Statement on Freedom of Speech

Trinity Hall (the "College") is fully committed to the principle, and to the promotion of freedom of speech.

Context

1. Colleges are required by law to outline principles for their members in relation to their right to freedom of speech in the context of other legal responsibilities of the College. This Statement takes into account the specific legal responsibilities, as set out in Section 43 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986, the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (as amended by the Higher Education (Freedom of Seech) Act 2023), the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

2. This Statement outlines the principles of free speech which apply to all Fellows, academic and operational staff, students and other members of the College, staff or students connected to the University or another College, and visiting speakers (i.e. speakers who are not members of the University of Cambridge or one of the Colleges) and all other persons invited or otherwise lawfully participating in College activities on College premises.

Principles

3. Freedom of speech means the freedom, within the law, to receive and impart ideas, opinions or information by means of speech, writing or images (including in electronic form) without interference.

4. Academic freedom, in relation to academic staff at the College, means their freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without loss of their jobs or privileges at the College, or the likelihood of securing promotion or different jobs at the College being reduced.

5. The College's core values include 'freedom of thought and expression' and 'freedom from discrimination' and it encourages its Fellows, staff, students, other members and visitors to engage in robust, challenging, evidence-based and civil debate as a core part of academic enquiry and wider College activity, even if they find the viewpoints expressed to be disagreeable, unwelcome or distasteful. These values extend to the JCR and MCR.

6. The College fosters an environment in which all of its Fellows, staff, students and other members can participate fully in College life, and feel able to question and test received wisdom, and to express new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions within the law without fear of intolerance or discrimination. In exercising their right to freedom of speech, the College expects its Fellows, staff, students, members and visitors to be tolerant of the differing opinions and perspectives of others, in line with the College's core value of freedom of expression While debate and discussion may be robust and challenging, all speakers have a right to be heard when exercising their right to free speech within the law. Neither speakers nor listeners should have reasonable grounds to feel censored or intimidated.

Policies and procedures

The policies and procedures the College has in place to imbed its values and commitment to freedom of speech are set out in its Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech.

Version Control Table

Version	Date	Major Change	Approved	Owner
2.3	Sep 2026	Revised paragraph 6 to refer to differing opinions and perspectives, removing the reference to tolerance of diverse identities.	21 September 2026	SORP Committee