

# Christ's College

## Brief Guide to the College's Disciplinary Procedures

### 1. Overview

The behaviour of student members of the College is governed by two "Ordinances": one is known as the *Code of Student Behaviour*, which deals with non-academic matters, and the other deals with academic matters. A third Ordinance deals with clubs and societies, about which there is a separate guide. There are also "College Regulations" dealing with more day-to-day matters. Students should acquaint themselves with the College Regulations and be sure to abide by them.

This brief guide is primarily intended for students of the College, whether making a complaint against another student or as the subject of a complaint facing disciplinary proceedings. It does not go into full details, which can be found in the College's Statutes and Ordinances online. Your Tutor can help you to understand and interpret them: the relevant sections are in Statutes F.IV and F.V and their associated Ordinances.

Complaints about misconduct can be made by anybody (whether or not associated with the College) and would normally name the student(s) alleged to have misbehaved; but a complaint is valid even if the person making it does not know the identity of the student(s) in question. You can make a complaint by writing to either the Senior Tutor (senior.tutor@christs.cam.ac.uk) or the Dean (dean@christs.cam.ac.uk) as appropriate (see section 2 below). A report made by a Porter about an incident may also constitute a complaint.

While a complaint of misconduct is under consideration, the Senior Tutor or Dean may think it necessary to impose temporary "precautionary measures" upon the accused student, as explained in section 3 below. The person making the complaint can also ask the Senior Tutor or Dean to consider putting such measures in place.

Some misconduct lies outside the jurisdiction of the College: specifically, some criminal offences, and offences against the University's disciplinary code. The College cannot take immediate action in such cases, as explained in sections 4 and 5 below.

### 2. Investigations and punishments

In the case of an accusation of *academic* misconduct, the Senior Tutor will handle the case in the first instance. The Dean will handle any accusation of *non-academic* misconduct. There is a separate set of procedures for misconduct in the context of a College Society, which is described in the *Brief Guide for Student Clubs and Societies*.

If the Senior Tutor or Dean (as appropriate) happens to be Tutor to the accused student, or Director of Studies, or is in some other way connected with the case, a deputy will be appointed; if that is the case then in everything that follows a reference to the Senior Tutor or Dean means their deputy.

Upon suspicion that an offence has been committed, the Senior Tutor or Dean will investigate and will consult relevant members of staff and Fellows, normally including the Tutor of the accused student and, if relevant, the Tutor of the student who made the complaint. The accused student will be given the chance to respond to the accusation, and may be

interviewed: if you are called to such an interview, you must attend. The investigations may also include interviews with other relevant students.

If the conclusion of these initial investigations is that there is indeed a case to answer, the Senior Tutor or Dean might deal with the case immediately, or might choose to refer the matter to the "Student Behaviour Panel" consisting of the Master or President plus two Fellows. In either case, if the offence is a serious one then the accused student will be offered the chance to attend a formal meeting, accompanied if the student so desires by any other member of the College, for example one of the following: his or her Tutor, any other Tutor, the Chaplain, any Fellow, a JCR or MCR student welfare officer, or a friend who is also a Christ's student. (If the matter is being heard by the Student Behaviour Panel then the student can alternatively choose to be accompanied by a member of the University who is *not* a member of Christ's, or in more serious cases can even be represented by a lawyer.) In advance of this formal meeting the student will be given copies of the relevant evidence, and during the meeting will also be entitled to introduce further evidence, to call witnesses and to question the College's witnesses.

The Senior Tutor or Dean can impose various penalties, including a fine of up to £150 and/or withdrawal of privileges (such as use of College facilities such as the Buttery or Hall) for a specified period (up to three terms for non-academic misconduct, or eight weeks for academic misconduct). The Student Behaviour Panel can impose a larger fine (up to £500) but can also impose a much wider range of penalties, up to and including expulsion from the College. Any fine issued is in addition to the invoices that might be sent by the College to cover damage to College buildings, fixtures and fittings. All fines received are added to the Sizar's Fund (the College's hardship fund).

It is possible to appeal against a decision of the Senior Tutor, Dean or Student Behaviour Panel, and the Senior Tutor or Dean can explain the options. At an appeal, the accused student has the right to be accompanied or represented by any other member of the College or of the University, or in serious cases by a legal representative.

### **3. Precautionary measures**

While a College disciplinary matter is under consideration, the Senior Tutor or Dean might think it necessary to impose temporary "precautionary measures" on the accused student. The purpose of such measures, which might for instance involve keeping two students who are in conflict with each other apart, is not to be punitive but rather to ensure that no further problems arise while the matter is being investigated. For example, the accused student might be required not to enter particular areas of the College, not to take part in certain activities, or to leave the College temporarily. Any student subject to such measures will be informed of their right to have the measures reviewed at specified stages throughout the process and/or when there are any further relevant developments.

### **4. Criminal offences and University disciplinary proceedings**

If the police are investigating an offence that is also being considered under the College's disciplinary procedures, the College's own investigations will normally be put on hold until all police or legal action has been completed. The same applies if the University is considering action under its own disciplinary proceedings, or similar action is being taken by another

external organisation. During this time, temporary precautionary measures (see section 3 above) may be put in place.

Once all such proceedings have been completed, the College's own disciplinary procedures may recommence.

## **5. Serious criminal offences and offences against University Regulations**

Some criminal offences – for example, serious sexual or physical assault – are so severe that the College does not have the appropriate level of forensic skill and investigatory abilities to properly investigate the accusation. In such cases, therefore, the Dean will be unable to take the matter further in College until the accused student has been convicted by a court, or the accused student accepts full responsibility for the offence. But the Tutors can and will offer pastoral care, guidance and support, and the Dean will advise the person making the complaint about alternative options (such as referral to the police or to the University's Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals).

The same applies to offences where the University takes responsibility for discipline instead of the College, including: sexual misconduct; harassment involving students at two or more Colleges; cheating in University examinations; disrupting or impeding the activities of the University; or misconduct occurring in the context of University societies or sports clubs.

For the duration of any police proceedings, legal action or University proceedings, the Dean may impose temporary precautionary measures (see section 3 above). Once all such proceedings have been concluded, so long as they have resulted in a formal finding that the student has committed an offence, the Dean may commence College proceedings.