

St Stephen's House Academic Disciplinary Code

Academic Disciplinary Procedure (Oxford University Students)

In cases where the College has concerns about the academic performance and/or progress of a student, or a student is failing to fulfil their academic obligations as set out in the *College Handbook* and their Student Work Programme the following procedure will be followed:

Stage 1: Discussion

When such academic concerns arise, there will be an initial discussion between the student and the subject tutor or Course Director. The significance of this discussion in this process will clearly be indicated to the student in advance. A note of the discussion including any mitigating or complicating factors, together with academic advice including advice to seek help from other sources within the College or without, will be kept on the student's file. A copy of the note will be supplied to the student within 3 working days of the discussion. The issues discussed will be reviewed with the student by the same tutor at latest by the end of the term of the first meeting, and a decision will be reached whether the student is now fulfilling their academic obligations. The possible outcomes of this review might be to add a note to the previous one that the concerns had been addressed, that although progress had been made further steps were required, or that this disciplinary process should proceed to the next stage.

Stage 2: First Formal Warning

If after the initial discussion(s) and review, it is felt necessary to initiate more formal academic disciplinary procedures, the Senior Tutor will meet with the student and issue a formal written warning. The warning will specify to the student what is expected of them in the future. These expectations might include attendance at teaching, completion of assignments by stated deadlines, or special collections. The student may elect to be accompanied at this meeting by another student member of the College.

Stage 3: Further Formal Warning and Probation

If the student fails to comply with the conditions set out in the first formal warning, the Senior Tutor will meet the student to issue a further warning which will place the student on probation. This will set out further expectations; for example, attendance at tutorials, completion of assignments and/or attainment of appropriate levels in penal collections. These will be communicated to the student in writing with a statement of the possible consequences of non-compliance. The student may elect to be accompanied by another student member of the College.

Penal collections may be written examinations, timed essays, or other written assignments set by the tutor concerned. The student will be allowed sufficient time to prepare adequately for them, and they will be marked by two external assessors appointed by the Senior Tutor. These assessors will be kept uninformed of the identity of the candidate and circumstances of the case, but they will take the stage of the process into account when deciding on an appropriate mark.

At all stages, the Senior Tutor will ensure that the student understands the situation clearly, and has the appropriate help to make their case.

Stage 4: Formal Disciplinary Hearing

If the student fails to comply with the terms of probation, the case will be brought to the Academic Disciplinary Panel, normally consisting of the Principal, Vice-Principal and one other member appointed by the Principal; in any case the Panel will consist of at least three members. If the Principal has taken a role in the previous procedure, the Vice Principal will act for them. At least 3 working days before the hearing, the student will be given a clear statement of the grounds for action and a copy of supporting evidence such as tutors' reports. The

student will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting of the Panel, and the opportunity to bring forward material considerations and mitigating circumstances, such as medical evidence. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by another student member of the College.

Once the cases on both sides have been heard, the Panel will meet in private to consider the issues and make a decision. The Chair of the Panel will communicate the decision to the student within 5 working days and make the requisite formal record of it for the student's file.

In the event of continued non-compliance with any of the terms of academic discipline, a student may be suspended or their course terminated (sent down).

Appeals Procedure

If the student wishes to appeal against a decision to suspend, or send them down this appeal will be heard by an Academic Appeal Panel appointed by the House Council. The student may appeal to this panel on grounds of error in the Academic Disciplinary Panel's findings or of disproportion of the penalty to the gravity of the breach of academic obligations. The student may not bring an appeal that challenges the academic judgement of the Academic Disciplinary Panel. Any appeal must be submitted to the Principal for onward transmission within 5 working days of the decision of the Academic Disciplinary Panel. Those members of staff involved in the earlier proceedings may not be members of the panel although they may be heard by it. Again, the student may be accompanied by another student member of the College, and a careful record will be kept of the proceedings on the student's file. The student along with the Senior Tutor will be notified of the appeal panel's decision in writing within 10 working days.

Further appeals may be made by students on Oxford University courses from this Panel to the Conference of Colleges Appeal Tribunal (CCAT) and to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE). Any appeal to CCAT must be made within 5 working days of the decision of the SSH Appeals Tribunal in the form set out on their website <http://www.confcoll.ox.ac.uk/html/main/ccat.html> which also sets out the regulations and procedures of the Tribunal.

Certain complaints which the student considers not to have been properly dealt with by the College and/or CCAT can be pursued with the OIAHE as set out on their website at <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

Standard and Burden of Proof

At any hearing of the Academic Disciplinary Panel or Academic Appeal Panel, the standard of proof shall be the balance of probabilities and the burden of proof shall be upon the person bringing the charge or making the appeal as the case may be.