



## ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

### **Unsatisfactory Academic Work and Failures in Academic Discipline**

The present document only concerns *undergraduate Junior Members* of the College. The primary responsibility for monitoring the academic progress of graduate students rests with the relevant University faculty or department, rather than the College. The College updates its procedures for unsatisfactory academic work and academic discipline regularly. The following represents the latest revisions, and replaces all earlier versions. The College retains the right to make further revisions, which will be communicated to Junior Members.

### **The Tutorial Review Committee**

Cases of unsatisfactory academic work or failures in academic discipline will be formally dealt with by the Tutorial Review Committee (TRC). The membership of this Committee will normally comprise the Tutor for Undergraduates, the Dean, the Tutor for Admissions, and one or more other Fellows. The Moral Tutor of the Junior Member summoned before the Committee (or another Fellow or Lecturer who is able to report on the Junior Member's work) will attend for the interview. The Committee will have the power of co-option, and will normally meet twice a term. If necessary, it may also make decisions after deliberations in person and/or by email. Such deliberations would normally only occur after at least one meeting with the Junior Member in person. They would also proceed in a manner that mirrors, as much as possible, the TRC's activities during its regular meetings, i.e. collecting views and supporting documentation from all parties concerned and weighing each case carefully.

The TRC typically considers a Junior Member's performance, motivations, etc., over a period of time, as well as possible solutions. The basis for the Committee's decisions related to a Junior Member's progress on her/his course should be a proportionate (i.e., not excessive) intrusion on the Junior Member's freedom in response to a legitimate academic need, and it should involve the full (i.e., not *ex tempore*) consideration of the case. At other times, the Committee considers matters that are more factual in nature. In these situations, and consistent with other College and University decisions related to non-academic discipline, the Committee applies the balance of probabilities.

Where the TRC deems it necessary, it may require Junior Members to produce additional work, and/or to attend specific lectures or classes, and/or to sit Special or Penal Collections. Special Collections may be set as a first instance, but in cases related to academic discipline (including academic dishonesty; see the paragraph '**Failures in Academic Discipline: Academic Dishonesty**', below) the TRC may proceed directly to Penal Collections without setting Special Collections first.

In the event that a Junior Member fails or refuses to comply with a decision of the TRC, the Committee will impose the sanction of suspension (that is, being sent away from the College for a specified period of time) or expulsion (which is permanent), unless it deems that there are reasonable extenuating circumstances. However, any decision by the TRC to suspend or expel a Junior Member is subject to appeal, as set out below.

At all meetings of the TRC (and, to the extent appropriate, in the event of deliberations in person and/or by email), the following rules apply:

- (i) At least four members of the TRC (counting the Tutor for Undergraduates, reserve members and co-opted members) will be present throughout the consideration of each case.
- (ii) A Junior Member summoned to a meeting of the TRC may be accompanied and supported by another person, for example a member of the JCR Committee, should they wish and provided that, no less than three business days before the meeting, they notify the Tutor for Undergraduates of the other person's full name and relationship to the College or professional function.
- (iii) The Moral Tutor and the Junior Member will be free to submit evidence and arguments to the Committee, through the Academic Administrator, no less than three business days before the meeting, either orally or in writing. Such material will be shown to the other party, also no less than three business days before the meeting. The Junior Member and the Moral Tutor will be given an opportunity to respond to the materials put forward by the other. The time available for this will be determined by the Committee.
- (iv) At the meeting, the Moral Tutor will be asked to outline the evidence that the Junior Member has not been performing at a satisfactory level. The Junior Member will be invited to respond, and is entitled to question or challenge the evidence put forward by the Moral Tutor.
- (v) The Moral Tutor and the Junior Member will be asked to leave the room while the TRC deliberates. The Committee will decide what course of action should be taken on the basis of the evidence and arguments submitted to it and the Junior Member's previous academic disciplinary record. This decision will normally be carried by a simple majority vote.
- (vi) Any decision and the reasons for it will be communicated in writing by the Tutor for Undergraduates to the Junior Member.
- (vii) As with any matter coming before the Governing Body or one of its committees, any member of the TRC who has a conflict of interest with regard to a case in front of the Committee must absent himself or herself from any consideration of that case. Similarly, any member of the TRC who is the Moral Tutor or who has a conflict of interest in the case or who has taught or expects to teach the Junior Member must absent himself or herself before the decision is discussed and reached by the Committee.
- (viii) As the chair of the Governing Body, to which any appeal against a decision of the TRC would be made, the Provost will not be present at meetings of the TRC, and will not play a part in its decisions.

