



OXFORD
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

STAFF HANDBOOK

Issue date: September 2016

Amended: June 2020

Review date: July 2021

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1 INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides guidance concerning the topics herein to current and new members of staff. **Part 2 onward of the handbook should be read in conjunction with your contract of employment as they set out various obligations upon staff that collectively form your terms and conditions of employment. This handbook is not contractually binding upon the College, save where this is stated.** If there is a conflict between the handbook and your written contract of employment, the written contract takes precedence. If the handbook leaves some questions unanswered, please contact the Principal.

Some parts of this handbook may only apply to teaching staff or to non-teaching staff. Where this is the case, it is stated. Otherwise it applies to all staff.

The College is committed to equal treatment for all under the terms of 2010 Equality Act, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, or sexual orientation. We aim to recognise and encourage the valuable and enriching contribution from all who work and learn here and the rights of all individuals who come into contact with the college, such as prospective students and job applicants.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and reflective environment in which every individual is valued. We believe that people from a range of backgrounds and experiences can enhance the life and development of the institution and that all individuals should be treated on the basis of individual merit and without prejudice. The College expects all employees to adopt this Staff Handbook.

1.1 COLLEGE BACKGROUND

Oxford Sixth Form College (OxSFC) is a leading independent sixth form college which specializes in teaching 15 – 19 year old students, the significant majority of whom intend to go on to higher education, although some may be seeking routes to alternative career options. Established in 1988, it has gained an excellent reputation for providing effective preparation for public examinations. This is achieved by thorough exam-specific teaching and close attention to the needs of each individual student, to enable reinforcement of understanding and attention to areas of weakness. Small groups allow for effective syllabus coverage and careful guidance with each student's understanding of material and production of written work. The College also runs courses under the banner 'Oxford Gap Year Program' for students, primarily from the USA, who wish to take further study courses, normally between high school and college.

The College runs a two-week Easter Revision Course (ERC) for A Level and GCSE consisting of highly-intensive and well-structured subject teaching in small groups which is geared specifically towards the demands of the examinations and the development of skills to organise and prioritise revision over the crucial final weeks before the exams

In a number of ways the College offers an environment quite different to that of a traditional school. The teaching approach is flexible, interactive and informal. Students are advised to make choices appropriate to their degree course or vocational aim and to take subjects which engage their interest and fit in with their abilities and aptitudes.

1.2 STARTING WORK AT OXFORD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

1.2.1 New Employee Induction

When you start work at OxSFC you will have an employee induction. This will minimally include Safeguarding and Prevent training, Health and Safety training and a tour of the premises (including fire safety information), introductions to staff and an overview of the college and its policies. You will receive a role specific induction from your line manager or senior member of staff. Any initial questions about the college may be asked at that time. You will also be given an opportunity to provide feedback on your induction and make suggestions for improvement.

Staff are invited to feedback at all times and can do so directly to their line manager, SMT or via the Staff Association.

1.2.2 Documents

In order to ensure that the College operates smoothly, there are a number of documents and forms that are distributed to staff before starting in a new role with the College. It is imperative that staff complete all required forms in a timely fashion, preferably prior to your first start date, as requested by college administration.

Documents that you will be given before or when you begin work include:

- New Employee Starter Form
- HMRC Starter Checklist (if P45 not available)
- Contract of Employment
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Medical Questionnaire
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy. You will be asked to sign a declaration to confirm that you have read and understood these policies and documents.
For management positions only, you will be required to sign an anti- fraud declaration. Documents that you will need to provide are:
- Proof of ID and eligibility to work in the UK such as a passport and an official National Insurance document such as a P60 or NI card and a P45 if available.
- Evidence of qualifications (where applicable)
- Evidence of your address and any former addresses for the last five years
- Your QTS number, if you have one.

As part of our commitment to Safeguarding, it will be necessary for new employees to undergo an Enhanced DBS check before starting work at the College. OxSFC will process the check on the prospective employee's behalf and bear any costs involved. You will be required to provide the appropriate documentation to complete the process. The DBS certificate will require renewal every 3 years and if there are breaks in service for periods of 3 months or more. You will be required to bring in the DBS certificate for verification when received.

We require staff to inform the College should you incur a criminal conviction during your service, once a DBS has been completed. The DBS reference number and date will be entered onto the College's Single Central Register.

In order to keep the Single Central Register up to date and facilitate our communication with you, you are responsible for providing any changes of address or contact details. At the beginning of every academic year a change of details form will be sent out to you requesting any amendments. Please follow the instructions on this form and return to the Reception Manager.

All roles in the College involve work with young people and are, therefore, exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that you are NOT entitled to withhold information about convictions, cautions, bind-overs, reprimands and final warnings, which in other circumstances would be regarded as spent. If there is a conviction we require the information in a sealed envelope marked 'strictly confidential' to the Principal: the nature of offence(s), date of conviction(s), penalties and country in which they occurred. This information will be held on a strictly confidential basis, in compliance with the Data Protection Act and only discussed with the selection panel where it is relevant to the post for which you have applied. Where a conviction is not considered a risk to the safeguarding of our students a risk assessment will be written and kept on file for any staff with a conviction, a copy being held by both the member of staff and the College.

2 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Under current legislation all employees must receive a written Statement of Particulars concerning your employment within 2 months of starting work and a revised statement or some other written confirmation within one month of any certain fundamental terms changing. The terms and conditions (including this Staff Handbook) will be construed in accordance with English law and it is

irrevocably agreed that the English courts have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any disputes which may arise from them.

2.1 HOURS OF WORK

The normal of hours of work for all staff, teaching and non-teaching, are set out in each employee's contract of employment. It is the nature of the business that some flexibility is expected. Some evening or weekend work may occasionally be required; where this is the case time may be given off in lieu or remunerated according to the terms of your contract. The College is open between 08.30 and 18.00, Monday to Friday with classes timetabled between 09.00 and 17.15. Each period is of forty- five minutes duration. All staff are expected to be available to attend staff training events.

In addition to contracted contact time (teaching or the provision of cover), teaching staff are expected to be available for meetings such as Curriculum Area Meetings; meetings with a prospective student; line manager meetings and whole staff meetings. Such events would generally be known about in advance and advised. It is expected that full-time and full-time equivalent contract staff would be available for such events when the latter occur within their contracted hours of work.

In the event that a member of staff would like to change his or her working hours, she or he may submit a flexible working request to the Principal for consideration.

Teaching staff who are required to work one of the two Easter Revision Course (ERC) weeks will be advised of their working hours no less than 4 weeks in advance of ERC taking place.

2.2 PROBATION

An appointment may be made subject to a defined probationary period. This will be set out in the contract of employment. Where an appointment is subject to a probationary period, your progress will be reviewed after one month from your start date and, subsequently at the end of the probationary period. Employment may be terminated at any time during the probationary period. The probationary period may also be extended.

The purpose of the probationary period is to ensure that a post holder taking up a new appointment is able to gain a full understanding of the post and to achieve a satisfactory level of performance. During this time you also have the opportunity to make up your mind about whether you wish to remain with OxSFC.

You will not be deemed to have successfully completed your probationary period unless this has been confirmed in writing to you.

2.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The college is committed to supporting the development of all its staff. To enable this, all staff members are asked to complete a Professional Development Review (PRD) once a year. The aim of the PDR is to improve communication between individual members of staff and managers, and ultimately increase job satisfaction and the effectiveness of the College. The PDR will be evidence based using data relevant to each member of staff and, for teaching staff, observation reports. The actions planned will be reviewed and updated periodically through the year to help maintain and improve the quality of learning experience of the students.

Training budget:

The College is able to support staff with professional development training where it is deemed relevant to the organisational objectives and needs of the College. Staff can apply to your line manager for support (financial or time) to undertake a course or programme of training that meets the needs of the College. E.G. exam board training on curriculum developments. We encourage all staff to continue to learn and develop and would seek to support staff wherever possible within operational and budgetary constraints.

To apply please follow the training and development procedure which you can request from your line manager. It will include an

explanation of the training requested, costed with time impact, and a rationale of how this would benefit the College and improve the students' experience. Staff will be asked to enter into a Training Agreement. It is expected that the staff member will remain in employment at the College for one year after completion of the training. If the staff member leaves the College before this time 50% of the cost will be reimbursed to the College. If the staff member's post is made redundant in this time there will no reimbursement expected. The Training Agreement is not required for regulatory training such as Safeguarding or Prevent Duty training.

2.4 PAY & SALARIES

An employee's salary and benefits are agreed following interview and are dependent on experience and qualification. A written individual contract will usually be given before or during the first week of employment but no later than 2 months after commencement of employment.

All staff will be paid on the 21st of the month or the nearest banking day prior to that date, should the 21st fall on a weekend or bank holiday.

The Principal reviews the pay and salaries of all staff in November of each year and any pay increase awarded takes effect from the 1st January thereafter.

2.5 EXPENSES POLICY

You will be reimbursed expenses which are properly, reasonably and exclusively incurred in carrying out your employment duties, and authorised by the appropriate manager.

Expenses will only be reimbursed if the necessary claims are submitted to the Finance department within two months of being incurred and if they are supported by relevant documents (for example VAT receipts, tickets and credit or debit card slips) and, where required, authorised by your line manager or a member of the SMT and in accordance with instructions in force at the time the expense was incurred.

Claims for authorised expenses submitted in accordance with this policy will be paid directly into your bank/building society account in the same month of being claimed or the following month.

In exceptional circumstances, we may, at our discretion, agree to reimburse expenses that have not been incurred or submitted in accordance with this policy.

Any questions about the reimbursement of expenses should be raised with an appropriate person **before** you incur the relevant costs.

2.6 PENSIONS

2.6.1 Workplace Pension Scheme - Group Personal Pension Plan with Scottish Widows

OxSFC has elected for a two tier approach to workplace pensions:

- Scottish Widows is the provider of the Group Personal Pension arrangement and provide the contractual scheme. www.scottishwidows.co.uk
- The People's Pension scheme www.thepeoplespension.co.uk will provide the base auto enrolment scheme to meet the government's requirements and OxSFC's obligations regarding auto enrolment unless you elect to join the Scottish Widows Group Personal Pension.

Details of both schemes are available from the HR Department at hr@oxfordinternational.com

If you are unsure, you should seek independent financial advice. "The scheme is available to employees after 3 months service and offers a salary sacrifice option, flexibility of contributions and online management. The provider's base annual management charge is 1%. The scheme is open to full and part-time employees over the age of 18 and the normal scheme retirement age is 65. However this is gradually increasing and is continuously under review. By 2028 the State Pension age will be 67 years. The link below is the government's calculator where someone can work out his state pension age based on the age. <https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age>

2.6.2 Workplace Pension Scheme – Auto Enrolment Scheme with The People's Pension

All employees will be automatically enrolled into the base workplace pension scheme after 3 months service in accordance with legislative requirement and eligibility. This scheme is operated by The People's Pension and further information is available by visiting their website: <http://thepeoplespension.co.uk/>. To be eligible for this scheme, employees will need to fulfil the following criteria:

- Earn over £10,000 pa
- Aged over 22 and under state pension age (please refer to www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension to calculate your state pension age).

