

PART E - WELFARE

E.1 Introduction

Should you experience problems with your health and well-being at Brasenose, the College can offer help and support. The College Welfare Team is always ready to listen, offer confidentiality when appropriate, and suggest ways forward. They work closely with the College Doctors and the University Counselling Service. Whatever your problem, whether you believe it to be relatively trivial or something more serious, it is in your interests to take appropriate advice as soon as possible. Suffering in silence rarely leads to a resolution and often compounds the problem. This is particularly important if your academic performance is affected: if you declare mitigating circumstances early, the college will be able to help you.

E.1.1 Our Approach to Welfare

There are three principles that govern our approach to welfare at BNC. Firstly, the college sees you as *responsible adults*. Secondly, we believe that you are *resident here voluntarily*. Thirdly, we believe that you're here in order to *pursue academic excellence*. Those three things sound obvious, but they're important to state explicitly. They have an effect on what we offer, and on how we do things.

The main effect of these three principles is that welfare in college is reactive. Unless it's extremely obvious, no-one will go around asking you if you're unwell or if you have any sort of particular problem. We respect your privacy and autonomy, because you're adults. If you do have a problem, therefore, you have to make yourself known to someone in the "welfare network".

E.1.2 The BNC Welfare Network

Welfare in college is provided by a network of people across all three common rooms: it is a net supposed to catch most people. It's also sometimes called the "Welfare Team" (see E.3 below for more information). It includes:

- i) Peer Supporters
- ii) JCR and HCR Welfare reps
- iii) Junior Deans
- iv) the College Nurse
- v) the Student Support Advisor
- vi) the Chaplain
- vii) the Senior Tutor
- viii) the Dean
- ix) the Sub-Dean
- x) Dr Anne Edwards, the Diversity, Equality and Harassment Officer
- xi) Dr James Cones, the Wellbeing and Diversity Officer

Every member of the Welfare Team works on a "listen and refer" basis – and very often they can help. At the very least, they will be able to ease two features of any personal problem - the anxiety of isolation and the fear of the unknown. There is also the option to visit the College Doctors or the University Counselling Service without being referred.

It may be that some of you are reluctant to approach some of these people with your problems. In creating a broad Welfare Team, the College aims to provide a network of individuals, at least one of whom you may feel comfortable approaching, and find congenial and helpful. Every member of the welfare team is committed to a professional and considerate approach to welfare which respects the individual and their needs.

E.1.3 Confidentiality

Every member of the Welfare Team can offer confidential listening.

In Brasenose, we follow the University's guidelines on confidentiality, which may be found here:

<https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/disability/confidentiality>

The approach of the College Welfare Team is to assume any welfare matter is confidential, and to seek permission from the student in question if information needs to be shared. Matters of academic performance, student discipline or living arrangements, if there is no health or welfare element declared by the student in question, will be dealt with discreetly but are not confidential in the same sense.

Sometimes people worry about coming forward with problems, because we are a small, tight-knit community, and they worry that news of their problems will spread. Every member of the Welfare Team mentioned above knows how important confidentiality is, and how important it is to offer confidential listening. So that is what the Welfare Team offers: **our primary assumption is that what you tell us will go no further**. But sometimes problems require more than just listening – they require some sort of action. Therefore, in some cases, those providing a listening service will ask your permission to talk to someone else about your problem. For example, if you have a difficulty with an individual tutor, they might ask if they can talk to that tutor on your behalf. It may also be appropriate to let other senior members of the welfare network know you have a problem. But once your permission is sought you can always say “no” and confidentiality will not be broken without your consent. Only in very particular circumstances is it possible that confidentiality will be broken without your consent – when you or someone else is likely to harm themselves or others, or likely to be in breach of the criminal law.

E.1.4 Tutors

Your relationship with your Tutor is an important one, and you can contact your Tutor for help and advice on welfare matters. Although they are not formally trained for welfare work, they can help to put you in touch with other sources of welfare support when this is appropriate.

