



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT & MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

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Staff Code of Conduct and Model of Professional Behaviour

1 Purpose and Context

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide a clear set of principles to guide staff in how they are expected to conduct themselves in their day to day work (the Code of Conduct) and how they should behave towards one another (the Model of Professional Behaviour).
- 1.2 Article 14 of the Articles of Government in 'The Further Education Corporations (Former Sixth Form Colleges) (Replacement of Instruments and Articles of Government) Order 2007' states that: 'After consultation with staff, the Corporation shall make rules relating to the conduct of staff.'
- 1.3 Article 15 states that: 'In making rules under Article 14, the Corporation shall have regard to the need to ensure that academic staff at the institution have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves at risk of losing their jobs or any privileges which they may enjoy at the institution.'

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 Even if it were desirable to do so, it would not be possible to write an exhaustive list of rules governing staff conduct. Staff should be trusted in the discharge of their responsibilities, which implies allowing room for initiative and judgement. In fairness to staff, however, it is important to set out guidance as to where the exercise of that initiative and judgement could potentially bring them into conflict with others.
- 2.2 There may be occasions when a member of staff wants to know how a particular aspect of conduct might be regarded, when measured against the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff should seek advice from the Personnel Manager in the first instance, or a member of SMT.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This Code of Conduct and Model of Professional Behaviour applies to all staff at the College, irrespective of anyone's position or role in the College, together with any agency/casual staff and any workers at the College who are here on a voluntary basis.

Staff Code of Conduct

1. Working with Students

In their dealings with students the College expects that all staff will:

- Ensure their relationships with students are never of a kind that could compromise their professional responsibilities.
- Promote College standards of student behaviour.

2. Working with Colleagues

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

Staff must adhere to the College's policies and procedures because their actions have consequences for others. If staff have any doubts or concerns, they should seek advice from within their line management chain. All College Policies and Procedures are on BHASVIC Central.

Smoking is not permitted on College premises except in designated places (also see College's Smoking Policy).

3. Representing the College

In order to preserve the reputation of the College, staff must:

- Obtain approval from the Principal, or in the Principal's absence, the Vice Principal, before contacting the press.
- Check with the relevant budget holder before committing College resources other than those for which they have responsibility.
- Take care over the use of College headed notepaper and the College logo, whether for use themselves or the use of students they are supervising; in particular:
 - Ensure that written communication conforms to the BHASVIC Visual Identity Manual.
 - Ensure that written communication they are sending outside the College is checked by the Principal's PA unless stated otherwise in specific College policies
- Maintain professional standards of conduct towards others when acting in a College capacity.
- Dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity and with due regard for the conclusions others may draw from their attire (see appendix for further guidelines).

4. Additional Professional Responsibilities

Whilst it is proper that staff should receive the rewards of their own professional and academic endeavours, it is also essential to the mutual interests of both staff and the College that these are not achieved at any cost to primary contractual commitments. To this end, staff should be clearly aware of the importance of ensuring that the Principal is kept informed as to their intentions in the following areas:

- Except in the case of employees with supply contracts, the proposed undertaking of additional paid employment
- Any interest they may have regarding the appointment of staff, selection of students or contracts with which they may be involved on the College's behalf.

In addition, staff are reminded that they are expected at all times to observe the following professional obligations:

- To preserve the confidentiality of information relating to the College's staff, students, finances, marketing and strategic planning, together with any further information rightly to be judged the property of the College (except as outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy)
- To preserve this same degree of confidentiality for twelve months after leaving the College's employment.
- To exercise proper professional discretion in the event of their being offered hospitality or gifts of any kind to ensure that their line manager is informed of their acceptance of any such gifts or hospitality with a value in excess of £25.00 per instance.
- To wear their College ID at all times so that it is visible to others.

5. College Property

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

- They, and students for whom they are responsible, look after College premises and property which they use
- Procedures for borrowing College equipment are observed
- Energy is conserved wherever possible
- The security of College property is maintained as well as possible and not put at risk
- They pay the College for any costs incurred by the personal use of College equipment (eg. phone, fax, photocopier). However, in calculating this staff should bear in mind any costs they may have incurred by the use of their own equipment on College business (eg. phone call on College business made from home).

Staff should also assist with the security of the College by directing to Reception anyone who they think might be a stranger on site.

