



Policy concerning personal relationships between staff and supervisors, and students

1. A personal relationship of a sexual or other intimate nature between a member of staff or supervisor and a student, with whom the former also has a professional connection, gives rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest. In particular, such a relationship creates, or may reasonably be perceived to create, a risk of favouritism or abuse of authority. It also undermines the relationship of trust and confidence, which is intrinsic to interactions between staff and supervisors, and students.

2. Members of staff and supervisors are under a duty to act with integrity and not to place themselves in a position of actual or apparent conflict of interest. A personal relationship in the circumstances described above should consequently be avoided.

STAFF AND SUPERVISORS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THIS COLLEGE

3. In the event that:

3.1 a personal relationship arises between a member of staff or supervisor and a student with whom that member of staff or supervisor also has a professional connection; or

3.2 there is or has been a personal relationship between a member of staff or supervisor and a student with whom the former is due to have a professional connection;

the member of staff or supervisor in question must disclose the relationship immediately to the Senior Tutor or, if preferred, to the Bursar or the Pastoral Tutor, who will speak to the Senior Tutor on their behalf. If a member of staff or supervisor is unsure whether or not a relationship with a student should be disclosed under this policy, the member of staff or supervisor must disclose it.

4. Following disclosure, the Senior Tutor will ensure as appropriate that the student is aware of the disclosure and that alternative arrangements are put in place to avoid the member of staff or supervisor having any professional connection with the student, liaising if necessary with the relevant student's college.

5. Failure to comply with this policy, or any arrangements which are put in place under it, may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

STAFF AND SUPERVISORS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE

6. In many cases, those who have or are due to have a professional connection to Sidney students, but are not members of Sidney, will be bound by equivalent policies of their institution of affiliation (e.g. the University's "Policy on personal relationships between staff and students). In such cases, the college expects them to abide by those policies. If no such policy applies to them, or if they are in doubt as to whether their obligations under another institution's policies are equivalent to the present policy, their obligation of disclosure and its implications are the same as for members of staff and supervisors who are members of the college.

7. For the purposes of this policy:

7.1 'member of staff' includes any person employed by the College or worker and/or who holds a College office (such as a Fellowship) or post, as well as any person to whom the College makes available any of the privileges or facilities normally afforded to its employees - where graduate students are working for the University in a teaching or related capacity, this policy will apply to them in that capacity as if they were employees of the University;

7.2 'student' includes any person pursuing a course of study leading to the award of a degree, diploma, or certificate of the University;

7.3 'professional connection' means any arrangement where a person in their capacity as a member of staff has any academic, pastoral or administrative or similar responsibility for a student, including for supervising, tutoring, teaching, selecting, assessing, protecting, safeguarding, or providing a reference for, the student; and

7.4 'personal relationship' means any association, however brief, of a sexual or other intimate nature, either in person or remotely (for example, via social media, email or text messaging).

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