# Regent's Park College

# Academic Engagement Concerns Policy

## Section A: The Purpose of this Policy

A1. Regent's Park College promotes academic excellence and seeks to support all its students in fulfilling their academic potential. Regular failure to attend tutorials, answer emails, attend meetings and fulfil other academic obligations and expectations may have an underlying cause in physical or mental health or other welfare or pastoral issues. The Academic Engagement Concerns process outlined below is intended to be followed only where this is not the case. Where there are physical or mental health or other tutorial issues the Support to Study and Fitness to Study Policy will be followed.

A2. When joining the College, students accept certain academic obligations, agreeing to pursue satisfactorily the studies which are required of them. The College's expectations are stated in Section 8 of the Regent's Park College Student Handbook:

*A3. While the College encourages you to take a full part in the College community and the wider University community, your continued membership of the College is conditional upon your maintaining a satisfactory record of academic work. You must attend tutorials, collections and classes required by your tutor/s and hand in any written work at the time and place specified by them. If you cannot avoid asking for a tutorial to be rescheduled, you should approach the tutor as soon as possible, preferably in advance. If you are ill, you may be asked to provide a doctor's letter. Upon meeting a new tutor for the first time, it is your responsibility to establish a means of contacting them in case you should be unable to attend a tutorial. It may be impossible to make any alternative arrangements for a scheduled teaching session, when a larger group of individuals is due to attend. Please note also that it is often not possible to reschedule teaching to take place after the end of 8th Week of each term.*

*A4. You must satisfy any conditions required by the Examination Regulations relating to the particular School for which you are studying, e.g., for practical work or vacation courses. You can find the examination regulations for your course and year here: https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Contents*

A5. All students should also obey the University's rules on academic misconduct as defined by the University's Code of Discipline and any other relevant University regulations or codes.

A6. This policy applies to all current matriculated and non-matriculated students at the College other than matriculated postgraduates. It particularly applies to undergraduates, Astrophoria Foundation Year students, registered visiting undergraduate and postgraduate students, and students on the ministerial and theological courses the College offers.

A7. The person at Regent's Park College responsible for the operation of the Academic Engagement Concerns Policy is the Senior Tutor, under the oversight of the Principal. The Senior Tutor, in consultation as necessary with the relevant Director of Studies, is responsible for investigating allegations of academic misconduct under all stages of this policy.

A8. This Policy has three stages, which are:

(a) Stage 1: Informal Warning;
(b) Stage 2: Formal Written Warning;
(c) Stage 3: Academic Disciplinary Panel.

A9. Stage 1 and 2 can be bypassed at the discretion of the Senior Tutor depending on the exact circumstances of the situation.

A0. All outcomes are subject to final appeal to the Principal, whose decision is absolute. Appeals must be made to the Principal within seven working days of any decision or penalty being communicated to a student. The Principal will reply in writing, clearly setting out their decision and the reasons for it. This notification will include a Completion of Procedures statement, which will be required should the student decide to take this decision to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

## Section B: Stage 1 Informal Warning

B1. For minor academic matters, the Senior Tutor may issue an informal warning after investigation. This requires a meeting with the student to explain the allegations, issue the verbal warning and to explain the reasons for issuing the warning. The Senior Tutor should offer the student and, when appropriate, their tutor or Director of Studies, an opportunity to respond.

B2. Informal warnings are recorded in writing by the Senior Tutor and are placed in the student's file in the Academic Office until the end of their current degree course.

B3. If the student wishes, they may appeal an informal warning to the Principal, whose decision is final. Appeals must be made to the Principal within seven working days of any informal warning being communicated to a student. The Principal will reply in writing, clearly setting out their decision and the reasons for it. This notification will include a Completion of Procedures statement which will be required should the student decide to take this decision to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

## Section C: Stage 2 Formal Written Warning

C1. For more serious academic breaches, the Senior Tutor may issue a Formal Written Warning, which may also include other penalties including but not limited to:

- fines for missing scheduled tutorials, collections and meetings with college officers, up to the value of the missed contact time, calculated using the Standard Tuition Rate in the most recently issued Register of Payments from Conference of Colleges;
- a requirement to sit disciplinary collections (i.e., targeted academic tests or assignments designed to assess and ensure academic competence) on a specified date and achieved at least a specified mark.

C2. Formal Written Warnings require a meeting with the student to issue the warning and to explain the reasons behind it. The Senior Tutor should offer the student and, when appropriate, their tutor or Director of Studies an opportunity to respond.

C3. Within five working days of the meeting the Senior Tutor will send a letter to the student to issue the Formal Written Warning, detailing any penalty or requirement imposed and the deadline by which these must be satisfied by. The letter issuing the Formal Written Warning will be placed on file in the Academic Office and a copy will also be sent by the Academic Office to the Principal.

C4. A student may appeal to the Principal, who will consider the student's written submission, evidence from the Senior Tutor, and any additional material the Principal requests. The Principal's decision is final. Appeals must be made to the Principal within seven working days of any decision or penalty being communicated to the student. The Principal will reply in writing, clearly setting out their decision and the reasons for it. This notification will include a Completion of Procedures statement which will be required should the student decide to take this decision to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

### Section D: Stage 3 Academic Disciplinary Panel

D1. The Senior Tutor may refer more serious and/or persistent academic breaches to an Academic Disciplinary Panel. This includes, but is not limited to, the following situations:

- failure to reach the required level in disciplinary collections;
- failure to satisfy any penalties or academic requirements previously imposed by the College by the date specified;
- persistent academic misconduct;
- failure to achieve basic academic standards or expectations.

D2. The Senior Tutor may refer cases previously dealt with under the Support to Study and Fitness to Study Policy to an Academic Disciplinary Panel in situations in which a student's failure to fulfil academic obligations and expectations do not appear to have an underlying cause in physical or mental health or other welfare or pastoral issues.

D3. The Senior Tutor convenes an Academic Disciplinary Panel, comprising the Senior Tutor (or a deputy appointed by them) as chair and two additional Fellows and/or Stipendiary Lecturers of the College who have not been previously involved in the case. A note-taker from the Academic Office should attend Panel hearings.

D4. The Senior Tutor should notify a student in writing that an Academic Disciplinary Panel has been convened under this policy, listing the members of the Panel and attaching a copy of this policy.

D5. The Senior Tutor may appoint an investigator (who should normally have no previous connection to the case) to gather evidence. The investigation should conclude as soon as reasonably practicable, typically within a week, with written evidence and a final report if a case is found to warrant formal action.

D6. The investigator, if one has been appointed, will usually attend any hearings of the Academic Disciplinary Panel. If the investigator needs to ask questions of the student being investigated, this should take place in a Panel hearing.

D7. When the investigation has been concluded and a report compiled, the chair via the Academic Office should summon the student to a hearing of the Academic Disciplinary Panel at least five working days in advance in writing. This hearing may take place either in person or online.

D8. The chair, via the Academic Office, should provide the student with the details of allegations and any written evidence to be considered at the Panel hearing at least 72 hours before the hearing.

D9. The student's written response and any supporting materials must be provided for the Panel to the Academic Office at least 24 hours before the hearing.

D0. The student may be accompanied to the meeting by:

- a student representative (JCR, MCR or OUSU), a fellow student, or other adviser; or another supporter or adviser, as appropriate, including those who are able to support students with disabilities.

D11. The supporter should not normally be a member of the student's family, unless a compelling rationale is provided, and this is agreed in advance by the chair of the Panel.

D12. Legal representation will not normally be permitted, though reasoned requests for such representation may be made, and will be considered by the chair of the Panel.

D13. The student should notify the chair of the Panel at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting if they are to be accompanied and by whom.

D14. The student and any accompanying person may normally be present for the duration of the hearing until such time(s) as they are asked to withdraw to enable the Panel to come to its decision.

D15. The Academic Disciplinary Panel will order its proceedings at its own discretion and may seek advice and institute enquiries to assist the discussions, and may decide to call witnesses, including any relevant College staff working with the student.

D16. If academic misconduct is upheld, the panel may impose one or more of the following:

- the issuance of a Formal Written Warning;
- disciplinary collections with a specified pass mark;
- restrictions on holding office in the JCR or MCR, or from certain extracurricular activities.
- restrictions on attending certain College social or extracurricular events;
- directions for the provision of references;
  suspension of access to or exclusion from specified College facilities or loss of right to College accommodation;
- recommendation to the Senior Tutor that the student suspends their studies (with conditions imposed for return to study);
- recommendation to the Principal that the student's studies at the College are terminated;
- recommendation to the Principal that the student is referred to the University Student Disciplinary Panel.

D17. The Panel may decide to refer the student back to any stage of the Support to Study and Fitness to Study Policy.

D18. The Panel may also decide to adjourn its proceedings and continue the hearing at a future date, provided that the student is given at least five working days' notice of the date and time of the next hearing.

D19. The student will receive written notification of the Panel's decision from the chair within seven working days of the hearing. The reasons for the Panel's decision will be clearly set out.

D20. The Academic Office will retain copies of the Senior Tutor's letter establishing the Panel, the Investigator's report (if there is one), any written evidence considered at the hearing, the minutes of the hearing and the Panel's decision letter in the student's personal file.

D21. If the student wishes, they may appeal the decision of an Academic Disciplinary Panel to the Principal, whose decision is final. Appeals must be made to the Principal within seven working days of any decision or penalty being communicated to a student. The Principal will reply in writing, clearly setting out their decision and the reasons for it. This notification will include a Completion of Procedures statement, which will be required should the student decide to take the case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

### Section E: Ministerial Assessment

E1. For general behaviour and academic discipline ministerial students are subject to the same procedures as outlined above. However, the College course in ministerial formation is itself a discernment process in which there will be end of year reviews with the Pastoral Studies Team with the intention that the College commend students into the Baptist Union settlement process and then commend them into ministry.

E2. In exceptional circumstances the Pastoral Studies Team, in conjunction with the Principal, may decide not to commend a ministerial student for settlement within the Baptist Union. This decision-making process will include discussions with the student, their placement church and an appropriate Regional Minister.

E3. A student wishing to appeal against a refusal to commend them to the Baptist Union for settlement may appeal in writing to the Chair of the Governing Body.

E4. The written appeal shall be lodged within 15 days of the decision being taken, and the appeal hearing shall be convened within 21 calendar days of receipt of the written appeal, unless either side requires more time to prepare.

E5. The Chair shall convene an appeals panel consisting of three members: the Chair or Vice-Chair of Governing Body; a further member of Governing Body; and a member of Governing Body or Council who is an accredited minister of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. No Fellow of the College shall be eligible to serve on this panel.

E6. The student shall have the right to be accompanied by a friend or to have representation, legal or otherwise, at the appeal hearing.

E7. The College retains the right to have legal representation present at the hearing as a non-voting member to give legal advice.

E8. The student and the College, normally the Director of Ministerial Training, shall present their written statement of the case to the panel no later than 72 hours before the hearing.

### Section F: General Matters

F1. The College will take account of relevant legislation such as General Data Protection Regulation legislation, the Mental Health Act, the Human Rights Act, the Equality Act 2010, and the general rights and expectations of a student of confidentiality.

F2. The College acknowledges that as a result of implementing this Policy it will receive personal sensitive data and data of a confidential nature pertaining to the student and other third parties, and shall ensure that all such data is handled, processed and stored accordingly.