

CODE OF CONDUCT

1 Introduction

This Code of Conduct is to provide a source of guidance to University employees. Whilst the University expects its employees and staff to comply with this code, it does not confer contractual rights or form part of any contract of employment and may be amended by the University or replaced at any time following appropriate consultation with recognised trade unions.

Breach of this code may be addressed via the University's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This code will be reviewed by the Human Resources department on a 3-year basis or amended in response to changes in future legislation and/or case law.

2 Ownership

The Human Resources department owns and manages this code on behalf of The University of Northampton.

3 Organisational Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees (and workers, as applicable) of The University of Northampton except Senior Post Holders who are covered by separate procedures managed by the Board of Governors. The policy includes any wholly owned subsidiaries, unless an alternative policy exists, subject to any qualifying conditions.

4 Definitions

Senior Post Holders – The Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer and the Clerk to the Board of Governors.

Bullying - The demeaning and humiliation of others through action or physical, emotional, or verbal conduct that erodes an individual's self-confidence and or undermines their self-esteem.

Harassment - Broadly speaking is the unwanted conduct which may violate a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation - Occurs when someone is treated less favourably or badly because they have brought or believed to have brought proceedings under the Equality Act, have alleged that someone has contravened such legislation or they are giving evidence or information in support of any such proceedings, or in connection with Union activities.

It includes situations where a complaint hasn't yet been made but someone is victimised because it's suspected they might make one.

Conflict of interest – A situation in which the concerns or aims of two parties are incompatible; where there is a clash between an individual's self-interest and their professional interest; where the situation means that an individual cannot make a fair and unbiased decision.

Close relationships – Can be as a partner, family member or close friendship

5 Policy Statement

- 5.1 The purpose of the Code is to define the standards of appropriate behaviour and conduct expected by the University in the performance of their duties.
- 5.2 The University is committed to treating individuals fairly, with dignity and respect and thus expects integrity, honesty and fairness to be displayed by its employees.
- 5.3 A number of principles within this Code are supported by more detailed policies and procedures which should be referred and adhered to.

6 Key Principles

- 6.1 The Code defines standards of behaviour and conduct expected of all employees in order that employees and all our stakeholders can be sure of those standards and have trust and confidence in our service.
- 6.2 Employees are expected to have regard for the impact of their behaviour on others and the University.
- 6.3 The areas detailed in the Code are not exhaustive and employees should be seen to be exhibiting the highest standards of conduct and behaviour and avoid bringing the University into disrepute.
- 6.4 The provisions of the Code of Conduct apply in all activities, both physical and virtual, in which employees are engaged in the course of their employment including work related functions that take place outside normal working hours.
- 6.5 It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure they have read and understood the Code of Conduct and any associated policies and procedures in the course of their work.
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of all line managers to act as an exemplar for the required standards of behaviour, promote understanding of the Code of Conduct and take any appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to deal with any breach of the Code or associated policies.
- 6.7 In addition to this Code of Conduct employees should familiarise themselves with the Key Behaviours within the Strategic Plan- Transforming Lives, Inspiring Change
- 6.8 Employees raising concerns to an appropriate person or body, either internally or externally, made in good faith, and in the reasonable belief that the disclosed concern tends to show malpractice, are protected by the University's Whistleblowing Policy and Union Operating and Facilities Agreement.

7 Employee Code of Conduct

Personal behaviour

7.1 Reputation of the University

Employees must uphold the name and professional image of the University and must not exhibit or engage in activity, whether it be within or external to the University, that may damage the reputation of the University or that of its officers and employees.

7.2 Standards of Integrity and Honesty

All employees must maintain a standard of integrity and honesty particularly in relation to disclosure of information, confidentiality, financial regulations, data protection, intellectual property and professional regulatory requirements.

7.3 Equality and Inclusion

In demonstrating the University's core values and compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the University seeks to ensure that the work environment promotes equality of opportunity and is free from discrimination. All employees are expected to comply with the Equality and Inclusion Policy and the Equality and Inclusion Procedure in all aspects of their work.

7.4 Respect at work

All employees are expected to behave and conduct themselves in a way that does not instil fear or create upset to colleagues, students and stakeholders. Employees should be mindful of how they communicate with others and should behave in a courteous, polite and respectful manner giving due consideration to the recipient at all times. Aggressive behaviour, physical or verbal, in person or in written communications will be addressed with reference to the appropriate policy and procedure.

7.5 Harassment, Bullying or Victimisation

All employees have a responsibility to ensure that we maintain an environment free from fear of bullying, harassment or victimisation. Employees are required to consider their own actions and ensure their behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional does not constitute bullying, harassment or victimisation. The University will take appropriate action for any breach or complaint of bullying, harassment or victimisation. Please see the Equality and Inclusion Policy, Conflict

Resolution and Grievance Policy and Procedure, and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for further information.

