspects of the purely social interactions between members and staff of the College.
2. The College does not seek to restrict the private choices of its members or staff. However, it strongly discourages its employees from entering into personal or intimate relationships with students for whom they have any responsibility and draws attention to the professional and other risks and difficulties.
3. It is recognized that relations of power, for example between tutors and their students, do exist and hence that the relationship between these and social relations may raise difficulties.

### Scope of the policy

4. This policy concerns personal or intimate relationships, however brief, between those working for Balliol College and its current students or applicants when those working for the College could reasonably be understood as having professional or academic responsibility for the student, or otherwise be in a position of power over the student or applicant as a consequence of their position at Balliol. It concerns both on-going and past relationships.
5. Relevant relationships include those which are marital, sexual, romantic, familial or physically intimate.
6. 'Those working for the College' is to be understood as including Fellows, lecturers, others on the College payroll, and visiting academics, but not those who do some work for the College while their principal connection with it is that they are students (e.g. junior deans, graduate officers at Jowett, admissions helpers, etc.).
7. In particular any such relationship between a member of the governing body and any student of the College or applicant is covered by the policy, as is any such relationship between any tutor or graduate adviser acting for the College and his or her tutee or advisee.
8. This policy does not cover inappropriate behaviour, unwanted personal or intimate attention, nor non-consensual relations of any kind. The College has policies on Conflicts of Interest, on Harassment and on Safeguarding. A student, like any other member or employee of the College, who feels they are the victim of such behaviour or attention, or that they have been adversely affected by a misuse of authority or conflict of interest should refer

to these policies. In such circumstances students should always consult a harassment adviser. Further, attention is also drawn to the fact that relationships involving students under the age of eighteen could fall within the scope of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 relating to persons in positions of trust having sexual relations with children under eighteen. Those in relevant positions within the College must not enter into a close personal or intimate relationship with a student under eighteen years of age. If the College becomes aware of such a relationship, it will report it to the police.

9. This policy is not to be understood as prohibiting or discouraging students from seeking advice or counsel as they see fit, for example, from their tutors, the Chaplain, Wellbeing and Welfare Officer, Dean, Praefectus or welfare advisers.

#### Disclosure

10. The person working for the College must disclose any relevant relationship to the Master either as soon as possible after its commencement, or when one of those involved becomes a student of the College, or a candidate for admission to the College.

#### Procedure

11. On disclosure of a relationship, the Master will consult with those involved to ascertain whether it is likely to have any impact on their College-related activities, or on other people in the College.
12. If such impact is foreseen, the Master will then arrange for the reorganization of duties and activities to ensure that the person working for Balliol has minimal and, if possible, no role on behalf of the College involving contact with the student or applicant or control over his or her life and activities in or in relation to the College or the University.
13. To the extent that it is not possible to eliminate such contact and control, the Master will take all necessary steps to minimize it, and continue to monitor the situation to ensure that the relationship between the student and the College is in no way impaired.
14. The Master will take further steps as necessary to minimize the potential effect of the relationship on other members and staff of the College, including especially those taught with the student concerned.
15. In making these arrangements, the Master may find it necessary to have external tuition arranged for a student or students.
16. In taking these actions, the Master and all others whom it is necessary to inform of the relationship will act so as to protect the dignity and privacy.