

**THE RHODES SCHOLAR CODE OF CONDUCT
WITH EFFECT FROM TRINITY TERM 2026**

Table of Contents

Context.....	1
Preamble.....	2
Purpose and Application	2
The Rhodes Trust’s Aims	3
Prohibited Conduct	3
Events, protest and disruption	5
Periodic Review.....	6

Context

The Rhodes Scholarships form the core of a lifelong community that includes trustees, staff, Rhodes Scholars (in-residence at Oxford and alumni) and associated volunteers. The Rhodes community strives to uphold the highest standards of character, behaviour, and academic integrity. Scholars in residence are first and foremost members of the University of Oxford, its colleges and departments, and subject to the codes and procedures therein. The Rhodes Trust, and Rhodes House as a physical, programmatic and shared community space, sits alongside this primary affiliation. This Code sets out the norms and expectations that sustain the Rhodes Scholar community and describes the process by which breaches are dealt with.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the document “Reporting Misconduct Under the Rhodes Scholar Code of Conduct” which contains information on, among other topics, the processes for the investigation and resolution of complaints and the sanctions which may be applied.

Preamble

As members of the Rhodes Community which is grounded in mutual respect, compassion and care, we pledge to respect the dignity of all and to treat others with courtesy and kindness in our interactions at Rhodes House, Oxford, and beyond.

As Rhodes scholars, each of us has a responsibility to uphold the values on which we were selected and a responsibility to live out those values in our dealings with others. We are, and are viewed by others as, representatives of the Rhodes Scholarship and the broader Rhodes community. We recognise we have a responsibility to uphold the integrity and reputation of the Scholarship in our dealings with others.

At the same time, in accordance with the principles of academic freedom and lawful, peaceful protest, we are encouraged to respectfully express our views and to engage in disagreement and critique. It is central to the purpose of the Rhodes Scholar community to engage in dialogue and debate with tolerance for difference. We strive to exemplify these principles and practices.

Coming from all around the world to study a wide range of disciplines, we affirm the value of our diversity across cultures, nationalities, religions, races, ethnicities, gender and gender identities, sexual orientation and disability status, as well as academic, economic, legal, political and social viewpoints. We commit to engaging with one another in a spirit of amicability, dialogue, civility and tolerance, whatever opinion each of us may hold.

We recognise that we come to Rhodes House with diverse life experiences and have been brought up with different cultural norms with respect to a range of personal and social issues. We acknowledge that such differences may result in misunderstandings and missteps, and we will navigate these differences with care, mutual respect, and open mindedness.

Purpose and Application

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to set out fundamental behavioural expectations within the community of Rhodes Scholars whilst they are in residence at the University of Oxford and to lay out the Trust’s policies and procedures for responding to complaints of Prohibited Conduct.

- a) **Jurisdiction and relationship with the University, its colleges and departments:** Rhodes Scholars are members of the University of Oxford and members of their colleges — and therefore primarily subject to the University’s and colleges’ codes and procedures. Additionally, as recipients of the Rhodes Scholarship, scholars are subject to the code of conduct of the Rhodes Trust, which is an independent, registered U.K. Charity. This Code works in parallel with the aforementioned codes: it applies particularly to conduct that arises in relation to activities of Scholars whilst they are in residence, whether on or off stipend.
- b) **Signposting and cooperation:** Where an alleged breach falls more appropriately within the jurisdiction of the University or a college (for example, matters requiring academic, specialist or criminal investigation), Rhodes Trust will direct complainants to those authorities and will cooperate with their processes. The Warden (or their delegate) will decide, after initial consideration, whether a complaint should be handled by the Trust, be referred to the constituent part of the University or college, or handled in parallel for welfare/precautionary purposes.
- c) **Scope and Standing:** For the purposes of adjudication and sanctions in this Code, this policy applies to Rhodes Scholars in residence in and/or engaged in activities at Rhodes House, or during Rhodes House programmes whether online or in person, including activities beyond Oxford such as Scholar trips. It also applies to guests of Rhodes Scholars on Rhodes House premises and during Trust events. Rhodes Scholars are responsible for their guests whilst on Rhodes House premises or at events.

