

Guide to Tutoring at Cambridge

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1. Introduction

This guide aims to identify the main aspects of being a Tutor, and to provide links to further sources of information on the Senior Tutors' website and elsewhere. It complements the training for New Tutors day organized by the Senior Tutors' Committee at the beginning of each academic year.

Arrangements vary between individual Colleges, and responsibilities also differ, with responsibilities for teaching, for undergraduate and postgraduate students, but the basic pastoral elements are common throughout Cambridge. Each College will provide, via their Senior Tutor, induction for new College Tutors, to clarify procedures at individual Colleges, and will hold regular meetings for Tutors. These are an essential part of their continued professional development, providing a forum for sharing and discussing tutorial issues and for taking part in specific update training sessions which may be organized by the College with the assistance of the Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC), the University Counselling Service (UCS) and other specialist organizations.

The Senior Tutors' Committee periodically offers update training meetings for experienced Tutors on subjects such as student mental health and disability issues.

Information and advice on these topics and a significant range of other University resources and procedures is also available on the Senior Tutors' Website:

www.seniortutors.admin.cam.ac.uk

The University also produces a document for student-facing departmental staff called 'When To Refer'. It is a comprehensive guide and one which reflects the importance of the College Tutor. It also provides an extensive number of links to guidance documents which Tutors themselves will find useful. The latest issue is available online at:

https://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/when_to_refer_2021-22.pdf

Tutors are responsible for providing help and advice to students on pastoral matters relating to a students' education and life as a student. As one of a student's primary points of contact in college for general welfare matters, a Tutor may have a wide variety of responsibilities.

The role of the Tutor is primarily to act as a first source of advice and support for students in their interactions with University and College authorities, and to provide a friendly, familiar and helpful face in times of difficulty. The role is very often one of triage or signposting; and involves helping to direct students to the most appropriate source of professional help, whether on finances or mental health or a myriad of other topics.

It is important that both student and Tutor understand the proper boundaries of the role and what can reasonably be expected from a College Tutor.

In helping students, Tutors should expect to liaise with, and receive support from, the Senior Tutor, Deputy Senior Tutor(s), other Tutors, Directors of Studies (for undergraduates), supervisors or course coordinators (for postgraduates), Head of Wellbeing and Welfare, College Nurse, University Mental Health Advice Service, Tutorial Office, GP, University Counselling

Service (UCS), and Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC).

The first term can be a particularly critical time for new students. While many students find College a stimulating, invigorating and exciting place, others may find it confusing, lonely and overwhelming. Tutors have a crucial role in helping students manage their transition to College and University life, whether that is from home or school in Britain or overseas, or from another university.

2. Expectations

2.1 What students can expect from the Tutorial System

Some students experience cultural, medical, financial or personal problems during their studies. It is particularly important for students on short courses to act immediately if they are experiencing difficulties, but all students are entitled to expect support when they need it.

The College is responsible for student pastoral (or Tutorial) support for its undergraduate and graduate students.

Cambridge Colleges each have a Welfare Team to provide support for their students' health and well-being. Whilst each college configures its Welfare Team differently, the role of Tutor is central to this team. In Cambridge the term 'Tutor' is used to refer to College-based academics who provide support, information and advice to students about navigating College and University life (known as 'pastoral support'). Tutors may be approached for advice in addressing questions about academic, financial, health, family or other personal issues that may be affecting their students' ability to pursue their studies effectively. Tutors provide a welfare referral service: they cannot solve all problems or answer every question, but they can direct students to a wide range of support provided by the College, the University and external services. Tutors are not trained counsellors or mental health professionals: they are therefore neither qualified nor able to take on a therapeutic role.

Tutorial support implies general oversight of student welfare, in the widest sense. Individual Colleges have various ways of delivering it, so that while in some there may be a single person charged with overall responsibility for this particular remit – normally the Senior Tutor – it is likely to be delivered by several people, each with certain students to look after, or specific areas of responsibility (e.g. admissions). Hence a College may involve a variety of individuals, e.g. Tutors (who are generally Fellows of the College, and may have separate academic responsibilities within the College and the University), Nurses, Counsellors, Welfare Advisors, or Chaplains. However it is delivered, tutorial provision is an essential component of collegiate life.

A Tutor has a wide variety of responsibilities, which may be grouped together under the three headings below. Because their role is to provide all-round support and guidance to the individuals in their care, it would not be feasible to provide an exhaustive list of their responsibilities, and their own College Tutorial office and the Senior Tutor will provide detailed advice on particular procedures. However, listed below are some of the regular ways in which Tutors fulfill their role, together with other members of the College welfare team -- the Senior Tutor and the Tutorial Office Staff, nurses, and chaplains, and (depending

on local College arrangements and the matter involved) with Directors of Studies. Clearly many of these functions rely on sensitivity and discretion; some raise issues of confidentiality, on which see section 7 of this guide.

1. Pastoral

Induction

- Introducing and welcoming new students to Cambridge and College life
- Ongoing pastoral contact for College-based talks, workshops etc
- Personal contact/support – a friendly face

Personal wellbeing

- Personal development
- Contact for health matters and problems
- Link with GP, hospitals, counsellors
- Assistance with reasonable adjustments and exam access arrangements for disabled students
- Help in developing transferable skills

Accommodation

- Provision of advice and support on accommodation issues

2. Administrative/financial

- Provision of advice on identifying and obtaining financial assistance Liaison with other bodies
- External: e.g. Local Education Authorities, Student Loans Company, graduate funding bodies, etc.
- Internal: e.g. Departments, the Student Registry, Exam Access and Mitigation Committee, Hardship Funds, Bell Abbott & Barnes Fund, etc .

3. Examinations

- Examination Access Arrangements (EAAs) / Adjusted Modes of Assessment (AMAs)/ allowances
- Complaints about the conduct of an examination; request for review of a class
- Change of course
- Intermission, disregarding of terms

4. Academic

- Regular oversight and review of progress
- Advice on study methods, and support in the event of difficulties with courses or teachers
- Initial careers advice and provision of references
- Liaison between student and supervisor/Director of Studies/Department

2.2 What Tutors can expect from Students

- To attend promptly all scheduled meetings with their Tutor, unless there is a compelling reason why they cannot, and give as much notice as possible of any unavoidable absence or delay;
- To deal promptly with all tutorial correspondence (including email) and with College and University administrative requests, such as enrolling for examinations, completing teaching questionnaires, etc;
- To engage fully with their studies, including replying promptly to emails from supervisors and their Directors of Studies (DoS)
- To attend relevant University lectures, seminars and practicals, and make use of the

available learning facilities and materials;

- To seek help at an early opportunity when problems or difficulties occur;
- To attend supervisions arranged for them and give as much notice as possible to both the supervisor and the Director of Studies of any unavoidable absence due to illness or other serious problem;
- To respond to requests for feedback on supervisions, tutorial support and other College facilities
- To give as much notice as possible when requesting a reference from their Tutor.

3. Roles and responsibilities of Tutors

The roles and responsibilities for both undergraduate and postgraduate Tutors are basically similar, although there will be a difference of emphasis in some areas. Tutors provide advice and help but cannot necessarily solve a student's problems. Overall responsibilities:

1. to be a helpful first point of call for students to assist with signposting;
2. to provide support, encouragement and constructive feedback where appropriate;
3. to provide a link between the tutee and College and University authorities, and also between the tutee and external bodies such as police or UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) if necessary;
4. to assist tutees in finding the right pathways to resolve problems;
5. to monitor the progress of tutees by means of CamCORS or Postgraduate Feedback and Reporting System reports;
6. to refer students at the earliest appropriate opportunity to other professionals whenever needed.

Tutors should meet with their students within their first week at College to introduce themselves, establish a point of contact and provide orientation to the College tutorial system and other pastoral arrangements.

