

Staff Code of Conduct

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Person Responsible	Deputy Principal Finance and Resources
Approval/review bodies	JNC/SLT
Frequency of Review*	36 months

** Policies will be reviewed more frequently if legal changes or good practice require*

Review History:		
Date of review	Reviewed by	Reason for review
March 2010	HR Manager/ DCQHR	Change of person responsible/general update
January 2011	Compliance & Policy Manager	Title change of Person Responsible, change of committee name
October 2013	HR Manager	Change of person responsible/general update and inclusion of alcohol abuse policy
September 2016	HR Manager	Tri-annual review and good practice update
August 2019	HR Manager	Tri-annual review and good practice update

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Related policies/documents:

Staff Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (Conduct);
College Mission Statement and Strategic Aims;
Safeguarding Policy;
Dignity at work policy;
Sickness Absence Policy;
Health and Safety Policy; and
Prevent Policy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. North Kent College (“the College”), in common with all responsible employers, expects its employees to maintain high standards of conduct both in the fulfilment of their College duties and also in their public activities outside of their work.
- 1.2. College staff (a member of staff in this context refers to a direct employee of the College) are expected to be aware of and work in line with, the following key principles:
 - 1.2.1. the College Mission and Vision which are located on StaffNet; and
 - 1.2.2. all employees of the College are expected to work in such a way that delivers the following behaviours:
 - 1.2.2.1. customer focussed, through a “can do” attitude;
 - 1.2.2.2. consistent and reliable;
 - 1.2.2.3. has a collaborative, supportive and tolerant approach;
 - 1.2.2.4. reflective, and embraces new initiatives to improve performance;
 - 1.2.2.5. consistently delivers good or outstanding lessons (teaching staff); and
 - 1.2.2.6. inspires, motivate and challenges students to achieve outstanding outcomes (teaching staff).
- 1.3. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and the College may amended it at any time.

2. Staff Conduct

- 2.1 The code set out below applies to all College staff. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the College Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (Conduct), Safeguarding and Health and Safety Procedures, Prevent Policy as well as your contract of employment.
- 2.2 The general standards of conduct expected of all employees of the College are:
 - 2.2.1 a customer-focussed, conscientious, diligent, honest and responsible approach to work;
 - 2.2.2 a caring and respectful attitude to colleagues, students, visitors and employers;

- 2.2.3 a friendly disposition and welcoming concern for the welfare of students, staff and visitors;
 - 2.2.4 a positive and constructive approach to daily pressures and issues;
 - 2.2.5 to maintain good standards of performance at all times;
 - 2.2.6 to uphold and further the College's positive public image at all times; and
 - 2.2.7 to co-operate fully with colleagues and management, fully complying with all reasonable management instructions.
- 2.3 All employees of North Kent College are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the law, College policies and 'British Values'. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken under the College's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (Conduct).
 - 2.4 A non-exhaustive list of examples of conduct that would normally be regarded as unacceptable (i.e. considered to be misconduct or gross misconduct) is outlined in the College's Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (Conduct).

3. Employment or activities and conduct outside of College

- 3.1 Members of staff are not permitted to engage in other employment or activity outside College work which may conflict with the proper fulfilment of College duties, is prejudicial to the College's interests or which causes loss of public confidence in the College or its staff.
- 3.2 If a member of staff wishes to work outside the College or engage in an activity which may conflict with the College, they must submit in writing the details of the work/activity to the Senior Leader for their area, for consideration. The Senior Leader will respond to the request within ten working days, with the response being logged on the staff member's personal file. Any such agreement is subject to review by the Senior Leader concerned at any time if it is felt necessary to revisit the agreement. Full-time members of staff should not undertake significant other work in addition to College duties.
- 3.3 Posts on social media which bring the College, or your employment, into disrepute will also be a matter of concern for the College and may lead to disciplinary action.

4. Criminal Charges/Convictions

- 4.1 If during your employment you are charged or found guilty of an offence you are required to inform either your line manager or the HR Manager immediately. This includes any offences which may result in a driving ban

(where the staff member is required to travel as part of their duties or drive a College vehicle).

- 4.2 The College will review the charges/conviction considering the job role as detailed in the Staff Disciplinary Policy & Procedure (Conduct).

