Expectations of Conduct

1. Expectations

1.1 The College's expectations of conduct reflect its legal basis, as a Christian charity, sharing, as a member of the UK's Evangelical Alliance, its Statement of Faith with a number of prominent Christian organisations. The College is constituted according to a traditional understanding of orthodox Christian doctrine and practice and, therefore, promotes community life that reflects and nurtures biblical values, including love and respect for individuals, property and the environment, and the promotion of well-being and human flourishing.

1.2 Breaches of these expectations that are readily understood as accidental and one-off or which have no serious negative impact on any of
- the emotional and physical well-being of other students and staff
- the cohesion of the College's communities
- the proper functioning of the College
- the material property of the College or of a member of its communities
- the reputation of the College

may be dealt with through the normal processes of encouragement and challenge within the College community directly with the person involved or by raising it with a student's personal tutor to take forward. All members of the College's communities have a duty to inform a student's personal tutor of such unacceptable conduct that they are unable to address themselves (for whatever reason).

1.3 Other breaches of these expectations should lead to the alerting of a member of the Conduct Panel, which may invoke Conduct Review Procedures. Students are informed of the members of the Conduct Panel during induction, and the College's Reception may be contacted at any time to ask for a confidential reminder of the current composition of the Panel. However, a student or staff member may choose to raise the issue with a personal tutor (typically, their own or that of the student concerned) or, if appropriate, the relevant Programme Leader. This member of staff is then responsible to raise the matter with a member of the Conduct Panel.

1.4 If there is any doubt about how to respond to behaviour, issues should be discussed with a member of the Conduct Panel for the sake of the maintenance of the community of the College and the good of its members who will refer their query to the full Panel for consideration and response as appropriate.

1.5 The College identifies two types of expectations, those of the Community Code that apply to all students, and those of professional codes that apply to students on programmes involving formation for specific professional futures. Breaches of a relevant professional code are handled using the College's Conduct Review Procedures in a way that is equivalent to aspects of other institutions' fitness to practise processes. While some issues may have a disciplinary dimension to them, this is not the language the College uses, and it is recognised that some fitness to practise issues are not about any ethical issues.

2. The Community Code

2.1 All students in their studies and in their interactions with other members of College communities and other activities while identifiable as a student of the College are expected to:
- respect the College as a Christian institution, founded in the classic Evangelical tradition[1]
- function within the framework of the College as it seeks to live out the commitments expressed in the College's statement of faith[2]
- demonstrate love, with related virtues of respect and consideration, for others, including staff, students and local communities
- act justly, fairly and honourably as an expression of their commitment to the College community
- adopt a diligent and co-operative approach to all aspects of academic life
- take responsibility for the creation and maintenance of a supportive educational community in which everyone can self-manage their learning, including challenging and/or reporting unacceptable conduct when appropriate
- demonstrate commitment to College life and activities
- relate positively with neighbours and residents in the wider general community around their place(s) of study, avoiding behaviour likely to cause annoyance or distress to members of their local communities
- maintain the good name of the College.

2.2 More detailed, separate documents describe expectations relating to
- the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
- issues relating to extremism.

2.3 The following non-exhaustive list contains specific examples of breaches of the Community Code that would lead to the invoking of formal Conduct Review Procedures (if not contact with the police or other authority):
- conduct which constitutes a criminal offence, including assault, theft, sexual abuse and any form of hate crime
- harassment of any kind, including by electronic means
- slander, bullying and any kind of oppressive, intimidating, indecent or offensive behaviour or language
- damage to others' or the College's property
- persistent deceit or dishonesty
- abuse of power
- disruption of the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the College, its students, staff or visitors
- breaches of policies, rules or regulations published by the College or a placement organisation
- behaviour which brings the College into disrepute.

2.4 Members of the College's community are particularly reminded of the challenges of upholding these expectations while using social media. There, users typically have a complex mixture of public and private roles and a set of relationships that combine professional and personal elements. It is easy to forget that a virtual arena may be quite public or that somebody might transfer comments made more privately into a more public arena. Because of this, two particular questions need to be borne in mind before a comment is posted or content added:

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[1] In its founding documents, the College subscribes to the Basis of Faith of the Evangelical Alliance.
[2] Particularly in relationship to others in the Christian community, see the Evangelical Alliance's Relationship Commitments.

- Could the statement be interpreted as harassment, bullying or slander of an individual, or bringing an organisation into disrepute?
- Does the statement breach confidentiality (pass on information, including photographs/video, that should be private)?

3. Professional Code for BA (Hons) Applied Theology and BA (Hons) Applied Theology (Youth and Community Work)

3.1 *Although these are separate programmes, because they share so much in terms of ethos and purpose, as well as communities and management structures, they also share a single professional code.*

3.2 The College's expectations that form this professional code are drawn from a variety of sources, principally:
- the National Youth Agency's "Ethical Conduct in Youth Work"
- the Church of England's "Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy"
- the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland's "A Code of Ethics for Baptist Union Ministers" and "Ministerial Recognition Rules"
- the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches' Code of Conduct Template for Senior Ministers and Ministry Staff
- the Association of Christian Counsellors "Ethics and Practice"

3.3 In turn, it is noted that the church codes listed here are based on the qualifications for church leadership found in the New Testament (see particularly, 1 Timothy 3; 2 Timothy 2-4; Titus 1).

3.4 It should be noted that while students who graduate successfully from the BA (Hons) Applied Theology (Youth and Community Work) programme receive professional qualification from the National Youth Agency and in some cases also the North South Education and Training Standards Committee for Youth Work, the other bodies whose professional codes have been consulted give no formal recognition to either programme. Nevertheless, these bodies represent the types of employers for which graduates of the programmes are prepared: it is essential to the programmes that students are able to practise according to such bodies' requirements.

3.5 Students on these programmes are expected to *at all times*:
- uphold the listed expectations of the Community Code
- model appropriate behaviour of youth workers and church leaders, including actively promoting the spiritual, physical and emotional welfare of others, seeking justice, and maintaining professional boundaries.

3.6 The following non-exhaustive list contains specific examples, beyond those listed above in relation to the Community Code, of behaviour that would lead to the invoking of formal Conduct Review Procedures:
- failure to seek to develop holistically as a person
- abuse of power dynamics
- abuse of finances
- failure to address an addiction
- repeated or serious failure to uphold appropriate confidentiality
- sexual activity with a young person over whom they have a leadership role (if Safeguarding expectations were breached during a placement, this would be an issue under the Community Code)

- sexual activity, including sexual intercourse outside of marriage, which is understood to be inappropriate according to the classic Evangelical tradition of the College's founding documents[3]
- bringing into disrepute an organisation with which they volunteer (including through a College placement) or by whom they are employed.

4.   Document History

17 December 2013	Approved by SMT
5 January 2015	Minor amendments approved by SMT: tidying up redundancies and adding in explicit reference to social media.
8 September 2016	Minor addition approved by Academic Board: references to Safeguarding and Prevent issues.
7 September 2017	Approved by Academic Board: minor changes and reordering to clarify and strengthen positivity in the balance of the document.
9 September 2019	Approved by Academic Board: amendments to examples of misconduct.
6 July 2020	Approved by Academic Board: clarification of which behaviours lead to informal processes and which to Conduct Review; separation of Community Code expectations from professional code expectations and creation of the latter section; underlining of the role of the tutor.
11 December 2020	Approved by Academic Board: addition of linkage to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; addition of example relevant external professional codes; amendment to more relevant link to global Evangelical statement about marriage.
16 September 2021	Approved by Academic Board: explication that panel membership is intimated in induction and that Reception can handle requests for reminders confidentially.
12 October 2021	Incorporated into Academic Framework
6 July 2022	Approved by Academic Board: Removal of reference to College Life Handbook; addition of material about social media (replacing Social Media Guidelines).

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[3] See, e.g., section IIE.2 of the Lausanne Movement's Cape Town Commitment.