### **Unsatisfactory Work and Failures in Academic Discipline: General**

The term **unsatisfactory work** will normally cover the following:

- Failure to keep all tutorials, classes or other required academic engagements, except where permission has been previously sought and obtained from the tutor concerned, or where there are adequate medical grounds;
- Failure to produce work for tutorials, classes, etc. regularly, as required by the tutor;
- Failure to perform adequately in Collections;
- Failure to produce work of a standard appropriate to the Junior Member's particular academic level.

In addition, **academic honesty** is fundamental to intellectual growth and scholarly inquiry. All members of an academic community must be confident that each person finds, develops,

and presents information and ideas responsibly and honourably. It is expected that all members of the College work, at all times, in a manner that respects and upholds these principles. Failure to do so may breach the College's standards for academic discipline. In particular:

- **Plagiarism.** Degree-level study will of course involve reading and drawing on published (and occasionally unpublished) academic work by others. It is good practice to cite that work in footnotes or in another way that makes clear the sources used. Plagiarism, however, which means presenting others' work as one's own without acknowledgment, is completely unacceptable. Any examples of plagiarism will be treated as matters of academic discipline (see ***Academic Dishonesty***, below). If proven, they will be dealt with severely, and in extreme cases may lead to a Junior Member being expelled.

The first step in addressing unsatisfactory work will usually be for tutors to draw the attention of the Junior Member to any inadequacies of their work and to discuss with them its causes and possible remedies. If the problems persist, the Moral Tutor will inform the Junior Member that he/she is being referred to the TRC. By contrast, in a situation involving a suspected failure of academic discipline, the Moral Tutor may refer the matter to the TRC immediately. In all cases, the composition, powers and procedures of the TRC are as described above.

The Junior Member will then be summoned by letter or email, normally at least one week in advance, to appear before the next meeting of the TRC. The letter will include an outline of the Moral Tutor's reasons for requesting that the Junior Member be interviewed by the Committee. A Junior Member summoned to appear before the TRC must attend. If a Junior Member fails to attend, the TRC is entitled to consider the case in his/her absence.

### **Special Collections**

Where the TRC, having summoned and interviewed a Junior Member, considers that his/her academic performance is sufficiently poor it will set Special Collections, and may make provision for subsequent Penal Collections in the event that the performance in the Special Collections is inadequate. The Special Collections are set with the requirement that the Junior Member achieve a mark commensurate with his/her academic potential as judged by the Committee. If such a mark is not achieved, a Penal Collection or Collections will normally follow. It will be made clear to the Junior Member at this stage that failure in these Penal Collections is likely to result in expulsion from the College.

### **Penal Collections**

If Penal Collections are set, the normal requirement will be the attainment of an Upper Second-Class mark; such collections will be marked by an assessor external to the College, to whom the Junior Member's identity is not disclosed. If the Junior Member achieves the marks required, the Committee will inform the Junior Member through the Tutor for Undergraduates. If the Penal Collections were set for reasons of Unsatisfactory Academic Work, the Committee would normally judge that the Junior Member no longer requires regular review by the committee (see '***Monitoring by the TRC***', below). If the Penal Collections were set for reasons of Academic Discipline, it would be open to the Committee to require the Junior Member to sit Penal Collections again, without a prior set of Special Collections, should his/her work cause dissatisfaction on any future occasion.

If the Junior Member fails to achieve the required marks in the Penal Collections, the Tutor for Undergraduates will inform the Junior Member of this and summon him or her to a further meeting of the TRC, at which the results of the Penal Collections will be reviewed. The Junior

Member will be asked to explain to the Committee (whether orally or in writing) any mitigating circumstances. The TRC will then decide what penalty to impose. The Tutor for Undergraduates will inform the Junior Member, in writing, of the Committee's decision. The normal penalty for failure in Penal Collections is expulsion. Any penalty is subject to appeal, as set out below.

### **Unsatisfactory Work: Failure in University (i.e. 'Public') Examinations**

The University imposes the rule that 'no candidate shall be admitted to examination for a Final Honour School without having first either passed or been exempted from the First Public Examination'. Grounds for exemption are considered by the Proctors of the University. Pursuant to this rule, on being notified that a Junior Member of the College has failed all or part of the First Public Examination, the Governing Body will inform the Junior Member by letter that he/she is required to pass the Examination at the second attempt. This second attempt must take place on the next occasion on which it is possible to sit the Examination, unless grounds for waiving this rule, such as illness, are established by the Moral Tutor of the Junior Member concerned at the TRC meeting. Junior Members who fail to pass the First Public Examination in two attempts are automatically expelled. Any appeal against expulsion, for example on the grounds of persistent disabling illness, will be considered by a special meeting of the TRC summoned before the beginning of the following Term. Junior Members who fail to pass the Second Public Examination, or Part I of such an examination, automatically go out of Residence. Any appeal to be allowed back into Residence in order to re-take the examination on a subsequent occasion should be presented to the Governing Body.

### **Failures in Academic Discipline: Academic Dishonesty**

For matters of plagiarism and other cases of academic dishonesty, the TRC has its disposal a number of disciplinary remediations, none of which necessarily requires that it precede or succeed another. These may include, but not be limited to: requiring a Junior Member to resubmit material to be checked for plagiarism, either by computer or by an assessor (who can be internal or external to the College); setting Special Collections (see above), to be marked by an assessor internal or external to the College; or, in cases of severe breach of academic discipline, setting Penal Collections (see above). For cases of academic discipline, Penal Collections need not be preceded by Special Collections.

### **Monitoring by the TRC**

Once a Junior Member has been referred to the TRC for any cause, his/her case will automatically be monitored at each meeting of the TRC until it judges that the work has improved to the extent that he/she may be removed from the list of those whose work is regularly reviewed or until the Junior Member has left the College. A Junior Member whose work is under regular review may be required to appear before the TRC at any of its meetings. Whenever this happens, the Junior Member will be summoned by letter or email. The TRC will inform the Governing Body, at its next meeting, of the interviews undertaken and of the Committee's decisions and proposals for future action.

A Junior Member whose work is being monitored by the TRC must seek the advice of their Moral Tutor and consult the Committee before taking on a time-consuming extra-curricular commitment.

## Appeals

In the event that the TRC decides that a Junior Member should be suspended (that is, sent away from the College for a specified period of time) or expelled, he/she will have the right of appeal against the decision to the next meeting of the Governing Body, the date of which he/she will be notified when informed of the TRC's decision.

He or she may exercise this right by writing to the Provost. If such an appeal is not made, the Junior Member must go out of residence within 48 hours, unless the TRC grants the Junior Member additional time. The members of the TRC (including the Moral Tutor, but with the exception of the Tutor for Undergraduates) must absent themselves from the relevant part of the Governing Body meeting for the duration of the consideration of the Junior Member's appeal. The Tutor for Undergraduates will present the evidence and arguments of the TRC, whether orally or in writing. The Junior Member will be entitled to present evidence and arguments to the Governing Body, whether orally or in writing, and to respond to all evidence and arguments submitted to the Governing Body by the Tutor for Undergraduates. Both the Junior Member and the Tutor for Undergraduates will be given an opportunity to respond to the materials put forward by the other. The time available for this will be determined by the Governing Body. The Junior Member may be present for the relevant part of the meeting up to but not including the vote, and may be accompanied and supported by another person, provided that, no less than three business days before the meeting, the Junior Member notifies the Tutor for Undergraduates of the other person's full name and relationship to the College or professional function. The Tutor for Undergraduates may not participate in the vote, and must withdraw from the meeting before the vote takes place. The remaining members of the Governing Body will then discuss and vote on the appeal.

The Junior Member will be permitted to remain in residence until this process is completed. If the Junior Member is prevented, by good reason, from appealing to the first Governing Body meeting after the TRC's decision is known, an appeal may be made to a subsequent Governing Body meeting, but the Junior Member may not normally remain in residence in the intervening period. The Governing Body's decision concerning the appeal — and the reasons for that decision — will be communicated in writing to the Junior Member by the Provost. Any decision taken by the Governing Body will be based upon the evidence and arguments put before it. Any other formal communication with the Junior Member will be through the Provost. Where an appeal is rejected, the Junior Member will be required to go out of residence immediately.

The College is a member of the Conference of Colleges Appeal Tribunal and has signed up to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Student Complaints ([www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)). The above procedure does not affect the Junior Member's right to appeal to these bodies.

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