

Wellington Square Watch announces findings of analysis of proposed disciplinary amendments.

For immediate release. 9th June 2024

Wellington Square Watch, a newly formed committee of student members of the university scrutinising the central bureaucracy, announces today the findings of a preliminary analysis of disciplinary amendments proposed by Council [[link](#)].

Our findings.

Proposed amendments to university statutes could **force people out of the closet, effectively expel financially disadvantaged students awaiting disciplinary hearings, and allow arbitrary withdrawals of access to IT facilities.**

The university **commendably seeks to improve the handling of sexual harassment cases, but many amendments are clearly unrelated and would have other deleterious effects.** The university claims that these other amendments are merely 'legislative and procedural improvements'. A close analysis shows that this claim is empty and implausible.

The amendments could prohibit, *inter alia*:

- dishonesty about one's sexual orientation to avoid homophobia;
- publishing research on a cheap lifesaving drug that causes funding for a more expensive one to be withdrawn from the university; and
- lawful and orderly participation in lawful and orderly processions.

The amendments amount to a **Proctors' Charter of arbitrary and unworkable prohibitions and powers.** They are noxious and un-Oxonian.

The **vast discretion** they create would **invite selective enforcement and the appearance of bias.**

Our call to action.

Congregation must stop this Wellington Square stitch-up. Wellington Square Watch calls upon Congregation to **block Council's proposals** and form a Steering Group to ensure that the Statutes **remain compatible with academic freedom.**

Wellington Square Watch calls on other members of the university community to oppose these amendments through the usual channels.

About Wellington Square Watch.

Wellington Square Watch seeks to promote, through lawful means in the fullest conformity with the statutes and regulations of the university—

- academic freedom;
- the democratic usages of the university, including the powers of Congregation;
- administrative accountability; and
- sound governance.

Pointers on Council and Congregation.

Legislative power in the university rests with Congregation, which comprises its senior academic and administrative staff. Council has certain delegated powers, and other powers to enact regulations and make proposals subject to Congregation's approval. It discharges much routine administrative work.

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