

Magdalene College - weapons and firearms policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the highest possible level of safety and security for everyone across Magdalene College.

This policy applies to all students, staff, Fellows and visitors to Magdalene College or any property owned or controlled by Magdalene College.

For the purposes of this policy a weapon is defined as any article made or adapted for use for killing or causing injury to a person or intended by them for such use by themselves or another person. This definition includes any article which is a concealed knife or concealed weapon and any article designed to look like a weapon.

For the purposes of this policy a firearm is defined as in the Firearms Act 1968 (as amended) and includes imitation firearms, replica and antique firearms, air guns, air pistols, air rifles and 'BB' guns and deactivated weapons.

Examples of weapons include but are not limited to explosives including fireworks and pyrotechnic devices, slingshots/catapults, pellet guns, 'airsoft' guns, crossbows, long bows, swords, martial arts weapons, articles which are sharply pointed or have a blade (other than a folding pocket knife with a blade less than 3 inches in length), swords, hunting or fishing knives, 'zombie knives' and knuckle-dusters.

Weapons that are capable of firing projectiles ('live' weapons/firearms) are expressly prohibited from being brought onto College property.

Corrosive liquids such as acid and cleaning fluids may be interpreted as weapons under this policy if carried with the intent to and/or used to cause personal injury or harm.

Exceptions

- (i) Police officers, etc

Police officers or military personnel carrying issued weapons in the course or performance of their duty.

- (ii) Work or educational purposes

Tools used for work or educational purposes, including utility and kitchen knives used for a lawful purpose that are not brandished or worn in such a way as to cause concern or alarm. It is recognised that chefs working in the kitchens may use knives they personally own and they are permitted to bring them into College as long as they are transported and stored safely.

- (iii) Ceremonial, etc

Exceptions will be considered for ceremonial knives carried or used for religious purposes, or other legal weapons used as part of a sanctioned activity such as a theatrical production or May Ball. All exceptions for such events or purposes require prior written approval from:

- Head Porter and, if they determine appropriate,
 - Health & Safety Officer
 - Dean

The application for an exception must be made in writing to the Head Porter and be accompanied by a risk assessment. The Head Porter is authorised to request as much information as they feel necessary to determine whether an exception may be granted or not. If written approval is given,

the Head Porter will outline the safety measures which must be adhered to. The Head Porter's decision is final.

No exception will be made for weapons used by members of sports societies e.g. archery, fencing. Please refer to the relevant University of Cambridge society for information on storage of such equipment.

Unauthorised weapons or firearms on College property

The College will seize any unauthorised weapon or firearm found on College property. The College may seek advice from the local police service and, if advised or it is otherwise considered appropriate to do so, will surrender the weapon or firearm to the police service.

Students, staff or Fellows who are found to be in possession of an unauthorised weapon or firearm may be subject to relevant disciplinary action.

Any person who uses an authorised weapon e.g. kitchen knife in a threatening or aggressive manner may also be subject to disciplinary action. Any other person who is found to be in possession of an unauthorised weapon or firearm may be reported to the local police service and asked to leave College premises.

Seized items not surrendered to the local police service will be stored safely until such time as an appropriate course of action has been determined. Decisions on seized items will be made by the Head Porter in consultation with as appropriate: the Dean, the College Health & Safety Officer, any other College Officer or external adviser. Such a decision may be to return the item to the owner with specific requirements for its removal from College property or retrospective approval of an exception; where appropriate, the College may dispose of the seized item.

The College is not responsible for any damage caused to any seized item nor is there any recourse, compensation or liability for items seized in good faith.

Student Accommodation

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies to all student accommodation owned or controlled by Magdalene College.

Accommodation Licence Terms and Conditions state:

'The Occupant is not permitted to be in possession of or store any unauthorised weapons or firearms in their rooms or flat, nor should they permit any guest or shared occupant to be in possession of or store any authorised weapon or firearm in College accommodation.'

Approved by Magdalene Health & Safety Committee 12/02/2026

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