



Humber UTC

A University Technical College

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY ISSUES

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including: treating others professionally and with dignity; acting honestly, using public funds and academy equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety policies and guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all staff, including the Principal.

This document is not an exhaustive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the academy, or representing the UTC, and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted throughout the Code.

This code shall be reviewed and updated as required.

2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

The Staff Code of Conduct forms part of an employee's contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated UTC policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, and the UTC reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

3. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

3.1 Standards of Behaviour

All employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to the UTC Board Members and fellow employees with impartiality. Employees will be expected, through agreed

procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service. A list of unacceptable behaviour which may lead to disciplinary action are provided at Appendix I.

3.2 Treating other people with dignity and respect

All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, students and external contacts, such as parents, professionally and with dignity.

Staff are required to comply with the UTC's equality policies in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated by the UTC. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, students and parents.

3.3 Appropriate relationships with children

UTC employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees of the UTC have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand UTC policies on child protection and should seek clarification on any points they are not clear on.

See UTC guidelines: Safer working practice for working with Children and Young People.

3.4 Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the UTC into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the Debarring Service.

3.5 Criminal actions

UTC employees must inform the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate, immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees of the UTC.

3.6 Required reading:

- UTC's Child Protection policy and procedure.
- UTC's Equality Policy
- UTC's Whistleblowing Policy
- UTC's Dignity at work policy

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Employees should declare any financial or non-financial interests that may cause any conflict with the UTC or the UTC's interests.

When considering whether there may be a conflict of interest an employee shall apply the test "Would a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts, think the employee might be influenced?" If the answer is yes, then the interest should be declared. If in doubt declare the interest.

Interests will include pecuniary interests, for example, land ownership, and involvement in contractual or employment relationships. Interests will also include indirect pecuniary interests, where known, i.e. pecuniary interests of your close relatives. A pecuniary interest is one, which has the potential for making you, your employer or your relative or friend gain or lose financially.

Non-pecuniary interests, where known, are just as important. Any potential for a good or a bad effect on employees, their family, close relations, friends, club or societies etc. and any of those they are associated with, will count.

See Appendices 2 and 3: Register of Employee Interests/Declaration Form.

5. PROBITY OF RECORDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings to the appropriate benefit agency, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the Police.

6. FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS

6.1 Financial Regulations

All UTC employees must comply with the UTC's and EFA Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations but some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

6.2 Business Contacts

In this section, "*business contact*" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the UTC is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

6.3 Declaration of gifts

Any gifts that are received in the course of your employment should be declared in writing on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (See Appendices 2 and 3) with the exception of those items specifically identified in sections 6.4 and 6.5 below. This document shall remain available for inspection.

6.4 Gifts or hospitality to an employee in the course of employment

As an employee of the UTC, you are personally responsible for all decisions connected with your acceptance of any gift or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the UTC.

You should treat with extreme caution any offer of gifts or hospitality made to you personally or to partners/members of your family. You should refuse any gift or hospitality which might be perceived by the public as influencing your decisions or actions as an employee of the UTC. Acceptance in the context of your employment of any fee or reward, other than your proper remuneration, can constitute a criminal offence.

Gifts or hospitality of nominal value (e.g. lunch/refreshments or a token promotional gift) may be accepted but always declare them on the declaration form and remember to attach details of any gifts or hospitality accepted during conferences/events. If the value of the hospitality is substantial, .e.g dinner to discuss business, get the approval of your Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate first.

Tactfully refuse gifts or hospitality from any external commercial body where these might be seen by the public to compromise your integrity, e.g. complimentary tickets to sporting events, paid holidays etc. It may help to explain that this is UTC policy. If the gifts are sent to the UTC, return them if the sender can be identified. If it is not possible for you to return them, make arrangements for them to be officially appropriated to the benefit of the academy or to a charity nominated by the UTC.

Any cash payments made in the context of your employment, e.g. a token payment following a talk you have given or a training session, must either be refused or, if intended for charity, paid via the UTC. It is not appropriate to make the donation yourself.

Declare all offers of gifts or hospitality, whether you accept them or refuse them. Declarations must be made on the form at Appendix 3 and no other method of declaration is valid. You must answer all of the questions on the form.

Hand the completed form to the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate who will ensure that it is checked to see that it has been properly completed.

If you have any doubt about whether to accept a gift or hospitality, seek the advice of the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate

6.5 Gifts or hospitality to the UTC

Where a business contact sends a gift to the UTC (for example, a stationery supplier sending a gift), these should not be accepted and should be returned to the supplier. Such offers should be declared and recorded on the form at Appendix 3.

If it is not possible to return the gift, the employee who usually deals with the supplier should declare the gift to the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the UTC.

The only exceptions to this are low cost, functional items suitable for business use (as opposed to personal use), such as diaries, calendars or pens, which may be accepted.

6.6 Use of UTC contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use UTC business contacts for the purpose acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non-UTC activities.

7. USE OF UTC PREMISES & EQUIPMENT

UTC equipment and premises are available only for UTC related activities and should not be used in relation to another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in writing and in advance by the Principal.

This includes photocopying facilities, stationery, telephones and computers and premises. Any UTC equipment that is used outside UTC premises, for example laptops, should be signed out of the UTC and returned to the UTC when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate

8. OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the UTC, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the UTC or exceed the legal maximum time as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate, informed of their employment by other organisations.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Employees must adhere to the UTC Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the UTC environment safe and well.

Risk assessments must be in place for all activities involving children and young people undertaken both on and off the UTCs premises.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at academy or off-site) by complying with statutory and UTC guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

9.1 Required reading:

- UTC Health and Safety Policy

10. USE OF ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the UTC has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the UTC's reputation and public confidence.

All UTC and UTC buildings and premises operate a no smoking policy.

11. USE OF UTC COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The UTC has the right to monitor emails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems by employees.

Employees should be aware that the UTC has the right to access employees' personal email and computer files if saved on UTC communication systems, if required for investigation of misuse.

It is recommended that employees do not use UTC systems (phone, email, computers) for excessive personal use. Inappropriate usage, which includes excessive or regular personal use may result in disciplinary action for the employee and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Inappropriate use of email and internet systems also includes viewing, publication or circulation of illegal or offensive material, viewing, publication or circulation of junk mail, including chain letters, jokes or large attachments, gambling or gaming; these will be treated as disciplinary matters.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who receive inappropriate communications are advised to inform their line manager immediately.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

All UTC employees, UTC Council members, Humber UTC Board members come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to students, staff, UTC activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

12.1 Managing data

Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

12.2 Disclosing data

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the UTC, its employees to other parties, for example, parents, colleagues or social networking sites and internet blogs. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a student to Child Protection officers and discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the UTC's Whistleblowing procedure. All UTC communication with the media must be directed through the Principal and the Chair of the Humber UTC Board as appropriate. Authorised representatives of trade unions may have communication with the media on behalf of the trade union.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release student data, for example, to parents seeking information about student progress or to other colleagues in the UTC.

Staff should be aware that from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information to prevent fraudulent claims, for example housing benefits.

12.3 Access to data

Everyone has the right to access data that is held about them, including references written by your current employer, and such requests should be made to your Line Manager/ Principal who will address the request.

12.4 Required reading:

- UTC's Whistleblowing Procedure

13. COPYRIGHT

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

14. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The UTC has a Dress Code policy (Appendix 4). It is a contractual obligation for all staff to comply with this policy.

Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism and allegations.

15. POWER AND POSITIONS OF UTC

As a result of knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, staff working with children and young people are in positions of UTC in relation to those people in their care. It is vital for all staff to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential to their Line Manager.

16. CONTACT WITH THE PRESS AND MEDIA

Unless specifically nominated and authorised by the Chair of the Board, employees are not permitted to give reports or speak to the press and media on matters relating to their employment by Humber UTC or their business or decisions. The Principal is responsible for dealing with the press and media. Other employees may be specifically nominated by the Chair of the Board. Employees with this responsibility should guard themselves against declaring a view which is contrary to the position taken by the Humber UTC and which may be deemed to be critical of that position.

Nothing in this Code is intended to inhibit or restrict the reasonable and legitimate role of trade union representatives but they are bound, in carrying out their role, to honour the intent of this Code. No representative should use unauthorised information in their union roles.

I declare that I have read and understood the Humber UTC Code of Conduct for employees and have been made aware of the “required reading”;

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Print Name:.....