E.1.5 Parental and Family Involvement

Precisely because students are *responsible adults*, we will not seek contact with your parents or family without your consent. This is in accordance both with the University's Confidentiality Guidelines and the requirements of the Data Protection Act. If a parent contacts us with a problem, very often they ask us not to talk to you about the problem. As we make clear to parents, we do not accept that sort of relationship: our responsibility is to you. For example, if a parent contacts us to say you are unusually anxious and upset, we will listen courteously

but give no information to them. If we decide that their concerns are serious enough to warrant it, we will attempt to talk to you and see how you are. If you are not in danger of harming yourself or breaking the law, and you do not wish to seek any extra help with any problem, then the matter will rest there. You have a right to privacy and to governing your own affairs.

In Brasenose, we realise that parents will wish to take an active interest in the education of their sons and daughters, and that parental involvement has been part of that success which has brought students to Brasenose. But the College is never *in loco parentis*. Students here are legally responsible adults and will be treated as such.

E.2. Health

E.2.1 General

If you are unwell, please inform the College Office or the Lodge as soon as possible. With your consent, the Academic Administrator or Porters will contact the College Doctors or the Nurse or any other member of the Welfare Team on your behalf.

E.2.2 College Doctor

Brasenose strongly recommends you register with one of the College Doctors; you can do this on-line (at <https://www.visualproductions.org.uk/oxford/reg.html?college=brasenose>) before (preferably) or when you arrive. It is also possible to register by completing paper forms available from the practice or from the College Nurse.

You **must** register with a GP in Oxford: if you need to see your GP back home, you can do so as a temporary patient, but you cannot be a temporary patient in Oxford. This is both an NHS rule and a University recommendation.

Free treatment is available for all EU students and overseas students who have paid the NHS surcharge when applying for their visa.

The College Doctors are:

Dr Laurence Leaver
Dr Mark O'Shea
Dr Joanna Lambert
Dr Sarah Stonehewer
Dr Andrew Valentine
Dr Caroline Woods
Dr Marcus Evans

They can be contacted at:

Jericho Health Centre
New Radcliffe House
Oxford OX2 6NW
Tel 01865 311234
<http://www.leaverandpartnersjericho.nhs.uk/>

You may choose which Doctor you prefer to see (including other salaried doctors). Information on the practice is provided to new students prior to arrival, and can also be found on their website.

E.2.3 College Nurse

Our Nurse, Kinneret Milgrom, attends College from Nought to Ninth Week inclusive. Surgery hours can be found here: <https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/current-students/welfare-support/health-information/college-nurse>

The Nurse's surgery is on Staircase XII. They can also be contacted via email (college.nurse@bnc.ox.ac.uk) or via the Lodge.

E.2.4 College Dentist

The College does not have an affiliation with a particular dentist, therefore students should seek treatment at a dentist of their choice. In the case of a dental emergency advice can first be sought from the College Nurse. Students often use a local dentist on the Oxford Brookes University site called Studental:

Studental
Oxford Brookes University
Headington Campus
Colonnade Building
3rd Floor
Gipsy Lane
Oxford OX3 0BP
Open Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm
Telephone 01865 689 997

For easy online bookings, go to their website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/services/dentist/studental-dental-care-oxford/V007823>

Treatment of emergencies will usually be under the NHS arrangements. However, unless patients are exempt from charges on the grounds of age (under 19 and in full-time education) or in receipt of income related benefit (HC2 Certificate, Working Tax Credit), the appropriate NHS fees will be payable at the appointment. Please see the website below for costs.

For out-of-hours dental emergencies please contact NHS 111 service by simply dialling 111 free from any phone.

The College Nurse can also give advice and recommendations on local dentistry services.

Useful Websites:

<http://www.nhs.uk> - to find a local dentist

E.2.5 Sexual Health

The College Doctors and College Nurse are available to offer support and advice on matters of sexual health. The nearest Sexual Health Clinic is at the Churchill Hospital, Headington.