If you earn less than £10,000 pa but earnings increase above the minimum threshold in the future, you will be automatically enrolled if you fulfil the age criteria. Once you are opted into the scheme, you remain in the scheme even if earnings fall below the minimum threshold, unless you choose to opt out. Until then you will not be automatically enrolled but you have the right to join and if you earn more than £5,772 pa, statutory contributions will also be made by OxSFC. If you are under 22 when you start work and then reach the age of 22, you will be automatically enrolled into the scheme if you fulfil the earnings criteria. If you are under 75 and earn less than £5,772 pa, you will not be automatically enrolled as you do not meet the criteria set by the government. You can request to enroll in the pension scheme but no contributions will be made by OxSFC.

2.6.3 Opting Out of the Auto Enrolment Pension Scheme

If you have been automatically enrolled into the base pension scheme but do not wish to stay in, you can opt out within one month of your date of enrolment. If you opt out by this date, any contributions that have been deducted from your pay will be reimbursed. Following auto enrolment, The People's Pension will email you with a joining pack and the pack will contain the necessary information and form to complete if you choose to opt out. **You cannot opt out before you have been automatically enrolled.** If you do not opt out within one month you can stop contributing at any time but your contributions and your employer's contributions will remain invested in your pension pot until you take your benefits.

2.6.4 Distribution of Pension Information

All information regarding pension schemes including updates on new legislation will be sent to employees via your private email address or using your OxSFC email address, if this is not supplied. It is advisable to ensure that the Finance Manager has your latest private email address and to send it to the pension provider on request. Opt out information for auto enrolment will also be sent to you via email from The People's Pension in their enrolment pack. So if you are auto enrolled and intend to opt out, it is imperative that you provide the Finance Manager with a current email address.

For further information regarding the workplace pension, please refer to the government website: www.gov.uk/workplace-pensions.

2.7 ANNUAL HOLIDAYS, TIME OFF IN LIEU & INVOLUNTARY ABSENCE

The annual leave year runs from 1st September to 31st August of each year. Each employee's annual holiday entitlement is detailed in her or his contract of employment. If your employment commenced or terminates part way through the holiday year, your leave entitlement will be amended on a pro rata basis.

Holiday can only be taken with the approval of your line manager and a member of the Senior Management Team (Principal or Assistant Principals); however, for operational reasons the following restrictions apply:

- Sufficient notice of your intention to take holiday must be given; a minimum of at least two weeks prior to the leave period.
- Teaching staff should take holiday outside of term time. Holiday at any other time is subject to the agreement of the Assistant Principals
- Non-teaching staff must take holiday at times convenient to the College according to operational requirements
- Non-teaching staff, Curriculum Managers and Senior Tutors should not take holiday during the main recruitment period from the publication of A Level and AS-level results in August to the end of September. Leave will be allowed only in exceptional circumstances.
- Non-teaching staff should not take more than 10 consecutive days of holiday. More than this will be allowed in exceptional circumstances only.
- As part of the annual entitlement non-teaching staff will be expected to take between 1 – 3 days as holiday during the Christmas period when the College closes.

Because of operational constraints it may not be possible to take leave on a public holiday for example for ERC. Where this is the case, time will be given off in lieu. Teaching staff may be remunerated for working on a public bank holiday if agreed in advance with the Principal or Assistant Principals. With the exception of ERC, teaching will not take place on bank holidays. Holiday bookings should not be made until annual leave has been authorised by your line manager. To request authorisation an email detailing the dates required is sent to your line manager

Ordinarily, you are expected to take your leave entitlement during the leave year. Outstanding leave may not be carried over into the following leave year other than in exceptional circumstances and only by agreement with the Principal or appointed deputy. Salaried staff may have permission to carry forward up to three days unused holiday entitlement at the end of each holiday year. If permission to carry leave over is not granted, it will be lost and you will not be paid for leave not taken. The one exception to this is where you have made a reasonable request to take all outstanding holiday prior to the expiry of the leave year and the request has been refused (or it has been granted but it is not reasonably practicable for you to take the holiday prior to the expiry of the holiday year).

If you are leaving the employment of OxSFC, your holiday entitlement will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. You may be required to take any unused holiday entitlement during your notice period or you may be paid an additional amount in lieu. If agreed or because of operational demands you have not taken this entitlement at the time you leave, you will be paid accrued statutory holiday pay calculated in proportion to the period already worked during the leave year less the value of any days of holiday already taken. You have no automatic right to take unused holiday during the notice period; this is at the discretion of the Principal.

If you have taken more than your full contractual holiday entitlement at the time you leave, calculated in proportion to the period already worked during the leave year, then the College will be entitled to deduct an appropriate sum from your final payment.

In the event that an employee fails to give and work the full amount of notice of the termination of your employment as detailed in your individual contract, a deduction equal to the amount of due notice not given or worked will be made from any holiday pay accrued but not taken at the date of termination of employment.

For the purposes of the Working Time Regulations, it will be deemed that the holidays stipulated by those regulations are taken and exhausted first as part of your contractual holiday entitlement.

2.7.1 Involuntary Absence

There may be occasions when it is difficult for you to come to work for circumstances outside your control, such as extreme weather. You are not expected to risk your safety by coming to work, but are expected to make every reasonable effort to get to work where it is reasonably safe to do so and to keep the College informed of your efforts. Staff who are unable or unwilling to come to work may not be paid, although the College may in its absolute discretion, choose to pay them or treat your absence as part of your paid holiday entitlement. In the event that the College has to close due to extreme circumstances staff will be paid the equivalent of your normal working hours during the closure period. However, where the College closes, for example between Christmas and the New Year staff may be required to use part of your annual leave.

2.7.2 Time Off In Lieu

Where time off in lieu is granted (**TOIL**), it should be requested in the same way as holiday and taken within 2 months or before the expiry of the current holiday year, whichever is sooner. The exception is TOIL granted for working the August Bank Holiday weekend; this can be carried forward to the next holiday year but must be taken within 6 months.

2.8 TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS, NOTICE AND REDUNDANCY

The period of notice you are required to give is set out in your contract. The statutory minimum period is one week. The length of notice of termination of your employment by OxSFC is similarly stated in your contract.

2.8.1 Redundancy Policy

Statutory redundancy is normally payable to any employee whose employment is terminated on grounds of redundancy, provided he/she has at least two years' continuous service with the College at the date of termination of employment.

If redundancies cannot be avoided, consideration will be given to applications for voluntary redundancy. If the selection of employees for redundancy becomes necessary, the following may be considered:

- Previous work experience and the ability to transfer to other jobs.
- Disciplinary, absence and conduct records.
- Job performance, experience and qualifications
- If all other categories remain equal, 'last-in, first-out' may apply.

2.8.2 Payment in Lieu of Notice

OxSFC will exercise its discretion in relation to payment in lieu in accordance with the relevant clause in your contract of employment. Please note that the conditions for payment in lieu are subject to the type of contract you have: either salaried or zero hours. Please refer to your contract for further details.

2.8.3 Garden Leave

If notice of termination is given by either side, we may, at any time and for any period(s), require the employee to stop performing your job and/or exclude them from attending the premises and/or assign them to special projects and/or limit your contact with employees or others connected with OxSFC or its business ("garden leave"). During any period of garden leave all contractual obligations towards OxSFC will continue to apply. Full-time staff may not therefore, by way of example, work for any third party, without written permission but must continue to ensure that they are available to attend work if required.

3.1 SICKNESS ABSENCE

3.1.1 Summary

OxSFC complies with the requirements of the *Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992* and is responsible for paying Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to members of its staff. This currently relates to periods of up to twenty-eight weeks of sickness absence in the majority of cases. Where SSP is paid it replaces the recipient's entitlement to state incapacity benefit. Payment is subject to normal statutory deductions and pension contributions. Staff are covered by the SSP scheme if they are off sick for 4 or more calendar days in a row (this will include absence due to an accident at work or absence due to an accident occurring while off duty). A list of those staff not entitled to SSP can be found on the Department of Work and Pensions website: <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/overview>

Rates of SSP are reviewed by the Benefits Agency from time to time. Current figures can be obtained from the Department of Work and Pensions website: <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/overview>

3.1.2 Discretionary Sick Pay

Any payment for time off sick above and beyond SSP (but inclusive of it) can be made in accordance with your contract and at the discretion of the Principal. Any such discretionary payment may be subject to notification and verification of sickness absence, normally by a registered General Practitioner (GP) and may be varied or discontinued at any time where upon SSP rules will apply.

3.1.3 Types of Absence

There are 2 main types of sickness absence:

a) Long-term Absence

Any period of absence from work because of ill health lasting more than four weeks will be deemed as long-term sickness. This includes:

Long-term absence because of a single illness or disability;
Repeated periods of absence arising from a single illness or disability;

Long-term sickness absence will require the submission of medical certificates.

b) Short-term Absence

Short-term absence can be for a variety of reasons over 1 day or several days. Frequent short-term absence involves patterns of absence due to minor illnesses that are usually not connected. Such patterns could vary from a relatively large number of single days of absence, to fewer occasions of absence involving a loss of up to a week or more, or a mixture of individual days and longer periods of absence. High levels of this type of absence may indicate problems which need to be explored and resolved. A total of 10 days or more of such absence within a 12-month period will normally lead to discussions under the terms of the procedures detailed below for the management of frequent, short-term absences. Frequent short-term absences may be self-certified or medically certified as requested.

3.1.4 Notification of Sickness and Sickness Benefits

a) Immediate Notification of Absence

If you are absent from work on account of sickness or injury, you or (where unavoidable) someone on your behalf should inform the College of the reason for your absence by telephone to Reception or via email to @staffabsence as soon as possible but no later than 08.30am on the day on which absence first occurs. In extenuating circumstances, such as being involved in an accident on the way to work, the College should be notified as soon as practicable by you or someone on your behalf.

When reporting your absence, you should give the following information:

- When you became unfit for work;
- The nature of your illness, which should be more specific than “unwell” or “sick”. If you feel uncomfortable disclosing the nature of your illness to Reception or in an email to @staffabsence please contact your line manager. You will still need to follow the notification procedure;
- How long you expect to be off work. If you expect to return to work the day after the 1st day of absence but were subsequently unable to return to work because of continued sickness, you should again contact your line manager and advise Reception before 08.30am of the second day;
- Teaching staff: The lessons that you will be missing with the work you would like the students to cover during your absence. Please follow the cover procedure;
- Any outstanding or urgent work requiring immediate attention;
- When you will contact your line manager again (and unless otherwise agreed, this notification should continue on a daily basis until the College receives any medical certification covering these points);

Please note that if you fail to report sickness absence or provide certificates according to sickness absence procedures, the College may withhold SSP or discretionary sick pay.

b) Absence of Between 1 and 7 Days

In respect of absence lasting between 1 and 7 *calendar* days you are required, as soon as possible, to complete a *self-certification form*. This is available from the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Boarding) or Curriculum Manager.

