

Reuben College Policy on the Prevention of Student-Staff/Postholder Relationships

Agreed by Delegated GB Authority and with effect from 1 August 2021

1. The College is committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure that students are not subjected to sexual harassment.
2. This policy applies to all Fellows and members of staff who have academic, professional or pastoral responsibility for students ("Responsibility"). Due to the collegiate nature of the University this policy also applies to postholders who have pastoral duties to students from another college. It does not apply to graduate student members of the Decanal or Welfare teams except in relation to relationships with students to whom they are actively providing pastoral support. In advertising any such roles, and in making any such appointments, this policy must be made clear. All references to 'staff' in this policy refer to individuals to whom this policy applies as set out in this paragraph.
3. Whilst acknowledging that at a graduate college's students and staff may be of a similar age, the power dynamic of a student-staff relationship is still in play. Therefore, this policy prohibits staff from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with any student for whom they hold any Responsibility. Such relationships are always inappropriate irrespective of whether the student did not object, appeared to give consent, gave consent or even instigated the behaviour.
4. All staff are bound by this policy, irrespective of whether the relationship takes place on College premises or elsewhere. It covers face-to-face actions, as well as those which take place through other media such as emails, letters, telephone conversations, social networking sites, text messages, etc..
5. This policy operates alongside and is not intended in any way to limit or override, the College's general Harassment Policy and Procedure.
6. Should a staff member in a position of responsibility for a student become aware that the student's behaviour suggests the possibility of romantic or sexual interest in them, then it is their responsibility to report this to the Welfare Dean, Senior Tutor or President so that a replacement staff member can be found for the student. This prevents the original staff member from becoming vulnerable to allegations of sexual harassment.
7. The College recognizes the sensitivities involved and will take all reasonable steps to keep concerns confidential. Information will only be shared with those who strictly need to know about the issues raised, including to provide support to the student and the member of staff or to initiate disciplinary action (as set out below).
8. Any member of staff found to be engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with a student for whom they have Responsibility, even with their consent, may be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal and/or removal of their College post.