

# CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION RELATING TO STUDENTS

**SENSITIVE INFORMATION CAN BE DISCLOSED TO YOUR TUTOR, OR TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE WELFARE TEAM, IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT APPROPRIATE CONFIDENTIALITY WILL BE RESPECTED.**

While Tutors, Fellows and College staff cannot promise to maintain absolute confidentiality in matters relating to student welfare, confidentiality will be maintained on a strictly need-to-know basis amongst those directly involved in welfare matters.

## A. THE COLLEGE WELFARE TEAM

Information shared by a student in discussions with their Tutor, a Fellow or a member of the College staff will normally be treated as confidential to the College welfare team and it will only be shared within the welfare team on a strictly need-to-know basis.

The College welfare team consists of those Fellows and College staff directly involved in student welfare matters including, for example:

- i. Tutors;
- ii. the College Registrar;
- iii. the College Nurse;
- iv. the College Counsellor;
- v. the relevant Director of Studies (on occasion).

## B. CONSENT TO DISCLOSE

If you raise a welfare matter with your Tutor or another member of the College welfare team, they will normally discuss with you who else may need to be informed. They will normally explain why some information may need to be shared and will seek your consent to share that information.

However, in the case of a serious welfare concern, information may be shared within the welfare team on a strictly need-to-know basis without your consent. No more information than is absolutely necessary in the circumstances will be shared within the College welfare team.

Members of the College welfare team will also consider the duty of care that may be owed to you or to others and in some circumstances that duty may require the College to take action on the basis of the information that you have provided.

Specifically, where there is considered to be an imminent and serious risk of harm to you or others the College's duty of care will override any obligation to maintain confidentiality.

## C. DISCLOSURE BEYOND THE WELFARE TEAM

Matters relating to your health or welfare that you disclose to your Tutor or another member of the College welfare team will only be shared beyond the College welfare team where:

- i. you have explicitly consented;
- ii. there is considered to be a clear risk of imminent and serious harm to you or to others; or
- iii. the College has a specific legal obligation to do so.

Information will not be disclosed beyond the College welfare team without the agreement of the Senior Tutor. On occasion generic advice may be sought from those beyond the College welfare team who have expertise or experience in a particular matter but any information provided by the College would then be anonymised as far as is reasonably practicable.

Should you disclose a disability to us we expect to share that information with the University Disability Resource Centre (DRC). If you tell us that you do not wish the College to share this information with the DRC we would then expect you to disclose the information to the DRC yourself. Whilst it is your prerogative not to disclose a disability to the DRC the collegiate University will then be limited in its ability to provide appropriate support to you and to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2000.

Similarly, the College may seek your consent to share certain information with your Faculty/Department. Whilst it is your prerogative not to consent to information being shared in this way that may limit the collegiate University's ability to arrange appropriate support for you.

If you are on a course leading to a qualification for a profession governed by codes of conduct intended to protect the public (for example, medicine or teaching) a concern about your health or behaviour may need to be referred to the appropriate body (for example, the relevant Progress and Fitness to Practice Panel) and this requirement may, in some circumstances, override the need for confidentiality.

On occasion the police or another government agency may request information from the College for law enforcement purposes. The Senior Tutor will consider any such request and in particular whether the College is obliged to provide the information without first seeking the consent of the student concerned.

If you disclose to your Tutor or another member of the College welfare team that you have been the victim of a crime but state that you do not wish to report the matter to the police, the College will normally respect your wishes. However, in exceptional circumstances, where the facts as they emerge give rise to concerns that there is a clear risk of imminent and serious harm to you or to others, the Senior Tutor may decide to report the matter to the police.

## **D. CONTACT WITH YOUR FAMILY**

If you are 18 or over you are legally an independent adult, no information about you will normally be shared with your family, legal guardian or next of kin without your consent.

An exception to this would be if the Senior Tutor is advised by a medical professional that you are:

- i. at a risk of serious harm or ill health, and
- ii. unable yourself to make informed decisions.

## **E. GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

If you inform your Tutor or another member of the College welfare team that you wish to transition to a gender other than that assigned at birth you will normally need to provide written consent before that information can be shared more widely.

You will need to discuss with the person to whom you choose to disclose your intention to transition if, how, and when you wish colleagues, students or others to be informed.

Please note that written records relating to student welfare matters are held in accordance with the College's Data Protection statement.

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