You may also be required to obtain verification of your illness or injury from a medical practitioner to receive any discretionary sick pay allowance.

c) Absence of More Than 7 Days

If you are absent from work because of sickness for more than 7 calendar days, you should obtain a Statement of Fitness for Work (“Fit Note”) from your doctor, stating that you are not fit for work and the reasons why. This should be sent to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Boarding) as soon as possible. If your absence continues, you should continue to send in Fit Notes to cover the whole period of absence.

If your doctor provides a certificate stating that you “may be fit for work” you should inform your line manager immediately. The College will discuss with you any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate your return to work, taking into account your doctor’s advice. This may take place in a return to work interview (please see para 3.3 below). If appropriate measures cannot be taken, you will remain on sick leave and we will set a date to review the situation.

d) Withholding Sick Pay

OxSFC may withhold statutory or discretionary sick pay if there is good reason to believe that your illness is not genuine. OxSFC may request that you be medically examined by its own designated doctor. If the College decides to withhold payment of

statutory or discretionary sick pay for any reason, you will be so informed. If you disagree with this decision to withhold payment of Statutory Sick Pay, you should contact the Principal and raise the matter informally in the first instance. It is open to you to progress the matter through the grievance procedure if necessary. If, after this, you still claim that you are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay, you may apply to an Adjudication Officer of the Benefits Agency, who will decide incapacity on the facts.

OxSFC can require you at any time to: produce an appropriate medical certification; or undergo a medical examination by a suitably qualified person of choice and at OxSFC expense. You will be required to co-operate in ensuring the prompt delivery of all relevant reports to the College. Without prejudice to Section 5(2) of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, but notwithstanding the provisions of that Act, you will allow the College access to any medical report which has been prepared by such a medical practitioner and/or by a medical practitioner responsible for your clinical care. You also agree to authorise your own medical practitioner to supply details of your medical condition to the medical practitioner appointed by us.

e) Qualifying Days

The Statutory Sick Pay legislation requires that an employer must agree those days which are to count as qualifying days for Statutory Sick Pay. The College has agreed that an employee's qualifying days for SSP will normally be Monday to Sunday.

f) Sickness Whilst on Annual Leave

Any entitlement to retain annual leave in the event of sickness whilst on leave will be given at the discretion of the Principal or appointed deputy.

If you are ill or injured during a period of pre-arranged annual leave you may request to treat the days of incapacity as sickness absence instead of annual leave. You must inform your line manager of your incapacity and its likely duration as soon as possible. The usual requirements for self-certification and Fit Notes will apply before your request can be considered.

Absence that has not been notified according to the above sickness absence reporting procedure may be treated as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence qualifies as gross misconduct and may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

3.2 THIRD PARTY CLAIMS FOR ABSENCE CAUSED BY AN ACCIDENT

If you are absent from work as the result of an accident or injury that happens whilst you are not at work and is caused by another person (e.g. a car accident), any payments made by the College under section 3 (including any SSP) will constitute loans. You must repay them when and to the extent that you recover compensation from the third party.

3.3 RETURN TO WORK DISCUSSION

Usually this will be a brief and very informal chat with your line manager on your return to work. It's aim in most cases will be to check that you're well enough to be at work and to let you know of any developments while you were away. If you have been away often, your line manager may take this opportunity to check that all is well and that there are no underlying problems causing the absence.

Where your doctor has provided a certificate stating that you "may be fit for work" the College will usually hold a return to work discussion to assess any additional measures that may be needed to facilitate a return to work, taking account of your doctor's advice.

3.4 LEAVE FOR OTHER REASONS

Additional leave may be granted, with or without pay, in certain circumstances. The following are some of the circumstances in which absence from work may be allowed. In every case you must apply in advance to the Principal or appointed deputy.

Failure to do so would be classed as an unauthorised absence, which qualifies as gross misconduct and may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

3.4.1 Exercising the Right to Time Off

Additional unpaid leave may be granted in certain circumstances, for instance to attend to the sickness of a member of your immediate family or equivalent, or to attend to a family or domestic emergency in order to enable you to make the necessary arrangements for continued care or attention.

In every case, save in the case of an emergency occurring overnight, or at the weekend, you must apply in advance to the Principal or appointed deputy.

In no case should you leave your place of work without having obtained the requisite permission.

As in the case of your own illness, members of staff who are prevented from attending your place of work, should inform the appropriate person of the reason for the absence as soon as possible, on each day of absence indicating how long they expect to be away from work.

3.4.2 Bereavement Leave

Leave of absence to attend the funeral of a person with whom there has been a close personal relationship may be granted at the College's discretion. Although there is no obligation to pay staff on bereavement leave, the College may elect, at its discretion, to make a payment.

The College recognises that it may not always be possible to request bereavement leave in advance. However, where it is possible, you should make a request to the Principal or appointed deputy. You should give reasons for your request and the number of days leave you would like to take.

Where it is not possible to request leave in advance you should contact the Principal or appointed deputy as soon as possible to advise them of the reason of your absence and the number of days of absence from work required.

Sympathetic consideration will be given to the need for additional time away from work if you are coming to terms with such bereavement. When your own health is adversely affected by bereavement, a short period of sick leave might be more appropriate and the Principal or appointed deputy will advise you accordingly. If you require extended time away from work to travel to or from a funeral or to carry out non-executorial duties associated with a death, you should discuss your requirements with the Principal or appointed deputy, who may, at his/her discretion, grant leave, which will normally be unpaid or taken as annual leave. In certain exceptional circumstances, a further limited period of paid leave for such purposes may be granted.

3.4.3 Visits to Doctor, etc.

If it is necessary for you to arrange a visit to your doctor, dentist or a hospital to receive treatment, or other necessary medical procedure during your normal working day, attempts should be made to arrange this in such a way as to cause minimal disruption to the work of your department. Permission to be absent from work for this purpose, should be sought in advance from the Principal or appointed deputy and will not be unreasonably refused. The College is not obliged to pay you whilst absent from work and may require you to take annual or unpaid leave. However, you can request to make up the hours instead and permission to do so may be granted at the Principal's or appointed deputy's discretion.

A disability requiring regular medical visits will be allowed in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

3.4.4 Antenatal Appointments

All pregnant employees are entitled to time off with pay to keep appointments for antenatal care made on the advice of their registered medical practitioner, midwife, or health visitor. Your line manager should be informed in advance of the dates and

times of your antenatal appointments.

3.4.5 Jury Service

If you receive a summons to serve on a jury, you should report this to your line manager. Operational demands may require you to apply for a deferral or excusal.

OxSFC is not required to pay staff whilst absent on jury service. Should you carry out jury service you will be advised at court of the expenses and loss of earnings that you can claim. OxSFC may pay you during this period, however this is entirely at the discretion of the Principal or appointed deputy. If you are paid during this period such payments will be less any amount which you can claim from the court for loss of earnings.

3.4.6 Voluntary Public Service

Members of staff should obtain the agreement of your line manager to the time-off involved before undertaking voluntary public service to attend council meetings, to serve as magistrates, school governors etc.

3.4.7 Flexible Working Policy

All eligible employees have the right to request flexible working by making a statutory application in writing to the Principal or appointed deputy. To be eligible to make an application an employee must have worked for the College continuously for the last 26 weeks. Further information regarding flexible working and submitting a statutory application are available on the government services website and can be viewed by following the link: <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working/overview>

3.5 ABSENCE FROM WORK

The effective operation of these arrangements in the interests of all employees is dependent on requests for additional leave being made only when necessary and in good faith. Against the general background set out in the introduction, your line manager may in appropriate circumstances ask for reasonable evidence that the leave requested is required for the purpose stated and withholding such evidence may result in loss of pay. Absence from work without good cause may also result in disciplinary action.

3.6 MATERNITY, PATERNITY, PARENTAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE

OxSFC complies with all statutory requirements for and entitlements to Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Adoption Leave. Further information is available from the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Boarding) or following the link to the government services website: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/time-off>

4 DISCIPLINARY, GRIEVANCE & CAPABILITY POLICIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

These procedures are designed to help and encourage members of staff to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance consistent with your terms and conditions of service. OxSFC recognises its responsibility to avoid the need for disciplinary action by providing support, guidance and constructive criticism. The aim of these procedures is to ensure prompt, consistent and fair treatment for all staff and to assist in enabling both the individual and OxSFC to be clear about the expectations of both parties. At the same time, the disciplinary procedures should not be regarded as a substitute for the good informal relationships which exist in the College and which may include informal admonition. For tutors on fixed-term contracts, the timings indicated below may need to be adjusted. Where an employee has less than a year's service, the College may elect not to follow a formal procedure prior to any decision to dismiss and there may not be any right of appeal.

These procedures are not contractually binding on the College and do not form part of the contract of employment.

4.2 DISCIPLINARY - SUMMARY AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Wherever possible problems should be resolved informally without recourse to formal procedures. Where it is not possible for a problem to be resolved informally, or the severity of the allegation warrants it, the formal procedure detailed below should be followed.

- 1 At any stage in the procedures an employee shall have the right to be accompanied by a single companion, who will be another OxSFC employee, or a full time officer employed by a trade union, or an accredited¹ staff representative.
- 2 There is no duty on a fellow employee to accept a request to accompany an employee and no pressure should be brought to bear on a person, if he/she does not wish to act as a companion.
- 3 The employee may also call witnesses to support his/her case at the disciplinary interview and any appeal arising from that interview.
- 4 No disciplinary action shall be taken against any employee until the case has been fully investigated.
- 5 At every stage in the procedure, the employee shall be advised of the nature of the allegation(s) against him/her, and will be given the opportunity to state his/her case before any decision is made.
- 6 Prior to any disciplinary interview the employee will be advised in writing of the nature of the allegations against him/her.
- 7 OxSFC reserves the right to suspend the employee on full pay while the allegations are fully investigated.
- 8 This procedure may be entered beyond stage one if the seriousness of a case warrants disciplinary action at a higher level.
- 9 A criminal offence committed outside of employment will not necessarily be treated as an automatic reason for disciplinary action, unless it is relevant to the duties of the employee.
- 10 An employee will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in cases of gross misconduct.
- 11 Formal oral and written warnings shall be noted on the employee's record for a period to be decided at the time, after which they will be disregarded.
- 12 An employee who considers that disciplinary action has been taken unreasonably, has the right to appeal against that decision (see below).

4.3 INFORMAL STAGE

- 1 OxSFC expects satisfactory standards of behaviour, attendance and performance from all its employees. Apart from the formal procedure for dealing with discipline it is part of the normal supervisory process that employees have brought to your attention the standards required and any failure to meet those standards.
- 2 Managers are responsible for encouraging employees to perform reasonably and effectively at work and should attempt to resolve matters informally with the employee before beginning the formal procedure.
- 3 Following informal action, coaching or counselling, if the required improvements are not made, or if the problem persists or is of a serious nature, then the formal procedure should be invoked.
- 4 Where improvement is required the employee will be informed about what needs to be done; how the improvement is to be reviewed; and over what period the change should take place. It will also be clear that if the desired improvement is not made, the next stage will be the formal disciplinary procedure. Equally, if following an informal meeting it turns out that no action is necessary, this should also be made clear.

¹This person will have received the appropriate training to represent staff members during disciplinary and grievance hearings.

4.4 INVESTIGATION

- 1 The Principal or appointed deputy will investigate the relevant facts of the situation. The purpose of carrying out an investigation is to find out if there is a disciplinary case to answer. The objective will be to:
 - (a) establish the nature of the allegations and the evidence to substantiate them and
 - (b) give the employee the opportunity to state his/her case.
 - (c) The investigator will report on the evidence to the Principal or appointed deputy who will decide if there are grounds for holding a disciplinary interview.
 - (d) Investigations will be conducted objectively and the College will ensure that matters are handled fairly and reasonably and in compliance with current legislation.
 - (e) As part of the investigation the employee may be asked to attend an investigatory interview, at which he/she may have the right to be accompanied. Where appropriate witnesses may also be interviewed and signed statements produced.

4.4.1 Suspension

- 1 In certain circumstances it may be in the interests of both parties for the employee to be suspended pending an investigation into the case. During his/her suspension the employee will receive full pay.
- 2 Only the Principal or appointed deputy may authorise suspension.
- 3 During a period of suspension OxSFC may contact the employee and ask him/her to come into the offices to help with the disciplinary investigation.

4.5 THE DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEW - PREPARATION AND CONDUCT

- 1 If, after fully investigating the allegations, there is reasonable belief that there is a disciplinary case for the employee to answer, in terms of his/her standard of behaviour, attendance or performance, a disciplinary interview will be held.
- 2 Once a decision has been reached to instigate the disciplinary procedure, a letter will be sent to the employee (normally 5 working days before the disciplinary interview), informing him/her of:
 - the nature of the allegations and the fact that the interview is to be a disciplinary one;
 - the date, time and location of the interview;
 - the right to be accompanied by a single companion, who will be another OxSFC employee, or a full-time officer employed by a trade union, or an accredited staff representative;
 - the names and roles of the people who will be present at the interview;
 - the names of any witnesses to be called by either party;

Where appropriate, the need for written statements from both parties to be presented to the Principal or appointed deputy for circulation at least 3 working days before the interview.

- 3 Normally the disciplinary interview will be conducted by the Principal or appointed deputy, with the allegations against the employee being presented by the relevant line manager. Where the allegations are made by the Principal, the interview will be chaired by an appointed deputy. The employee and/or his/her companion will be allowed to present your case and respond to the allegations, calling any witnesses as required.

- 4 Both sides may question each other and any witness called. The Principal or appointed deputy may also question both parties and your witnesses.
- 5 If at any time evidence arises which needs further investigation, then the interview will be adjourned and reconvened later.
- 6 The Principal or appointed deputy will consider the case and will decide if the allegations are well-founded, on the balance of probability and, if so, what level of disciplinary action should be taken (if any).
- 7 The factors to be taken into consideration when making such a decision are:
 - the gravity of the case
 - any guidance offered by the disciplinary procedure and insurer's advice helpline;
 - any precedents;
 - the employee's disciplinary and service record;
 - any mitigating circumstances.
- 8 The Principal or appointed deputy will inform the employee of the decision, either orally for a first formal oral warning or in writing for the first or final written warning and normally within 5 working days of the disciplinary interview. Where a disciplinary warning is given, the employee will be informed in writing, of the details of the expected improvement(s), the time span and consequence of failure to improve and of his/her right to appeal against the decision. In the event that further time is required for consideration of the case the employee will be informed of the decision in writing.
- 9 Where a disciplinary warning has been given, the letter will include:
 - the date of the interview and names/titles of those present;
 - details of the allegations that are/are not well-founded, on the balance of probability;
 - the improvement required of the employee;
 - the time scale within which improvement must be achieved;
 - the level of disciplinary warning and the supporting reasons;
 - the timescale that any warning will remain current.

4.6 STAGES IN THE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Stage One: Formal Oral Warning

Normally the employee will be given a formal oral warning if his/her conduct or performance does not meet acceptable standards. He/she will be advised of the reason for the warning, the improvements required and the timescale for improvement. He/she will also be advised that this is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure and that he/she has the right to appeal. A letter confirming the formal oral warning will be sent to the employee. The warning will be effective for a maximum of 6 months (from the date of the letter following the disciplinary interview). After that time it will be disregarded (save for evidential purposes), subject to satisfactory performance and/or conduct.

Stage Two: First Written Warning

If the employee's conduct or performance warrants it, or if a further offence occurs, a first written warning will be issued. The employee should be advised that, if there is no satisfactory improvement, further disciplinary action will be considered under stage three. The written warning will be effective for a maximum of one year (from the date of the letter following the disciplinary interview). After that time it will be disregarded (save for evidential purposes) subject to satisfactory performance and/or conduct.

Stage Three: Final Written Warning

If there is a continuing failure to improve, and conduct or performance is not satisfactory, a final written warning will be issued. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale for improvement. It will warn

that a recommendation for dismissal will result if there is not satisfactory improvement and will advise of the right of appeal. The final written warning will normally be effective for a maximum of 12 months. After that time (save for evidential purposes) it will be disregarded subject to satisfactory performance and/or conduct.

Stage Four: Dismissal

If conduct or performance remains unsatisfactory, and the employee/worker continues to fail to reach agreed standards, he/she will be dismissed. Only the Principal or appointed deputy can take the decision to dismiss an employee. The employee will be provided with written reasons for dismissal, the date on which the employment is terminated, and the right of appeal. If the dismissal is 'with notice', the notice period will be as stated in the employee/worker's contract of employment, but the college may deem it appropriate to make a payment in lieu of notice. In cases of gross misconduct the employee may be dismissed summarily.

Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is generally seen as misconduct serious enough to destroy the contractual relationship between the employer and the employee and make any further working relationship and trust difficult, if not impossible. Whilst it is not possible to specify all incidents which would constitute gross misconduct, examples of acts which normally would be regarded as gross misconduct include:

- fighting, or using or threatening to use physical violence against a student, another employee or visitor to OxSFC;
- serious negligence which causes or may cause unacceptable loss, damage or injury to persons or property;
- harassment or bullying of a student, another employee or visitor to OxSFC;
- deliberate damage to, or serious misuse of OxSFC property or the property of an employee, visitor, or other party associated with the College;
- serious insubordination or refusal to carry out a legitimate instruction, the consequences of such a refusal being that there is a clear breach of contract between the staff member and the College;
- theft, fraud, or deliberate falsification of records;
- incapacity at work through alcohol or use of non-prescribed drugs;
- irresponsible conduct of a nature likely to endanger the health and safety of the individual or others;
- bringing the College into serious disrepute;
- serious breach of confidence (subject to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998);
- making any misrepresentation in the course of the application for employment, whether or not the misrepresentation would have affected any decision to appoint you;
- serious failure to follow policies or procedures;
- refusal to carry out reasonable instructions

This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive. Dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct could, therefore, occur for offences not mentioned above which are of similar gravity, or where the contractual relationship between the College and the employee has broken down. In cases of alleged gross misconduct, the employee may be suspended without prejudice to his/her pay, pending a full investigation (see above).

If, on completion of the investigation and full disciplinary procedure, the college is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred and the recommendation is that the individual should be dismissed this may be done summarily, without notice or payment in lieu of notice. If, on the other hand, it is decided that the circumstances do not warrant dismissal, some lesser penalty may be imposed, including the employee being given a written warning. The employee shall be informed of the decision taken (see above). In this case also, a certificate of recorded delivery shall be deemed to constitute evidence of receipt.

4.7 APPEALS

- 1 An employee who considers that disciplinary action has been taken unreasonably has the right to appeal against that decision. He/she should submit in writing, to the Principal, notice of his/her intention to appeal within 5 working days of receiving the letter confirming the disciplinary action. The appeal must be received by the Principal within this time and must also set out the full grounds of appeal.

The purpose of the appeal is to establish whether the finding of the disciplinary interview was appropriate and procedurally correct.

- 2 Appeals will be considered by a senior member of OxSFC staff not previously involved in the case.
- 3 As soon as reasonably practicable and not less than 5 working days before the hearing, the College will notify the parties and members of the time and date of the hearing. The notification of hearing shall include a reminder to the parties of your rights and responsibilities for documents and witnesses (as listed below).
- 4 At least 10 working days before the hearing, the parties will send to the Principal the names of any witnesses and the written submissions (i.e. the grounds for appeal and any new evidence) they wish to have considered, together with a copy of any documentary evidence they intend to rely on at the hearing.
- 5 The Principal will send the names of witnesses and copies of any written submissions and documentary evidence to all parties as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 6 If the panel wish to call witnesses, the Principal should notify the parties as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 7 This procedure may, in the interest of natural justice, be varied and altered by the appeal panel. If any party wilfully refuses to comply with the timetable, the panel may dismiss the appeal, or refuse to allow the responsible party to submit documentary evidence, or written submissions, or call witnesses.

4.7.1 Appeals Procedure

- 1 At the appeal hearing the appellant shall have the right to be accompanied by a single companion, as stated above.
- 2 The manager making the original allegations will present the case against the appellant.
- 3 The hearing of the case will take place in the presence of both of the above parties.
- 4 The appellant, and/or his/her companion, first presents his/her case to the member of staff hearing the appeal, either personally or in writing, and has the opportunity to call witnesses and submit additional documents.
- 5 The member(s) of the appeal panel and the manager may put questions to the appellant. They and the appellant and/or his/her companion, may put questions to any witness.
- 6 The manager will likewise present his/her case and may call witnesses.
- 7 Whoever is hearing the appeal has the right to call other witnesses. Normally these arrangements are made before the meeting to hear evidence. However, whoever hears the appeal may wish to seek further evidence during the meeting.
- 8 Whoever hears the appeal will consider its decision after all the other parties have withdrawn.
- 9 The decision will be conveyed to the appellant (or, if requested, to his/her companion) as soon as possible. The decision will then be confirmed to the appellant in writing.

It is not practical to specify all disciplinary rules or offences that may result in disciplinary action as circumstances may vary. Employees should seek to maintain the rules and procedures detailed in this handbook, your contract and any appendices at all times.

4.8 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

4.8.1 Introduction

Any employee who has a complaint arising out of his or her employment should seek to have that complaint addressed by using the procedures outlined below.

It is expected that the majority of such complaints will not develop into formal grievances but will be dealt with and satisfactorily resolved through informal discussion, as described below.

However, whenever the formal procedures are used, the employee has a right to have his or her complaint carefully and impartially considered and to receive, after appropriate consideration and discussion, a final response which will either: explain to the employee why a situation complained of must stay as it is or a decision complained of will remain unaltered, or change the situation or decision complained of to address the employee's concerns, or provide details of an alternative solution which is acceptable to the employee and which is considered by his or her line manager to be appropriate, taking account of the complaint raised and the impact of the proposed solution on any other affected party.

4.8.2 Summary and General Principles

- 1 The procedures aim to achieve as rapid and effective resolution as possible.
- 2 Wherever possible matters should be resolved informally.
- 3 The procedures relate to any grievance concerning an employee's employment.
- 4 The procedures do not apply to the settlement of a grievance relating to disciplinary matters – for which there is a disciplinary procedure.
- 5 At any stage in the procedure, an employee may have the right to be accompanied by a single companion who will be another OxSFC employee, or a full time officer employed by a trade union, or an accredited² staff representative.
- 6 There is no duty on a fellow employee to accept a request to accompany an employee and no pressure should be brought to bear on a person, if he/she does not wish to act as a companion.
- 7 At any stage in the procedure, subject to the agreement of all parties concerned, there may be a suspension in proceedings of this grievance procedure to facilitate mediation, fact-finding or other non-adversarial discussions which might be likely to promote the chances of the resolution of the case at as early a stage as possible and without equivocation.
- 8 Any grievances that are considered to be vexatious or mendacious will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

4.8.3 Informal Stage

Raising a grievance is a formal procedure. However, the College recognises that some situations may not warrant formal steps; or, the employee may prefer to address the matter informally. OxSFC strongly encourages informal discussion to deal with an employee's concerns.

- 1 An employee who wishes to raise a concern informally should, in the first instance, raise his/her concerns with the appropriate line manager. It is hoped that in many cases it will be possible to achieve a solution with all those concerned considering a situation with mutual respect for one another and a genuine desire to resolve the matter.
- 2 In some cases an employee's concerns may involve his or her line manager in which case he/she may find it helpful to seek advice from another manager within the College. This person will then consider the employee's concerns and work with him or her and those against whom his or her complaint is directed, with a view to making recommendations that might, if adopted, resolve the matter without the employee needing to invoke a formal grievance procedure.

4.8.4 The Formal Grievance Procedure

Where an employee believes that it is either not appropriate to deal with a matter informally, or when an attempt at informal resolution has not been successful, and he/she wishes still to pursue the matter, the procedure set out below should be used.

- 1 At each stage of the grievance procedure the employee has the right to be accompanied at any meeting by a union representative, or by an accredited representative or other colleague of his/ her choice from within the College.
- 2 When arrangements for a meeting are being made it will be for the employee to arrange for the representative or person accompanying him or her to attend. The member of staff should also give advance notice to the person chairing the meeting of the name of any person accompanying him or her.
- 3 Written records, which will be agreed with and made available to the employee, will be kept at each stage of the formal procedure. Employees should note that, when a grievance is formally raised, it is not possible for documents and complaints to be kept "off the record"; those complained about are entitled to know the details of the complaint and to respond to it.

The timescales set out in the formal procedure and in the appeals procedure are indicative of what is required for a complaint to receive an appropriately prompt response. Where it becomes apparent that additional time is required this should be discussed with the employee concerned.

4.8.5 Bringing a Formal Grievance

The employee must set out his/her signed grievance in writing to his/ her line manager. The line manager may then pass the matter on to the Principal or other appointed senior manager.

Where the complaint is against the line manager, the grievance should be put to the Principal or other appointed senior manager.

4.8.6 Preliminary Meeting

The Principal or other appointed senior manager will invite the employee to a meeting at which the employee will, where this is not already clear, be invited to explain the basis for his or her grievance in order to progress the investigation of the grievance. Once informed in writing of the basis of the employee's grievance the Principal or other appointed senior manager will request a written response from any other party he /she considers appropriate. Written responses should normally be returned to the Principal or appointed senior manager within five working days of receipt of his or her request. Any written response will usually be supplemented by a meeting with any of the principal parties in the case; particularly any members of staff against who grievances are raised.

4.8.7 Resolution Meeting

- 1 Once the responses to the grievance have been received the Principal or appointed senior manager will arrange a meeting to hear the grievance. The meeting will be chaired by the Principal or appointed senior manager. Such a meeting will usually take place with 5 days' notice to the parties concerned. A formal record of the meeting will be kept.
- 2 The Principal or appointed senior manager will write to the parties, normally within 5 working days of the meeting, setting out his/her findings and resolving the grievance. They will also inform the member of staff raising the grievance of the means by which he/she may appeal against any findings.

4.8.8 Appeals

It is expected that the great majority of grievances will be satisfactorily resolved. Where, exceptionally, a grievance cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, a final appeal stage may be invoked as follows.

- 1 The complainant should register his or her appeal to the Principal within 5 working days of the receiving the original

decision. The employee raising the grievance should state why he or she is dissatisfied with the outcome of the original grievance meeting.

- 2 On receipt of an appeal, the Principal will notify the other parties concerned. An appeal meeting will usually be convened within a further 10 working days. The parties concerned will receive at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.
- 3 The hearing will enable the parties to put your cases, to present evidence from any witnesses, and to question the statements made by the other party and his or her witnesses. The complainant once again has the right to be accompanied by a single companion who will be another OxSFC employee, or a full time officer employed by a trade union, or an accredited³ staff representative.
- 4 The chairman of the panel will write to the parties, normally within 10 working days of the hearing, to convey his/her decision, which will resolve the grievance.

The decision of the appeal panel is final; there will be no further right of appeal.

³This person will have received the appropriate training to represent staff members during disciplinary and grievance hearings.

4.9 CAPABILITY POLICY

4.9.1 Introduction

The success of the College depends on the effective contributions of all staff.

Capability refers to an individual employee's ability to perform the work expected of them to required standards. The required standards are set out in this handbook; the job specification; during induction and appraisals. In some circumstances, for example where the poor performance arises out of negligence or deliberate acts, the disciplinary policy may be more appropriate.

The College recognises the capability problems may be outside an employee's direct control and may be related to underlying work problems or personal issues. The college will therefore attempt to deal with any capability issue sympathetically.

All staff have a PDR. The PDR allows for discussion about performance and to agree future objectives. Where performance and capability is thought to be an issue, managers are responsible for addressing these issues as early as possible.

Employees are responsible for their performance and for bringing to the attention of your line manager as soon as possible any work related problems or personal circumstances that may affect your performance.

4.9.2 Principles

Poor performance is not acceptable and will be addressed promptly and as constructively as possible. Any action taken will be taken only following an investigation into the causes of the problem. OxSFC is mindful that poor performance may arise from misunderstandings due to ethnic/cultural/gender/disability issues. Where this might be the case the matter will be explored and dealt with sympathetically.

If the cause of poor performance is a work related matter outside the control of the employee, OxSFC will give attempt to address this as soon as possible.

Where responsibility for poor performance lies partly or wholly with the individual employee, OxSFC will give encouragement and support to a member of staff who is willing to take reasonable steps towards improving their performance.

In most cases, attempts will be made to resolve performance issues informally through a meeting or meetings between the employee and line manager.

At any stage of the procedure the employee will be kept informed and given the opportunity to state his or her case before any action is taken.

At all stages of the formal procedure employees have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

In most cases a member of staff should not be dismissed because of a failure to perform to the required standard unless warnings and an opportunity to improve have been given. However, where a member of staff commits a single significant error, or a number of substantial errors which are attributable to incompetence, negligence or failure to meet the required standards of the job and the actual or potential consequences of that error are, or could be, extremely serious, warnings may not be appropriate. The procedure allows for earlier stages of the procedure to be omitted.

Nothing in the capability policy removes the right of a member of staff to take up the grievance procedure. However, once the formal capability procedure has been started any formal complaint or grievance will be suspended until the conclusion of the capability procedure.

4.9.3 Informal Procedure

The informal approach is aimed at bringing concerns to the attention of the member of staff, finding causes, identifying responsibilities and agreeing actions to be taken.

Where there are concerns about an employee's performance, manager and employee should meet and establish:

- the performance gap
- the causes
- the impact poor performance is having
- the actions to be taken
- who has responsibility for the actions
- the performance standards that are required
- the support to be given to the employee
- the timetable to review the agreed objectives Possible outcomes are:
- reviewing the duties, responsibilities, line management or other aspects of the job
- provide appropriate training or development opportunities
- by agreement, transfer the employee to a different post within the College
- instigating the formal procedure.

4.9.4 Formal Procedure

STAGE 1 – FORMAL VERBAL WARNING

If performance does not meet acceptable standards and remedial action has been ineffective (including informal action), or is considered inappropriate, the line manager will meet with the employee to discuss the issues. The employee will be given 5 working days' notice of such a meeting. If no satisfactory answer is given by the employee, he or she will be advised of the:

- improvement required
- time scale for improvement
- support to be given
- consequence of not meeting performance targets

A formal verbal warning will be given. A letter confirming the formal verbal warning will be sent to the employee and the right of appeal will be advised against the outcomes of the meeting. The warning will be effective for a maximum of 6 months (from the date of the letter following the meeting). After that time it will be disregarded, save for evidential purposes, subject to satisfactory performance.

STAGE 2 – FIRST WRITTEN WARNING

If the problem is more serious, or if insufficient improvement has been made, a further formal meeting will be held. If no satisfactory explanation is given, the employee will receive a **first written warning** confirming the outcomes of the meeting and the right of appeal will be advised against the outcomes of the meeting. A copy of the letter will remain on file for one year.

STAGE 3 – FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

If performance remains unsatisfactory or if the problem is sufficiently serious a final formal meeting will take place. Before any such meeting is held the circumstances of the case will be fully reviewed to ensure that sufficient support has been given to the employee and that a final formal meeting is appropriate.

If no satisfactory explanation is given, a **final written warning** will be given. This will state that the employee will be dismissed if no acceptable improvement is made within the agreed time scale and the right of appeal will be advised against the outcomes of the meeting. A copy of the letter will remain on file for one year.

STAGE 4 – DISMISSAL

If an employee's performance is still unsatisfactory and improvement continues below an acceptable standard, dismissal will normally result. The dismissal letter will state:

- the reason for dismissal
- the date on which employment will terminate
- the right of appeal

4.9.5 Appeals

Should an employee wish to appeal, notice to appeal needs to be given to the Principal or appointed deputy within 5 working days. Appeals will be heard by managers not previously involved in the case.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

OxSFC abides by the various UK laws that forbid discrimination in employment. Staff are protected in all aspects of the employment relationship, which includes recruitment and selection, employment terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, access to benefits, dismissal and post-termination.

It is therefore the intention that all employees shall have an equal chance of advancement and access to opportunity irrespective of any protected characteristics, including age; gender; gender reassignment; disability; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. It is the duty of every manager to ensure the terms of this policy are observed. If you feel that the general intent of this policy is not being implemented, then you should draw this to the attention of your line manager, in the first instance. Should the matter not be resolved satisfactorily, you may raise a grievance through the grievance procedures

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy, and therefore treat colleagues with dignity and respect at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff or third parties. College employees are expected to promote equality

and diversity at all times and challenge behavior which is contrary to the ethos of equality of opportunity.

OxSFC encourages any employee who feels that they have been unfairly treated to make a complaint using the appropriate procedure. We will make every effort to secure a fair outcome to every complaint. OxSFC will do everything in its power to ensure any employee making a complaint of discrimination in good faith will be protected from victimisation. Allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Any employee found to have acted contrary to the Equal Opportunities Policy (and this may include staff who turn a blind eye to actions which are contrary to the Equal Opportunities Policy) could face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

OxSFC complies with statutory requirements for the employment of disabled persons and young people. Please follow the links to the government services website for further information: <https://www.gov.uk/child-employment/minimum-ages-children-can-work>; <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/employment>

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- All employees have a duty of care to your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions and must abide by the general health and safety rules and procedures at all times. Staff are expected to be familiar with the College Health and Safety Policy. This is displayed in Reception or can be viewed on the College website. Employees should co-operate with the College to help everyone meet their legal obligations. Failure to comply with health and safety requirements and procedures may result in disciplinary action.
- No action is to be taken by an employee which could threaten the health or safety of themselves, other employees, students or members of the public.
- Smoking is not permitted in any part of the College premises or directly outside, including the use of e-cigarettes. Employees are required to ensure this regulation is also strictly observed by the students and any visitors or contractors on college premises.
- Any health and safety concerns should be reported to the Facilities Manager. Staff wishing to alert the Facilities Manager of any maintenance issues can email them via Maintenance@oxfordsixthformcollege.com.

7 HARASSMENT, BULLYING, DISCRIMINATION AND WHISTLEBLOWING

7.1 SUMMARY

OxSFC is committed to equal opportunities and to providing an environment in which all employees, students and visitors are treated with dignity and respect, and in which they can work and study free from any type of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. All staff and students are responsible for upholding this policy and should act accordingly. Offensive behaviour will not be tolerated.

Harassment may be unlawful where it is carried out on certain protected grounds, including sex, marital status, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age.

7.2 DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

A person subjects another to harassment where he or she engages in unwanted and unwarranted conduct which has the purpose or effect of:

- a) violating the other's dignity, or
- b) creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for the other

Harassment may involve repeated forms of unwanted and unwarranted behaviour, but a one-off incident can also amount to harassment.

The other person's motives are not the main factor in deciding if behaviour amounts to harassment. Just because certain behaviour may be acceptable to the alleged harasser does not mean it is not harassment.

Reasonable and proper management instructions given in a fair and proper way, or reasonable and proper review of a member of Staff's work and/or performance will not constitute harassment. Behaviour will not amount to harassment if the conduct complained of could not reasonably be perceived as offensive.

7.3 BULLYING

Bullying is a form of harassment. It may be characterised by offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. It may not be based, or may not appear to be based, on gender, race or any other specific factor.

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOUR THAT MAY AMOUNT TO HARASSMENT:

- suggestive comments or body language;
- verbal or physical threats;
- insulting, abusive, embarrassing or patronising behaviour or comments;
- offensive gestures, language, rumors, gossip or jokes;
- humiliating, intimidating, demeaning and/or persistent criticism;
- open hostility;
- isolation or exclusion from normal work or study place, conversations, or social events;
- publishing, circulating or displaying pornographic, racist, sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive pictures or other materials;
- unwanted physical contact, ranging from an invasion of space to a serious assault.

The above is not exhaustive. All examples may also amount to bullying, particularly when the conduct is coupled with the inappropriate exercise of power or authority over another person.

Many of the examples of behaviour may occur through the use of internet, email or telephone including cyber bullying: the use of the internet and related technologies to harm another employee or a student of the College in a deliberate, repeated and hostile matter.

Being under the influence of alcohol or similarly intoxicated will not be admitted as an excuse for harassment or bullying.

7.4 DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination may be unlawful where it is carried out on certain protected grounds, including marital status, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender or age.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.

Direct discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic (as above). For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because it is considered they will not "fit in", could be direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination occurs where an individual is subject to an unjustified provision, criterion or practice which puts them at a particular disadvantage because of, for instance, their sex or race. For example, a height requirement would be likely to eliminate proportionately more women than men. If this criterion cannot be objectively justified for a reason unconnected with sex, it would be indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex.

Discrimination also includes victimisation (less favorable treatment in response to certain action taken to raise concerns about discrimination) and harassment (dealt with above).

7.5 WHISTLEBLOWING

OxSFC is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity and expects all staff to maintain high standards. However, all organisations face the risk of matters going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harboring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring, or to address them when they do occur, in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy available on the OxSFC website.

The aim of the policy is to encourage staff to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible, in the knowledge that such concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, as appropriate and that your confidentiality will be respected. The policy is intended to provide guidance as to how to raise those concerns and to reassure staff that they should be able to raise genuine concerns in good faith without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work. A whistleblower is a person who raises a genuine concern in good faith about such matters. If you have any genuine concerns related to suspected wrongdoing or danger affecting any of OxSFC's activities (a whistleblowing concern) you should report it under this policy.

The whistleblowing procedure should not be used for complaints relating to your own personal circumstances such as the way you have been treated at work. In those circumstances you should utilize the college's grievance procedures. If you are uncertain whether something is within the scope of this policy you may seek advice from the Principal.

OxSFC hopes that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your line manager. You may tell him/her in person or put the matter in writing if you prefer. Your line manager may agree a way of resolving your concern. In some cases he/she may refer the matter to the Principal or appointed deputy.

Where the matter is more serious, or you feel that your line manager has not addressed your concern, or you prefer not to raise it with him/her for any reason, you should contact the Principal or appointed deputy.

A meeting will be arranged with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may be entitled to bring a colleague or union representative with you however if you are allowed to bring a companion they must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

A written summary of your concern shall be recorded and a copy will be provided to you following the meeting. In addition, we will aim, if possible, to give you an indication of who we propose to deal with your concern.

Once you have raised a concern, OxSFC will carry out an initial assessment to determine the scope of any investigation. The College will inform you of the outcome of our assessment. You may be required to attend additional meetings in order to provide further information. In some cases the College may appoint an investigator.

The College will aim to keep you informed of the progress of the investigation and its likely timescale however sometimes the need for confidentiality may prevent the College from giving you specific details of the investigation or action taken as a result. You should however treat any information given to you as confidential.

If it is concluded that a whistleblower made false allegations maliciously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

All staff are responsible for the success of the Whistleblowing Policy and should ensure that they use it appropriately to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.

8 MISCELLANEOUS

8.1 BEHAVIOUR AT WORK

All employees should behave with civility towards fellow employees, students and members of the public on the College premises. Staff are expected to follow the ethos and principles outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct below. Objectionable or insulting behaviour will render the employee liable to disciplinary action.

All employees shall use your best endeavours to promote the interests of the College and shall, during your working hours, devote the whole of your time, attention and abilities to the business and affairs of the College. Any involvement in activities, which could be construed as being in competition with or detrimental to the College, is forbidden.

Further, all reasonable instructions from a manager must be followed.

Statements of a racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate or defamatory nature made on the College premises will be treated as a serious breach of policy and will not be tolerated.

Where political issues arise in the classroom. Tutors are required to deal with these in a balanced, impartial way and not to promote biased political viewpoints. This also applies to extra-curricular activities and events and is a requirement for all college staff.

English will be used as the language of tuition and administration of students at all times, unless otherwise requested by the Principal or appointed deputy. Outside the classroom English should be promoted as the language of communication for all.

8.1.1 Staff Code of Conduct Ethos

Central to the ethos of the College is a committed staff that promotes an inclusive, holistic and liberal set of values. Staff behaviour should exemplify the core values of:

INTEGRITY: We build relationships through trust, honesty and respect

PASSION & PRIDE: We love what we do and strive for excellence

CARE: We put our students and their goals at the heart of everything we do

CREATIVITY: We are not afraid to be different and we celebrate innovation

Each member of staff should demonstrate professionalism, trust, respect, care, equality, tolerance, empathy, and transparency. These qualities underpin commitment to Students and to our colleagues to create a professional community that collaboratively supports the social, intellectual, and emotional wellbeing and development of our students.

Professional Conduct

Staff conduct is unpinned by legislation and staff should seek to comply with both the spirit and detail of the relevant legislative requirements.

Staff should:

- be mindful of both student and their colleagues' diversity, and be committed to equality and inclusion, accommodating those differences that arise from gender, civil and family status, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, , religion, age, disability, religious belief, ethnicity and any further grounds outlined in equality legislation;
- uphold the reputation and standing of the profession and of the College, and work with integrity and judgement;
- comply with national and school policies and procedures which aim to promote student education, welfare and child protection;
- communicate effectively and appropriately, in a manner that is respectful, collaborative and supportive, and
- use appropriate electronic communication (email, texting, etc.) in line with current College guidelines to ensure transparency and safeguarding.

Commitment to Students

Staff should:

- act in the best interests of the students;
- create an environment where students can become actively responsible for the learning outcomes and holistic development;
- respond positively and be responsive to the differentiated learning and welfare needs of students;
- teaching staff should use positive feedback in lessons, on written work and in written reports to motivate students to improve their educational outcomes; and also raise cause for concerns in a timely, fair and constructive way, and
- foster a sense of community within the College.

Commitment to Colleagues and Collaboration

Staff should:

- work in a collaborative manner across the wider College community, respecting the skills and opinions of all members of staff, and treat colleagues respectfully and inclusively;
- promote collegiality by respecting colleagues' professional standing and opinions, and, in that spirit, be prepared to offer advice and share professional practice with colleagues; and engage with planning and evaluation at a College level;
- cooperate with outside agencies, inspectorates, and support services in the interests of students and the College as appropriate, and
- be respectful and work in a collaborative manner with parents/guardians, their representatives, and other agencies/partners in the educative process.

Commitment to Professionalism

Staff should:

- take responsibility for sustaining and improving the quality of their professional practice;
- be reflective and self-evaluate their own professional practice, their knowledge base – both role specific and in terms of current procedural recommendations – and take responsibility for their on-going professional development, and
- contribute to the review and revision of College practices to enhance student learning and the College needs.

8.1.2 Safeguarding and Safe Recruitment

a) Safeguarding

Every member of staff has a duty to safeguard our students. Please be familiar with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and do not put yourself in a position which makes you vulnerable to accusation or makes the student feel uneasy.

Any concerns should be addressed to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Boarding) or one of the Safeguarding team members.

All staff must complete the Level 1 Safeguarding qualification and appropriate Prevent training before joining the College and must be prepared to undertake further training, including the mandatory Level 2 Safeguarding training, as and when required by the College.

A key aspect of the College's safeguarding strategy is the easy identification of both staff and students on the College premises. As such it is a requirement for all staff and students to visibly wear your ID badge. It is expected that staff will challenge colleagues and students who are not exhibiting their ID badge.

If a student confides in you, please listen non-judgmentally, do NOT promise confidentiality and do not investigate. Reassure the student and ensure they are safe, report the conversation as above and make notes as soon as possible. For further details please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

In July 2015 it became a legislative requirement for all staff working in an educational setting to receive Prevent training to help protect our students from the influence of extremist views and possible radicalisation. In addition, we are required to promote fundamental British values with our students which we interpret, because of the high international mix of students in our College, as 'life values'. All staff are continually updated of the developments under the Prevent Duty and Safeguarding umbrella and appropriate training is rolled out accordingly.

b) Safer Recruitment

Safe recruitment is an important part of the safeguarding process. If you are involved in staff recruitment, please ensure that you are conversant with the College's Safer Recruitment Policy and keep notes of all interviews with prospective candidates. Before starting work all staff members are required to undertake a DBS check. A Barred List (which includes List 99) check with a written risk assessment may be put in place whilst awaiting the return of a DBS. Please note no teacher can be permitted to teach alone until the DBS has been returned and suitability confirmed.

8.1.3 Drugs and Alcohol

The following are examples of what is generally unacceptable: bringing alcohol or drugs onto the premises; being in possession of alcohol or drugs whilst on work premises or when representing OxSFC; consuming alcohol or taking drugs whilst on the premises (unless as part of a College organised social event) or when representing OxSFC; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours or when representing OxSFC; being unfit to work or represent OxSFC as a result of alcohol or drugs; concealing any such incident, including a failure to report it to the appropriate person; and helping anyone to breach this policy, whether deliberately or recklessly.

In some circumstances, bringing alcohol on to the premises may be appropriate, for example as a gift for a colleague. Possession or moderate consumption of alcohol may also be appropriate, for example at certain social functions and client meetings. Possession of drugs in the form of prescribed medication may also be appropriate at times.

If you are prescribed medication you must seek advice from your GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on your ability to carry out your job and whether your duties should be modified or you should be temporarily reassigned to a different role. If so you must tell your line manager without delay.

Ordinarily, non-prescribed drugs and alcohol are not permitted in any part of the work place and all staff are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out your duties safely without limitation due to the use or after effects of alcohol or drugs (whether prescribed or not). OxSFC recognises that some staff may become dependent on alcohol or drugs. Staff are encouraged to self-refer and seek help, in confidence, at an early stage by contacting your line manager or another appropriate person. Other sources of advice, support and information include:

NHS 24 helpline: if you are unwell and it cannot wait until your doctor's surgery opens and it is not an emergency requiring the 999 service, then use the NHS 24 helpline. **Tel: 111 Website:** www.nhs24.com/ContactUs

Drinkline: National helpline providing counselling, support, advice and information. **Tel: 0800 917 8282 (calls are free).** Advice and information can also be obtained from the **NHS website: www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/AlcoholSupport.aspx**

Talk to Frank: Free, confidential advice and information about drugs and solvents. Trained advisors can provide information about local services and give you support if you are concerned about a drug problem. **Tel: 0800 77 66 00. Website: www.talktofrank.com**

8.2 BEHAVIOUR OUTSIDE OF WORK

The College expects employees to maintain the standard of behaviour expected during working hours, especially at all times when with students. This includes the maintenance of professional working relationships and attitudes. Actions that threaten the professionalism or image of the College will be considered cause for disciplinary action.

8.3 COLLEGE PROPERTY

Use of college property for any purpose other than normally defined duties is not permitted.

Further, college property of any type, including course books, is not to be taken away from the College premises without prior approval. Books and materials brought into shared classrooms, must however, be removed at the end of the lesson and if college property, returned to the appropriate department such as the library or the exams office.

All employees must immediately notify the appropriate supervisor of any damage to college property or premises.

8.4 ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

Staff should not, without the prior consent of OxSFC, accept any payment, service, loan, gift, trip, entertainment or favour of whatever kind from anyone over the value of £50.00. Any gift over the value of £50 must be recorded in the College Gift Log as part of the anti-fraud regulations. This includes any cumulative value of any such gifts. In appropriate circumstances, for example where refusal of an unsolicited gift may cause embarrassment, staff should notify your line manager immediately in order that retrospective consent can be given.

8.5 RIGHT OF SEARCH

OxSFC reserves the right to search all staff while in the workplace and to inspect any vehicle, locker, parcel, package, handbag or case. An adverse inference may be drawn from any refusal to comply with a properly conducted search.

8.6 USE OF COMPUTERS, INTERNET AND EMAIL

8.6.1 General Principles

OxSFC equipment and systems must not be used:

- For any form of harassment of individuals. Individuals who are subject to harassment should report the matter to the Principal or your line manager.
- To download, access, record and/or store material that could be considered racist, sexist, homophobic or likely to be in contravention of discrimination, extremist, bullying or harassment legislation.
- Unreasonably or excessively for personal purposes

OxSFC reserves the right to view all material (including electronic mails of a personal nature) stored in its computer system (“the

System”).

Abusing the System or software, for example by deliberately or recklessly introducing or causing to be introduced a virus or by accessing obscene or other inappropriate material, may be regarded as gross misconduct and appropriate action may be taken in accordance with the disciplinary procedure, if necessary resulting in summary dismissal.

8.6.2 Confidentiality

Users of OxSFC equipment and systems must consider the confidentiality of information held by the College and must not breach this confidentiality by distributing such material to unauthorised persons inside or outside the organisation.

8.6.3 Equipment

Only software approved by the Principal or appointed deputy should be installed on computers owned by OxSFC. Users must not alter the set-up of any computer, printer or other device without consulting the Principal or appointed deputy.

8.6.4 Internet

OxSFC demonstrates a reasonable attitude towards staff, trusting them to act responsibly and appropriately in the use of the internet: staff are free to use it for purposes other than the requirements of your job as long as this does not interfere with your effectiveness at work. Staff should be mindful, however, that they must not:

Visit adult sites or other sites containing pornographic material or download any such images, video clips or sound files onto an OxSFC computer. Download and/or store material that could be considered racist, sexist, homophobic or likely to be in contravention of or likely to be in contravention of discrimination, extremism, bullying or harassment legislation.

In order to ensure the above rules are adhered to the Principal or appointed deputy or outside IT consultant may:

Conduct audits of PC's to check there is no unapproved or unsuitable software installed or that no modifications have been made. Randomly check activity on OxSFC's link to the Internet to check what sites are being visited. Use filtering software to prevent access to web content considered unsuitable. Monitor internet usage.

8.6.5 Social Networking Sites

Staff may access social networking sites in your own time, i.e. whilst on breaks, on your workstation PC's. However, if it is deemed by a manager that use of such sites is detrimental to a member of staff's work, access to such sites will be barred.

While OxSFC respects an individual's right to a private life, the College must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Staff using the internet or social networking sites are required to:

Not post entries that are publicly accessible which contain negative references to the College, its staff, students, business activities or products that would bring the College into disrepute or affect its impartiality.
Ensure they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the organisation.

Take care not to allow your interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between members of staff, students and clients.

Avoid comments towards staff and students that can be construed as derogatory or offensive: this constitutes an act of bullying or harassment as described under section 7.3

Seek prior permission from the Principal or appointed deputy and the individuals concerned, if they wish to share work-related

photographs, videos and comments.

Not disclose confidential information relating to the College or your employment with the College. Not to use personal social networking or email accounts to communicate with students

8.6.6 Security

Staff should be aware that networking sites are a public forum, particularly if the individual is part of a 'network'. Staff should not assume that your entries on any site will remain private. Staff should never send abusive or defamatory messages.

8.6.7 Enforcement

Action will be taken against any user in breach of the above policy. Any action taken, following appropriate procedures, might result in the termination of his/her contract of employment.

8.6.8 Email

Emails communicate information very effectively but can impede discussion and the message can be misunderstood, partly because your tone is easily misread. Your email is a reflection upon your work ethic and conduct. If in doubt talk to your colleagues and students directly. If something needs discussing, particularly with a group, ask your line manager to arrange a meeting. Before you send an email, consider whether:

- You are sending it to the most appropriate contacts
- A meeting would be better
- The subject fields which can be useful are specific and/or descriptive
- It is to the point and avoids confusion by sticking to one subject per email
- The message has been kept succinct
- It is abrupt or dismissive by being too informal
- Whether irony, nuances and humour can be misinterpreted as the tone cannot be heard
- The punctuation is adequate – punctuation rules still apply
- You have explicitly expressed deadlines, actions, expectations
- You have appropriately used the 'CC' function to copy in a minimum number of people and use 'BCC' for distributions lists only
- You have avoided using the automatic response to 'Reply All' on 'CC' lists to ensure your reply is only sent to those directly involved
- Whether an acknowledgement is required if time is short or an email requires a detailed reply and you need to respond fully later
- Use of the various distributions lists should be carefully considered. The 'all staff' distribution list in particular ought not be used without due thought

It is important to remember that emails are not private and are subject to Data Protection. They can be used in court as evidence, they may be unintentionally sent to the wrong recipient and unless encrypted. It is a useful rule of thumb to remember not to write anything in an email that could not be written on the back of a postcard!

College staff

All College staff are in a position of trust, and there are expectations that they will act in a professional manner at all times. Here is some key advice for staff which may help protect your online reputation:

- Ensure you understand your College policies on the use of social media, Childnet's 'Using Technology' guide has more information on what to be aware of.
- Do not leave a computer or any other device logged in when you are away from your desk.
- Enabling a PIN or passcode is an important step to protect you from losing personal data and images (or having them copied and shared) from your mobile phone or device if it is lost, stolen, or accessed by pupils.
- Familiarise yourself with the privacy and security settings of the social media and apps you use and ensure they are kept up to date. Advice can be found on the UK Safer Internet site advice and resources page for parents and teachers.
- It is a good idea to keep a check on your online presence – for example by typing your name into a search engine. If there is negative content online it is much easier to deal with this as soon as it appears. The UK Safer Internet Centres Reputation minisite has more information on this.
- Be aware that your reputation could be harmed by what others share about you online, such as friends tagging you in inappropriate posts, photographs, or videos.
- Consider your own conduct online; certain behaviour could breach your employment code of conduct.
- Discuss these same issues with close family, friends and colleagues, as you could become a target if they do not have security and privacy settings in place.
- Do not accept friend requests from pupils past or present. If you feel this is necessary, you should first seek guidance from a senior manager. Be aware that your social media friends may also be friends with pupils and their family members and therefore could read your posts if you do not have appropriate privacy settings.
- Do not give out personal contact details – if pupils need to contact you with regard to homework or exams, always use your College contact details. On college trips, staff should have a school mobile phone rather than having to rely on their own.
- Use your college email address for school business and personal email address for your private life; do not mix the two. This includes file sharing sites; for example Dropbox and YouTube.

If you are bullied online

- You should never respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. You should report incidents appropriately and seek support from your line manager or a senior member of staff.
- Save evidence of the abuse; take screen prints of messages or web pages and record the time and date.
- Where the perpetrator is known to be a current student or colleague, the majority of cases can be dealt with most effectively through the school's own mediation and disciplinary procedures.
- Where the perpetrator is known to be an adult, in nearly all cases, the first action should be for a senior staff member to invite the person to a meeting to address their concerns, and if they have a reasonable complaint, to make sure they know how to raise this appropriately. They can request that the person removes the offending comments.
- If they refuse, it should be an organisational decision what to do next – either the College or you could report the matter to the social networking site if it breaches their terms, or seek guidance from the local authority, legal advisers or support from other agencies for example, The UK Safer Internet Centre.
- If the comments are threatening or abusive, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitute a hate crime, you or a representative from the College may consider contacting the local police. Online harassment is a criminal offence.

8.7 HOUSEKEEPING

Both from the point of view of safety, appearance and consideration to others, work areas must be kept clean and tidy. Please leave offices and classrooms and your own and common work space in the kitchen and staff room tidy. Failure to do so, once prompted, will be considered as failure to contravene to the conditions of work and behaviour as laid out in this document. The importance of this duty cannot be overstated.

Please return dirty crockery to the staff rooms and place in dishwashers where available. We all share the facilities so please share the responsibility for keeping them pleasant to use.

8.8 EMPLOYEES' PROPERTY

No liability is accepted for any loss of, or damage to, employees' property brought onto the premises. Employees are requested not to bring personal items of value on to the premises. The College does not have insurance to cover the loss or damage of personal possessions whilst at work and employees should ensure your personal or household insurance adequately covers your possessions.

8.9 STUDENT WELFARE

In the interests of student welfare, occasions when a student appears to be uncomfortable or upset should be reported to the student's Senior Tutor or a member of the Safeguarding team.

In the interest of not only the students' academic progress but also their welfare, it is important that students are entered into the correct classes. Any student movement should follow the process detailed in the 2018/19 Tutors' Handbook.

8.10 STAFF WELFARE

As part of the College's insurance cover a 24-hour telephone counselling service is provided for use by all staff and their partners as required. This scheme is free of charge and totally confidential. The telephone number for the helpline is 020 71737796 and the scheme verifier number is 71735. Please make a note of this number as you may be required to quote it when you contact them quote it when you contact them.

The service offers advice on a whole range of personal, lifestyle and work related issues including, but not limited to:

- Work related issues including stress, workplace relationships, bullying and harassment
- Emotional issues including anxiety, stress, depression, low self-esteem
- Family and relationship issues
- Marital and relationship problems
- Substance misuse/dependency
- Health, critical illness and bereavement
- Financial management, restructuring and/or debt related issues
- Telephone counselling is also available to partners of staff

members Please contact the Principal if you have any queries regarding the scheme. The College offers it staff the following benefits:

- Eye care vouchers
- Cycle to work scheme
- Child care vouchers
- Season ticket loan

Please contact the Principal for further information

The College offers staff complimentary hot and cold beverages during the working day. Each tuition site has a staff room where tea and coffee is available throughout the day.

8.11 STANDARD OF DRESS

As employees come into contact with students and members of the public, it is important that they present a professional image with regard to appearance and standard of dress. Although we do not expect 'collar and tie' we do expect staff to be smart/casual in your attire.

8.12 COMPETITION AGREEMENT

It is a condition of employment that during the period of your employment or for 6 months after the termination of your employment, you may not approach any individual or organisation who has, during the period of your employment, been a client of the College, if the purpose of such an approach is to solicit business which could otherwise be undertaken by the College. Nor shall you during the period of your employment or for 6 months after the termination of your employment solicit, canvass or induce any person employed by the College to cease working for or providing services to the College.

8.13 POLITICAL/ RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The College has no political or religious bias and is not prepared to allow any political or religious activities on college premises without consent from the Principal or appointed deputy. Onsite cultural activities may include traditional national customs such as Christmas, Thanksgiving and Chinese New Year celebrations, but bias will not be shown toward any one student or culture during regular activities or lessons.

8.14 STATEMENTS TO THE MEDIA

Any statements to reporters from newspapers, radio, television, etc. will be given only by the Principal or appointed deputy.

8.15 USE OF EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Telephones are provided for the essential aspects of college business. Personal telephone calls can be made only in an emergency and with prior permission of the Principal or appointed deputy.

8.16 CONFIDENTIALITY, RETURN OF PROPERTY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

8.16.1 Confidentiality

"Confidential Information" includes (but is not limited to) Intellectual Property (as defined below), information in any form (including databases, paper, electronically stored data, magnetic media, film and microfilm and information committed to memory) relating to the financial position, corporate strategy, business development, business plans, business methods, sales information, fee structures, pricing and buying methods, client contacts, invoicing procedures and/or payment arrangements, contracts with clients, contracts with suppliers, employees, contractors, consultants, students, responses to tender documents, speculative projects and regarding OxSFC (or any associated organisation). It also includes any other information which is marked confidential (or similar) or has been notified to you by as being confidential (or similar) or could reasonably be considered confidential.

You shall not at any time divulge or communicate to any person (other than with the written permission of OxSFC or under an order of a competent court) or use otherwise than for the benefit of OxSFC any confidential information which you may have received or obtained while in the service of the College, except for information or knowledge which may come into the public domain through no fault of your own. This restriction shall continue to apply after the termination of your employment without limit in point of time but shall cease to apply to information ordered to be disclosed by a competent court or otherwise

required to be disclosed by law or which becomes available to the public generally through no fault of your own.

You shall not (without OxSFC's prior written consent) during or at any time after your employment send (by any means, including by email) or download any confidential information for your personal use or the use of a competitor or other third party. You must not memorise or copy any confidential information or send any property belonging to OxSFC or an associated organisation to any person, whether in paper or electronic format, other than in the proper performance of your duties.

The provisions of this clause are in addition to and do not limit any restrictions upon you implied by law. Nothing in this clause shall prevent you from exercising any of your rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

In addition, the employee shall exercise reasonable care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and shall at the termination of employment or at any other time upon demand return any such material in his/her possession and provide to the Principal or appointed deputy any password protected documents and the relevant password. For further information please see the Data protection policy.

8.16.2 Return of Property

You shall upon the termination of your employment immediately deliver up to OxSFC all materials including, (without limitation) all information, data, equipment, correspondence, documents, papers and property belonging to OxSFC or any associated organisation received or obtained by you in connection with your employment which may be in your possession or under your control, without keeping copies, retaining the ability to access copies or passing them to third parties.

8.16.3 Intellectual Property

"Intellectual Property" (IP) includes any copyright work, design right document, invention, discovery, software program, secret process, computer code or database (whether in hard or soft copy, machine readable form or in any other media) and any other works made or created by you in the course of your normal or specially assigned employment duties (which shall include time outside normal working hours) ("Works") and all IP rights in the same shall belong to and be the property of OxSFC. IP rights include copyright, patent, trade mark, database right, unregistered design right, registered design right and all other intellectual property rights.

You shall promptly disclose all inventions, software programs, computer code or databases (whether in hard or soft copy, machine readable form or in any other media) and any other works made or created by you as part of your employment with the College to OxSFC. If OxSFC reasonably decides that the same does not amount to a Work, it shall notify you and keep the same confidential.

In relation to Works, you will, if so requested by OxSFC (and at OxSFC's expense) do all such acts and execute all such documents as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this clause and vest all rights, title and interest in such Works to OxSFC.

8.17 PHOTOCOPIER

The photocopier is for the express purpose of copying essential office material and material for use in classes, in the college, where the content cannot be found in textbooks etc. All staff are requested to keep photocopying down to a minimum, and to observe the CLA guidelines located by each photocopier. It is particularly important that sourcing is maintained on all copied materials.

Resources, photocopied or published, that are used in class, can affect the image of the College and the quality of tuition it provides. No materials that may offend students or other staff members should be introduced into the College. All photocopies should be as neat and presentable as possible. Failure to do so will be considered as inappropriate preparation.

In the event of a breakdown of the photocopier provided, staff should contact the IT Manager rather than attempt to fix the

machine themselves as damage caused by staff will invalidate the insurance cover.

8.18 CLIENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

It is accepted that the College will receive comments, complaints and other demands from students and/or parents in the course of the academic year that may reflect poorly on administration and tuition. Such statements will be treated equally and with professional attention and in accordance with the Complaints Policy which can be viewed on the OxSFC website.

Should a complaint be directed towards an individual, OxSFC will decide if the complaint warrants contacting the individual to gain further information, prepare an action plan to solve any problems or begin disciplinary procedures. Should the individual be approached, discussions at every stage will be recorded and copied to all relevant parties to maintain a clear and open process.

9.0 COVID-19

Covid-19

Detailed information on Covid is provided to all staff in the relevant risk assessment & policy.
The College will follow government guidance & regulations to ensure the safety of staff, students and any visitors to the College.

Scenario 1 : College is open but some students temporarily unable to attend.

In the case of a late start or return to College, due to international travel restrictions and / or quarantine requirements, teaching & learning will be provided face-to-face to those able to attend. However a camera, conference speaker & microphone will be in operation in classrooms to allow students to attend remotely until they are able to join in person.

Scenario 2 : College building closure due to government regulations

When face-to-face teaching is not possible due to government regulations, online teaching & learning will take place, primarily using MS Teams. Google classroom may also be used where appropriate.
In both scenarios lesson registration will continue using Celcat. The precise coding of registers will depend on government regulations in operation at the time. Further information concerning this will be circulated by e-mail at the relevant time.

We hope you enjoy working for the College and welcome any
feedback