



**HUMANITIES**  
DIVISION



**Kellogg College**  
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# How can we cultivate a culture of free inquiry and disagreeing well on campus?

**Friday 4 July, 5pm**  
**TS Eliot Theatre, Merton College and online**

A panel discussion with Dr Arif Ahmed MBE, Professor Alan Bogg, James Murray, Akua Reindorf KC, and Professor Naomi Waltham-Smith

Chaired by David Isaac CBE

Encountering and engaging with different views and arguments is a core dimension of democracy, and universities have a particular responsibility to create an environment in which a variety of claims and positions can be aired and subjected to critical scrutiny. Against the backdrop of a legislative, regulatory and cultural climate in which freedom of expression has received greater attention of late, this panel brings together the Director for Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom at the Office for Students, academics and lawyers to consider how we can collectively cultivate a culture of free inquiry and disagreeing well. Going beyond issues of compliance, the panel will explore how relevant legal frameworks and case law, alongside other approaches, can provide insights into how to enable open and critically vigorous debate about contentious topics.

*Supported by the Humanities Division/Kellogg College Visitor Scheme and Doyle Clayton*

# About the panellists

**Dr Arif Ahmed MBE** joined the Office for Students as Director for Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in August 2023. Previously Arif was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College. He has held visiting posts around the world. Before taking up his present appointment, Arif was a Commissioner to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Until recently, he was a trade union representative and caseworker for the University and Colleges Union. Awards: MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for 2021 for services to education, 2021 Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression Trust Award.

**Professor Alan Bogg** is currently Professor of Labour Law at the University of Bristol and a Barrister at Old Square Chambers. He is also a Visiting Professor at the University of Oxford Faculty of Law and an Emeritus Fellow of Herford College, Oxford. He is the co-author of one of the leading texts on this topic, *Human Rights at Work* (Bloomsbury, 2024).

**James Murray** is an employment and higher education partner at the law firm Doyle Clayton, who advises both individual academics and academic institutions. He is a member of the common room at Kellogg College, Oxford and a Research Fellow (Law and Policy) at the University of Buckingham. He has published eleven academic papers on the law concerning academic freedom and free expression on campus.

**Akua Reindorf KC** is a barrister at Cloisters Chambers specialising in employment, discrimination and human rights law, with particular expertise in the higher education sector. She is a Visiting Senior Fellow at LSE Law School, where she focusses on the law of academic freedom and freedom of speech in higher education. She is a Commissioner of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. She appears in a personal capacity.

**Professor Naomi Waltham-Smith** is Professor of Music at the University of Oxford and Douglas Algar Tutorial Fellow at Merton College. Previously, she was a professor and Deputy Chair of Faculty at the University of Warwick, where she chaired the Academic Freedom Review Committee and Senate Group on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression. In addition to articles and chapters on academic freedom and artistic censorship, her recent book *Free Listening* explores the role of critically discerning deliberation and disagreement in creating a more egalitarian society.

**David Isaac CBE** is Provost of Worcester College, Oxford. He was until recently a partner at Pinsent Masons and is the former Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, of Stonewall and of Modern Art Oxford. He was also a director of the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, the Human Dignity Trust, the Big Lottery and 14-18 NOW. He is the current Chair of Governors at University of the Arts London and Chair of the Henry Moore Foundation.