

# Code of Staff Conduct

<b>Author: (Job title)</b>	Director of Human Resources
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## **CAPITAL CITY COLLEGE GROUP**

### **CODE OF STAFF CONDUCT**

#### **Introduction**

1. Capital City College Group is committed to transforming lives through exceptional education and training. We only achieve what we do because of our staff who are the most valuable asset we have. We know the difference that a truly engaged and effective workforce makes toward us realising our vision, and having the right HR and OD strategy is critical in achieving our objectives. This Code sets out the standards we expect all our employees to maintain, and is central to the success and reputation of the organisation.
2. The Code applies to all staff, including agency and casual staff. The Code cannot cover every aspect of working life. It is therefore important to see it as a set of principles to illustrate the standards expected, to give clarity and to protect the College and the staff. It is supplemented by other corporate standards as well as local standards set by managers.
3. The Group takes its duty of care to all staff seriously. Similarly, employees have a duty of trust and for those exercising professional responsibilities, especially working in the educational sector, the obligations of this trust are considerable.
4. The College will ensure that the Code is up to date and available on the staff intranet. It is the personal responsibility of each member of staff to familiarise themselves with the standards set out in the Code and apply them at all times. Whenever there is any doubt, staff should seek advice. Ignorance of this Code will not be accepted as a mitigating circumstance.
5. The Code covers conduct at work but also behaviour outside work which may have an impact on employment, for example, that which may result in damage to the Group's reputation or a loss of public confidence.
6. The Capital City College Group recognises that the fair implementation of the Staff Code of Conduct requires that certain obligations and responsibilities are assumed and acted upon at an institutional and managerial level as well as a staff level.
7. An employee who is in breach of this Code may be liable to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure. Serious breaches will be treated as gross misconduct, which could lead to dismissal.
8. The provisions contained in the Code will, from time to time, be subject to amendment and/or addition, following consultation with trade union representatives.

#### **General conduct**

9. All staff have a responsibility to:
  - a) Comply with any obligations under the terms of their Contract of Employment; carry out their duties in a proper and professional manner at all times; maintain standards of conduct and behaviour reasonably expected of employees and not conduct themselves negligently.
  - b) Work together with their line manager in a co-operative way, with mutual respect, and follow

lawful and reasonable management instructions; observe any operational regulations and standing orders; follow Group/College procedures including, but not limited to, for example, sickness reporting and certification, timekeeping, health and safety, information technology, whistleblowing, data protection (see section "Holding and Using Data"), equal opportunities and ensure that all paperwork and forms relating to Group/College policies and procedures and schemes are completed accurately and honestly.

- c) Be helpful and polite; refrain from rudeness, or inappropriate conduct whether face to face, by telephone or electronically.
- d) Work with honesty and integrity at all times.
- e) Refrain from:
  - i. Consuming alcohol in the workplace unless, exceptionally, permission has been given by management for moderate drinking, for example at a staff event, but such consumption must not result in any improper conduct or damage to the organisation's reputation in any way.
  - ii. Having alcohol on breath or being under the influence of drink or drugs during working hours such that performance is detrimentally affected and/or the organisation's reputation is damaged in any way. Staff working in areas with high health and safety risks, such as laboratories or craft workshops, must not consume any alcohol during the period before they start work so that performance is not affected in any way and they must seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are taking any medication which might impair judgement or speed or reaction.
  - iii. Committing a drink or drug offence, whether during or outside working hours, which could endanger anyone's safety or diminish the organisation's confidence in the employee's suitability or, given the position of the employee within the organisation damage the College's reputation.
- f) Not plagiarise the work of a third party.
- g) Be reliable and punctual.
- h) Ensure that the organisation is provided with up to date contact details e.g. address and telephone numbers so that it is able to communicate with the employee reasonably and appropriately.
- i) Ensure that clothes and footwear are appropriate for the role being carried out both at work and when attending work related events, recognising the diversity of dress amongst different communities.
- j) Wear staff ID at all times whilst at work and request learners to display their ID.
- k) Where a personal relationship exists or develops between members of staff who are in line management or a supervisory relationship at work, the line manager or supervisor should not be involved in management activities or processes in relation to the other party that may compromise (or be perceived as compromising) the reputation, credibility or integrity of either party or the College, such as recruitment and selection, probationary reviews, staff appraisal, promotion, disciplinary matters and approval of expenses.
- l) If an employee detects or has reason to suspect that any employee or manager is acting improperly, the Group's Whistleblowing Policy sets out a reporting procedure which should be followed without fear of victimisation.

- m) Report any concerns on radicalisation to the Designated Officer for each College as outlined in the Safeguarding, Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy.
- n) Report inappropriate behaviour or conduct of a member of staff towards a learner to the Group Director, HR & OD Safeguarding, Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy.
- o) To keep up to date with College events by regularly reading emails and the intranet.

### **Working with learners**

10. All staff must at all times:

- a) Comply with the spirit and letter of the College Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and any other Group policies or procedures relating to learners or any instructions given by management in this regard.
- b) Report any child protection or adults at risk concerns or incidents to the College's Child Protection Helplines at CIC on 020 7697 1717; at WKC or CCCT on 020 7832 5331 and at CONEL on 020 8442 3948.
- c) Note that it is a criminal offence for teaching staff, and other staff whose jobs involve supporting learners or who are in a position of trust, to engage in sexual activity with a learner under the age of 18 years or a vulnerable adult.
- d) Not engage in any sexual activity or relationship with a learner who they are teaching, or supporting, or whose work they are marking, examining or moderating. Where a relationship has developed this must be declared to their line manager in order for the organisation to determine the appropriate course of action, taking account of safeguarding, reputation and loss of confidence considerations. This requirement equally applies to relationships that existed prior to the employment or enrolment.
- e) Personal relationships between employees and learners over 18 years of age must be disclosed to the organisation via the HR Team. Relationships with learners who are vulnerable adults are prohibited. This type of relationship could be viewed as an abuse of an employee's position of trust and a breach of professional conduct.
- f) Comply with the Group's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and in particular around linking to learners' social network accounts and with regard to accessing and downloading pornographic material.
- g) We have health and wellbeing responsibilities to our learners and staff should not give any tobacco products to learners.
- h) Management understand that in emergencies staff may have no option, to ensure the safety of learners, to provide financial support. In such circumstances staff should inform their manager at the earliest opportunity and reclaim the costs.

11. All staff involved with learners are responsible for maintaining professional boundaries with learners at all times. They are in a position of trust and have additional responsibilities in law to ensure that no learner relationship could be perceived as an abuse of this position and subject to allegations. To fulfil these responsibilities, and in order to protect themselves against misplaced allegations, teachers, and all staff involved in looking after learners, should:

- a) Not encourage behaviour on the part of the learner which goes beyond that which ordinarily would be expected from a staff/learner relationship.
- b) Not initiate or accept friend requests by learners on their private social networking accounts and are advised to keep their accounts private.
- c) Keep their private life separated from the classroom and learners at the College.

### **Holding and using data**

12. When you hold or process personal data about staff or learners you must:

- a) Ensure that it is accurate, relevant and not excessive.
- b) Ensure you do not retain information longer than is needed.
- c) Process personal data only to carry out our responsibilities as a College and as notified to data subjects (individuals).
- d) Not disclose information (including giving references) about an individual to an external agency without an individual's consent, unless there is another lawful basis for such disclosure. If you are unsure you must always contact the Data Protection Officer. You must always seek approval from the Data Protection Officer in the case of disclosure of information to the Police.
- e) Only take work home that contains personal information in an encrypted format.
- f) Ensure that all personal data is kept secure and only accessed by authorised personnel and secure from fire and other hazards.
- g) Dispose of hard copy personal data by the use of a shredder where provided or by using confidential waste bags.
- h) Apply password protection to computers, personal devices, screensavers and documents

### **Health and safety**

13. Staff and managers have a personal responsibility for health and safety and should comply with the Health and Safety Policy at all times:

- a) Observe fully health and safety policies, procedures and codes and ensure that the working environment is as safe as possible for learners, staff, colleagues and people who visit College premises and that no one is put in any danger.
- b) Where identified by risk assessment, use protective measures such as safe systems of work, including where necessary the use of safety equipment such as machine guards and machine shut-offs, and personal protective equipment including protective clothing, footwear, face masks, goggles etc.
- c) Comply with accident reporting procedures.
- d) Comply with hygiene requirements.
- e) Avoid potential risk or injury or danger to oneself or other persons in the course of work and ensure that risk assessments are undertaken, communicated and implemented for all College or Group activities under their control including off-site activities.

- f) Refrain from smoking on College premises, other than the designated areas, or in areas in close proximity to the College such as entrance areas.
- g) Attend any Occupational Health appointments as directed by the College.
- h) Co-operate with any health and safety activities, including any training.
- i) Be responsible for visitors to Group premises by accompanying them from and to reception points and brief them on relevant general health, safety and welfare arrangements e.g. fire safety and first aid, location of toilets and canteen facilities and any local safety arrangements especially when visiting workshops, kitchens etc.
- j) Complete appropriate documentation/risk assessment in respect of external speakers.

### **Use of the employee's official position**

14. There should not be any grounds for suspicion that an employee's personal needs or interests influence any actions or decisions relating to their work. Within this context employees must not at any time:
  - a) Abuse their authority in relation to a colleague, learner, client or member of the public.
  - b) Breach the Group's Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures including those in relation to petty cash, collection and handling of monies, keeping of accounts and authorisation of expenditure, and never falsify documents or complete any form dishonestly. Any perceived financial irregularity must be reported immediately to the Group's Chief Operating Officer (COO). Where it is the COO who is suspected of financial impropriety, the matter should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and in circumstances where it is the CEO who is suspected, to the Chair of Audit Committee.
  - c) Accept gifts, hospitalities or gratuities, without reference to the Financial Regulations, from individuals or groups who have or may seek to have dealings with the College. Where an employee feels that they cannot refuse a gift, they should report the gift to their line manager.
  - d) Give or receive hospitality, except of a very minor nature. Hospitality should only be accepted when it is reasonably incidental to the occasion and not extravagant and where no suggestion of improper influence is possible or seen to be possible. Examples of unacceptable hospitality include holidays, tickets to sporting events, use of a company flat.
  - e) Place themselves under a financial obligation to any person where this might affect, or be thought to affect, the proper performance of the employee's duties.
  - f) Provide any goods or services to a friend, partner, associate or relative unless management permission had been given.
  - g) Never defraud the organisation or accept any bribe and always disclose if someone tries to bribe.
  - h) Claim any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly by failing to disclose their full earnings.

## **Private work**

15. Outside work can bring fresh skills and knowledge to employees' work in the organisation but employees should:
- a) Not engage in other employment, including self-employment or voluntary work (paid or unpaid) during hours when contracted to work for the organisation or during periods of sick leave, unless given permission to do so by their line manager.
  - b) Not engage in any employment or voluntary work outside the organisation or hold any position such as Director of a company where this conflicts with or is detrimental to the commercial interests of the organisations or in any way weakens public confidence in the conduct of the organisation's business or may damage the health and safety of the employee in any way.
  - c) Employees are required to declare any declaration of interest to their manager and failure to do so will be regarded as a serious breach of trust.
  - d) Not to buy or sell items on College premises for personal gain.