The BHASVIC Model of Professional Behaviour¹

The BHASVIC Model of Professional Behaviour grew from discussions with all College managers in January 2007 and with all College staff on the morning of 12 March 2007. The following points should be noted:

- The Model is not a job description; nor does it attempt to describe a member of staff's sense of their vocation. Its purpose is to define how all staff should aspire to behave as they interact with one another.
- The Model is arguably open to the criticism that it is full of things that are obvious and with which no one could disagree. But the test of the Model is how far we live up to it. As a community we have a collective expectation that as individual members of staff we are all aspiring to conform to it 100% of the time in our interactions with colleagues. We will welcome help in making this aspiration a reality.
- The Model belongs to and applies to all staff equally, irrespective of anyone's position or role in the College.

A. Staff should support the College mission and College processes

All staff should:

1. Demonstrate an awareness of the wider College context
2. Demonstrate good time-management and personal organisation
3. Act in accordance with College policy and procedures

In addition, all College managers should:

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the abilities, aptitudes, circumstances and roles of the staff they line-manage
5. Manage collective decisions effectively even when they hold private reservations
6. Enable the team they lead to understand the wider College context

B. We should all feel trusted and supported

All staff should:

7. In all their interactions with colleagues, assume the best of them
8. Seek support when they need it, and offer it when appropriate
9. Communicate with due consideration to time, place and manner
10. Work collaboratively with all members of the College community
11. Thank or praise colleagues when appropriate
12. Be discreet whenever information needs to be treated confidentially

In addition, all College managers should:

13. Delegate effectively and supportively
14. Be visible, accessible and approachable
15. Coach and mentor staff effectively where appropriate

C. Staff should be committed to constant improvement

All staff should:

16. Reflect on their own practice, and that of the College
17. Propose, and welcome, new ideas and constructive criticism

¹ Reference to College managers in the Model means teachers who are paid on the management pay spine, members of the support staff who have the title of manager and members of the Senior Management Team.

18. Be willing to modify their professional behaviour based on an understanding of how their colleagues perceive them

In addition, all College managers should:

19. Create the conditions in which the team(s) they lead can perform to the best of their ability
20. Respond to poor behaviour and performance (ie that detracts from or falls short of our mission and values or the model of professional behaviour) promptly and supportively
21. Always take time to give staff the 'big picture' – in essence, this means (i) the fundamental whys and wherefores for doing something, (ii) everything that is involved and (iii) the timescales
22. Involve all staff who are affected by a plan early enough for their views to shape it.
23. Be as clear as possible when planning, defining who will do what by when

Related documents:

Staff and general documents:

- Absence and payments for Additional Work for External Organisations
- Absence Management Policy
- Acceptable Use of Computers (Staff) Policy
- BHASVIC Staff Handbook
- Changing Staff Contracts Policy
- Children of Staff on Site Policy
- College Mission Statement and Values Statement
- Complaints Policy
- Conditions of Service Handbooks
- Contracts of Employment
- Credit Card Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Directed Time Guidelines for teachers
- Disciplinary Policy
- Environment Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Overseas Travel (Staff) Policy
- Probation Policy
- Professional Development Review (PDR) Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Smoking Policy
- Staff Development Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Staff References Policy
- Visual Identity Manual
- Whistleblowing Policy

Student documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- College Charter
- Educational Visits Policy
- Marketing Policy and Codes of Conduct
- Student Planner

Appendix

Staff Standard of Appearance

1. The broad standards we should all adhere to are:
 - (i) when working with students or other staff, the standard of appearance should be smart-casual.
 - (ii) when representing the College, for example at Parents' Evenings and Open Evenings, the standard of appearance should be smart.
2. In cases where these standards are not upheld, they should be dealt with through the line-management chain.

Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is NOT to set rules. They are offered to assist staff in meeting the broad standard in point 1 above. Staff are expected to conform to that standard and it seems reasonable to publish advice that would assist in giving greater clarity about what the standard means. The guidelines below should be read in the spirit of paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the Staff Code of Conduct. Please also note that the guidance only touches on the issue of clothing, not other aspects of appearance; the guidance is only intended to assist the fundamentals of staff professional discretion and SMT's duty to support.

When working with students or other staff, the standard of appearance should be smart-casual as a minimum. Clothing which:

- (i) displays inappropriate slogans or images
- (ii) reveals underwear or inappropriate bare flesh
- (iii) is dirty, holed or fraying
- (iv) resembles beach-wear, including shorts and flip flops

is likely to be judged inappropriate. There may be obvious exceptions however, for example sportswear and protective clothing appropriate to role. Again, staff professional discretion is key. If in doubt, ask.

When representing the College, for example on Open Evenings and Parents' Evenings, the standard of appearance should be 'smart'. Visitors should feel that staff have dressed well out of courtesy to them. Please speak to your line manager or any member of CMT if you require clarification.