

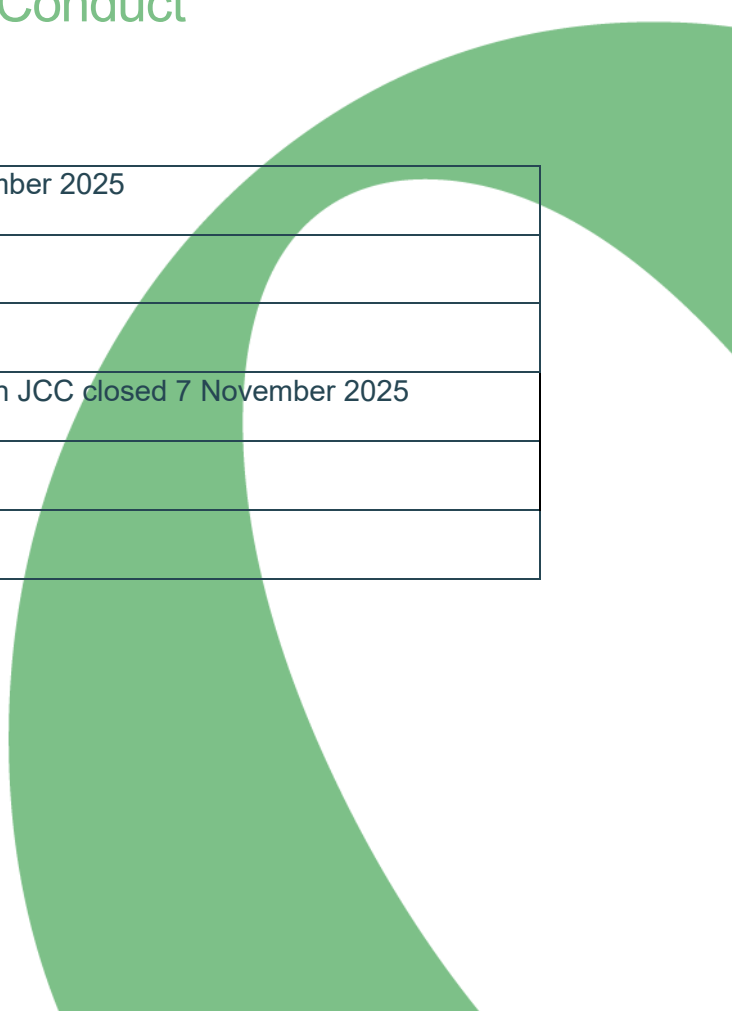


Coastland College

Policies & Procedures

Staff Code of Conduct

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Policy Author:	Director of HR
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Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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Alternative Formats:

If you require this document in an alternative format, please use the following contact information: welcome@coastland.ac.uk

Staff Code of Conduct

1. Aims, Scope and Principles

- 1.1 This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff (including agency and casual workers) and volunteers to follow.
- 1.2 By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our College is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.
- 1.3 College staff have an influential position and will act as role models for students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.
- 1.4 We expect all staff and volunteers to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.
- 1.5 At Coastland College, we are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, and visitors.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all staff and volunteers. It reflects our legal obligations, safeguarding responsibilities, and our core values:

- We are Courageous
- We are Dynamic
- We are Empowering
- We are Welcoming
- We are Connected

- 1.6 Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our disciplinary procedures.
- 1.7 Please note that this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this Code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the College and its students.

2. Legislation and Guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should (among other things) cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media. 'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18, the use of child in this policy refers to students and apprentices.

3. General Obligations

Staff must:

- 3.1 Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- 3.2 Never use inappropriate or offensive language in College.
- 3.3 Treat colleagues and students with dignity and respect in any interactions and communications, both in-person and online. This includes in virtual meetings and on social media.
- 3.4 Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- 3.7 The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and accepting and valuing individual differences for all employees, students, or other College users. Do not act in any way which is discriminatory towards individuals or groups including for reasons of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. These are the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.8 Take reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of yourself, other employees, students, and College users. Be clear when students are in your supervision as to what your responsibilities are. Report anything which you consider

a health and safety risk immediately. Please refer to the College's Health and Safety Policy for further guidance.

3.9 Treat all College property with care and respect, ensuring its security.

3.10 Adhere to the College's Smoking and Vaping Policy.

4. Safeguarding

4.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard students from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

4.2 Staff will familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures, and the Prevent Duty, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a student.

4.3 Please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy for further guidance.

4.4 Comply with the guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings. This involves being responsible for your own actions and behaviour; working in an open and transparent way; working with other colleagues where possible in situations that may be open to question; discussing and taking advice from the Senior Leadership Team over any incident which may give rise to concern; recording any incidents or decisions made; applying the same professional standards regardless of gender, sexuality, or disability; complying with confidentiality where necessary; and being aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against you.

4.5 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

4.5.1 This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the College, including an agency worker, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of college

4.5.2 We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

4.5.3 A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Principal, DSL or Director of HR, or the Chair of Governors, where the Principal is the subject of the allegation.

4.6 Low-level concerns about members of staff

4.6.1 A low-level concern is behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'.

For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with students
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of students using personal devices for non-work-related purposes
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating students

4.6.2 Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

4.6.3 All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

4.6.4 All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

- 4.6.5 Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.
- 4.6.6 This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our college values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.
- 4.6.7 Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 4.6.8 Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

5. Whistle-blowing

- 5.1 Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest”. Examples linked to safeguarding include:
- Students’ or staff members’ health and safety being put in danger
 - Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
 - Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest
- 5.2 Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected. The College aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 5.3 Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or college procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.
- 5.4 Staff should follow the College’s Whistleblowing Policy and Process where this is required.

6. Sexual Harassment

6.1 Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has a purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

It also includes treating someone less favourably because they've submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the past, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment. When this behaviour is unwanted, it includes (but isn't limited to):

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay' including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing
- Continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic, or that some people might find offensive
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless)
- Offensive emails, text messages or social media content
- Comments and jokes of a sexual nature
- Sexually suggestive looks and staring
- Sexual propositions and advances
- Promising things in return for sexual favours
- Physical contact such as massaging, hugging or kissing
- Sexual contact on social media

6.2 Staff will help create a positive environment that works to prevent sexual harassment. This includes calling out sexual harassment that they witness. All witnesses will be provided with appropriate support and will be protected from victimisation.

- 6.3 If a staff member is concerned at any point about incidents of sexual harassment (either directed at them or someone else), they should report their concern to the Principal, DSL, Director of HR. If the concern is about the Principal, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of the Governing Board. The College will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.
- 6.4 All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to incidents of sexual harassment. The College will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved and workforce training is targeted where needed.

7. Staff-Student Relationships

- 7.1 Relationships formed with students must be based on mutual trust and respect. It is a criminal offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003) for a person in a position of trust in an educational establishment to engage in any sexual activity with a person under 18, with whom a relationship of trust exists, irrespective of the age of consent, even if the basis for their relationship is consensual.
- 7.2 In the event of a relationship developing or pre-existing, with a student 18 years or over, the member of staff concerned is required to declare this and any possible conflict of interest to the Director for HR in confidence.
- 7.3 Staff will observe proper boundaries with students that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.
- 7.4 If staff members and students must spend time on a 1-to-1 basis, staff will make sure that where possible:
- This takes place in a public place that others can access
 - Others can see into the room
 - A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

- 7.5 Staff should avoid contact with students outside of college hours if possible. Work related contact can be expected outside of college hours for open events, trips and events.
- 7.6 Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and students. This includes social media profiles.
- 7.7 While we are aware many students and their parents/carers may wish to give gifts to staff, e.g. at the end of the college year, only small token gifts from staff to students are permitted. Gifts from staff to students is not otherwise permitted.
- 7.8 If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a student may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a student, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

8. Personal Relationships at Work

- 8.1 We recognise that individuals who work together may form close personal relationships. Personal relationships at work are a normal part of life and you are entitled to a private life. At the same time, we are committed to promoting a working environment based on dignity, trust and respect.
- 8.2 It is important for us to ensure that staff behave in an appropriate, professional and responsible manner at work and that any personal relationship does not compromise this.
- 8.3 If you are involved in a close personal relationship with a colleague, contractor, client, customer or supplier, you must not allow that relationship to influence your conduct while at work.
- 8.4 You must ensure that any personal relationship at work does not have an adverse effect on your work, give rise to a conflict of interest, or provide any other workplace advantage.
- 8.5 Intimate behaviour during work time, such as holding hands, kissing, other close physical contact and discussions of a sexual nature is not permitted. For the avoidance of doubt, this applies during any period that you are working, whether that is at the workplace or at any other location in line with your duties.

- 8.6 You must ensure that any confidential information that you have access to is protected at all times. Any breach of confidentiality will be treated very seriously, and even inadvertent disclosure will be dealt with under our Disciplinary procedure.
- 8.7 If you enter into a personal relationship with a colleague working in the same department or team, an individual that you supervise, a manager, or with any individual which may give rise to a conflict of interest, you must declare your relationship to your line manager and the Director of HR.
- 8.8 Any information that you disclose will be treated sensitively and in confidence.
- 8.9 Where one party has access to confidential information or is in a position of authority over the other, or there is a potential conflict of interest situation, we reserve the right to transfer one or both of the individuals involved in a personal relationship to an alternative post either temporarily or permanently.
- 8.10 In such circumstances, we will consult both of the individuals and seek to reach a satisfactory agreement regarding the transfer of one or both of them.

9. Communication and Social Media

- 9.1 College staff's social media profiles should not be available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as students may be able to find them. Staff are expected to review and update the privacy and security settings on their personal social media accounts to ensure they are set to private. As an additional measure to protect personal privacy, staff may consider using a variation of their name—such as a first and middle name—instead of their full name.
- 9.2 Staff should not attempt to contact students or their parents/carers via social media, or any other means outside college, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find students' or parents/carers' social media profiles.
- 9.3 Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are students at the college without their consent.
- 9.4 Please refer to the College's online safety policy and social media guidelines policy for further details.

10. Acceptable Use of Technology

- 10.1 Staff will not use technology in college or belonging to the college to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling, and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.
- 10.2 Staff must exercise professional judgement when using personal or college-issued devices during working hours, particularly in the presence of students. Any personal use must be incidental and limited to essential, time-sensitive matters, and should only occur during the employee's own time (e.g. before or after working hours, or during designated breaks).
- 10.3 We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the College IT system.
- 10.4 Please refer to the College's ICT and internet acceptable use policy for further details.

11. Confidentiality

- 11.1 In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the College, staff, students and their parents/carers.
- 11.2 This information should never be:
- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
 - Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
 - Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
- 11.3 This does not overrule a staff member's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

12. Honesty and Integrity

- 12.1 Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with students, handling money, claiming expenses and using college property and facilities.
- 12.2 Staff will not accept bribes. Please refer to the College's Gifts and Hospitality Policy for detailed guidance on acceptable limits and the declaration process.
- 12.3 Staff will ensure that all information given to the College is correct. This should include:
- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of college)
 - Qualifications
 - Professional experience
- 12.4 Where there are any updates to the information provided to the College, the member of staff will advise the College as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.
- 12.5 Inform the College if you receive a Police caution or are convicted of a criminal offence as this may affect your suitability to work with children and young people. All posts at the College are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Police Act Criminal Records 1997.
- 12.6 Your conduct in your private life is a matter of concern to the College where it damages the College's reputation, makes you unsuitable for educational work, or renders your continuing employment unacceptable. Offences relating to violence, dishonesty, substance abuse (including alcohol), sexual offences, and possibly other offences are likely to come into this category.
- 12.7 Dealing with the media on any issue without the knowledge and support of the Principal will also be a matter of concern for the College and may lead to disciplinary action.

13. Dress Code

- 13.1 Staff should wear smart, appropriate clothing suitable for wearing in front of students. It is not acceptable to wear clothes that display any offensive or political slogans. The goal is to maintain a professional and respectful appearance that aligns with the College's values.
- 13.2 If a uniform is provided, it must be clean, neat, and presentable at all times. It is important to maintain a professional appearance that reflects the standards of the College.
- 13.3 Staff must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as required by their specific roles and responsibilities. This includes, but is not limited to, safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, and high-visibility clothing. PPE should be worn correctly and maintained in good condition to ensure safety and compliance with health and safety regulations.

14. Conduct Outside of Work

- 14.1 Staff will not act in a way that would bring the College into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the College on social media, any conduct of this nature could lead to disciplinary action.
- 14.2 You are required to devote your full time, attention and abilities to your duties during working hours and to act in our best interests at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without the written consent of the College, undertake any employment or engagement, which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with our interests. An Exclusivity of Service Form is available from the HR Department.
- 14.3 Always take care at events (both on and off campus) and work-related trips to ensure behaviour remains professional and maintain appropriate boundaries with colleagues, students, and other members of the College community. Careful consideration about the appropriateness of consuming or supplying alcohol in work contexts should form a central part of taking such care.

- 14.4 Work-related social events are an opportunity to build camaraderie and strengthen professional relationships. While participating in these events, colleagues are expected to maintain the same standards of conduct as they would in the workplace. This includes behaving professionally, respecting personal boundaries, and being mindful of the appropriateness of consuming or supplying alcohol. It is important to ensure that these events are inclusive and respectful, fostering a positive and supportive atmosphere for all attendees.
- 14.5 At Coastland College, we recognise the importance of individual political beliefs and activities. However, it is essential to maintain a neutral and professional environment within the workplace. Colleagues are expected to refrain from engaging in political activities during work hours or using College resources for political purposes. This includes campaigning, distributing political materials, or displaying political symbols.
- 14.6 Trade union materials may be shared or displayed in accordance with relevant legislation and College policies, provided they are appropriate, respectful, and do not disrupt the working environment.
- 14.7 Our goal is to ensure that all members of the College community feel respected, and that the workplace remains free from political bias.

15. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually and may be updated as required. Any proposed changes will be consulted on through the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

16. Links with other Policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour policy (Students)
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Filtering and Monitoring Policy
- Staff Smoking and Vaping Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Equality Analysis

Name of Policy:	Staff Code of Conduct
Person Responsible:	Director of HR
Date of Analysis:	10 November 2025

1: Identify aims of the activity

What is the purpose of the policy and who is intended to benefit?

The purpose of the Staff Code of Conduct Policy is to set clear expectations for professional behaviour, conduct, and responsibilities for all employees of Coastland College.

It provides a framework to ensure that staff act in a manner that upholds the values of the College, maintains a safe and respectful working environment, and protects the interests of students, colleagues, and the wider community.

This policy is intended to benefit:

- **Staff**, by providing clarity on acceptable standards of behaviour and promoting a fair, respectful, and inclusive workplace.
- **Students**, by ensuring they are supported and safeguarded by staff who act professionally and ethically.
- **The College**, by fostering a culture of integrity, accountability, and equality, and by reducing the risk of misconduct or reputational harm.

The policy supports the College’s commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion by applying consistent standards to all staff, regardless of their background or protected characteristics, in line with the Equality Act 2010

2: Assess likely impact

How might this policy have an impact on staff, visitors or students in terms of disability, age, race, gender, religious belief, trans-identity, sexuality?

Positive Impact
 No Impact
 Negative Impact

If you have identified **negative** impacts, you need to revise your activity to ensure that you are not disadvantaging any group on the grounds of disability, age, race, gender, religious belief, trans-identity, sexuality.

If you have identified **positive** impacts or **no impact**, please explain your decision

The Staff Code of Conduct Policy is designed to all employees, regardless of their background or personal characteristics. It promotes a respectful, inclusive, and professional working environment, which supports the wellbeing and dignity of all staff and students.

Positive impacts identified include:

- **Promotion of equality and fairness:** The policy sets clear behavioural expectations that apply equally to all staff, helping to prevent discriminatory or inappropriate conduct.
- **Support for protected characteristics:** By reinforcing respectful behaviour and professional boundaries, the policy helps safeguard individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- **Inclusive culture:** The policy contributes to a culture where diversity is valued and all individuals feel safe and respected.
- **Safeguarding and wellbeing:** It supports the College’s safeguarding responsibilities by ensuring staff conduct does not compromise the safety or dignity of students or colleagues.

No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. The policy is intended to uphold the College's values and legal obligations around equality, diversity, and inclusion.

3: Checklist

1. Which of the following groups have you consulted?

- Staff Students Committee Other stakeholders
(please specify below)

JCC – UCC and Unison November 2025

2. How frequently will you monitor the impact(s) of this activity?

- Termly Annually Other (please specify below)