Details of how to find the clinic and the services it provides can be found here including how to access HIV prevention medication or order a free STI self-test kit online:

www.sexualhealthoxfordshire.nhs.uk/visiting/opening-times-and-how-to-find-us/oxford/

E.2.6 College Policy on Welfare Taxis

College will cover the cost of a taxi for genuine emergencies (e.g. urgent medical treatment at a local hospital or local GP, attending a Sexual Assault Referral Centre). The Porter on duty has the authorization to approve taxis for emergencies. Either the College Nurse, Dean, Sub-Dean, Chaplain, Senior Tutor, or Tutor for Graduates should be consulted before booking a taxi for non-emergency special circumstances and charging it to College. The definition of emergency is not fixed but for illustration a student with severe mobility problems, resulting from an accident or similar circumstances, would be eligible.

The provision of a taxi for non-emergencies must be approved by the Dean or Sub-Dean in advance and the taxi ordered via the Lodge. For guidance, the following non-emergency taxi journeys are possible, at the Sub-Dean or Dean's discretion, for qualifying students:

- i) transit to and from a valid BNC address* and University Departments for teaching-related purposes
- ii) transit to and from a valid BNC address* for medical appointments
- iii) transit to and from a valid BNC address* and College for teaching-related purposes, or to meet College Officers, or for other purposes agreed to by the Dean.

Funded taxis are not generally available for other purposes. All journeys must also take place between 8am and 8pm, except for medical appointments, unless the Sub-Dean or Dean agrees to other arrangements.

Students with disabilities are not bound by the above conditions and should discuss their mobility needs with a College Welfare Officer, the Nurse, or the College's Disability Advisor in the first instance. Subsidised taxis may form part of living support arrangements, in accordance with individual needs.

*Valid BNC address: Main Site, Frewin, Hollybush, St Cross, or a registered student address within Oxford.

E.3 Members of the Welfare Team

E.3.1 The Dean

The Dean, Professor Adam Perry (Tutorial Fellow in Law) convenes the College's Welfare Committee and plays a central role in developing and coordinating College policy on Student Health and Welfare.

E.3.2. The Sub-Dean

The role of the Sub-Dean is to respond to and support student welfare and discipline cases in the College, under the supervision of and on behalf of the Dean, and to work closely with the Junior Deans and other College Officers.

E.3.3 The Chaplain

The College Chaplain, Julia Baldwin, has a room (Heberden 1) just above the JCR. She is available to listen in confidence to any member of the College on any matter at any time, day or night, and is well-placed to refer students to agencies which may best help them. Knock on her door or email her to make an appointment to see her.

E.3.4 Graduate Advisers

Every Graduate student is allocated a College Adviser. You may contact your College Adviser for help and advice on welfare matters.

E.3.5 The Diversity, Equality and Harassment Officer

Dr Anne Edwards (anne.edwards@bnc.ox.ac.uk) is available to offer advice to all members of College on matters of diversity and equality. She is the College's Lead Fitness to Study Officer. Her availability and contact details are posted in the Lodge.

E.3.6 The Wellbeing and Diversity Officer

Dr James Cones (james.cones@admin.ox.ac.uk) is available to students. He promotes and advises on equality diversity and inclusiveness within the college for all members of its community, with particular emphasis on welfare for the members of our community from BAME backgrounds, and on issues arising regarding race and race discrimination.

E.3.7 The Student Support Advisor

The College employs a Student Support Advisor, Sebastian Petzolt, for nine hours per week with students in weeks nought to ten inclusive. He is registered as a psychodynamic therapist, and can offer advice about other sources of wellbeing support, confidential listening and short-term counselling. Sessions can be booked via: <https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/current-students/welfare-support/welfare>

E.3.8 The University Counselling Service

The Counselling Service provides confidential advice – email: counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk and see www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling.

