

# HUNTINGDONSHIRE REGIONAL COLLEGE

## Further Education Corporation

### CONDUCT OF STAFF

#### Introduction

Our professional and personal standards, not just our contracted obligations, guide our conduct and behaviour to our customers, students and colleagues.

It is therefore important that we have a Code of Conduct with appropriate rules. The Code of Conduct provides guidance on the standards of conduct required of all staff, and college protocols. The rules describe the responsibilities of all members of staff in relation to their individual conduct. These rules may be reviewed or amended from time to time in the light of experience or changing circumstances. Breaches of the rules may lead to disciplinary action being undertaken under the College Disciplinary Procedures.

The purpose of the Code and Rules of Conduct is to ensure that the College:

- Acts in accordance with the guiding principals of probity, transparency and high standards of conduct in the public sector exemplified in the Nolan Report;
- Provides a supportive working culture for staff and students;
- Provides a high quality of service to its students and customers in accordance with the College Charter.

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## CODE OF CONDUCT

As an employee of the College, you have a responsibility to:

- Carry out the duties assigned to you in a diligent manner and inform your line manager of any difficulties you may encounter;
- Familiarise yourself with, and adhere to, College systems, procedures and policies;
- Maintain a proper, professional relationship with our students. Teaching staff, in particular, should have regard to the professional difficulties which may arise if an appropriate distance is not maintained from students, both inside and outside the College. Staff must recognise that they are not in an equal relationship with students but often in a position of authority which should not be abused. Staff should be aware of the problems which may arise if they engage in sexual and inappropriate emotional relationships with students;
- Act in a fair and courteous manner to all others with whom you come into contact as a result of your College duties;
- Treat the College environment and its associated resources with respect and ensure that others exercise the same degree of care and respect for our environment;
- Make yourself clearly identifiable as a member of staff to students, visitors and your colleagues by wearing your name badge and using the correct procedure to identify yourself when answering the telephone;
- Manage the behaviour and conduct of students, visitors and your colleagues – in exercising such responsibility you are expected to deal firmly but politely with any minor incidents of undesirable student behaviour, whether or not the students are known to you. On the rare occasion where more major incidents occur, you should inform an appropriate College manager and/or Reception at the earliest possible opportunity;
- Make sure new colleagues, students and visitors know about our Health and Safety Procedures;
- Care for the health and well being of students, visitors and your colleagues. This encompasses the responsibility to rigorously enforce the rules regarding not smoking within the College environment and to set a good personal example for students;
- Act in accordance with the College procedures on drug and alcohol abuse. Therefore, you should ensure that our students are aware of the dangers associated with the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs and the College's policies in dealing with cases where there is reasonable belief that the students are participating in drug related activities. You should take appropriate action in accordance with College policy in the case of any student you believe to be:
  - under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or other incapacitating substances; or
  - in possession of alcohol or illegal substances;
- Be aware of the influence which we exert on our students and others with whom we come into contact as a result of our College duties. Therefore, staff must exercise caution with regard to participation in political activities and the expression of personal ideological views such as those of a political or religious nature.

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### RULES OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

1. **Code of Conduct** In all your actions as an employee, you must have regard to the Code of Conduct for staff.
2. **College Charter** You must ensure that you are familiar with, and work in accordance with, the College Charter.
3. **Compliance with Financial Regulations** You are responsible for compliance with the College's financial regulations and for the efficient use of any resources over which you have influence or control; and to manage any staff under your control to ensure that such regulations and procedures.
4. **College Information and Communication Systems** The college information systems e.g. telephone, post, Internet are the property of the College and may only be used for authorized purposes. In the use of these systems staff have no right to privacy, and the compliance of students and visitors to the College.
5. **Health and Safety** You must comply with the requirements of the College Health and Safety Policies, together with relevant legislation and regulations, and ensure that compliance of students and visitors to the College.
6. **Public Interest Disclosure Procedure** In the event that you become aware of or suspect any wrongdoing, you have a duty to take action to disclose it in accordance with the 'Raising Issues of Serious Concern' Procedure.
7. **Equal Opportunities** You must observe the College's Equal Opportunities Policy.
8. **Rules of Conduct for Students** You must ensure that you are familiar with the rules of conduct for students which may be varied from time to time, and behave in a manner which is consistent with these rules.
9. **Personal Appearance** You must always present a smart, professional appearance. Whilst dress is a matter of personal taste, it is normally expected that staff will wear clothes which are generally accepted as appropriate for a professional environment and the work tasks for the day. Casual dress, such as jeans, trainers or leggings, is not normally acceptable unless a particular work task requires it.
10. **Personal Behaviour** You must act as a positive role model to our students and as a representative of the College. In both your private and public life, you must be careful to avoid becoming engaged in any activities which may bring the College into disrepute.
11. **Attendance and Time-keeping** you must attend regularly and punctually.
12. **Alcohol and Illegal Substances** You must always present yourself as fit for duty – this encompasses the responsibility of not being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or being adversely affected as the result of prior consumption of alcohol. You must not consume or be in possession of illegal substances and you must report to a member of the College Senior Executive Team any cases where you have reason to believe that a

student, colleague or visitor to the College is under the influence of or in possession of alcohol or illegal subsistence.

13. **Smoking** You must not smoke whilst on College premises or on College duty.
14. **Food and Drink** you must comply with College Policies regarding areas where food and drink may be consumed, and ensure the compliance of students and visitors to the College.
15. **Exclusivity of Service** You must comply with your contractual obligation to devote your full attention and abilities to the proper performance of your duties and responsibilities and to act in the best interests of the Corporation at all times. Accordingly, the Principal's written consent is required in respect of any employment which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the Corporation.
16. **Confidentiality** You must familiarise yourself with, and observe, your contractual obligation with regard to confidentiality.
17. **Contact with the Media** You may only communicate with members of the press or broadcasting media on behalf of the College, or in respect of any matters connected with the College, with the express permission of the Principal.
18. **Copyright, Employee Inventions and Post-termination Restrictions** You are required to observe your contractual obligations with regard to the above matters.
19. **Declaration of Interest** If you have a financial interest or involvement in a contract, potential purchase or any similar issue being considered by the College, then you must report this in writing to the Director of Finance.
20. **Fees** You must declare any fee from another body for work related in any way to your College employment. In the event of a fee being offered or paid, you may be required to surrender this to the College.
21. **Gifts and Hospitality** It is important to exercise particular discretion with regard to the acceptance of gifts and hospitality. You should be careful not to foster the suspicion of a conflict of interest. You should always have in mind the need to behave in a manner that avoids giving the impression that you have been influenced in your dealings with others by any gift or consideration.

The following are examples of what is normally acceptable:

- (i) Occasional gifts of a trivial character, such as small gifts from groups of students on completion of their courses, or inexpensive seasonal gifts such as diaries, calendars and so on;
- (ii) conventional hospitality, provided it is normal and reasonable in the circumstances.

If you are in any doubt about the acceptability of gifts or hospitality, you should raise the matter with a member of the Senior Executive Group.

22. **Criminal Convictions or Formal Police Cautions** You are required by Department for Education and Employment Regulations to report to the Principal in writing any criminal convictions or formal police cautions which are recorded against you.