



TRINITY HALL
CAMBRIDGE

College Response to Gemma White QC's 'Report for Publication'

Executive Summary

This document outlines actions the College has taken following events covered in a Tortoise Media article published in February 2020 and recommendations received in the Inquiry Report. It accompanies the publication of Gemma White QC's 'Report for Publication' in September 2022.

The Governing Body thanks Ms White QC for her work on the Inquiry and welcomes its thoroughness, range and detail. The College has been working towards improving its internal processes and its institutional structures since before the Inquiry Report was received and some of the steps that predate receipt of the Inquiry Report are noted in what follows. The Governing Body is committed to taking action in response to Ms White QC's findings and recommendations in order to promote a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all our students, operational staff, and Fellows.

I. Appointments and Structural Reforms

1. The appointment of Ms Mary Hockaday as the **new Master**, the first woman to take up the post, heralds a new era for the College. She emerged from a rigorous and highly competitive recruitment process which assessed candidates in relation, partly, to the requirements of the role emphasised in the Inquiry Report.
2. A new **Head of Wellbeing** took up office in September 2022 to enhance the proactive implementation of wellbeing provision for all students, operational staff and Fellows. The Head of Wellbeing will also provide a point of contact, external to the Fellowship, where students can seek support or advice, or take complaints.
3. A new **Director of Human Resources** took up office in January 2022 and is able to offer support and advice to operational staff and Fellows separately from line

managers, including in relation to disciplinary and grievance processes involving operational staff and Fellows.

4. The new College post of **Dean of Discipline** was created in August 2020 to ensure a clear separation of pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities in all student-related matters.
5. A new **Director of Communications** was appointed in September 2020 in order to improve internal and external communications, and to offer professional communications expertise and support to students, operational staff, and Fellows.
6. A new Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee was constituted in 2019 and is tasked with maintaining **regular oversight of all the College's governing documents and policies** so that they remain up-to-date and fit for purpose.

II. Responding to the Inquiry Report

1. Overall

In February 2021, the Governing Body voted to **act on all the recommendations** of the Inquiry Report.

2. The Three Central Cases

The Inquiry investigated three specific cases where the way the College addressed student allegations of sexual misconduct had been brought into question:

- a) The handling of allegations of sexual misconduct made against a former Fellow. Ms White recommended that new protocols for taking **legal advice** be developed, **trustee training** be given to all Fellows, and, in particular, a **Working Group on Sexual Misconduct** be established.
- b) The handling of allegations of sexual assault made by two students against another student. Ms White QC made recommendations about the **appointment and appraisal of Tutors** and about various features of the operation of **student disciplinary processes**.
- c) The handling of an allegation made by a student named 'John' in the article against a now former Fellow. Gemma White QC recommended **disciplinary action** against the former Master (Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Morris) in relation to his handling of this allegation. She also **investigated the allegation**. This investigation and its overall conclusion remain confidential.

3. How Trinity Hall handles sexual misconduct and other allegations by students

After implementing the recommendations of the Inquiry, acting upon the recommendations of the Sexual Misconduct Working Group, and subsequent to other improvements in the handling of complaints made in recent years, the College wishes all its student members to be assured that support is available to them from multiple sources and that all complaints brought to the College will be handled according to published procedures. In particular:

- The **Dean of Discipline** role has been established to provide consistency in the handling of disciplinary matters, independently of tutorial and pastoral provision.
- A clear and transparent **Code of Discipline for Students and Postdoctoral Research Associates** was published in 2020.
- New **standard operating procedures** have been approved for student disciplinary processes (hearings of the 'Junior Members' Committee')
- Students are actively encouraged to report allegations of sexual misconduct to the University's **Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals** (OSCCA), which is specially resourced to investigate these allegations. Separate College complaint procedures remain available, however, for students who do not wish to pursue matters via OSCCA.
- From September 2022, students may consult the **new Head of Wellbeing** for pastoral support, advice, or to report concerns, as someone **independent from the Fellowship**.
- **Support and reporting options** have been made clear in different formats, including flowcharts in the *Student Handbook* (requested and delivered in 2020), and updated presentation on the website (recommended by the Sexual Misconduct Working Group and delivered in 2022).