Before the first meeting, Tutors should normally be informed by the Senior Tutor, Tutorial Office, or the College Nurse whether any of their tutees has a declared disability. If so, Tutors should ensure that they have a general understanding of the disability and should enquire whether the student will require any support for the initial meeting itself (advice can be sought from the Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre - ADRC). Information on the impact of specific impairments on study can be found on the ADRC website:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/teaching-disabled-students/understanding-effects-impairments-study

The University is legally bound to act when a student discloses a disability. In disclosing to one part of the collegiate University, under the law a student is deemed to have disclosed to all parts of the collegiate University. Consequently, where a student makes a disclosure to their Tutor, the College must have appropriate procedures in place to seek written consent for information to be shared with the ADRC to ensure that the student begins the established process for the determination of access requirements. A record of the disclosure and the action taken should be recorded and held securely.

At the first meeting, Tutors should ensure that students are aware of the purposes of the tutoring system, how students can contact their Tutor, including their Tutor's office hours – though email is good for some matters of routine business or information, face-to-face contact is recommended, and helps build a relationship -- and that they are allowed to change Tutors where reasonably appropriate.

It is really important that Tutors make students aware of what the role of Tutor entails as well as what are and are not the responsibilities of the tutees.

Undergraduate Tutors normally meet their students individually at the beginning and end of each term. Tutorial group meetings can also be useful so that students can meet one another in a social setting. The pattern of meetings, and the responsibility for arranging meetings, with

postgraduate students may vary, but should be regular and sufficiently frequent to ensure that the relationship between Tutor and student remains active, even when assistance with a particular issue is not needed. Students often use the framework of a routine visit to bring up a difficult issue that has been troubling them.

Tutors should normally be proactive in arranging meetings with students and following up any unexplained non-attendance. However, students also have a responsibility to attend pre-arranged meetings, to notify Tutors if they cannot attend, and actively to seek support from their Tutors when and if needed.

All new Tutors should ensure they are familiar with the Senior Tutors' website and the pages for current students (www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk) as well as their own specific College arrangements regarding tutoring.

Tutors are expected to provide written references for students, although academic references are often better provided by the DoS. Requests for references must be made in a timely manner to give the Tutor adequate opportunity to produce the reference.

Tutors should respond promptly to emails from tutees, within three working days at the latest.

If a Tutor is temporarily unavailable, students should be made aware of this information and advised about alternative arrangements.

Tutors should make every effort to attend all meetings for tutorial staff arranged within the College. Your College will inform you about these.

4. Good Practice in being a Tutor

Matters to cover with tutees during the induction period (first meeting) include ensuring that they have satisfactory arrangements for accommodation (this can be a particular issue for postgraduate students) and for financial support. If there are any immediate concerns about loans, grants or bursaries, these should be dealt with as a matter of priority. In some Colleges, referral to the Financial Tutor or Tutorial Bursar may be appropriate.

Sensitive enquiries about any underlying health matters or family concerns may also be helpful but be aware that students may not be comfortable talking about these issues.

In addition to the routine termly or twice-termly meetings, the Tutor should be available for unscheduled consultations that individual tutees may request. These may be conducted in person during office hours, by telephone or by email.

Although it is important to encourage students to make use of email facilities for standard communication, electronic communication is unsuitable for transmitting confidential, personal or other sensitive information. In these cases a face to face meeting or possibly a phone call is to be preferred; and face-to-face meetings, even if brief, can also help establish a relationship, communicate a welcome and friendly support, or give an impression of a student's state of health or mind in ways that an email exchange might not.

If alerted by supervisors or Directors of Studies, Tutors should follow up any unexplained absence from supervisions, lectures or classes on the part of their tutees by email or text message, and, if no reply is forthcoming, notify the Senior Tutor. It is good practice to ascertain the reason for any non-attendance, as this is often one of the early indications that a student is experiencing difficulties.

If a student is identified as having significant difficulties with their academic work, then the Tutor should contact the student in question and discuss possible reasons for their poor performance.

The problem may be academic or study skill-related; it could as often be fundamentally non-academic in nature, e.g. illness, family or other social problems, financial, or loss of motivation. In attempting to assist the student to deal with the difficulties, whatever they may be, the Tutor may advise the student to seek professional help from, for example, their General Practitioner, the University Counselling Service (UCS) or the Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC), to which students at all Colleges have access and can self-refer, or to a College Counsellor or College nurse, if in post.

Tutors should encourage the student to discuss their difficulties by asking open-ended questions framed to elicit more than monosyllabic replies. For example, 'What do you think may be the reason for your loss of motivation?' rather than 'Are you depressed?'

The Tutor should be prepared to enter into dialogue and possibly advise, either personally or by referral, on specific non-academic topics of relevance to university life, such as relationship problems, health and welfare, and financial matters. This will require the Tutor to be well informed on appropriate support services within the College, the wider University and externally to which the student may be directed or referred. Much of the relevant information and appropriate links can be found in this Guide and on the Senior Tutors' website.

In addition to general college regulations, personal Tutors will find it helpful to become generally aware of those areas affecting students covered by University Regulations including: conduct of examinations and personalised examination provision for, for example, disabled students; student misconduct and fitness to study policies; requirements for academic progress; the University's student complaint procedure; and Library and IT regulations.

Practical advice to students who are survivors of sexual violence may be found here:

<https://www.studentsupport.cam.ac.uk/sexual-harassment-and-violence-support/advice-students>

The Collegiate University has comprehensive procedures for responding to student reports of harassment and sexual misconduct; again, Tutors should be aware of and prepared to direct affected students to these procedures, which provide specialist support and investigation. **See Section 6 of this guide for more information.**

In this and other areas, it is vitally important that Tutors recognize the limits of their professional competence.

The main focus of the Tutor's role when dealing with a personal problem is to listen and assist the student in deciding on the next step to take which, in many cases, will be to discuss the matter with the appropriate professional services.

When a meeting with a tutee has taken place, Tutors should make a factual record of this, with the date of the meeting and of any significant matters arising. In accordance with current data protection legislation, informal records kept by Tutors should be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to their purpose; they should be accurate and up to date, and should not be kept any longer than necessary for their purpose. Tutors should be aware that students have the right under the legislation to ask to see any records, including email correspondence relating to that student (see also annex A on records management).

Students with physical conditions may seek medical help when required, through the College nurse if in post, the Cambridge General Practitioner with whom they will have registered, or the out of hours service. But in emergencies access to medical care can be arranged through the Porter's lodge.

5. Student mental health concerns

In recent years the incidence of reported mental health issues among young people in general and students in particular has risen significantly. The collegiate University has not been exempt from this trend: these same years have seen an increase in self-referrals by students to the UCS, College Nurses and counsellors, local medical practitioners and to the ADRC. However, due to lack of knowledge and the stigma surrounding mental health issues, some students who are struggling may be reluctant to seek help, or are unaware that they may need it.

While it is important to say that, as with physical conditions, Tutors should recognize the limits of their professional competence, Tutors nevertheless have a valuable role to play in listening actively to students who disclose anxiety, depression or other mental health issues. A Tutor should be prepared for these issues to arise indirectly, through the discussion of academic, family, financial or other worries, and they will often be expressions of anxieties – about how to manage stress, or competing demands on time – that, for all their reality, may not merit onward referral.

Listening actively, acknowledging the reality of their concerns, and asking them to describe a typical working day or week may in itself encourage the student to explore and address their concerns, build resilience and continue their development into adulthood and their professional careers. Tutors should be prepared for such conversations to include some signs of distress (a box of tissues to hand is necessary Tutorial equipment) but should also be ready to contain and gently end conversations if they are becoming circular or aimless. It may be more helpful to suggest another short meeting, or a series of short meetings; reflecting on small signs of progress between these meetings can be really encouraging, and helping a student plan achievable goals can help rebuild confidence and resilience.

