Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech & Expression

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 Equality Act 2010 and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

2. This Statement outlines the principles of free speech which apply to all 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).

Principles
3. The College is strongly committed to the principle of freedom of speech and expression. It fosters an environment where all of its members can participate fully in the life of the College, and where each member feels confident and able to research, question and test received wisdom, and to express new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without fear of isolation, marginalisation or discrimination.

Equally, the College expects its members to receive and respond to intellectual and ideological challenges in a constructive and peaceable way.

The College also acknowledges its statutory duties in protecting its members and other people from "radicalisation", which in this context means being drawn in by others to support terrorism, or to commit acts of terrorism.

4. Subject to paragraph 3 above, no premises of the College will be denied to any member or body of members by reason of the beliefs or views of that individual or of that body or the policy or objectives of that body.

5. In holding to these key principles, the College will take into account its obligations regarding freedom of speech, the management of the health and safety of its members and the general public, the promotion of equal opportunities and prevention of discrimination on the grounds of belief, race, gender or sexual orientation or other legally-protected characteristics, and its duties associated with preventing people from being drawn into terrorism or the promotion of terrorist activities.

As an example of this, the College reserves the right to refuse access to its premises if it is of the opinion that a visiting speaker or the purpose of a meeting is likely to give rise to the incitement of crime and/or is likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Policies and procedures
6. In determining the likelihood of risk of harm to members of the College and/or the general public, or members of the College being drawn into terrorism, or otherwise promoting any violent or illegal action, the College publishes policies and/or procedures to set out and manage:
   a) the behavioural expectations of students and student unions, as set out in the College’s Dignity@Study statement;
b) the management of College events at which controversial views may be expressed (whether or not they are held at the College), as set out in the College’s Statement on Management of College Events; and

c) the management and conduct of visiting speakers at meetings held within the College, as set out in the College’s Statement on Management of External Events and External Speakers.

In all cases, the College’s Code of Practice for Upholding Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech and Expression at College and External Events should also be read in conjunction with the relevant statement(s), and its requirements met.

22 June 2016

Annex

Dignity@Study

The College’s core values encompass freedom of thought and expression, and freedom from discrimination. As a place of learning, teaching and research, the College provides an environment in which to exchange ideas, opinions and views. The College is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment in which the rights and dignity of all members of the University community are respected.

The College expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration. All members of the collegiate University community have the right to expect professional behaviour from others, and have a corresponding responsibility to behave professionally towards others. Appropriate behaviour is fostered by a University culture which encourages positive, supportive and open interactions.

The College recognises that to work and study effectively, students need a climate of equal opportunity in which they are respected and valued for their contribution, irrespective of their sex, gender identity (including reassignment), marital, parental or partnership status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, sexuality, religion or belief, or age. The University will not tolerate the harassment or bullying of any member of its community by another.

There is a need for procedures to deal with any less positive relationships in general and in particular with inappropriate behaviour (including bullying, harassment, victimisation, or discrimination) that may affect the well-being of individuals within the University. Students who have complaints concerning the behaviour of other students or Senior Members (and who consider that they have been harassed or bullied by another student or students or Senior Member); and students who have complaints concerning the behaviour of members of College staff (and who consider that they have been harassed or bullied by a member of staff), are advised that such complaints, including allegations of harassment or bullying which arise within the College teaching, learning and working environment will normally be dealt with under the College’s complaints procedures.