



A dynamic College for aspiring communities

Code of Conduct

PURPOSE

The standards outlined in this document are representative of the standards of performance and behaviour that are expected of the College's working community and are not intended as a complete listing of all the College's rules, regulations and standards.

Only through the observance of such standards can the College effectively and efficiently serve its external and internal clients.

The relationship between the College and its employees is based upon mutual trust and confidence. This Code of Conduct sets out some of the standards upon which this relationship is to be based.

SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the College and anyone working within it on a voluntary or placement basis.

It is the responsibility of the College's working community to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, all of the College's rules, policies and procedures.

Failure to comply with the standards of performance and behaviour outlined in this document may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure. Such disciplinary action may include dismissal depending on the circumstances.

All employees will be made aware of the Code of Conduct and will sign to confirm their understanding and acceptance of the standards set out within it.

ATTENDANCE & TIMEKEEPING

Employees' attendance at work is expected to be punctual. Instances of lateness should be explained by the employee concerned to his/her line manager, who will monitor and action as appropriate in accordance with the College's Absence Management Procedure.

It is the responsibility of management to approve any variations (including any short-term variations) to an individual's normal hours of work. Individuals should not vary their normal hours of work without prior management approval.

The College's Absence Management Procedure outlines the standards that are expected of all employees and the procedures that should be followed during any period of absence. It also provides details of how the College will address and manage all issues related to employee absence.

ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Employees must not attend work under the influence of any substance, including alcohol, illegal drugs and/or solvents. Employees who have been prescribed medication by a healthcare professional must inform their line manager immediately if that medication has, or could, have an adverse effect on the employee's ability to carry out his/her duties.

The College's Drug Abuse Policy and Procedure outlines the standards expected of all the College's working community in relation to drug and alcohol use and abuse, and provides guidance on managing issues related to such use and abuse and the action that will be taken by the College in instances of non-compliance.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The College recognises that all members of its working community and its clients have the right to be treated with consideration, respect and dignity, and is committed to creating and maintaining a working environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation.

To clarify, bullying and/or harassment is verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct which is unsolicited or unwelcome and which another individual considers violates their dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Instances of bullying and or harassment at work, or outside work if it has a bearing on the working relationship, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All instances of bullying and/or harassment will be managed through the Anti-harassment, Bullying and Dignity at Work Procedure and the College's Disciplinary Procedure as appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All of the College's working community has a personal responsibility to protect and maintain the confidentiality of both College and client information. The disclosure of confidential information relating to the College and/or its internal or external clients is prohibited, except as authorised or required by the law or in accordance with an employee's duties under his/her contract of employment (including statements made between or to Trade Union Representatives).

If employees are unsure as to whether they should disclose information which they consider to be, or might be, confidential, they should seek guidance from their line manager.

Full details of the covenants by which employees are bound in respect of confidentiality are outlined in their contracts of employment.

A breach of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee/s responsible in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

Any confidential data taken off-site must be securely stored.

COMPANY VEHICLES AND DRIVING IN PURSUIT OF COLLEGE ACTIVITY

The College is committed to ensuring that employees are kept as safe as possible whilst undertaking any task on behalf of the College, including driving during the course of work or in pursuit of College business or activities.

Where company vehicles are provided to employees in specific posts at the College, this will be detailed in the employee's contract of employment.

There may also be occasions on which employees are required to either drive a company vehicle or their own vehicle in pursuit of College business or activities. Individuals should refer to the Health and Safety Manual for more detailed information.

CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU (CRB) DISCLOSURE

The College is committed to adhering to the CRB's Code of Practice.

Roles at the College are assessed in order to decide if a CRB disclosure or check is required and if it is, what level of disclosure is required. There will be instances when existing members of staff will also require a new CRB check, for example to comply with procedures governing learner residentials.

CRB checks are undertaken to ensure that the College upholds its duty of care to protect vulnerable groups who access the College. Failure to co-operate with a reasonable request on the part of the College to obtain a CRB check may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

In order to uphold fairness and consistency, and to comply with College regulations (including but not limited to its financial regulations), members of the College's working community must disclose any interests and/or relationship(s) - whether direct or indirect - that they have with any person, college, company or other organisation involved with the College and/or its business and/or activities which may give rise to conflict / compromise.