However, if a student continues to experience distress, reports a deterioration in their mental health, or does not respond to offers of tutorial support, Tutors should certainly recommend other sources of professional mental health support. Tutors can seek advice from the University's Mental Health Advice Service (MHAS) about any student of concern. Sometimes practical non-therapeutic options such as specialist mentoring provided through the ADRC, can be a useful pre-emptive and preventative solution to causes of anxiety. It may also reassure the student that you are taking their concerns seriously to seek their permission to discuss this with another member of the College welfare team, whether Senior Tutor or another Tutor.

The majority of students experiencing mental health difficulties are unlikely to disrupt others; however, there are a few occasions in the Colleges and University each year when a student's behaviour may affect the functioning of other students and the wellbeing of members of their immediate community, including fellow students and College tutorial and non-academic staff.

In these situations, the College's Fitness/Support to Study procedures can provide a useful or even an essential framework in setting out principles and where necessary formal steps to ensure the sustainable safety and wellbeing of all involved. (See section 13 on Fitness to Study and Fitness to Practise).

It is helpful when dealing with a student experiencing acute distress or crisis (see Annex C) to try to remember the following:

- Remain as calm as possible;
- Explain the limits of confidentiality (see below and Section 7)

- Be honest and open about your role and responsibilities
- Talk to the student, remembering that they may well be frightened;
- Reassure the student that there are people available who can help;
- Support is available for you, too (see Annex C).

It may be, however, that the student recognizes that they have a problem but does not want help or denies that they have a problem. In such cases, it is important that the Tutor gently but firmly reiterates their concern and repeats their offer of support. If this is again refused, the member of staff should then contact the Senior Tutor for advice. It may then be appropriate to contact the University's Mental Health Advice Service about the situation, without necessarily disclosing the identity of the student.

A duty Tutor who is called upon to deal with a student who is not known to them should try to get some basic information including the student's name and, if possible, address and the subject area studied. It is also helpful to know the name of their General Practitioner and what, if any, medication or other substances the individual has taken, how much, and when. Try to establish whether the student has had any such difficulties previously, and who or what was helpful at that time.

In very rare circumstances, a meeting with a distressed student can develop into an emergency situation.

In extreme circumstances, if a member of staff considers the student to be at immediate and significant risk of harm to themselves or others, the staff member should call 999, advising the Senior Tutor at the earliest opportunity that this has been necessary and why. If there is no immediate risk to life but you need urgent professional input Annex C sets out the various routes available to you to ensure the student is assessed by a mental health professional.

It is important to inform the student who you are involving in their care and to seek consent to share information wherever possible.

However, in cases of acute mental distress where there is an immediate and significant risk of harm, the need to safeguard the individual or others will trump the student's right to confidentiality, and in these cases, help should be summoned with or without the student's permission. Afterwards, it is important to make a factual note of what has happened.

Decisions about whether to involve a student's emergency contact should normally be taken by the Senior Tutor or in line with any local protocols in place regarding emergency contacts.

It is unusual for behaviour to become threatening, but if this does arise, it can often leave people involved in the situation feeling anxious. It is important not to exacerbate the situation and to remain calm.

If a Tutor starts to feel threatened, they should end the conversation as quickly as possible and seek assistance from the College Porter's Lodge . Any explicit violent threats should be taken seriously and acted upon by calling the police.

Anyone trying to help an individual in a violent state should avoid putting him or herself in a

dangerous situation by ensuring that, whenever possible, another member of staff is aware of the situation; doors are left open and/or the Tutor should have a colleague with them if they fear that they may be facing a potentially volatile situation. In the case of a direct physical assault, the Tutor should extricate themselves as quickly as possible and should not exacerbate the situation by retaliating as such a response could lead to criminal charges being brought against the Tutor. Help should be sought from the College Porters' Lodge.

An emergency always arouses strong feelings in everyone; the University's Mental Health Advice Service is always happy to discuss a crisis after the incident.

6. Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

If a student discloses a matter of harassment or sexual misconduct to you, your immediate response may impact the student's future decisions. It is important that you listen to them, believe them and provide safe space for support. Below are some important messages when responding to disclosure:

- Thank you for sharing this with me, it takes a lot of courage.
- You are not alone; you deserve to be believed and supported.
- You have a choice in what you do next and what is right for you.

If a student discloses to you that they have recently been subjected to any form of harassment, sexual misconduct or violence, then practical guidance is available for staff supporting students. The guidance includes information about supporting students, preservation of evidence and sources of further help and advice:

www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/sexual-assault-and-harassment-advisor/staff-guide-for-supporting-students-who-have-experienced-sexual-misconduct

The Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service have created a short list of helpful and unhelpful things to say when you are speaking to a student who has been impacted by sexual violence.

Helpful

- ✓ Are you feeling safe now?
- ✓ Would it be helpful if I explained your options? Or would you just like me to listen?
- ✓ Is there someone you can talk to when you leave here?
- ✓ Take your time.

Unhelpful

- ✗ I think the best thing to do is report it
- ✗ Tell me everything that happened
- ✗ How much did you have to drink? Was it a misunderstanding?
- ✗ Did you say no?

The student may or may not wish to report the matter or seek further support. You can ask them whether there is any action they would like you to take but do not put pressure on the student to take action now – they should retain control of the situation. Certain types of behaviour may constitute a criminal offence; where the student believes a criminal offence has been committed then they are also able to report this to the police but again, this is their choice. The nature of the offence means that the student may not wish to involve the police or the University. However, there are a number of collegiate University and external support mechanisms available that students should be encouraged to consider accessing detailed on the University web link below. One of these support mechanisms is the Student Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service. This service provides emotional and practical support to students who have been subjected to any form of sexual harassment, violence or misconduct, whether recently or in the past. The specialist staff can provide information to the

student on their options and support them through any reporting process should they wish to engage with one. The service can also provide consultation to staff who are unsure about what steps to take or how to best support a student.

The Collegiate University has developed detailed advice for staff and students on what to do and where to seek information in cases of harassment or sexual misconduct. This advice can be found here:

www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct

6.1 University reporting procedures

The University and Colleges have implemented the Informal Complaint Procedure for Student Misconduct. This procedure is designed to empower a student who has been subjected to any form of physical misconduct, sexual misconduct or abusive behaviour to report the matter in order to limit their interaction with the other student involved by facilitated agreement and therefore avoiding any formal investigation or independent evidence of the incident. Tutors and Senior Tutors can obtain advice from the Investigator at OSCCA at OSCCA@admin.cam.ac.uk. Further information about the procedure is available at www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/reporting.

Alternatively, students (and staff) are able to report other students' behaviour using the Student Discipline Procedure, this will result in a formal investigation and if the University finds that a breach of the Rules of Behaviour have taken place, then sanctions and measures can be imposed. The reporting student may move from an informal complaint procedure to the formal discipline procedure at any time in this process.

Both the Informal Complaint Procedure for Student Misconduct and the Student Discipline Procedure, prohibit students from engaging or attempting to engage in physical misconduct, sexual misconduct or abusive behaviour. These behaviours are further defined as follows:

'Physical misconduct' is any unwanted and unreasonable contact. Physical misconduct includes pinching, punching, kicking, slapping, pulling hair, biting, pushing, shoving, using weapons and using items as weapons.

'Sexual misconduct' is any unwanted and unpermitted sexual activity. Sexual activity includes sexual acts, kissing, sharing private sexual materials of another, touching through clothes, showing sexual organs and remarks of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct can take place in physical or virtual environments.

'Abusive behaviour' is any unwanted behaviour which is reasonably likely to cause harm; or have the effect of violating another's dignity; or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other. It includes threats, abusive comments, the use of or supply of illicit substances, making malicious accusations, repeatedly contacting someone, and abuse that takes place within an intimate relationship. Abusive behaviour can take place in physical or virtual environments.

The following definitions are also provided:

The word 'unwanted' means 'unwelcome' or 'uninvited'. It is not necessary for a person to object to the behaviour for it to be unwanted.

The word 'unpermitted' means 'not permitted' or 'unauthorised'. A number of behaviours can indicate where permission has been given, for example, verbal comments or physical actions. Permission for an activity can only be given at the time it is taking place and where the person has the choice to give or not give permission. Where there is disagreement as to whether an activity was unpermitted, the applicable test shall be, taking all circumstances into account, whether a reasonable person would consider the activity was unpermitted.

The University will treat any report made with the utmost seriousness, and both procedures are handled by an investigator or facilitator who is a trained specialist. While the procedures are ongoing, the respondent student will not be permitted to contact or engage with the student who has reported the behaviour. The investigator or facilitator can discuss any questions from the student in advance of them submitting a report.

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own conduct at all times, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs is not an excuse or mitigation for engaging in sexual misconduct.

Where health conditions or disabilities of a student may have significantly contributed to a student's behaviour in breaching the Rules of Behaviour, this may result in an investigation being conducted using the Procedure to Support and Assess Capability to Study in addition or instead of an investigation under the Student Discipline Procedure. Both Procedures can provide for the removal of a student from their course of study.

Complaints will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, but the expectation of the Colleges and the University is that complaints about serious sexual misconduct will usually be directed to the University's procedure and, after being given appropriate advice, will support the student whether or not they decide to report it to the police.

Likewise, the expectation is that cases involving students from two or more Colleges, or where the complaint relates to conduct occurring in the context of University-level sport or societies, will normally be considered under the central University procedure because of the complexity of such cases and additional reputational risks. The Colleges agree that while there is an overlapping jurisdiction with the Colleges in cases of serious sexual misconduct, there will be few, if any cases where it would not be appropriate for the Colleges to cede their jurisdiction to the University. In other less serious cases, where a student wishes to complain about the behaviour of another student in the same College, they will normally be expected to use their College's procedure. Further, although a College's procedure will only enable it to discipline its own students, it may also allow for a student from another College to raise a complaint about the behaviour of one of its students. The University has provided Colleges with a possible template for a student harassment procedure, based on the University's own procedure.

It is strongly recommended that, having directed a student to the advice on sexual misconduct, a Tutor keeps the new procedures firmly in mind and, with the Senior Tutor, offers further support within the framework of the new procedure, which is designed to protect the best

interests of all parties. Remember, too, that Cambridge has some excellent external specialist support available to students. Internally, we have a Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service; Tutors should ensure that students are made aware of these sources of support. You can find a list of external sources of support here:

<https://www.studentsupport.cam.ac.uk/resources-and-information>

7. Confidentiality

No assurances of absolute confidentiality should ever be made to a student.

Should a situation arise where there is risk to life or immediate safety of a student, safeguarding responsibilities will always override the need for confidentiality.

The limits of confidentiality should always be set out clearly at the outset (and ideally be outlined as a resource which students can access readily, like a webpage) and documented.

(See also Section 5 on Mental health concerns and Section 9 on Supporting disabled students; *When to Refer* also contains useful information about confidentiality, framed for Departmental and Faculty staff.)

8. Boundaries

Tutors have a purely professional relationship with their tutees. It is important to understand the boundaries that this entails. Tutors should clearly define their availability, for face to face meetings or for any other form of contact, such as email. Unless agreed otherwise with your Senior Tutor, there is no expectation that Tutors should be available in person outside normal working hours or at weekends unless the College has an organized out-of-hours rota.

Tutors are encouraged not to provide personal phone numbers or addresses to their tutees. It may, however, be useful to arrange emergency contact, perhaps *via* the Porter's Lodge.

Tutors are encouraged to get to know their tutees in more relaxed social settings, but this should normally be restricted to College events.

Tutors should beware of getting over-involved with students as dependent relationships are not sustainable. If a Tutor is concerned that a student is becoming too dependent, they should address this with the student following advice from the Senior Tutor.

9. Supporting disabled students

A Tutor supporting disabled students needs to know the following:

- a. the Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC) – its role and remit
- b. the definition of disability and institutional responsibilities to disabled students
- c. what is the Student Support Document?
- d. what support is available to students?
- e. what disability support funding is available?
- f. The ADRC's approach to confidentiality

9.1 Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre

The Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC) provides confidential information, advice and guidance to staff and students about the best ways to remove barriers to a disabled student's ability to fully experience all that Cambridge has to offer. This includes making recommendations for adjustments to teaching and learning assessments, the physical environment, as well as in some cases the provision of human and material support (for example specialist mentoring or study skills or assistive technology). The ADRC team can also advise on how to make teaching, learning and assessment more inclusive, with an aim of reducing the number of individual adjustments required, and offer a suite of courses for staff on a range of disability-related topics.

Details on training courses can be found on the ADRC website:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/thinking-about-disability/training

The ADRC has two advisory teams: Neurodiversity and Disability. The Neurodiversity Team supports students with Specific Learning Difficulties, Autism and ADHD. The Disability Team supports students with mental health conditions, physical and sensory impairments and long term health conditions. Details of the team of advisers who work with students may be found at:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/advice-support-for-students/meet-advisers

The ADRC liaises with Colleges and Departments to ensure that students are appropriately supported on their study programme. The ADRC can support any matriculated student paying university fees who is a member of a College; it also provides support and advice to prospective students and applicants.

If there is a situation that Tutors are concerned about, the ADRC is happy to meet in person to discuss the situation. This could be about how to support students with particular disabilities, or how to improve the accessibility of information. Email disability@admin.cam.ac.uk or call 01223 332301; the ADRC's guide to understanding the effects of impairment on study is also recommended, at

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/teaching-disabled-students/understanding-effects-impairments-study

For a wealth of other information and guidance (including guidance to staff on supporting

students with specific disabilities) visit the ADRC's webpages:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk

9.2 The definition of disability and institutional responsibilities to disabled students

Under the Equality Act (2010), a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term (has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or more) adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities. For the purposes of supporting students, this includes mobility or sensory impairment, long term medical conditions including HIV and cancer, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, mental health conditions, eating disorders and those with Specific Learning Difficulties, such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, that have an impact on a student's ability to study or on any other aspect of university life.

Not everyone with a long-term medical condition or disability will need or want support, and students with similar disabilities may well have different support needs. Do not assume that prior experience of a particular disability gives you an insight into a student's requirements. Each student is individual and the ability to manage different situations will vary depending on when they were diagnosed, what support they have had around them and their personal strengths. Always ensure the student has an opportunity to explain the barriers they face in accessing their study programme or with their life in College.

If a student wishes to access support, they must contact the ADRC themselves, and it is useful if they can provide appropriate written medical or specialist evidence. For a specific learning difficulty this is an adult diagnostic assessment completed after the age of 16, which meets the national quality standards. For other disabilities a recent supporting letter or report from their doctor or medical specialist is required. Every summer (in July and then in September) every College receives a Cohort Summary of disclosed disabilities among those incoming students who have made contact with the ADRC. This should provide a useful first indication to Senior Tutors and Tutors of anticipated support requirements.

To clarify the legal duties of the Collegiate University in relation to support for disabled students the University developed the 'Code of Practice: Access and Inclusion for Disabled Students'. The Code sets out and explains how these statutory responsibilities, such as the duty to make reasonable adjustments, are managed across the collegiate university. The Code is reviewed and updated annually. The most recent version is at:

www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students/supporting-disabled-students

9.3 What is the Student Support Document (SSD)?

Once a student has engaged with the ADRC and there is a need for support to be put in place, the ADRC will normally prepare a Student Support Document (SSD) outlining the nature of the disability and the impact this has on the student's ability to access their programme. The SSD will outline recommendations for supporting the student. These recommendations could relate to academic departments, Library Services, Examinations Office, Estates and Facilities, ADRC or College.

SSDs are placed on the student's CamSIS record by the ADRC, once they have been approved by the student. They can then be accessed by administrative and academic staff who have the

required access (and a notification email is sent to those who have access). If an SSD has been placed onto CamSIS this indicates that the student has given permission for the information to be distributed to those members of staff who need to see the information (and this information, as well as the student's disclosure permission, is in the distribution list at the bottom of the SSD)

The document can be created and downloaded as a whole document which may include personal sensitive information (for those who are directly responsible for learning and teaching the individual student) or as a shorter document which summarises the recommendations only and does not contain sensitive information (for example, where the person receiving the shorter document only needs to see the recommendations). Staff who do not have access to SSD information on CamSIS (for example supervisors or lecturers) can be sent the document in either the long or short form as a downloaded document by the appropriate College or Departmental contact who has access to the SSD on CamSIS. The decision as to which version of the document to send is the responsibility of the College or Departmental member of staff who has full CamSIS access. For more information on SSDs see:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/student-support-documents

Academic departments/faculties have their own responsibilities to disabled students. These include: ensuring accessible work space (rooms and furniture); the provision, preferably in advance, of appropriately formatted material in support of lectures; ensuring that the formats in which teaching is delivered are accessible; authorising the recording of lectures; and arranging for facilities to store equipment. Tutors (liaising with DoSs) may on occasion need to help the student to ensure that these things are in place – if they are not, contacting the Departmental Administrator and/or the Disability Adviser who has prepared the SSD is a good first step.

The ADRC runs courses on how to produce accessible materials:

<https://training.csx.cam.ac.uk/course/uis-acc-docs>

If a student discloses a disability on or after their arrival in Cambridge or it becomes apparent that they are disabled, Tutors should check that the student is aware of the ADRC and if they are, that they have or are on the way to having an SSD put in place. If they have not engaged with the service, the Tutor should offer details of how the student might contact the ADRC, highlighting how the ADRC can assist them and how students may be supported. Tutors are advised to put these details in writing, and to keep a record of the email or letter in which they have done so, to avoid subsequent claims to the contrary.

Tutors are not expected to obtain support: that is the responsibility of the student in conjunction with the ADRC, and they should be encouraged to exercise that responsibility with your support. An excellent *Varsity* article by a student who overcame initial reluctance to seek support is at:

www.varsity.co.uk/features/17775

9.4 What support is available to students?

Possible recommended support may include adapted residential accommodation, extended library loan periods, permission to record lectures, use of assistive technology and ergonomic

equipment, a range of human support, such as specialist mentoring, note-taking, specialist 1-1 study skills, short term equipment loan, referral to Counselling Services and Examination Access Arrangements (EAAs). The ADRC can also help with applying for appropriate external and internal funding and liaising with College staff to implement support. In most cases, to implement support, the student will need to provide appropriate medical or specialist evidence. If there is an issue but a student has not been diagnosed, Tutors or a ADRC Adviser should advise them how to go about getting appropriate evidence. In the case of possible specific learning difficulties, ADHD and Autism (including Asperger syndrome), the ADRC can provide information on how formal diagnostic assessments can be accessed. It is important to note that the ADRC is not a diagnostic service.

9.5 What disability support funding is available?

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are a government-resourced fund for eligible home students. The Student Loans Company, the NHS and Research Councils have application procedures that eligible disabled students need to go through. It is a long application process so students are advised to apply as early as possible to avoid a delay in receiving their equipment and support. The fund is to provide support to enable the student to access and participate with in their academic studies.

Since September 2016, in response to the Government's cuts to DSAs, disabled students at Cambridge have also had access, where appropriate, to the Reasonable Adjustments Fund (RAF). This fund is open to eligible home students and covers a range of non-medical help tasks (such as note-taking, specialist study skills and mentoring) which were previously covered by DSAs.

ADRC advisers will be able to advise students on which funds they are eligible for and guidance is available on the ADRC website:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/current-students/uk-nationals

EU and international students can apply to the International Disabled Students' Fund (IDSF): details are at:

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/current-students/eu-and-international-students

In most cases students will need to provide appropriate medical evidence or diagnostic report.

The ADRC also administers the Disabled Students' Bursary Fund. This is a limited fund that can make small awards (up to £1000) for any disabled student who has exhausted all other funding possibilities. The fund is financed entirely from donations and so awards are limited, and there is an expectation that students will have also sought support from their college or department. Matched funding awards are common.

There are also other funds, such as the Medical Support Fund, that may also be able to provide assistance. Tutors should ask the Senior Tutor or a Financial Tutor whether College hardship funds are also available. More information on the Medical Support Fund and other access and university hardship funds is available on the below webpages:

www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/financial-hardship-support-access-

9.6 The ADRC's approach to confidentiality

Where a student discloses a disability, but asks a Tutor not to disclose further, the Tutor should maintain that confidentiality. However, the Tutor should acknowledge the disclosure and highlight the information about support that is available to the student, in writing, encouraging them to find out more by contacting the ADRC (see list of contact details at the end of the document) so they can make an informed decision about engaging with the process. The Tutor should keep a record of any email in which Tutors have provided these details. If the Tutor is concerned, they can contact the ADRC and ask for advice, without disclosing the name of the student. The exception to this is if the Tutor believes the student is putting themselves or others at risk of harm at which point the Tutor should follow the guidance in section 5 above.

Legally, disabled people may choose whether to disclose their disability or not, or to ask for disclosure to be restricted to specific individuals or groups. When students contact the ADRC for the first time, they are asked to make their disclosure status clear, and the benefits of disclosing are explained. The student should be encouraged to allow even limited disclosure: it should be made clear to them that if they choose to restrict disclosure this may have an impact on the College and University being able to put appropriate support and/or adjustments in place. Tutors should keep a dated record of any such chosen restriction on disclosure. In situations where the Tutor, or the ADRC, considers the student to be at risk to themselves, or to others, the decision may legitimately be made to break confidentiality.

10. Potential warning signs and behaviour of students in difficulties

10.1 Common signs

As the person with regular contact with particular students, the Tutor may be the first person to notice that a student is developing difficulties. Certain types of behaviour potentially give cause for concern and may alert a Tutor to a student's difficulties.

Among the most common are the following:

- extreme eating behaviour and/or weight fluctuation;
- use of drugs or abuse of alcohol;
- withdrawal from others, loneliness;
- gambling or debt problems;
- sudden changes to behaviour;
- deterioration in academic performance, particularly if this is untypical of the student;
- sudden mood changes and/or changed demeanour;
- persistent absence, persistent lateness or lack of response to attempts to engage;
- anxieties about sexuality;
- paranoid or delusional thinking;
- suicidal ideation;
- any self-harming behaviour or suicide attempt;
- unsustainable expectations of or demand on their Tutor.

In addition, certain life events may indicate that a student may need to access additional support:

- the recent loss of a close relationship;
- an experience of failure;
- bereavement, especially if the loss is of a close relative;
- a history of physical or mental illness in the family;
- a history of violence in the family;
- a history of sexual abuse.

See also the next section for another possible cause of vulnerability.

10.2 When a student may be susceptible to radicalisation: our duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities – including higher education institutions – to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is commonly referred to as the ‘Prevent duty’.

The Act makes clear that as a Higher Education Institution we must balance the duties under Prevent with our legal requirements in relation to freedom of speech and academic freedom, as enshrined in other legislation. Freedom of expression is itself an important means to challenge and prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Experimenting with political, religious and philosophical ideas will be natural part of the University experience for many students and are not generally negative; after all, many great innovations were the result of ‘radical’ thought. However, when these thoughts are so far from the norm than an individual begins to see violence as a legitimate means to achieve political, religious or philosophical ends, then we are obliged to intervene.

Radicalisation can take place face-to-face or online; there have also been cases where individuals radicalise themselves. Whilst there is very low risk, a small number of students may be vulnerable to a range of radicalising causes, including religious radicalisation, far-right politics or animal rights extremism.

There is no set pattern to the occurrence of radicalisation but Tutors who are likely to be already aware of a student's vulnerability but unclear as to its cause may find it helpful to look out for the following behaviours as single or combined signs for concern:

- Noticeable changes in peer group or religious practices
- Sudden or increased isolation from family/social group
- Extremist political activism or the accessing, possession or distribution of materials advocating extremist views
- An undertone of grievance or 'them and us' language/behaviour
- Increased emotional instability, and/or cultural/social anxiety
- Possession of suspicious items (large amounts of money, multiple passports, possession of unusually large amounts of everyday materials which could be used to make incendiary devices).

Please bear in mind that many of the above, rather than being a sign of potential radicalisation, may instead suggest other support needs. Our approach should therefore be considered on a case-by-case basis. All Colleges have subscribed to this approach, within the same collegiate university framework; it is important that Tutors follow this framework, which is designed to be proportionate and to protect all concerned.

If you believe there to be an immediate threat to the safety of the student, or that actions of that student may lead to harm to members of the University community or the wider public, you should:

- Contact the police directly (dial 999) outlining your concerns
- Report that you have done so to the Senior Tutor or the University Prevent Contact (prevent@admin.cam.ac.uk or 01223 332323). You may choose either at your discretion, depending on the circumstances.

If you have concerns about a student and their vulnerability to radicalisation but do not believe there to be an immediate risk to the safety of the student or others, you should:

- Raise your concerns with the Senior Tutor of the student's College or the University Prevent Contact (referralconfidential@admin.cam.ac.uk or 01223 332331), outlining the circumstances
- The Senior Tutor or the University Prevent Contact will then consider these circumstances. They may consider gathering further information or insight from College or University staff to contextualise the information.
- If appropriate, the Senior Tutor and University Prevent Contact will share information and liaise informally together and, if necessary, will liaise with the police and/or the BIS Regional Coordinator (without naming the individual unless appropriate), for advice or further contextual information.
- On the rare occasion where severity of concern warrants it, the student may be referred to external sources of support through the relevant channels.
- Alternatively, a local package of support to the student may be delivered via the College, in line with its policies on welfare support and safeguarding.

- If further investigation suggests that concerns are unfounded, no further action will be taken.

In all instances, whether action is taken or not, the College Prevent Lead (usually the Senior Tutor) will be informed of the name of the student and the facts of action taken (or not taken) to allow for confidentially recording.

Details of the collegiate university's approach to the Prevent duty can be found at:

<https://prevent.admin.cam.ac.uk/resources-and-guidance>

Online training resources can be found at:

www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=117231

11. Students in financial hardship

Students will generally contact their Tutor if they are experiencing financial hardship. The student may be eligible for support from College Hardship Funds – your Financial Tutor or the Senior Tutor will be able to advise — and the University has limited funds available to support students in unexpected financial hardship, including a Special Hardship Fund created in 2017-8. Details of available University funding streams are updated on the Cambridge Students site regularly:

www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/overview-of-financial-support

12. Support and Assessing Capability

It is always best if student problems and difficulties can be addressed by discussion and mutual agreement. Where a student is struggling to acknowledge difficulties with their behaviour or engage with support offered by the College, then providing support within the framework of a formal procedure can provide a transparent and clear structure for students.

The Fitness to Study procedure or Support to Study Procedure adopted by most Colleges can be used in these circumstances: the details of this process can be found on individual College Websites and on the Senior Tutors' Committee website.

The University's Procedure to Support and Assess Capability to Study is designed to complement any College procedure and particularly concentrates on the stage 3 which may lead to the suspension of a student.

More information about the University procedure is available at: [Supporting and assessing capability to Study | Student Complaints \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

The Fitness to Practise procedures are governed by University Regulations and apply to medical students, veterinary students and PGCE students. Details can be found in Statutes and Ordinances. It will usually be advisable for Tutors to speak to their Senior Tutor initially if they have a problem with a medical, veterinary or PGCE student which they think may have a Fitness to Practise aspect. The Medical and Veterinary Student Progress panel or the relevant PGCE examination board can offer expert advice to Colleges about concerns, both academic and medical in nature, which may not yet warrant formal investigation under Fitness to Practise procedures.

These procedures are set out at:

www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/fitness-practise-appeal

The Director of Medical Education (Clinical or Preclinical), in the case of medical students, the Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine, in the case of veterinary students, and the primary or secondary PGCE course manager, in the case of PGCE students will also be able to give confidential advice.

13. The Role of the Tutor in Appeals and Complaints

Students have access to a range of people they can approach for advice should they wish to make an informal or formal complaint. This can include their Tutor.

Tutors are not expected to carry out an exhaustive investigation, but on issues where a simple misunderstanding or administrative glitch seems to have occurred Tutors can talk to students, discuss the situation, perhaps explain why the situation may have occurred and/or make informal enquiries within the College or Department.

Tutors are advised to discuss the matter with another member of staff if they feel that it is outside their area of competence. Whilst many complaints may just need a simple explanation or a student may simply want to air something that has annoyed them, there will be other more complicated issues for which expert advice should be sought. These issues may include matters relating to a disability, discrimination, bullying and harassment or they may be highly complex and need further investigation.

Students' confidentiality should always be respected and only broken without permission if a Tutor thinks there is an immediate and significant risk of harm to the student or others as a result of what has been disclosed. If the student has disclosed information about illegal activity, Tutors should immediately seek advice from the Senior Tutor.

Having carried out an informal investigation, where this is appropriate, it is likely that the matter will be resolved. Even though they may not be carrying out a formal investigation, Tutors should make a brief factual record of discussions and hold it on the student's file.

It may be that as a result of discussions the student decides they want to make a formal complaint. They are entitled to do so and should initially follow the College complaints procedure on each College website. Where the complaint relates to their University experience or a University staff member, a complaint can be submitted using the University's Complaint Procedure. The form and guidance is available at: [Student Complaints | Student Complaints \(cam.ac.uk\)](#).

In some cases, it may be that a Tutor recommends that a student makes a formal complaint so that the matter can be investigated thoroughly. In this instance the student will have to agree to put their complaint in writing, following published College or University procedures. The University's Student Complaint Procedure has a 28 day timeframe, so it is important that students do not delay in submitting a complaint. Depending on the nature of the complaint the student may need to be reassured that genuine complaints will be dealt with fairly and should not affect their progression on their course of study.

Students are also able to raise a complaint about their examination results, within 28 days of receiving the results. A complaint can only be upheld on the grounds that there was a procedural irregularity in the examining process, or that there has been bias or perception of bias in the marking, or that the examiners were unaware that some of the academic provision was withheld (for example, during industrial action). More information about the Examination Review Procedure can be found at: [Examination Reviews | Student Complaints \(cam.ac.uk\)](#).

14. Helpful Links

14.1 Within Collegiate Cambridge:

Accommodation Office	www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk
Breaking the Silence	www.breakingthesilence.cam.ac.uk
Careers Service	www.careers.cam.ac.uk
Childcare Office	www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk
Postgraduate Code of practice	www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/grad-code-of-practice
CSU	www.cambridgesu.co.uk
Disability Resource Centre	www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk
Equality and Diversity	www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk
Fees and Funding	www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding
International Student Office	www.iso.admin.cam.ac.uk
Language Centre	www.langcen.cam.ac.uk
Nightline	www.cambridge.nightline.ac.uk
Occupational Health	www.oh.admin.cam.ac.uk
Office of External Affairs and Communications	www.communications.cam.ac.uk
Office of Intercollegiate Services	www.ois.cam.ac.uk
Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals	www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk
Prevent	www.prevent.admin.cam.ac.uk
Senior Tutors	www.seniortutors.admin.cam.ac.uk
Student Registry	www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk
Student wellbeing pages	www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/welfare-and-wellbeing
Students' Unions' Advice Service	www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk
University Counselling Service	www.counselling.cam.ac.uk

