

Linacre College Policy on the Prevention of Student-Staff Relationships

1. The College is committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure that students are not subjected to sexual harassment.
2. This policy applies to all Fellows and members of staff who have academic, professional or pastoral responsibility for students. Due to the collegiate nature of the University this also includes staff who have pastoral duties to students from another college. This policy also applies to graduate student members of the Decanal or Welfare teams. In advertising any such roles, and in making any such appointments, this policy must be made clear. Henceforward, all references to 'staff' in this policy refer to staff as defined in this paragraph.
3. Whilst acknowledging that at a graduate college students and staff may be of a similar age, the power dynamic of a student-staff relationship is still in play. Therefore, this policy prohibits such staff from engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with students for whom they hold any such responsibility. Such relationships are always inappropriate irrespective of whether the student did not appear to object, appeared to give consent, gave consent or even instigated the behaviour.
4. All staff (as defined in paragraphs 2) are bound by this policy, irrespective of whether the relationship takes place on College premises or elsewhere. It covers face-to-face actions, as well as those which take place through other media such as emails, letters, telephone conversations, social networking sites, text messages, etc..
5. This policy operates alongside and is not intended in any way to limit or override, the College's general Harassment Policy and Procedure.
6. Should a staff member in a position of responsibility for a student become aware that the student's behaviour suggests the possibility of romantic or sexual interest in them, then it is their responsibility to report this to the Senior Tutor or Principal so that a replacement staff member can be found for the student. This prevents the original staff member from becoming vulnerable to allegations of sexual harassment.
7. The College recognises the sensitivities involved and will take all reasonable steps to keep concerns confidential. Information will only be shared with those who strictly need to know about the issues raised.

8. Any member of staff found to be engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship with a student for whom they have responsibility, even with their consent, will be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal.