



# Hertford College

OXFORD

## ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY

*October 2023*

*Replaces all previous versions.*

### **Introduction**

The College is committed to conducting its activities in accordance with the highest ethical standards, and all relevant legislation. It has zero tolerance for bribery committed by staff, members or associated persons, aims to reduce instances of bribery perpetrated against the College to the practical minimum, and will take appropriate action to prevent bribery in respect of its activities.

This policy applies to the College, and to all subsidiary undertakings.

### **Definition of Bribery**

The College adopts the definition provided by the Bribery Act 2010, under which it is an offence:

- to offer, promise, give, request, agree to receive or accept a financial or other advantage with the intention to induce or reward improper performance.
- to offer, promise, give or agree to bribe a foreign public official in order to obtain or retain business or an advantage in the conduct of business except where this is specifically permitted by law. The only **exception** is where not to do so would place an individual in imminent or immediate personal danger (see below).
- fail to prevent bribery intended to give the organisation a business advantage by persons associated with them.

The College recognises that the giving and receiving of gifts and hospitality as a reflection of friendship or appreciation where nothing is expected in return may occur, or even be commonplace. This does **not** constitute bribery where it is proportionate, and recorded properly, and in accordance with the **Gifts and Hospitality Policy**.

### **College Policy**

All staff, members, and those acting for or on behalf of the College are expected at all times to:

- act in a fair and impartial manner, without favouritism or bias;
- understand and comply with their responsibilities under this policy;
- guard against the commission or acceptance of bribery by anyone covered by this policy;
- report immediately any suspicion of bribery in relation to any of the College's activities.

*Except:*

- Where it is reasonably judged that the exception regarding personal danger applies, as defined above. Such instances should be reported as soon as possible after they occur.

Reports of suspected bribery will be investigated fully, and disciplinary or other action will be where a breach of this policy is judged to have taken place. In the most severe cases, this may result in dismissal for staff, expulsion for members, and contractual or commercial sanctions for third parties. It may also lead to civil recovery proceedings, and/or reference to professional bodies and/or the police or other criminal investigation agency and may result in prosecution.

Individuals who refuse to take part in bribery, or who report concerns under this policy in good faith, will be protected from detrimental treatment or retaliation. Malicious or vexatious reports may result in disciplinary action.

### **Application**

All reports required under this policy should be made as a disclosure under the College's **Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Code of Practice**. The protections and other provisions of that code will apply, as will the detailed processes for handling, reporting and recording the disclosure.

This policy will be brought to the attention of all new staff and members upon first joining the College, and to all existing staff and members on a regular basis.

*Treasury Committee, October 2023*