7.6 **Adherence to Health and Safety Requirements**

All employees must be aware of their responsibilities under all relevant Health and Safety legislation and University Policy. All activities should be carried out with the highest regard for Health and Safety of fellow staff, students and visitors. Employees are required to report any breaches of Health and Safety Policy or legislation and may do so in confidence with their line manager or the Safety Office. See Health and Safety Policy for further information.

7.7 **Relationships with other current or potential members of staff, students or stakeholders of the University.**

The University is concerned with the private lives of employees when relationships cause a conflict of interest or difficulties in the working environment.

Employees must notify their manager if a close relationship with another employee or student may compromise the integrity or perceived integrity of decision making, assessment, recruitment or promotion of another person. Each case will be considered and action to remove the employee from the position of authority over another may be taken for example, moving supervision or line management to another employee.

7.8 **Standard of Competent Job Performance**

All employees should competently and conscientiously perform the duties outlined in their job description and all reasonable tasks requested by management and the University.

7.9 **Other employment**

In order to ensure the wellbeing of our employees and compliance with the working Time Regulations, those who undertake additional work outside of the University, whether it is paid or voluntary, must notify their line manager.

Employees engaged in other work must ensure that it does not come into conflict with their duties at the University, that they devote their time during their University working hours to their University post and that it does not distract them from carrying out their duties with the University.

7.10 **Consultancy work**

All staff seeking to secure personal consultancy work must first discuss it with the relevant Dean or Deputy Dean or Director of Professional Services and seek approval. The nature of consultancy work must fit with the University Strategy and values, and encourage close relationships with the community, industry and business.

7.11 **Duty of Trust and Confidence**

In all contracts of employment there is an implied term of mutual trust and confidence therefore employees should not act in a way that is likely to destroy or seriously damage the relationship of trust and confidence between the University and its employees. Such actions may make the employment relationship with the University untenable resulting in a decision to end employment either by the individual, the University or mutually agreed. Examples of misconduct or negligence which may result in a loss of trust and confidence can be found in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

7.12 **Adherence to University Regulations, Policies and Procedures**

All employees have a duty to ensure they are fully aware of and comply with all University regulations, policies and procedures. Employees should refer to the policies and procedures pages (located on the Staff intranet) to access the latest versions.

Training and development in areas such as Equality and Inclusion, Recruitment and Selection, Bribery, Discipline, and Grievance is provided and should be undertaken in the given timeframes and refreshed at the required intervals.

7.13 **Adherence to Legislation and Non University Professional Regulations**

Employees are legally required to comply with all employment legislation and with any regulations defined by the employee's professional body.

7.14 **Misuse of drugs and alcohol**

All employees should be able to undertake their duties to a high level of competence and the use of or being under the influence of non-medically prescribed drugs and alcohol are prohibited in the carrying out of those duties on University or partner premises. There may be occasions when alcohol is served at a University event and alcohol consumption may be permitted provided that employees continue to act in a manner that does not bring the University into disrepute. Further information can be found in the Substance Use and Abuse Policy.

7.15 **Gambling**

Gambling activities must not be conducted on University premises other than fundraising events that may include a raffle or sweepstake. All gambling legislation must be complied with and licences obtained where necessary. Lottery syndicates are permitted but its management must not interfere with University business.

7.16 **Recording of conversations**

Recording of conversations using a voice recording device is prohibited unless all parties agree to be recorded. Separate provisions with regards to lecture Capture can be found in the Lecture Capture Policy.

7.17 **Conduct outside of work**

Employees attending University linked events outside of work time for example, leaving parties and social events, are expected to continue to behave in a manner that does not jeopardise the University's reputation.

In some circumstances behaviour/conduct outside work and not at a work-related event could potentially lead to disciplinary investigation where the University might consider such behaviour has brought the university into disrepute, for example if an employee committed an act of racism/racist violence.

7.18 **Personal appearance**

The University does not operate a dress code for employees with the exception of some areas where uniform or protective clothing is required. However, all employees are expected to dress in a way appropriate for their work.

Use of University Resources

- 7.19 All University resources must be used for the purposes of the University. Employees should ensure any personal use is limited and reasonable and does not contravene the primary purpose of the University; interfere with, conflict with or take priority over the performance of University duties; waste resources, deny or impair the service to other users; or have a negative impact on the University or other users, and when using social media. Resources include financial, IT equipment, email, internet, telephone and property. Further information can be found in the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

7.20 **Private telephone calls**

Use of university telephone facilities for occasional emergency or essential calls is permitted. No personal calls to premium rate numbers or personal international calls are permitted. The University reserves the right to review the usage of company phones, in terms of destination and call length, through telephone bills, and ask employees to reimburse any costs for personal usage for calls and texts.

7.21 **Use of IT equipment**

IT equipment for limited personal use, such as internet access and e-mail is permitted providing it is during breaks or before and after working hours, does not interfere with University business, does not compromise University business and is for legal usage only. See the Acceptable Use Policy.

7.22 **Social Media**

Employees are allowed to access social media websites from the University's computers or devices provided that it is for work-related and/or scholarly activity. Employees must ensure that communications are appropriate and not offensive, and do not bring the University name into disrepute. Access via University devices or an employee's own, for personal usage must be take place during breaks or before and after working hours.

Employees must read and follow the University Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

7.23 **Credit Cards**

Use of University credit cards for personal expenditure is not permitted and will be considered gross misconduct.

Professional Integrity

7.24 Intellectual Property (IP)

The University shall own all IP in work produced by University employees in the course of their employment with the University unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Such ownership is subject to the exceptions in the Intellectual Property Policy and to the provisions relating to employee inventions in the Patents Act 1977. See Intellectual Property Policy.

7.25 Financial Regulations

The University Financial regulations can be found in the Financial Regulations document, and associated guidance, all available on the University intranet. All employees that have financial or budgetary responsibility should make themselves aware of the regulations and abide by them. Any further clarification should be sought from the Finance Department

7.26 Conflict of interest

Employees should seek to avoid putting themselves in a position where there is a conflict, whether actual or potential, between their personal interests and their duties in the University. They should not allow any conflict of interest to arise which might interfere, or be perceived to interfere, with the exercise of their independent judgement.

Any University employee, who has a personal, financial or other beneficial interest in any financial arrangement to which the University is party, or is considering becoming a party, should disclose the fact to the Clerk of the Board of Governors, who will maintain a register. The term 'personal' includes situations involving a family member.

Declarations of interest will be sought on an annual basis from the Clerk to the Board of Governors from all members of the University Management Team and any University employees involved in approving procurement over £10,000 per annum.

7.27 **Access to confidential information**

The University operates in a transparent manner however in the undertaking of duties employees may have access to confidential information either about individuals or in connection with the Universities operating activities. Employees must keep such matters confidential. Employees with access to student and staff records, or those that have regular access to confidential matters will be asked to sign an additional confidentiality agreement. See Data Protection Policy.

7.28 **Data Protection**

All employees are expected to comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University Data Protection Act Policy and Procedure. Data protection training is provided by the University. All new staff and those identified as requiring data protection training must undertake the training as soon as is reasonably practical and within the timeframes given.

Employees are required to undertake Data Protection training every three years.

7.29 **Bribery Act**

Employees are expected to comply with the Bribery Act 2010 and with the University Bribery Act Policy and Procedure. Employees should be vigilant to ensure that bribery is prevented, detected and reported.

Employees are required to undertake Bribery Act training every three years.

7.30 **Money Laundering**

Employees are expected to comply with the legislation surrounding money laundering which is centred on:

- Proceeds of Crime Act (2002) (POCA)
- Money Laundering Regulations (2007)
- Terrorism Act (2002)

The University has an appointed Money Laundering Reporting Officer to whom employees should report if they suspect that money laundering activity is or has taken place or if they suspect anyone is involved in money laundering activity.

Further information is contained in the Anti-Money Laundering Policy which employees should read and understand.

7.31 **Gifts and Hospitality**

The University permits corporate gifts, hospitality, entertainment and promotional expenditure where it is undertaken:

- For the purpose of establishing or maintaining good business relationships;
- To improve the image or reputation of the University; or
- To present the University's activities effectively.

Further information is contained in the Bribery Act Policy and should be read prior to any consideration to gifts is given.

Employees may accept personal gifts from established suppliers up to the value determined by the Board of Governors as detailed in the Financial Regulations document. Anything received above this level shall become the property of the University and shall be recorded by the Clerk.

Hospitality can only be accepted where the invitation is by an organisation to a range of its clients/ customers and networking opportunities for the University arise.

8 Associated Documents

- Strategic Plan – Transforming Lives, Inspiring Change
- Linking Values, Critical Success Factors and Key Behaviours, Embedding Values
- Supporting Critical Success Factors with Key Behaviours
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- Equality and Inclusion Procedure
- Conflict Resolution and Grievance Policy
- Health and Safety legislation and University Policy
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- Substance Use and Abuse Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Data Protection Policy
- Bribery Act Policy
- Union Operating and Facilities Agreement

9 Equality Analysis

An Equality Impact Assessment must accompany this document.

10 Version Control

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