5. Personal Relationships

- 5.1 A personal relationship is where a staff member is:

5.1.1 related to a student or another member of staff; or

5.1.2 in a relationship with a student or another member of staff, where the relationship is more than a friendship (this includes emotional, romantic or any other relationship which goes beyond the normally accepted boundaries of professional colleagues).

- 5.2 Given the sensitive nature of personal relationships, staff are required to use common sense in assessing whether this policy is relevant to them. If any person is unsure, they should speak to HR in confidence about the situation.

- 5.3 This policy is not intended to prohibit staff from having a personal relationship with a work colleague. However, it must be recognised that there is potential for the relationship to affect the College's business.

- 5.4 The College recognises that where personal relationships develop at work, there is potential for conflict between professional and personal interests. Members of staff are responsible for their own conduct and must declare any potential conflicts of interest to their line manager.

- 5.5 If one of the staff members is or will be responsible for managing, auditing, verifying, appraising or authorising the work of the other, each staff member should declare the relationship without delay to their respective line managers. This also applies where one of the individuals is a contractor or consultant and the other staff member is responsible for that contractor's/consultant's work. The College reserves the right to decide to discontinue the situation where one staff member is responsible for managing, auditing, appraising or authorising the work of the other. Any measures taken would be in full consultation with the members of staff concerned and would be with a view to reaching agreement.

- 5.6 Members of staff who are in a personal relationship are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at work at all times in respect of such relationship. This means being considerate of the feelings of their other colleagues in their day-to-day dealings and being discrete in any discussions regarding their private life within the workplace. The personal aspects of any personal relationship must be conducted entirely outside of the work

environment; public displays of affection are inappropriate in the work environment.

- 5.7 Personal relationships between staff and students could compromise professional relationships and damage the teaching and learning environment for other students and staff. Staff members are strongly advised not to enter into sexual/romantic relationships with any student. This would be considered unprofessional and may have implications both in terms of child protection/safeguarding issues and ongoing employment at the College.
- 5.8 College equipment and resources are provided for work purposes only. Any inappropriate use in furtherance of a personal relationship will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- 5.9 Staff must ensure that they protect all confidential and commercially sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure.
- 5.10 Failure to declare a personal relationship in any of the circumstances detailed above may result in disciplinary action.

6. Alcohol/drug abuse

- 6.1 As a member of staff at the College, you are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out your job and to be able to perform your duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after effects of alcohol or drugs.
- 6.2 Alcohol and drugs use can lead to reduced levels of attendance, reduced efficiency and performance, impaired judgement and decision making and increased health and safety risks for you and other people. Irresponsible behaviour or the commission of offences resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs may damage the College reputation and, as a result, the business.
- 6.3 Staff are expected to abstain from alcohol consumption both during working hours and for a reasonable period prior to attending work. It is accepted that staff may, on occasion, have an alcoholic drink at occasional work-related events. However, the College expects these occurrences to be exceptional and at these times for staff to drink sensibly and not become unable to perform their work duties. At all times, staff are expected to be mindful of their personal safety and the safety of others.
- 6.4 Staff are expected to abstain from drugs use both during working hours and for a reasonable period prior to attending work. Drug use includes the use of controlled drugs, psychoactive (or mind-altering) substances formerly known as "legal highs", and the misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medication.
- 6.5 The College will not accept staff arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and/or whose ability to work is impaired in any way by reason of the

consumption of alcohol or drugs, or who consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescription or over the counter medication, as directed) on College premises.

- 6.6 Single incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem, which may damage the College reputation, are likely to be dealt with under the College Disciplinary Policy.
- 6.7 The College wishes to promote a culture which understands and is sympathetic to the problems associated with alcohol and drug misuse in which staff with dependency problems are encouraged to seek help and are supported; if you believe that you have an alcohol or drug-related problem, you should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible.
- 6.8 If you notice a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour which you believe is related to alcohol or drug use, you should encourage your colleague to seek assistance through their manager or the HR Department. If they will not seek help themselves, you should draw the matter to the attention of your manager. You should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering because of an alcohol or drug-related problem.
- 6.9 The College recognises that alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. The College is committed, in so far as possible, to treating these problems in a similar way to other health issues and will provide support where possible with a view to a return to full duties. Failure to engage with the support offered, discontinuing the course of treatment or continuing to perform unsatisfactorily post treatment will result in the Staff disciplinary procedure (conduct) to be implemented, which could lead to your dismissal.