The Code does not impose collective liability on groups but will regulate individual conduct arising from group activity.

The Scholar Code is a complement to the other Rhodes Trust [Codes of Conduct](#) which govern the behaviour of Rhodes Trust staff, Trustees, National Secretaries, selection committee members, volunteers, and other members of the broader Rhodes community in their interactions with Rhodes Scholars. Alumni who are not in residence or not acting as volunteers are not covered by these codes.

The Rhodes Trust’s Aims

The Trust seeks:

- To strive to create an environment in which bullying, harassment and violence are not tolerated and to deal appropriately and as per the Trust’s policies within the remit of UK law with sexism, racism and other expressions of violence, bullying and harassment whenever these arise in our community;
- To encourage the Scholar community to centre the values in the code as part of their engagement while in residence and, to publish the Code on Rhodes Connect and the Rhodes Trust website;
- To provide support when harm occurs and treat with fairness, respect and care any Scholar or other person who discloses or submits a complaint(s) of violation(s) of the Code or against whom such a complaint is lodged, making no findings until the investigation concludes;
- To strive to protect the privacy of all affected individuals, except in circumstances where there is a significant risk of harm or legal obligations otherwise require;
- To respect the right of Scholars to make their own decisions about seeking criminal or civil recourse;
- To ensure any response, investigation or sanction will be proportionate, evidence-based and subject to fairness and due process;

- To seek, whenever possible and appropriate, to resolve complaints and conflicts in educational and restorative ways.

Prohibited Conduct

-Conduct that is inconsistent with the standards of behaviour expected of Rhodes Scholars

As set out above, Scholars in residence are first and foremost members of the University of Oxford, its colleges and departments, and subject to the codes and procedures therein.

The Scholar Code of Conduct reflects the position of the Trust within the collegiate University by imposing a similar Code of Conduct for our Scholars, to that which the University sets for its student members.

Scholars are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the University's disciplinary frameworks, including the Code of Discipline in Statute XI; non-academic and academic disciplinary procedures; the Proctors, as the University's disciplinary officers, including emergency regulations for student conduct, published in the University Gazette, notified to them by their college and remaining in force for a set period; the Rules Committee (six Congregation members and six student members who meet annually to review and issue conduct regulations); the Curators of the University Libraries; the IT Committee; local rules on access and use, made and published by people or bodies responsible for managing University land and buildings, or operating University services and facilities.

Scholars should also familiarise themselves with the University's Harassment Policy and definitions therein.

Finally, Scholars should be mindful of the Codes of Conduct that are in place in their Colleges.

Conduct will be deemed inconsistent with the standards of behaviour expected of Rhodes Scholars, and will therefore be Prohibited Conduct if Scholars:

- disrupt or obstruct any events or activities of the Trust, or of its Scholars, or its officers, employees and agents, including by disrupting or obstructing the lawful exercise of freedom of speech by any of those persons or by their guests. However, it shall not be a disciplinary breach to engage in protests permitted by this Code.
- deface, damage, or destroy any property of the Trust (including the Rhodes House) or any other person or knowingly misappropriate such property, including by its unauthorised occupation;
- engage in action which is likely to cause injury or to impair safety;
- engage in violent, indecent, disorderly, degrading, humiliating, or threatening behaviour or language or in any harassment, bullying, or sexual misconduct towards any other person, or mistreating any animal;
- engage in dishonest behaviour, including by forging or falsifying any document which causes or may cause any harm or loss;
- engage in any academic misconduct under relevant Oxford University (and/or college) policies or any other form of plagiarism, cheating, lying, fraud (including misuse of Rhodes Trust name, logo or affiliation);
- possess, use, offer, sell, or give to any person items (including drugs and weapons), the possession, use, or provision of which is illegal;

- being convicted of a criminal offence anywhere in the world, except where the behaviour in question is not an offence under English law.