4. Institutional and procedural responses

Gemma White QC has made many recommendations, some arising from the investigation into the three central cases, as above, others more generally and from other contributions to the Inquiry. These cover, broadly, governance, communications, student disciplinary processes, and tutorial and welfare matters. The actions the College has taken in response to all of these institutional and procedural recommendations are provided in this College Response, under the headings given to them by Gemma White QC, for convenience and so that readers can cross-refer.

Introduction

In March 2020, the Governing Body of Trinity Hall commissioned an independent and external Inquiry, led by Gemma White QC, into claims published in an article by Tortoise Media in February 2020 about the College's handling of three specific allegations of sexual misconduct in 2018 and years previous.

Ms White QC's confidential Inquiry Report was delivered to the Fellows on Governing Body, as trustees, in February 2021. The Governing Body had committed to publishing the findings of the Inquiry and the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry required Ms White QC to produce a Report for Publication.

The Report for Publication has taken some time to prepare, owing partly to the very sensitive and confidential personal information contained within the Inquiry Report (as indicated by Ms White QC in her statements of 3 November 2020 and 5 May 2021). As a matter of law, the College is required to take into account the privacy rights of all individuals, including students, operational staff, Fellows, and alumni, whether referred to anonymously or by name. The Report for Publication contains further information on the time taken between the Inquiry Report and the publication of the Report for Publication.

The Inquiry Report provides a thorough review of the handling (in 2018 and earlier) of the three cases described in the Tortoise Media article (see 4.1.1 in the [Terms of Reference](#)). In addition, Ms White QC has provided in the Inquiry Report a series of recommendations, some arising from these reviews, some emerging from other contributions to the Inquiry.

Governing Body considers it important to publish the 'Report for Publication', containing Ms White's recommendations, and this 'College Response' describing actions that the College has already taken and plans to take. Above all, the decision to commission a thorough Inquiry leading to a 'Report for Publication' and the actions outlined in this College Response indicate the Governing Body's determination to ensure that all members of the College community can access support and report concerns, that all concerns will be properly handled, and that Trinity Hall is a safe, inclusive and mutually supportive community in which everyone is able to thrive.

I. Appointments and Structural Reforms

All events described in the Tortoise Media article took place in 2018 or earlier. Since that date, the College has implemented a number of structural changes that are part of a broader modernisation and professionalisation process and, in that context, are mostly separate from the findings and recommendations of Gemma White's Inquiry. Six key steps have been taken:

1. Appointment of new Master

The appointment of Ms Mary Hockaday as the new Master, the first woman to take up the role, heralds a new era for the College. She emerged from a rigorous and highly competitive recruitment process which assessed candidates in relation, in part, to the requirements of the role emphasised in the Inquiry Report. The process was supported by an executive search firm, who provided transparency, an independent perspective, and helped to broaden the field of high-calibre candidates.

2. Appointment of a Head of Wellbeing

A new Head of Wellbeing, Ms Lisa Dery, began her role in September 2022. As well as proactively implementing wellbeing provision in College, she will also provide a point of contact, external to the Fellowship, where students can seek support or advice, or take complaints. This appointment was made following a thorough review of the College's mental health and wellbeing provision, undertaken by Ms Natalie Acton, as the then Head of Student Wellbeing in the University. The appointment builds on and enhances the College's existing wellbeing provision.

3. Appointment of a Director of Human Resources

In January 2022, the College appointed a Director of Human Resources, Ms Magalie Cooper, to provide specialist, professional advice to Senior Officers of the College in relation to all HR matters, including employment law and handling staff disciplinary and grievance procedures. The Director of HR is also well-placed to advise and support the College's operational staff and Fellows involved in relation to employment matters and institutional well-being. Above all, the Director of HR will help to ensure that College HR procedures are up-to-date and that good practice is always followed.

4. Creation of the post of Dean of Discipline.

The post of Dean of Discipline operated for the first time in the 2020/21 academic year and has been filled by Professor Alexander Marr since its inception. This post ensures the separation of disciplinary responsibilities from tutorial and welfare provision. Creation of the

post of Dean of Discipline brings the College into line with standard practice in other Cambridge colleges.

5. Appointment of a Director of Communications.

One of the concerns raised in the Inquiry Report was that the College's communications in relation to the events covered in the Tortoise Media article, including communications to its students and alumni, were poorly handled. The appointment of an experienced Director of Communications, Mr Paul Holland, in August 2020 was intended to provide a level of professional expertise and transparency in College communications. The Director of Communications provides expert support for students, operational staff and Fellows, as well as for senior management.

6. Establish a Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee

The Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee (then called the Statutes and Ordinances Committee) was established in the academic year 2018/19 and first met in July 2019. It is a formal committee of the College with approved terms of reference; it has expert external members and meets regularly with responsibility to report to the Governing Body. Its remit is to oversee the College's governing documents and to recommend changes where necessary. Increasingly it also exercises oversight over College policies, the Code of Discipline for Students and Postdoctoral Research Associates, and the Student Handbook.

The College considers these measures to be important, structural changes that facilitate and enhance the effective operation of the College as well as procedural improvements in specific areas that fell short of best practice in the events covered by Tortoise Media.

II. Responding to the Inquiry Report

Accepting and acting upon all the recommendations

After receiving the Inquiry Report, the Governing Body, at a meeting in February 2021, welcomed the Inquiry Report, thanked Gemma White QC for her work, and voted to act upon all the recommendations contained within the Report.

The remainder of this section lists the recommendations in the Report under the headings given to them by Ms White QC.

Recommendation regarding the (now former) Master

On 31 August 2021, a College statement announced the resignation of the Master, Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Morris. That statement indicated that the Inquiry Report had recommended that the Governing Body consider initiating disciplinary action against the then Master in relation to his handling of one allegation against a third party. The Governing Body initiated disciplinary action against the Master in May 2021 having determined that there was a *prima facie* case against him. The Master disputed the recommendation made in the Inquiry Report but considered that it was in the best interests of the College for him to offer his resignation. The disciplinary action initiated by the Governing Body was necessarily closed when the then Master resigned from his office, given that the ultimate sanction would have been removal from office had the complaint been upheld.

The Working Group on Sexual Misconduct

A recommendation in the Inquiry Report was that the College establish a Working Group on Sexual Misconduct to include current students and alumni (some of whom have specialist expertise in this area), as well as Fellows. This recommendation was publicised in a statement on 5 May 2021, when an open call to the student and alumni communities for members was advertised.

Drawing on external expertise and experience, the Working Group developed a cultural survey which it circulated in September 2021 to current and recent students, staff, and Fellows, in order to establish an understanding of the College culture in relation to sexual misconduct. The Working Group analysed the results and prepared a series of recommendations for further action. Its report was presented to the Governing Body (and student representatives) in June 2022, and the recommendations in that report are being implemented.

Governance issue: the role description for the Master

Ms White identified an unhelpful mismatch between the responsibilities required of the Master by the College's Statutes and Ordinances and the content of the then-existing job description, especially in regard to management of the Fellowship. Before the appointment of the new Master, Ms Mary Hockaday, a new and detailed job description for the Head of House was drawn up. It was informed by the findings and recommendations of the Inquiry

and specified, *inter alia*, the Master's responsibilities for Fellows' discipline and proactive cultural leadership.

Allegations of sexual misconduct against Fellows

The Governing Body accepts and endorses Gemma White QC's recommendation that a proactive approach is necessary to create a College culture where all forms of sexual misconduct are actively resisted. The work of the Sexual Misconduct Working Group is one expression of this. Additionally, in the 2021/22 academic year, the Vice-Master and the Senior Tutor formally introduced the compulsory 'consent workshops' that were provided for all new undergraduate students, and professionally facilitated by the local sexual health charity, Dhiverse. The Vice-Master and Senior Tutor took those opportunities to outline to new students the positive steps that were being taken to respond to the issues raised by the Inquiry and to indicate that support and a range of reporting options were available to students who experience sexual misconduct on the part of any member of the College, whether Fellow, operational staff member, or student. The overall aim was to assure the new cohort of undergraduate students that the College takes these matters seriously and that they can be reassured that any concerns will be handled sensitively and properly. The Vice-Master also wrote (on 20 October 2021) to all new and returning students with a clear statement of these procedures in conjunction with the publication of the revised *Student Handbook* at the start of Michaelmas Term. The compulsory 'consent workshops' are now a permanent feature of the induction programme undertaken by all new undergraduates and, from September 2022, will be accompanied by compulsory 'Bystander Intervention' training, both of which are professionally facilitated by Dhiverse. Senior leaders in the College introduce and endorse these sessions to demonstrate that the College does not tolerate sexual misconduct by any College member and will take appropriate action.

Student complaints

The Senior Tutor has worked with OSCCA to ensure that, as of 1 November 2021, all Tutors have written guidance on how, and to what degree, to assist students in writing their written statements when they wish to make a complaint or report a concern. The guidance will be included in Tutorial Packs for Tutors from Michaelmas 2022.

In relation to the recommendation regarding respondent students (that is, students against whom complaints are brought), the Senior Tutor has confirmed that normal practice is that communications with a respondent student will be in person and that appropriate support for

the respondent student will be made available. Where it is necessary for a Tutor to recuse themselves from supporting a particular student, the reasons will be clearly explained to that student.

Junior Members' Committee (for student discipline)

A Junior Members' Committee is formed when there is an alleged breach of the Code of Discipline for Students and Postdoctoral Researchers sufficiently serious for the Dean of Discipline to refer it, via the Master, to a Junior Members' Committee. A Junior Members' Committee is comprised of three Fellows and up to two Junior Members. As recommended by the Inquiry Report, the Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee has approved an amendment to Ordinance 12 governing JMC procedures. The amendment allows for the appointment of a legally-qualified chair in complex cases. The recommendation for the provision to appoint a presenting officer where deemed appropriate is to be given further consideration.

Additionally, standard operating procedures for JMC proceedings have been formulated to ensure good practice and to inform those taking part of their responsibilities under the Statutes and Ordinances. These standard operating procedures include, as per the recommendations in the Report for Publication, that the JMC should control its own procedure, in accordance with Ordinance 12; that it should make direct contact with complainants; that the College's Compliance Officer should be consulted before any sensitive personal information is shared; that legal advice should be taken directly by the Chair of the JMC; and that the JMC Chair should request an outline of the evidence to be provided by any witnesses and should provide witnesses, in advance of their appearance, with a written explanation of the proceedings and what their role will be. The standard operating procedures were approved by the Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee at its meeting in Easter Term 2022 and received by the Governing Body in the same term.

Tutorial system

An innovation for the academic year 2021/22 was that all first-year undergraduate students were invited to College a full week before the start of term. A full training and induction programme was devised and delivered including compulsory sessions on consent, wellbeing, resilience, academic study skills, racial awareness, budgeting and finance, personal development and careers advice.

The College recognised that new incoming students in 2021 arrived at College after two exceptionally disrupted years of schooling, following the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, the first Induction Week programme was specifically designed to support the new students' transition to University life. In particular, it was hoped that the programme would be better adapted both to cultivating an ethic of reciprocal responsibility and respect amongst new students and to delivering important training (such as the consent workshops) than had hitherto been feasible, given the hectic and crammed schedule of the shorter traditional 'Freshers' week'. During the academic year 2021-22, the College carefully reviewed the Induction Week programme, consulting widely with students and other stakeholders, and resolved that it should thereafter become an annual fixture.

The Induction Week programme, beginning more than a week before the University term starts, has helped to address some of the recommendations made by Gemma White QC (and, in many respects, gone beyond them). All Tutors now meet with all new tutees on the first day of the programme to ensure that a support contact is established at the earliest opportunity. In addition to participation in the externally-facilitated consent workshops, Bystander Intervention training is also provided. All students also participate in mental health and wellbeing workshops facilitated by the College's Wellbeing Team, and also attend presentations by the College's Discrimination and Harassment Contact. Participation in all Induction Week activities is compulsory for all new undergraduate students.

In 2021/22, a third postgraduate tutor was appointed, following the recommendation that enhanced tutorial provision for postgraduate students be considered.

The College has also instituted a new meeting of the Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies Committee before the start of Michaelmas Term in order to review and approve the *Student Handbook* before the start of the academic year. The current Student Handbook is made available to all students in electronic format before the start of each Michaelmas Term.

The Senior Tutor runs a process of continuous performance management of Tutors throughout the academic year. A formal 'system of annual appraisal for Tutors' has not been implemented in addition to this process, but further consideration will be given to this recommendation as reflection on the tutorial system continues. The Tutorial Awayday is advertised in the College Calendar, and the Awayday programme is always presented to the Unreserved part of the first Governing Body meeting of Michaelmas Term. The College will

continue to consider how best to share with students information on the professional training that all Tutors continually undergo.

Directors of Studies

All new Directors of Studies must attend the University's Director of Studies training sessions. In addition, Directors of Studies ordinarily monitor feedback from supervisors through termly reports, and other informal feedback. The Senior Tutor organises termly meetings of Directors of Studies in order to provide information and guidance, in addition to regular meetings with all Directors of Studies on an individual basis. Following feedback from the Sexual Misconduct Working Group, further guidelines are being drawn up to clarify appropriate professional boundaries in the context of supervisions and will be included in the *Student Handbook*. Any further clarifications regarding the provision of supervisions would most helpfully be drawn up on a University-wide basis as, in many subjects, supervisions are organised centrally by University Departments and Faculties and many supervisions take place at other Colleges or University premises.

College Discrimination and Harassment Contact

The College Discrimination and Harassment Contact, Dr Rona Smith, provided a valued and well-utilised source of support and direction for students. Dr Smith introduced herself to all new undergraduates during the induction week in 2021 in order to indicate the support and advice she is able to offer. From September 2022, Ms Lisa Dery, as Head of Wellbeing will act as College Discrimination and Harassment Contact, in response to the recommendation that a Contact be appointed who is not a member of the Fellowship.

Student Welfare Officers

The College recognises the valuable support that Student Welfare Officers provide to their peers. The Wellbeing Team met regularly with the JCR and MCR Welfare Officers at the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year to offer support and remind them of the internal and external support that is available to them. The College proposes to introduce bespoke training sessions on College governance and support and reporting policies, for newly elected JCR and MCR representatives, to accompany the training for Student Officers already provided by Cambridge SU, in Lent Term 2023.

Effects of Sexual Violence

As of Michaelmas Term 2021, all Tutors, Senior Officers, and Tutorial Office staff, had attended training sessions by OSCCA on Harassment and Sexual Misconduct in the University Setting, including the effects of sexual violence on survivors. The College Discrimination and Harassment Contact will seek further input from OSCCA in order to bring these sessions to the attention of other Fellows. The University also makes available its training and resources on preventing harassment and sexual violence ('Breaking the Silence') to all University members.

Communication

As this statement has indicated, the College acknowledged the limitations of earlier communications activity and appointed a Director of Communications, Mr Paul Holland, in September 2020. The Director of Communications recognises the need for communications to be transparent and frank, including instances when College matters are likely to attract media scrutiny. External communications support for the College is also available from the University's Office for External Affairs and Communications and other outside sources as needed.

A new statement has been drawn up on information sharing with students which addresses, as recommended, the types of information that will be shared with the student body and types of information that will not, with explanations in those cases. It also indicates the criteria as to the information that can be shared with students in Governing Body meetings (unreserved business) and that which remains confidential (reserved). This statement will be discussed with student representatives in the new Lent Term training sessions, as above.

Legal advice

A protocol has been drafted relating to how the Governing Body should take and receive legal advice. This protocol addresses all the elements recommended in the Inquiry Report, including that it is provided in writing, in full, and with any instructions and documents provided to lawyers. Approval for the protocol was given at the meeting of the Governing Body on 30 November 2021.

Trustee training

Farrer & Co, the leading law firm headquartered in London, delivered trustee training to the Governing Body in Lent Term 2022. All Governing Body Fellows are trustees of the College as a charity. The names of the trustees are published annually by the Charity Commission. The training confirmed the responsibilities of Governing Body Fellows as trustees. All trustees undertook the training.