14.2 General wellbeing

NHS Student Health	www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/getting-medical-care-as-a-student
Student Health App	www.expertselfcare.com
Student Minds Transition guide	www.studentminds.org.uk/transitionintouniversity.html
Citizen's Advice Bureau	www.citizensadvice.org.uk
The Mix	www.themix.org.uk/about-us
Finding a local GP	www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-GP
Finding a local Dentist	www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist
Centre 33	centre33.org.uk/help/Cambridge-south-cambridgeshire

14.3 Alcohol and Drugs

NHS live well site - alcohol	www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-advice/alcohol-support
NHS live well site – drugs	www.nhs.uk/live-well/addiction-support/drug-addiction-getting-help
Talk to Frank (drugs and alcohol)	www.talktofrank.com
CGL	www.changegrowlive.org
Alcoholics Anonymous	www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Narcotics Anonymous	www.ukna.org
Alcohol Change	www.alcoholchange.org.uk

14.4 Bereavement

Cruse charity (bereavement care)	www.cruse.org.uk
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Dying Matters www.hospiceuk.org/our-campaigns/dying-matters

Bereavement Advice Centre www.bereavementadvice.org

14.5 Carers

Carers Trust www.carers.org

Care Leavers' Association www.careleavers.com

14.6 Contraception, Family Planning, Sexual Health and Pregnancy

Family Planning Association www.fpa.org.uk

Marie Stopes Charity www.mariestopes.org.uk

SANDS charity www.sands.org.uk

Lime Tree Clinic www.icash.nhs.uk/where-to-go/icash-cambridgeshire/lime-tree-clinic-cambridge

DHIVerse www.dhiverse.org.uk

14.7 Crime

Parkside Police Station www.cambs.police.uk/contactus

Victim Support www.victimsupport.org.uk

14.8 Disordered eating

Talk ED www.talk-ed.org.uk

Beat www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

National Centre for Eating Disorders eating-disorders.org.uk

NHS Eating disorders www.nhs.uk/conditions/eating-disorders

14.9 Emergency Contraception

NHS guide www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/emergency-contraception

Chlamydia testing www.tht.org.uk/our-services/sexual-health/free-chlamydia-postal-test-kits

NHS Sexual Health Hub www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health

British Pregnancy Advisory Service www.bpas.org

Brook www.brook.org.uk

14.10 Gender

The Kite Trust www.thekitetrust.org.uk

Beaumont Society www.beaumontsociety.org.uk

Gender Identity Research and Education Society www.gires.org.uk

NHS Gender Dysphoria guidelines www.nhs.uk/conditions/gender-dysphoria

Transgender Zone: www.transgenderzone.com

14.11 LGBT+

Lesbian and Gay Foundation www.lgbt.foundation

CUSU LGBT+ www.lgbt.cusu.cam.ac.uk

14.12 Mental health

NHS First Response service www.cpft.nhs.uk/search/service/first-response-service-frs-

SANE	www.sane.org.uk
Samaritans	www.samaritans.org
HopelineUK	www.papyrus-uk.org
Mind	www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/#contact
Student Minds	www.studentminds.org.uk

14.13 Sexual assault/rape

Cambridge Rape Crisis	www.cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk
Cambridgeshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre	www.theelmssarc.org
NHS – help after rape or sexual assault:	www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/
Survivor’s UK	www.survivorsuk.org

14.14 Student Finance

Student Finance England	www.gov.uk/studentfinance
Financial Services Compensation	www.fscs.org.uk
National Debt Line	www.nationaldebtline.org
Money Helper	www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en
Step Change Debt Charity	www.stepchange.org
Cambridge Money Advice Centre	www.cambridgemoneyadvicecentre.org.uk/contact-us

14.15 Key Documents for Reference

Statutes and Ordinances	www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so
Disabled Students Code of Practice	www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students/supporting-disabled-students

Malcolm Millbrook, Office of Intercollegiate Services
Last updated: 26 June 2023

Annex A: Records management as a Tutor

1. As a Tutor, you should keep accurate and factual records of meetings with your students, and ensure that such personal data is appropriately processed and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the current data protection legislation in the UK (the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)). In addition, you should read and follow the guidance on personal data retention included in the College's Data Protection Policy and "data protection statement" for students (see points 5 and 6 below). You should also complete any data protection training specified by your College.
2. It is important that you keep records to enable them to track the progress of your tutees, and to respond to queries about your tutees, either in terms of current pastoral or academic care, or in the form of references. Any response should only be made in line with any College policy on confidentiality. It is also useful, should a student claim that support was not offered, to have a record of advice and/or information given.
3. In general, the management of personal information must comply with legislated data protection principles, which state that personal data shall:
 - be processed (i.e. collected, handled, stored, disclosed and destroyed) fairly, lawfully and transparently. (The lawful basis for most Tutorial activities will either be the consent of the individual, or that it is in the legitimate interests of the College and does not override the student's privacy rights: the purposes of processing are outlined in public data protection statements.);
 - be processed only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
 - be processed securely;
 - remain adequate, relevant and limited;
 - remain accurate (and rectified if inaccurate);
 - not be kept for longer than necessary.
4. The types of records held by Tutors can be in any format i.e. paper student files, meeting notes, emails to and from students, spreadsheets of contact details, etc. Much of this information will be confidential to each student and you must ensure that you are aware of where any and all personal data is located, that the data records are stored securely and that access is only available to persons authorised to view the information.
5. You may develop your own systems for storing information on students but you should check with your College whether there are any particular protocols you are expected to follow with regard to records storage and confidentiality.
6. The personal data of students held by Tutors should be retained for no longer than is necessary. Once a student has left College, it is recommended that any records intended for permanent retention/archive (as stated in the data protection statement for students) are added to the main file for that student. Any other information held by Tutors should be kept only whilst relevant. College policies vary,

but most Tutor records are retained for one year after students complete their course of study (normally by graduation). This includes special examination arrangements and student/ tutor meeting notes. Any information regarding student complaints should also be kept for one year, unless the complaint has been formalized, in which case records should be kept for at least one year after the final completion of the complaint investigation and all related avenues of appeal.

7. At all times, you should be aware that students have a legal right of access to any personal information that is held by the College. While the records may contain confidential or private comments from you and other people (within the College or externally), it is possible that the rights of the student will override any third party requests for confidentiality, and you should bear this in mind when you create information (personal data) or receive it from third parties (and delete or retain it at the time as appropriate). The decision on what is disclosed to the student is the responsibility of the College Data Protection Lead, from whom you should seek advice as necessary. All members of staff have an obligation to produce any personal information kept by them about a specific student if requested to do so as a result of a request from a student to access the personal data held by the College. It is unlawful to destroy such information once a request has been received.
8. In the event of the personal data of tutees being lost, stolen, accessed inappropriately or shared in error with others, you must as soon as possible notify the College Data Protection Lead, who will advise you on what action to take.
9. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows staff and students, and anyone outside the organisation, to request any recorded information that the College holds, providing that it does not contravene the rights of privacy and confidentiality outlined above. (Note that these rights also apply to Tutors: much of the record you create will be their personal data as well, but it is worth emphasising that a balancing of rights will almost always favour the student. You are therefore advised to be careful about how you record your own views of a meeting.)

Recommended sources of information

- College Data Protection Policy
- College data protection statement for students
- College policy on confidentiality in a welfare context
- College protocols on records storage/information management
- Find out who the College Data Protection Lead is

Annex B: Writing references for students

Tutors are among those individuals likely to be approached by a student to write a reference. Writing references is a key role for Tutors and is something that may continue for a number of years after the student has graduated. Students need different kinds of references for a range of different situations: future programmes of study; internships; accommodation; voluntary work and paid employment.

