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Policy Statement:

Staff Code of Conduct

Date approved:	22 June 2022	Review Date:	May 2023		
Approved by:	Finance and Employment Committee				
Relevant to (please ✓):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NETA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WBL
Signed (Lead Manager):	Kay Taylor				
Print Name:	KAY TAYLOR				

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear set of principles to guide staff in how they are expected to conduct themselves in day to day work.

It is not possible to write an exhaustive list of rules governing staff conduct. Staff should be trusted in the discharge of their responsibilities, allowing room for initiative and professional judgement.

2 SCOPE

This Policy covers all staff, volunteers, governors, agency, students, visitors and contractors.

3 STATEMENT OF ACTION

Etc. is committed to providing clear employment policies and procedures that form a basis for treating all employees fairly and equally.

Etc. will regularly review all human resource policies and procedures in line with changes to employment law and where applicable best practice to support our Great Place To Work Strategy.

4 LINKED POLICIES

- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

5 LOCATION AND ACCESS

The Group Gateway site – Human Resources Policies and Procedures



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Procedure:

Staff Code of Conduct

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear set of principles to guide staff in how they are expected to conduct themselves in day to day work.
- 1.2 It is not possible to write an exhaustive list of rules governing staff conduct. Staff should be trusted in the discharge of their responsibilities, allowing room for initiative and professional judgement.
- 1.3 This document, however, provides a consistent framework and guidelines.
- 1.4 Staff should seek advice from the Head of Human Resources (HR) in the first instance or a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) if they have any queries about the content of this document, or if they require advice on how any aspect of conduct may be regarded.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy covers all staff, volunteers, governors, agency, students, visitors and contractors.

3.0 References and Related Documentation

- 3.1 This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Policy – Appendix P
- Staff Disciplinary policy and procedure
- Single Equality Scheme
- Financial procedures, specifically anti bribery, procurement and gifts and hospitality
- Whistleblowing policy and procedure

4.0 Professional boundaries / working with students

- 4.1 All members of staff are responsible for ensuring their relationships with learners are never of a kind that could compromise their professional responsibilities. This means professional boundaries must be maintained at all times. This includes:
 - Personal relationships with learners should not be sought out or conducted by staff members. If any staff member has an existing relationship (e.g. family member) with an under 18 learner, advice should be sought from the Safeguarding team to ensure the staff member and learner are safeguarded appropriately
 - Personal contact details should not be given to learners
 - Personal phone numbers and email should not be used to contact learners
 - Learners and staff should not be 'friends' on Facebook or in contact via other personal social media other than those approved such as 'Group Facebook groups' which are monitored. This includes using private messaging on group platforms. Staff should also be cognisant of public postings (e.g. Facebook/Instagram) and the potential implications of such posts being accessible to students.

- If a member of staff is thought or identified to be behaving in a way that is putting a young person at risk, or behaving inappropriately with any learner in a manner that could be seen to be subjecting them to harm or duress, this should be reported to the Group Designated Lead for Safeguarding or any member of SMT immediately

5.0 Additional professional responsibilities

5.1 Staff are reminded that they are expected at all times to:

- Not engage in any capacity with the media and if approached to advise the Group Director of Marketing immediately. The only exception to this is where the person approached is a member of the senior management team in this case advice should still be sought from the Group Director of Marketing in the first instance, as far as is reasonably practicable, but if this is not possible then personal professional judgement should be utilised.
- Preserve the confidentiality of information relating to The Group's business which includes: staff, learners, finances, marketing and strategic planning, together with any further information rightly to be judged the property of The Group (except as outlined in Whistleblowing policy and procedure) and/or could reasonably be considered commercially sensitive.
- Wear their Group ID with the appropriate coloured lanyard at all times when on group premises
- Support the monitoring of fundraising activities to ensure that monies raised are not used to fund extremism and so prevent a damaging effect on the safeguarding of learners and The Group's reputation.

6.0 Gifts and Hospitality

6.1 It is an offence under the Bribery Act 2010 for members of staff to accept corruptly any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refraining from doing, anything in an official capacity or showing favour or disfavour to any person in an official capacity.

6.2 The guiding principles to be followed by all members of staff must be:

- The conduct of individuals should not create suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and their private interest
- The action of individuals acting in an official capacity should not give the impression (to any member of the public, to any organisation with whom they deal or to their colleagues) that they have been (or may have been) influenced by a benefit to show favour or disfavour to any person or organisation

6.3 Members of staff should not accept any gifts, rewards or hospitality (or have them given to members of their families) from any organisation or individual with whom they have contact in the course of their work that would cause them to reach a position whereby they might be, or might be deemed by others to have been, influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting such hospitality. The frequency and scale of hospitality accepted should not be significantly greater than The Group would be likely to provide in return.

6.4 When it is not easy to decide between what is and what is not acceptable in terms of gifts or hospitality, the offer should be declined or advice sought from a member of the Senior Management Team or Clerk to the Corporation. For the protection of those involved, the Clerk to the Corporation will maintain a register of gifts and hospitality received where the value is in excess of £10. Members of staff in receipt of such gifts or hospitality are obliged to notify the Clerk to the Corporation promptly.

7.0 Bribes and inducements

7.1 The making or accepting of bribes or any other inducements, financial or non-financial, in respect of any transactions carried out on behalf of the Group by any staff is forbidden and shall be a disciplinary offence.

8.0 Working with Colleagues

8.1 Staff must adhere to The Group's policies and procedures, in particular the 'Tone of Voice' and be aware their actions may have consequences for others.

8.2 Staff must attend meetings and other commitments on time and meet other deadlines on which their colleagues depend.

8.3 Staff must adhere to The Group's policies and procedures because their actions have consequences for others. If staff have any doubts or concerns about their own or a colleague's actions, they should seek advice from their line manager. All Group Policies and Procedures are on the staff gateway.

9.0 Professional Prejudice

9.1 The Group sets an expectation of mutual respect among all staff at all times regardless of professional role and we therefore do our best to avoid 'professional prejudice'. Professional prejudice is the belief, based on presumption rather than evidence, that one part of an organisation's staff are in some way more professional than another part of its staff or that some skills within the organisation are more important or somehow superior to others. Professional prejudice harms the effectiveness of organisations because it attacks victims' self-esteem.

9.2 Professional prejudice is frequently unintentional and inadvertent and, for example, can show as:

- Not understanding the contribution of support staff to The Group mission, vision and values.
- Failing to act on instructions correctly or respond to a colleague's request with reasonable promptness
- Careless use of language when referring to colleagues
- Assuming that other colleagues are under less work pressure than oneself
- Failing to treat a colleague's skills and abilities with the respect one would expect for one's own.

10.0 Representing The Group

10.1 In order to preserve the reputation of The Group, staff must:

- Check with the relevant budget holder before committing resources other than those for which they have responsibility.
- Take care over the use of Group/College headed notepaper and logo's, whether for use themselves or the use of learners they are supervising; in particular ensure that written communication they are sending outside The Group is in line with agreed branding standards which are available on the Gateway. In the event of any concern, seek assistance from a member of the Secretariat team.
- Maintain professional standards of conduct at all times towards others when acting in a Group capacity.
- Dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.
- Not engage in activity that would bring The Group into disrepute.
- Use appropriate language at all times.

11.0 Group Property

11.1 In order to preserve the quality of The Group's environment and physical resources staff must ensure that:

- They, and learners for whom they are responsible, take reasonable care of the Group premises and property which they use
- Procedures for borrowing Group equipment are observed
- Energy is conserved wherever possible
- The security of Group property is maintained as well as possible and not put at risk
- They pay The Group for any costs incurred by the personal use of group equipment (for example phone, photocopier).
- Additionally, staff should also assist with the security of The Group by directing /escorting to Reception anyone who they think might be a stranger on site.