STANDARDS OF DRESS

Employees are expected to dress in a way which is appropriate to their role. Some roles necessitate employees to wear items of protective clothing in the interests of health and safety. Such items should be worn at all times as required.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The College is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for its employees and learners alike.

All employees have an individual responsibility to uphold and apply in practice the College's Equality and Diversity Scheme and to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that Scheme and with relevant legislation. Discrimination and prejudice will not be tolerated by the College and such conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The College has established financial regulations which govern all activity associated with the procurement and invoicing of goods and services on behalf of the College. All employees have an individual responsibility to uphold and apply in practice these regulations and any breach of them will be addressed in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Employees must not accept any gifts, fees or inducements for any service connected with their employment (including, for the avoidance of doubt, any such gifts received from learners), with the exception of minor gifts, inexpensive marketing materials and cards. Individuals should inform their Line Manager if they are offered any substantial gifts or if they require further clarification.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The College is committed to promoting and implementing all relevant health and safety legislation and recognises that the highest priority must be given to safe methods of work at all times.

Employees must familiarise themselves with the College's Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety Manual and must ensure that all health and safety standards are met in accordance with that policy. Employees must not, under any circumstances, behave in a way which could endanger their own health and safety or the health and safety of others. Any breach of the College's health and safety rules or regulations or its Health and Safety Policy will be viewed extremely seriously by the College and may constitute gross misconduct in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Staff - Learners

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for anyone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity (including touching of a sexual nature) with a person under the age of 18 who is in their care. The position of trust definition applies to all teachers and other staff in an educational setting. Such a breach of trust is an arrestable offence, even if the activity and/or relationship is consensual. Anyone successfully convicted under this legislation will be subject to notification requirements and registration under the Sex Offenders Act 1997.

Employees in such a position of trust must not enter into personal relationships with any learner under the age of 18, and must not encourage behaviour on the part of the learner which goes beyond that which could ordinarily be expected from a staff/learner relationship.

Personal relationships between employees and learners over 18 years of age must be disclosed to the College via the employee's line manager.

These rules will be strictly enforced and failure to comply with them will result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure. Furthermore, in suspected cases of an abuse of a position of trust, the College may report those concerned to the Police.

Between Staff

If you perceive that a personal relationship you have with a colleague may give rise to a professional conflict/compromise you should bring this to the attention of your Line Manager or their manager. Such disclosures must be treated with respect, dignity and in confidence.

Staff – Client/service provider

If you perceive that a personal relationship you have with a client or service provider may give rise to a professional conflict/compromise you should bring this to the attention of your Line

Manager or their manager. Such disclosures must be treated with respect, dignity and in confidence.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Anyone suspected of, or caught, causing deliberate damage to College property, hired plant or third party property within the confines of College and/or client premises will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS OR OTHER MEDIA

Statements to the press or other media on any aspects of the College's business and/or activities must not be made without prior reference to the Director: Communications and Marketing. Although this does not apply to Trade Union Representatives acting in a Trade Union capacity. The College and Trade Unions would inform each other on press statements affecting each other's business.

The reasons for this will no doubt be appreciated by employees, as often the Senior Management team is more aware than staff of the College's opinion on controversial matters and can therefore ensure that an appropriate statement is made.

Any statement made in contravention of this rule may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the employee/s concerned in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

THEFT

Anyone who is suspected of or caught stealing the property or assets of the College, its employees or clients will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure. The Police may be notified.

USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

All employees have an individual responsibility to uphold and apply in practice the College's e-mail and Internet Policy. Breaches of the e-mail and internet Policy will be addressed in accordance with the College's Disciplinary Procedure.

GUIDANCE NOTES

No code of conduct can hope to spell out the appropriate behaviour for every situation, nor should it seek to do so. The College relies on each member of staff to make a judgement of what is right and good practice in any particular situation.

If you are unsure determining what action is appropriate in any given situation it is recommended that you seek clarification from your line manager.

An individual who is not satisfied with an outcome arising from a decision reached in relation to their employment has the right to appeal using the stages outlined in the Grievance Procedure.