1. Your reference will usually provide information under three broad categories: (1) confirmation of the accuracy of information provided by the student; (2) provide a prediction of future academic performance if you are able to provide it; (3) provide an opinion about the suitability of candidate for their chosen programme of study or employment.
2. Ahead of writing a reference for a student it's always useful to ask the student to provide a current CV and any statements of purpose they have written for their application. You should also check, as far as you are able to do so, that the student is aware of the reference request and that they have given their consent for you to provide one.
3. If you feel you are unable to provide a reference for a student, you should explain your reasoning and suggest an alternative more suitable referee.
4. You should be aware that in most cases students will have a legal right to see a copy of your reference from the organisation that you have provided the reference to; your own right to request that the reference is confidential may be overridden by the students' right to see it.
5. You have a duty of care to both the student and recipient of the reference to ensure that your reference is fair and factually accurate.
6. You should not write a defamatory reference as this has the potential to lead to legal action. If you are unable to recommend the candidate for the job or programme of study, you should decline to write the reference.
7. It is helpful to clarify within the reference whether you are writing on behalf of the College or in a personal capacity. If a reference is written on behalf of the College, a copy usually should be placed on the student's file held by the Tutorial Office. If writing personally, you should retain a copy.
8. Requests for references by telephone should be declined where possible, but in the event should be followed up with the submission of a written reference.

9. Sensitive personal information (sometimes referred to as “special categories of personal data”) should not be disclosed by the referee without the prior recorded consent of the student. Sensitive personal information is defined as being related to:

- the racial or ethnic origin of the individual;
- their political opinions;
- their religious beliefs;
- whether they are a member of a trade union;
- their physical or mental health or condition (including disability information);
- details of their sex life and/or gender identity;
- whether they have any convictions or have committed any criminal offence.

Annex C: Student Mental Health Crisis – Guidance for Tutors

The primary goal in any interaction with a student in distress or crisis is to provide support that will help to keep students and College communities safe.

When supporting students who are presenting in distress and/or in crisis, it is important that Tutors stay calm, listen and attempt to de-escalate in the first instance. This can help to prevent escalation to a mental health crisis. At the same time, Tutors need to be aware of when it is appropriate and necessary to share information and/or escalate risk.

Escalation of risk in this context means to involve someone who is specially trained to provide appropriate assessment of, and support to, a student who may be at risk of suicide or self-harm.

Tutors are not expected to become mental health experts, nor independently manage a crisis situation, which may feel overwhelming and is not appropriate to their level of training and skills. An important aspect of being an effective Tutor is to know your limits.

If you are concerned that a student may be considering taking their own life it is important to ask them.

1. Emergencies and immediate risk

If a student has attempted suicide and is injured or non-responsive or has taken an overdose call an ambulance.

If a student discloses they have made plans to end their life, but have not yet acted upon those plans, ALWAYS:

- Call the First Response Service (FRS) on 111, option 2 if the student consents to speak with the operator, OR
- the FRS professionals' line on 01480 757365 [**NEVER SHARE THIS NUMBER WITH STUDENTS**] if the student declines to speak with FRS direct, OR
- ensure that the student is taken to A&E for an assessment.

2. Disclosure of suicidal ideation without suicidal planning or intent

- If a student discloses suicidal thoughts but says they have no plans or intent to act on these thoughts, follow your College's procedures to inform relevant people about your conversation so that appropriate supports can be arranged.
- If possible, you can work together with the student to create a Safety Plan, using the NHS Stay Alive app: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/stayalive/>

3. Concerns being raised by other students

- If a student raises concerns about another student, let them know that you will be following up with that student directly. It is important to speak to the student of concern about their thoughts and how they are feeling to ascertain the level of risk they are presenting with.

4. The student declines to engage after risk issues have become apparent

- If a student has disclosed that they are feeling suicidal, but they decline to engage with support, please seek advice from the FRS professional's line.
- If you believe that there is an immediate risk of harm, call an ambulance or the police if the student has left the premises.

There are a number of sources of support that students in crisis may be able to access; depending on their circumstances and when the crisis takes place. Crisis support is any service that is available at short notice to help resolve a mental health crisis or provide support whilst it is happening. Crisis services include:

Service	Use and availability
Emergency services (999)	For when someone has harmed themselves, others, or the safety of the person or others is at serious and imminent risk. 24/7.
Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department	For when someone needs immediate medical attention, for example if the student has significantly self-harmed. 24/7.
NHS First Response Service	<p>For when a student is in acute distress/mental health crisis but there is no immediate risk to safety. 24/7</p> <p>The local NHS First Response Service (FRS) provide support for people in mental health crisis and are available 24/7 all-year round. They have two telephone numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a student in crisis is able and willing to engage with the service, they should be supported to dial 111 and select option 2 to speak to FRS direct. • If a student in crisis is unable or unwilling to engage with the service, and a staff member needs support, they can call the FRS Professional's Line (01480 757 365). Do not give this number to students. <p>FRS can also make referrals to local community mental health teams, and to the Sanctuary.</p>
Emergency GP appointments	For when someone needs urgent support for mental health difficulties but there is no immediate danger to their safety or the safety of others. Usually 8.30am-6pm Monday – Friday but times vary (see the relevant surgery's website).

University's Duty Line	For staff with non-urgent mental health concerns about students in working hours. The Duty Line is staffed by members of the University Counselling Service and Mental Health Advice Service and staff members will receive a call back from the Duty Practitioner within four working hours. Tutors/Staff members should call the University Counselling Service Reception (01223 332865) and confirm they would like support via the Duty Line service.*
University's Mental Health Advice Service (MHAS)	<p>The University's Mental Health Advice Service is not a crisis service, but it provides liaison, advice and practical support to University and College staff in student-facing roles. Staff can seek advice from the service about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to work with individual students who might present with mental health issues, challenging behaviours or are who are difficult to engage with • post-crisis care for students who remain in College following a mental health crisis • behavioural management of students whose behaviour may be impacting on the wider College community (including support with support/fitness to study processes) <p>The MHAS is not a crisis service and offers non-urgent support to students through staff referral and via pre-booked appointments.</p>

Support available can be found on the [Student Wellbeing webpages](#).

De-escalation and safety steps

This diagram sets out key steps that support the de-escalation of distress and safety of students and staff in challenging situations.

RESPOND

Remember a **calm, supportive** approach will help the student. Clarify your name, role & that you are there to help.

Be clear about **confidentiality** – in a crisis we need to contact appropriate help. **Gather info** on the student's details, whether they may be in danger/taken steps to harm themselves, or if they have concerns for their own safety.

Support is available, including NHS (111 option 2, for FRS), & your college-level support.

REFER or PLAN FOLLOW-UP

The following guidance is for situations where: **(1)** the situation is an immediate emergency requiring NHS intervention; **(2)** the situation is not clearly an immediate emergency, but you have reason for concern about risk; **(3)** the situation appears to not be an emergency & the student does not require any immediate medical assistance or referral, but a referral for follow-up support is appropriate.

Categories and recommended steps for safety, de-escalation or referral for support

1

999 if emergency medical attention is needed; be prepared to provide directions
111, option 2 – NHS First Response can help in a mental health crisis
101 accesses non-emergency Police if a student is missing; inform Senior/Duty Tutor if out of hours.

2

If you are concerned the student may be suicidal – ask them.

If 'Yes', clarify if any steps have been taken (call 999) or if plans have been made (999 if imminent, or 111-2 if not).

If 'no', see (3).

Encourage the student to remain in a **safe place** whilst help is coming. If you cannot remain available, contact support via your College.

3

Ask permission to contact College / University Wellbeing team to **follow up to offer support**. If not a 'yes', tell them you have responsibility to let someone know. Check the student has **contact details for support** if things deteriorate before the next working day – NHS and College/University.

REPORT

Documenting your notes and a summary of steps taken towards safety helps continuity of care, and supports you in handing over actions to NHS or College/University specialist staff.

For very serious incidents, inform the Senior Tutor immediately

Let the student know who will be informed.

RECOVER

Once the emergency is over, **self-care** is important.

Consider arranging a **debrief** with the University's Mental Health Advice Service, your manager, or the College or University's wellbeing team.

It's normal to be impacted by crisis or distress – consider **support for you**.