It is located usually at 3 Worcester Street, Oxford but from March 2022 is running from a temporary address: Hayes House, 75 George Street, Oxford, OX12BQ. During term (weeks 0–9) reception is open Monday-Friday, 9.00am-5.00pm, for new callers. For pre-arranged appointments the service remains open Monday-Thursday until 8:00pm. The service is available throughout the year at reduced hours outside of term time. Online appointments are available during the University vacation period and to those on year abroad or suspending studies.

E.3.9. Peer Supporters

Peer Supporters in both the JCR and HCR are available to listen and offer informal welfare support to any member of College, and have been trained through the University Peer Support Programme. They are happy to be contacted privately, and also hold regular surgeries in College, which are advertised in Common Room mailings.

E.3.10. JCR and HCR Welfare Reps

The JCR and HCR welfare reps work together to offer informal welfare support to members of both common rooms. They are available to listen and provide advice about other sources of welfare provision within the College and University. They work closely with other members of the College Welfare Team and coordinate regular welfare events in both common rooms. The Welfare Reps are trained Peer-Supporters.

E.3.11 Junior Deans

The Junior Deans also offer welfare support to members of both common rooms as well as playing a decanal role. The three Junior Deans are senior postgraduate students who are employed by college to act in a welfare and decanal capacity (see section C2). They are available to listen and provide advice about other sources of welfare provision within the College and University. They work closely with other members of the College Welfare Team. They are trained in First Aid and also receive mental health first aid training. In emergencies, the on-call Junior Dean should be contacted at any hour of the day or night, during the week or weekends through the porter's lodge. Junior Deans are best placed, for example, to assist you if you are worried about a friend who is particularly distressed or has consumed a large quantity of alcohol.

E.4 Safety and Security

Useful advice on personal safety is provided in the *University Student Handbook*, section 3 – see www.proctors.ox.ac.uk/handbook/handbook/. Personal emergency alarms are available free of charge in College. They are issued by the HCR and JCR.

E.5 Equality Issues

E.5.1 Equal Opportunities

Brasenose fully supports the principles of equal opportunities and is committed to satisfying these principles in all its activities. The College's codes of practice are set out in G.3 and G.4, below.

In addition to the Diversity, Equality and Harassment Officer, all of the Welfare Officers (Dean, Sub-Dean, Chaplain, Senior Tutor) the JCR Women's Officer and JCR Diversities and Equalities Rep many others are available to offer informal advice and support to members of the Junior Common Room on matters of equality and inclusion within the College and University.

Dr James Cones (james.cones@admin.ox.ac.uk) is available to students particularly from BAME backgrounds, to support on issues arising regarding race and race discrimination.

There is a list of University harassment advisors, some of whom identify as BME or LGBT, at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/support>.

Further University-wide resources are provided on the EDU website here: <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/harassmentadvice>.

E.5.2 Harassment

The College is committed to protecting its members from harassment. It has adopted a Policy

and Procedure on Harassment which is set out in G.5, below and online at [https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/downloads/official information/Harassment Policy 2016.pdf](https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/downloads/official%20information/Harassment%20Policy%202016.pdf)

The Policy gives guidance on how any member of the College who has suffered harassment and wishes to make a complaint should proceed. In the first instance, you may find it helpful to seek advice from one of the College harassment officers, who are the Senior Tutor, Chaplain, and Diversity and Equality Officer (see above), or from another member of the Welfare Team.

The Dean, Sub-Dean, Senior Tutor, Chaplain, Nurse and Head Porter have all received sexual abuse and rape crisis training and can offer support to members of College affected by sexual harassment. You may find the Brasenose Welfare Term Card (found at the bottom of the webpage <https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/current-students/welfare-support/welfare>) and the following University website page helpful in considering all the options available to you: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/sexual-violence?wssl=1>

The University also runs an independent Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service. This is an all-in-one provision for any students regardless of age or gender who have been affected by sexual harassment or violence. They provide free support and advice, along with a safe place to be heard independent of your college or department. The service supports students in all situations, whether the experiences of sexual harassment or violence happened in Oxford or elsewhere, and whether it was recent or in the past. They will support you at your pace and will help you to explore your options, and they'll be there to support you whatever you choose to do. You can make an appointment (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) with one of their advisors by emailing: supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk More information is available here: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice?wssl=1>

Further information about the Oxfordshire Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre, a collective of women committed to supporting survivors of sexual abuse, rape, domestic abuse, and harassment, can be found at <https://www.osarcc.org.uk/>.

The nearest Sexual Assault Referral Centre is a 30-minute drive away from College in Bicester. The Centre provides a safe place where victims of sexual assault or rape can talk in complete confidence and receive care and support from specially trained and understanding professionals. Further information about the Centre can be found at <https://www.solacesarc.org.uk/>

The College can provide free taxi travel to the Centre in case of emergency: please ask for this at the lodge.

E.5.3 Staff Student Relationships

The College regards the professional relationship between members of staff and students as central to the student's educational development and wellbeing. The College has adopted a policy on Staff / Student Relationships which strongly advises staff not to enter into a close personal or intimate relationship with a student for whom they have any responsibility.

Members of staff are required to disclose any close personal or intimate relationship with a

student to the Senior Tutor or Tutor for Graduates who will apply the Staff Student Relationship Policy to put in place appropriate adjustments and safeguards for all concerned.

As part of implementing these safeguards, the College will want to discuss with you adjustments to your teaching, welfare provision or other activities. It is not a disciplinary offence for a student to be involved in a relationship with a member of staff and it is not a disciplinary offence for a student not to disclose such a relationship; the onus of the responsibility for disclosure falls upon the member of staff. Failure to disclose a relationship will lead to disciplinary action against the staff member concerned. In addition, a member of staff should also disclose any former relationship with a current student for whom they are given responsibility. If a student is concerned about the nature of their relationship with a member of staff, the student is strongly encouraged to have an informal conversation with one of the Junior Deans.

If a student is concerned about any other student's relationship with a member of staff that student is strongly encouraged to have an informal conversation with one of the Junior Deans.

The College policy and procedures on Staff Student Relationships can be found at:
https://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/downloads/official_information/Staff_Student_Relationship_Policy_for_Academic_Staff_Final2019.pdf

E.6 Students with Disabilities

The College will make reasonable adjustments to cater for the needs of students with a disability. Students with a disability are strongly encouraged to communicate in advance with the College with details of any disability, so that appropriate support and provision can be put in place before the beginning of the academic year.

Information on the support available to members of the College with a disability can be found at:
www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduate-admissions/184-disabilities/370-disabilities-special-needs.

E.7 Fitness to Study covering “suspension”

Undergraduates admitted to the College are normally expected to commence and complete their course of study within the specified duration of the relevant programme. It is recognised, however, that a delay or an intermission to study, “suspension” of studies will sometimes be necessary and in the interests of an individual student’s health or well-being. The College also recognises that in some cases reasonable adjustments are required to enable a student to continue on course, or return to study following a period of intermission. The College endeavours to deal with such matters sensitively and non-judgementally and in a spirit of collaboration with students. Early intervention and active collaboration with all parties are promoted by the College.

The Fitness to study policy outlines the pathways followed by College covering a variety of different cases where suspension or termination of study might be sought voluntarily by a

student, where a support plan might be put in place following advice from the University Disability Advice Service (or similar) or cases where College wishes to suspend or terminate a programme of study when the student concerned does not wish to suspend or terminate voluntarily.

In the first instance, any student wishing to discuss suspension of studies can contact the Senior Tutor or Tutor for Graduates.

The College policy and procedures relating to Fitness to Study can be accessed through the college website by clicking on the “About Brasenose” tab and “official information”. It can also be found here:

[www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/downloads/official_information/Fitness to Study BNC final OL.pdf](http://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk/downloads/official_information/Fitness_to_Study_BNC_final_OL.pdf)