Voluntary impairment by alcohol or other drugs is not a defence to the above Prohibited Conduct.

Scholars are expected to familiarise themselves with the relevant Oxford University (and/or college) policies on [Equality](#) and [Harassment and Bullying](#).

The following definitions are contained therein:

- *“Harassment” has the meaning given in section 26 of the Equality Act 2010 and section 1 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (in its entirety, and as interpreted by section 7 of the Act).*
- *“Bullying” is a form of harassment and may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.*
- *A Scholar commits “sexual misconduct” if they engage in any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Conduct is “unwanted” if it is not consented to and if the relevant member does not have a reasonable belief that consent has been given.*

[The Office for Students](#) also provides a breakdown of the UK’s Equality Act 2010, which provides the legal framework for Oxford’s policies.

Events, protest and disruption

Rhodes House is a community and programme space for Rhodes Scholars. There are different ways in which Rhodes House is used throughout the time that Scholars are in Oxford. The governance of these differs according to their purpose:

- 1) It is a venue for set-piece formal events -including Trustee-hosted Coming Up and Going Down dinners- and official ceremonies. Such events are intended to be occasions for celebration. These formal events are not intended to be forums for robust exchange of views or protest. Whilst such activities, when conducted lawfully are legitimate and valued features of scholarly life, it is expected that they will be conducted in the appropriate way and at the appropriate forum (as further set out below). Given the existence of alternative forums for such exchanges and the celebratory purpose of formal events, formal events are not considered to be an appropriate forum, and scholars are reminded that disrupting or obstructing the events or activities of the Trust, or of its Scholars, or its officers, employees and agents, including by disrupting or obstructing the lawful exercise of freedom of speech by any of those persons or by their guests is Prohibited Conduct under the Code. Note that silent protest is also a disruption.
- 2) It is a venue for debates, panels, seminars and other events which are designed to encourage the robust exchange of views. During these events, lawful, peaceful, non-violent expression of political views that does not materially obstruct events or create safety risks is permitted, and indeed encouraged to the extent that it is a legitimate expression of freedom of speech. However, such protest must not shut down debate.
- 3) Protests, direct actions or demonstrations are also part of the expression of Scholars’ views. However, such behaviour is subject to the Prohibited Conduct rules, as set out above; protests, direct actions or demonstrations that are violent, unlawful, materially obstruct communal events or create safety risks are not permitted. Material obstruction includes conduct that prevents an event from proceeding or that

renders parts of Rhodes House inaccessible. Protests (including silent protest) that occur at set-piece formal events will be responded promptly to in the moment. If such behaviour continues or re-occurs it may be deemed Prohibited Conduct within the meaning of this Code and subject to further disciplinary action or sanctions.

Peaceful demonstration outside Rhodes House public entrances or on public pavement is permitted provided it complies with UK law, the University's [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#) and any health & safety requirements; occupying private Rhodes House spaces or interfering with programmed events is not.

4) Rhodes House is also a venue for Scholar Programming. Such programming encourages Scholars to come together to express their views in smaller or larger groups. These spaces are legitimate ones for Scholars to engage in robust debate together, and whilst such spaces may not always be comfortable, all members of the community must always ensure the arena for discussion is open and inclusive.

“Prohibited Conduct” for the purposes of this Code is set out above.

Periodic Review

The Rhodes Trust shall review this Code from time to time and update it as necessary. This review will: capture legal requirements; evaluate the supports and resources available to the parties; assess the promptness and equitability of the resolution process; and assess fairness of the sanction and remedies imposed. The Trust will solicit input from Scholars-in-Residence (at the time of the review) in reviewing the Code and will provide an opportunity for the feedback of individuals who have engaged with this Code as Complainants or Respondents, if appropriate.

As part of any review, the Trustees of the Rhodes Trust may consider whether any amendment to, or modification of, this Code may be appropriate. The Trustees may then amend or modify this Code accordingly.

From time to time, the Trust will anonymously report on the number and severity of complaints received.

Point of Contact

The Registrar: registrar@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk