



# **Staff Code of Conduct**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this code is to provide a clear framework within which employees of Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust (WHMAT) are expected to conduct themselves. WHMAT strives to maintain a work environment for its staff and a learning environment for its students in which honesty, integrity and respect for colleagues, students and the parents/guardians and clients of the Trust constantly reflected in personal behaviour and standards of conduct.

## **Principles**

- Employees are expected to have regard for the impact of their personal behaviour on the Trust, colleagues, customers, the environment and the community.
- The Trust receives a substantial income from public sources. It is essential that the Trust maintains the highest standards of conduct in financial matters and seeks to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour. Financial procedures and regulations are in place and employees are expected to ensure that decision making is open and fair and complies with these.
- This code covers some of the most important issues relating to personal conduct, and gives a framework of standards and behaviour guidelines, but it is not intended to be exhaustive.

## **Standards of Personal Behaviour**

### **Equality of Opportunity**

One of the Trust's core values is the promotion of inclusivity and valuing diversity'. WHMAT seeks to ensure that the work environment for its employees is supportive, and one where individual respect is shown to all. All members of staff and students, regardless of their gender, race, ethnic background, culture, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, socio-economic status or any other factor will be supported and encouraged to perform to their potential.

### **Harassment and Bullying**

To secure an environment in which students and members of staff are able to flourish and to achieve their full potential, the Trust is committed to ensuring that everyone is able to work and to participate in the life of the Trust without fear of harassment, bullying or intimidation. Everyone at WHMAT has a part to play by ensuring that their own behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional, does not constitute harassment. The Trust will take action against inappropriate behaviour which shows lack of respect for others or which leads people to feel threatened.

### **Health and Safety**

The Trust places a high priority on providing a safe working and learning environment and will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation. All activities should be carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of employees, students, contractors and

the public. Our aim is excellence in health and safety, by means of continuous improvement of standards, and the comprehensive use of risk assessments so as to systematically remove the causes of accidents/incidents and ill-health. This, together with more specific aims and objectives, reflects the Trust's commitment to promote employee well being.

## **Performance**

The Trust expects individuals to follow all reasonable rules and instructions given by those supervising or managing their activities and/or work areas. This is outlined further within the Performance Management, Appraisal and Capability Policies.

## **Conduct Outside Work**

The Trust does not seek to dictate how employees conduct themselves in their personal lives outside work. However, unlawful, anti-social or other conduct by employees which may jeopardise the Trust's reputation or position will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

## **Dress Code**

The Trust does not operate a formal dress code for its employees, other than for those who are provided with uniform and/or protective clothing. However, employees must ensure that their dress is appropriate for the situation in which they are working and that they present a smart, professional image and one that reflects sensitivity to student and customer perceptions.

## **Academic Integrity**

The Trust strives to maintain the highest standards in all the teaching and research that it undertakes, and staff must not conduct themselves in ways that may undermine the academic standards of its awards or the conduct and dissemination of its research.

## **Intellectual property**

Where appropriate the rights to personal benefit from inventions, discoveries and patents directly created by staff at WHMAT will be protected by intellectual property rights.

## **Copyright**

Subject to the following provisions, the Trust and employees acknowledge the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. All records, documents and other papers (including copies and summaries thereof) which belong to the Trust and therefore which are made or acquired by employees in the course of their employment shall be the property of the Trust. The copyright in all such original records, documents and papers shall at all times belong to the Trust

## **Financial Regulations**

The Trust's financial regulations create a framework of financial controls within which the staff of the Trust must operate. These regulations are designed to protect the Trust and individual members of staff. Failure to comply with these regulations may lead to the loss of

assets, significant delays in payments to employees and suppliers, and additional work for colleagues, as well as potential for disciplinary procedures.

Employees must not accept gifts or hospitality that could give rise to a suspicion that they have a conflict of interest or have been influenced in a decision. Any gifts received must be agreed by the Executive Head Teacher and recorded in the register.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

The highest standards of behaviour are also expected in all areas of Trust life, especially where individuals are in positions to make decisions which may have significant impact on others. In all such cases it is important that decisions are taken in a fair and balanced way that can withstand external scrutiny. Conflicts of interest should be identified so that individuals are not involved in decisions where their actions could be seen as biased.

### **Access to Confidential Information**

There will be times when individuals, through their positions as members of committees, selectors/recruiters, line managers etc, become aware of confidential information, either about other individuals or in connection with the Trust's commercial/academic activities. Individuals should be aware of the need to keep such matters confidential and to respect the proper channels of communication for such information.

### **Use of Equipment for Non-Work Purposes**

The Trust will allow employees reasonable use of Academy equipment and facilities, provided that authorisation has been obtained on every occasion, that the use does not interfere or conflict with the work of WHMAT, and that any costs are met by the individual.

### **Private Telephone Calls**

Employees may use Academy telephone facilities to make occasional private calls for essential or emergency matters. Private international calls are not permitted without prior authorisation from the Executive Head Teacher. Employees who WHMAT have provided mobile phones must reimburse the Trust for the use of these phones for private calls and texts etc.

### **Use of IT Equipment, Internet and Social Media**

Users of the Academy's IT and the internet facilities must behave reasonably towards other users and the facilities and in public areas they must behave appropriately. Users who do not behave reasonably and appropriately may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees may use Academy internet facilities for occasional personal matters, but must not access social media for personal purposes in working hours. The E-Safety Policy outlines requirements in more detail.

### **Data Protection**

WHMAT holds and processes information about employees, students, and other data subjects for academic, administrative and commercial purposes. When handling such information, the Trust, and all staff or others who process or use any personal information, must comply with the Data Protection Principles which are set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Procedures**

### **Raising matters of concern**

Employees have a right and a duty to raise concerns which they may have about breaches of the law or propriety by the Trust. This should normally be through their SLT line manager but in circumstances where this is not appropriate they may approach the Head of Academy or Executive Head Teacher in confidence.

### **Breaches of this code**

This code of conduct has been drawn up to provide a source of guidance to the Trust's employees. It is not a contractual document and can be amended at any time by the Trust. All staff must comply with both the provisions of this code and the Trust/Academy's policies and procedures, breaches of which will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.