## **Discrimination, bullying and harassment**

16. The Group is an inclusive environment and employees should:
- a) Follow the Group's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and related HR policies and always treat anyone they come into contact with in the course of their work with dignity and respect.
  - b) Always avoid any behaviour which could be seen as intimidating or excluding for others or bullying or harassment, and comply with any corporate policies and/or procedures on these standards.
  - c) Be considerate of the feelings of others and seek to recognise their needs.
  - d) Be aware of the power of communications and seek to use them respectfully – avoid using words in oral, written or electronic communication which are unnecessarily aggressive, offensive, over personalised or intimidating.
  - e) Be aware that any form of sexual harassment of a member of staff or learner is completely unacceptable and may result in both College disciplinary action and possible criminal investigation

## **Confidentiality**

17. All staff have a responsibility to safeguard the organisation's information (which means any information of a confidential nature relating to the Group, the learners, employees or its business, finance transactions or affairs which belong to and is of value to the organisation or in respect of which the organisation owes an obligation of confidence to a third party) and should:
- a) Familiarise themselves with, and observe, their contractual obligation with regards to confidentiality.
  - b) Keep all matters relating to learners or finances or business decisions confidential at all times unless permitted to make any disclosures with the express consent of the organisation or they are demonstrably in the public domain e.g. the web site.

## **Criminal conduct**

18. Employees are expected to abide by the spirit and letter of the law at all times and should:
- a) Not commit any criminal offence at work.
  - b) If arrested and/or charged with any criminal offence (including driving offences but not parking tickets), whether committed inside or outside working hours, report the matter to their manager as soon as is reasonably practicable. Failure to do so will be investigated under the disciplinary procedure. Once reported the organisation will decide, having regard to the nature of the offence and the duties of the employee's post, whether the employee is unfit to do their job or if the reputation and integrity of the organisation has been damaged or is likely to be damaged.
  - c) Tell their manager if they believe that another employee is breaking the law in the course of their work.
  - d) Note that if an employee fails to disclose a conviction for a criminal offence when applying for a post (unless the person is exempt by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 from obligation to disclose it) or makes a false declaration, for example, about qualifications, this will be considered as gross misconduct and investigated under the disciplinary procedure.
  - e) Inform their manager if they, or any adult living in their household, becomes the subject of an allegation of abuse against a child or a vulnerable adult or a police enquiry, irrespective of the nature of that enquiry.

## **Recruitment and references**

19. The Group is committed to a fair and open approach to recruitment and within this context employees should:
- a) Follow the Group Recruitment Procedure at all times, with appointments made without bias, on the basis of the candidate's ability and suitability for the job, on merit and not for any other reason. In this context the following standards apply:
    - i. Employees should always disclose if they are a friend, partner, associate or relative of a member of any recruitment panel for a job they have applied for.
    - ii. Chairs of recruitment panels must undergo safer recruitment training and appropriate support from HR before recruiting staff
    - iii. Recruitment panel members should take no part in any short listing or interviewing process which involves a friend, partner, associate or relative.
  - b) Only those authorised to supply references are entitled to do so through the HR Team.

## **Working within the College environment and its resources**

20. The environment of the Colleges and the Training Arm is important to all that use it and employees are expected to:
- a) Value and respect the College environment by keeping classrooms, offices and common space clean and tidy; avoid wasting resources; use recycling facilities and be security conscious.



- b) Ensure that all Group resources, goods, equipment and materials are used efficiently and only used for legitimate Group/College business.
- c) Not to steal, wilfully damage or seriously neglect anything that belongs to the organisation or to anyone with whom the employee comes into contact during the course of their work. Any loss or damage, no matter how minor, must be reported to the organisation and a written report prepared if required. If the loss or damage is due to the employee's own negligence, the Group may hold them liable for any costs incurred in replacing any property.
- d) Not to remove any property from College buildings or grounds, even though it may seem to be of no value, unless you have the express written approval of College management. This includes property placed in recycling bins, general waste and skips.
- e) When leaving the organisation, return any Group/College property, as directed by the organisation and not remove any property from College premises.
- f) On leaving the organisation do not remove any electronic record or information or forward any electronic record unless you have permission to do so.
- g) Obtain written permission for the reasonable use of the organisation's equipment and facilities for personal use and that the use does not interfere or conflict with the work of the Group and that any costs are met by the employee.