

# MANSFIELD COLLEGE

University of Oxford



## College Complaints Procedure

i. Approved by Mansfield College Governing Body on 12 October 2016. This Complaints Procedure will be subject to annual review by the Senior Tutor on behalf of the Governing Body.

ii. This Complaints Procedure follows the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) 'Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals' 2014 which defines a complaint as:

“an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about [the College's] action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of [the College]”.

Mansfield College Complaints Procedure enables students to register dissatisfaction with aspects of College life not covered by the College's other avenues for feedback and appeal. A student wishing to appeal against College academic disciplinary procedures should follow the guidance in the Student Handbook (Academic Disciplinary Procedures). A student wishing to appeal against Decanal disciplinary measures should follow the guidance in the Student Handbook (Disciplinary Procedures). A student wishing to complain of harassment should consult the Statement of Policy Concerning Harassment. For all other complaints, including complaints about the College's disability provision or the College's PREVENT policy, the below procedure should be followed.

iii. Completed students who wish to submit a complaint through this procedure must do so within six months of their course completion date. In the case of undergraduate or graduate taught students the course completion date will be considered to be the date that their final results were released. For graduate research students the course completion date will be considered to be the date that Leave to Supplicate was granted. For visiting students, the course completion date will be considered to be Friday of 8<sup>th</sup> week of the student's final term. Late submissions may be permissible in the event of a delay in submission caused by illness or other urgent circumstance, but in such an event, the College requires that supporting evidence for this delay be provided (for example, a medical letter from a GP/hospital specialist in the case of illness).

iv. In the case of any issues which have affected a number of students, those students will be permitted to submit a complaint or appeal as a 'group', but in such an event the College will require that the group nominate one student to act as the group's representative. The College would expect to deal only with this representative, and would expect the representative to liaise as necessary with the other affected students.

v. The Complaints Procedure is invoked when a matter cannot be resolved through liaison with College tutors, College Advisors or staff members. Please note that all students are encouraged to submit termly academic feedback and self-progress

assessments, and liaison between the JCR/MCR and Governing Body takes place at regular meetings of Governing Body and the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

vi. Complaints (or individual elements of a complaint e.g. corroborating statements) may only be considered anonymously by the panel if a compelling case is made (with supporting evidence) for anonymity. Students can request for any detail of the complaint to be confined to the investigating panel. However, students should be aware that raising a complaint anonymously, or requesting that limits be placed on the sharing of information, may impede the College's investigation and the communication of that investigation's outcome.

vii. A student may, if they wish, appoint a representative, such as another member of College or an advisor from the Student Union, to submit a complaint on their behalf. Should a student appoint a representative, the College will uphold data protection legislation and adhere to the University's guidance on handling personal information when dealing with said representative. The College reserves the right to decline to accept complaints from third parties except where they are acting as a student's representative.

viii. All correspondence and notes of meetings regarding official complaints will be considered confidential. No complainant will suffer any disadvantage as a result of a complaint brought with honest intention and in good faith.

ix. The College Complaints Procedure is in two parts, namely informal and formal complaint. The procedure follows the University's 'College Discipline, Complaints and Appeals Guidelines' and the guidance given in the OIA 'Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals' (2014).

### Informal Complaints

x. Complaints should be raised in the first instance with the relevant College Officer:

Academic: the Senior Tutor (undergraduates), the Tutor for Graduates (postgraduates), and the Tutor for Visiting Students (Visiting Students).

Domestic (e.g. issues involving Domestic staff and services such as food, accommodation, security and maintenance): the Domestic Bursar

Financial and computing: the Bursar

Disciplinary (non-academic): the Dean

Library: the Librarian

Welfare: the Tutor for Welfare

For complaints about other students: the Dean

For complaints about College Academic staff: the Senior Tutor

For complaints about a College Officer: the Principal

For advice on which member of staff is most appropriate to contact when making an informal complaint, please contact the Academic and Admissions Manager.

xi. The relevant College Officer will advise the complainant, and, where possible, offer a solution without the submission of a formal complaint. This may involve investigation under another College procedure. The relevant College Officer will also

be able to advise on whether a complaint should be considered instead through University channels, or whether it may in fact be most appropriately dealt with by the police.

### Formal Complaints

xii. Formal procedures will usually be invoked when no resolution has been reached to informal procedures. Formal complaints must be made in writing to the Principal. They will not usually be considered if the complaint is already being addressed under another College procedure.

xiii. If a formal complaint is taken forward, the Principal will convene a panel of not fewer than three members of Governing Body with no previous connection to the student. The complainant will usually be expected to appear before the panel, and may be accompanied by another member of their common room if they wish. The panel would advise the complainant on any evidence that might be required before investigation of the complaint, and each side would be given equal opportunity to present their case.

xiv. The panel's decision (made by majority vote) will be conveyed in a report to Governing Body, and a copy of that report will be given to the complainant within 90 calendar days of the date the formal complaint was made. In the event of a complaint being upheld by the panel, the panel is empowered to decide upon an appropriate remedy and, if necessary, advise Governing Body on any required changes in practice or procedure.

xv. This concludes the College's consideration of the complaint and a Completion of Procedures letter will be sent to the complainant. The only circumstance in which the complaint could be reconsidered by the College would be if new material evidence related to the complaint was submitted after the panel's decision, provided that there were valid grounds for this late submission.

### Further Appeals

xvi. If the student considers their complaint to remain unresolved after completion of the informal and formal procedure, the student may take their complaint to the Conference of Colleges Appeals Tribunal (CCAT). This appeal should be filed with the Secretariat of the Conference of Colleges within five days of the College panel's decision. The Tribunal's decision concludes the University procedures and a Completion of Procedures letter will be sent to the complainant.

xvii. Once the University's procedures have been concluded, a complainant may appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (see [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk) for information).

xviii. The Academic and Admissions Manager will record the number of complaints made using the formal procedure each year, and a summary of numbers and outcomes will be presented to the Equal Opportunities Policy Monitoring Group.