



***Policy on***  
***Staff Code of Conduct***

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

POLICY TITLE	STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT
DOCUMENT OWNER	Director of Human Resources
OWNING DIRECTORATE	Corporate Services
OWNING DEPARTMENT	Human Resources
DIRECTORATES AND DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY	All staff
POLICY EFFECTIVE FROM	17 March 2021
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**New College Durham**  
**Staff Code of Conduct**  
**(Equality and Diversity Assessment)**

We will consider any request for this Policy to be made available in an alternative format.

We review our Policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All Policies are subject to Equality Impact Assessments. Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the Policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or human rights.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these Impact Assessments, and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of the Policy.

To make suggestions or to seek further information please contact:

Human Resources Department  
[human.resources@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:human.resources@newdur.ac.uk)  
Tel: 0191 375 4025/4023

**Equality Impact Assessment: January 2021**

# New College Durham

## Staff Code of Conduct

### 1. Introduction

New College Durham seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment where the welfare and health and safety of staff and students is paramount.

This code of conduct provides clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all college staff are expected to observe.

All staff have a duty of care to keep students safe and are accountable for the way in which they use their authority and position of trust.

This code of conduct provides guidance as to how staff can reduce the risk of potential allegations / concerns being raised against them by acting professionally and appropriately at all times.

### 2. Relationship with other College Policies and Procedures

This code should be read in conjunction with the following College policies and procedures:

- Single Equality Scheme
- Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People / Adults at Risk
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups – Essential Recruitment and Selection
- College Prevent Duty
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedure (“Whistleblowing”)
- Anti-Bribery Policy

- Financial Regulations
- Financial Procedures
- Social Media Policy
- Information Security Policy
- Management and Monitoring of Electronic Communications, Internet and
- Telephones Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy for Network and Computer Facilities
- Management of Health and Safety Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure for Staff

It is accepted that the following does not provide an exhaustive list and staff must ensure that they conduct themselves in a manner that cannot be deemed to be or construed as inappropriate or unprofessional. If a member of staff has concerns as to how something will be portrayed/interpreted, then they should seek advice from the HR Department before pursuing that activity/course of action.

### **3. Behaviour / Conduct**

- 1.1 All staff are expected to behave professionally and appropriately at all times in their interactions with fellow staff, students and stakeholders.
- 1.2 All staff must ensure that they engage with any training deemed relevant/essential to their role.
- 1.3 All staff should avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 1.4 Staff should demonstrate high standards of conduct and encourage students to do the same.
- 1.5 All staff are expected to engage in professional development and training accordingly.

- 1.6 Staff are expected to show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others and not undermine fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 1.7 Staff are expected to maintain high standard in their own attendance and punctuality.
- 1.8 Staff must always act with integrity, honesty and never act in a fraudulent manner.
- 1.9 Staff must treat all College staff and students with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- 1.10 Staff are expected to devote their full attention to the effective undertaking of their role and must not undertake any other employment outside of the College without the prior and explicit permission of the Principal and Chief Executive (in accordance with the Contract of Employment – Exclusivity of Service). Further guidance on this matter can be sought from the College’s Human Resources (HR) department.
- 1.11 Staff that undertake teaching are also required to:
  - Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students;
  - Promote good progress and outcomes for students;
  - Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge;
  - Plan and deliver well-structured and engaging lessons;
  - Provide timely feedback to students;
  - Adapt teaching to the strengths and needs of all students;
  - Manage behaviour within the classroom effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment.

## **4. Equality and Diversity**

All staff must have due regard for Equality and Diversity legislation and ensure that they adhere to their obligation as set out in law under the Equality Act. Staff must not discriminate, harass, stereotype or victimise against staff or students.

## **5. Safeguarding**

- 1.12 All staff have a role to play in the safeguarding of children/vulnerable adults.
- 1.13 All staff have a duty to ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of all students and ensure that they adhere to the obligations as set out in the College's Safeguarding Procedures.
- 1.14 All staff are responsible for their own actions.
- 1.15 All staff are required to read all pertinent guidance in relation to safeguarding to effectively discharge their obligations within their role, of particularly relevance is reading, on an annual basis, Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education as well as the College's relevant safeguarding policies and procedures and ensure that they are conversant with their roles/responsibilities under said procedures. If any member of staff is unclear or has any queries, these should be raised with Human Resources (where the matter relates to staff) or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (if the matter relates to students).
- 1.16 All staff are required to undertake relevant Safeguarding training which is refreshed three years. Staff are expected to undertake the training within a timely manner of the request being made. If staff wish to undertake this training prior to the three-year timeframe the college will be happy to accommodate such requests, just contact the Training Manager to make these arrangements.
- 1.17 All staff should take care of students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- 1.18 Any safeguarding concerns should be reported to the College's Designated Safeguarding lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in a timely manner.



- 1.19 Staff are encouraged to report any suspected infatuation or any situation which they feel may comprise their professional standing.
- 1.20 Staff should be aware that they may be vulnerable to accusations when working alone with a student. It is recognised however that such occasions are necessary at times. If possible, staff should leave the door open or use a room with a window in the door. Staff should inform another member of staff as to their location and who they are meeting.
- 1.21 Staff should avoid travelling in a car with one student, unless explicit permission from one of the College's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads has been sought and approved.
- 1.22 When communicating with students' staff should only use their work devices/email address or an allocated work phone number.
- 1.23 Staff should never contact with students outside of the College for the purpose of seeking friendship.
- 1.24 Staff should never allow allegations made by a student go unrecorded or not acted upon by gaining the relevant advice from one of the College's Safeguarding Leads.

## **6. Sexual Contact**

Intimate or sexual relationships between a member of staff and a student will be regarded as wholly inappropriate and a significant breach of the College's Safeguarding Procedure. Any staff member who is in a relationship with an adult, who subsequently becomes a student at the College must report their relationship to the HR department, prior to the student commencing or enrolling on their course/programme.

## **7. Physical Contact**

Some staff will work in certain roles or settings where physical contact may be required i.e. supporting a student who is blind or has special educational and support needs. Physical contact should only take place when it is necessary and appropriate to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe environment and the student should be made aware of why the contact is necessary and appropriate.

## **8. ID Badge**

Staff must ensure that they wear their staff ID badge and lanyard at all times whilst working on College premises to identify themselves as a member of staff. Should a replacement badge be required please contact a member of the HR department.

## **9. Criminal Offences**

In accordance with the contract of employment, staff must notify the HR department if they are charged or convicted of an offence during the course of their employment. The notification must take place at the earliest opportunity. The nature/severity of the offence or conviction will determine the appropriate course of action.

## **10. “Whistleblowing” – Public Interest Disclosure**

When staff, students and stakeholders have concerns about serious malpractice which is in the public interest to raise, they can do so under the College’s Whistleblowing Procedure. Any individual raising a concern under this procedure must not be subject to victimisation or any action(s) which seeks to deter them from raising the issue as this will be regarded a serious disciplinary offence and will be investigated accordingly under the College’s Disciplinary Procedure,

All staff must ensure that they are aware of their obligations under this procedure and a copy can be located on the HR page of the College’s intranet site.

## **11. Acceptance of Gifts / Bribery and Adherence to the College's Financial Regulations**

Compliance with the following policies is compulsory for all staff employed by the College:

- Anti-Bribery Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Financial Procedures

Failure to comply with these policies has potentially significant consequences, and thus it is important that you understand your obligations. Please note that being unaware of the obligations detailed in the policies, will not be justification for any non-adherence. If you have any queries or doubts about any issues covered by these policies, please contact HR or Finance representatives.

## **12. College Property**

Staff should have due regard for all College property as well as property that has been issued to them for use outside of the College (i.e. for use at home). Staff are responsible for the safe handling and storage of such equipment. It is recognised that accidents can happen, and that property can be damaged. Where any College property becomes damaged, this should be reported to the relevant department or to your line manager as soon as reasonably possible.

## **13. Acceptable Use – IT Equipment/Access**

All staff must accept the terms of the College's Management and Monitoring of Electronic Communications, Internet and Telephones policy and must adhere to the College's Acceptable Use Policy for Network and Computer Facilities by signing and dating the statement.

## **14. Information Security**

All staff must have due regard for the management and sharing of information. All staff utilising College IT systems must ensure that:

- The integrity and security of all electronic systems is maintained;
- All information is stored in a secure manner and that appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent improper access;
- Any attempts to gain improper access to information are detected and recorded accordingly;
- College information systems are not compromised or used for unauthorised activities;
- Only authorised members of staff can collect and view pertinent information, which must then only be used for legitimate purposes;
- Information is only shared with legitimate and authorised users both inside and outside of the College.

Staff are required to ensure that they are familiar with their obligations as set out under the College's Information Security Policy which is available to view on the IT page of the intranet.

## **15. Social Media**

All staff must ensure compliance with the College's Social Media Policy regarding their behaviour and communication online. Staff must not accept "friend requests" or "followings" from a student. A copy of the College's Social Media Policy is located on the HR page of the intranet.

## **16. Health and Safety at Work**

All staff have an obligation to comply, support and co-operate with any policy that deals with the management of health and safety within the College, or within the undertaking of activities related to the College. All staff must ensure that they undertake health and safety training, which is refreshed every three years, and undertake any role specific training as identified 'essential' to the role that is being undertaken i.e. First Aid, Manual Handling, Working at Heights training etc.

All staff that are identified as requiring health surveillance must ensure that they adhere to the requirements of the Health Surveillance programme/policy, ensuring attendance at appointments and completion of relevant paperwork/assessments.

Staff must not undertake any activity that they are not trained to undertake and should raise any concerns as soon as reasonably possible either with their line manager or a member of the Health and Safety team.

## **17. Smoking at Work**

New College Durham operates a no smoking policy in all of its buildings. Staff are only permitted to smoke within the designated smoking area which is clearly signposted on the campus.

## **18. Adherence to all College Policies**

Staff must ensure that they comply with all College Policies and Procedures and ensure that they are familiar with their roles/responsibilities under these procedures to for the effective undertaking of their role. Copies of all polices are located on the intranet. A staff member should liaise with their line manager if they have any concerns/queries regarding their responsibilities under any given procedure.

## 19. Failure to adhere to Staff Code of Conduct

Failure to comply with the Staff Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. A serious breach of this code may result in a referral being made to an external or statutory agency in accordance with the College's statutory and legal requirements.

## 20. Policy Review

- 1.25 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to employment legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.
- 1.26 In considering the effectiveness of this policy, consultation will be undertaken with Trade Unions, Staff and Managers to assist in the review process.

Implementation Date	<b>March 2021</b>
First Review Date (due)	<b>March 2026</b>