

**Coleg y Cymoedd Corporation  
Code of Ethics for Corporation Members**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This briefing sets out a model Code of Ethics for the College. It does not seek to rehearse the legal framework governing the operation of Colleges, but takes as its starting point the distribution of powers and responsibilities set out in legislation and the Instrument and Articles of Government. It lays down general principles which can be used to determine action, which will conform to the high standards and values expected in the public sector.

**2. Overview of general values**

- 2.1 In all College activities it is important to develop and promote a set of core values relevant to its mission to provide high quality learning opportunities for learners.
- 2.2 As an institution within the public sector, the Corporation accepts that those values must be in conformity with the principles laid down by the Nolan Committee for those holding public office, namely:- selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership
- 2.3 The College recognises the obligations to the learners, employers and the wider community it serves. It also recognises its obligations to stakeholders, partners and associates and, particularly, to the taxpayer.
- 2.4 The reputation of the College, including the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals, is one of its most vital assets, the protection of which is of fundamental importance.
- 2.5 The College demands and maintains the highest ethical standards in carrying out its activities.
- 2.6 In its dealings with individuals the College will adhere to the principles of natural justice and individuals' civil and human rights.
- 2.7 The College will seek to encourage a culture of openness aimed at ensuring that matters connected with the operation of the College can be discussed frankly with staff and learners. It will adopt and maintain procedures on whistle-blowing which will enable concerns to be raised on a confidential basis, where that is appropriate, both inside, and if necessary outside, the organisation.

- 2.8 The College is committed to securing equality of opportunity for staff and learners alike and to discharging its legal duties under relevant discrimination legislation.

### **3. Values relating to Learners**

- 3.1 The College believes that integrity in dealing with its learners or prospective learners is a prerequisite for success, and an important statement of the values it offers.
- 3.2 The College will not deliberately give inadequate or misleading information on its learning programmes or other services.
- 3.3 In all advertising and public communications, the College will avoid untruth, concealment and overstatement about its programmes and achievements. The College will avoid recruitment practices that involve the offer of improper financial or other inducements to learners.
- 3.4 The College will make all reasonable attempts to deliver learning programmes and support services to meet the individual needs of learners, efficiently and effectively to accepted quality standards, and will take reasonable steps to rectify any shortcomings in the service delivered.
- 3.5 Learning support, information, advice and guidance offered to learners will be impartial and guided by the best interests of the learner.
- 3.6 The College will publish a statement setting out what learners and others can expect of the College and details of its complaints and appeals procedures. It will deal with all learners with equal care and respect.
- 3.7 The College will ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and efficiently.
- 3.8 Within the requirements of the law and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, the College will maintain the confidentiality of information on individual learners.

### **4. Values relating to our Educational Partners**

- 4.1 The College is committed to collaborative arrangements that will benefit the institution and its learners. Where the College is competing with others, the College will compete vigorously, but honestly, with other educational institutions offering similar learning opportunities.
- 4.2 The College will not seek to damage the reputation of competitors or other third parties either directly or by innuendo.
- 4.3 The College will provide information on individual learners to the Careers Service and other institutions engaged in providing for the learning needs of the learner in

accordance with agreed procedures, within the requirements of GDPR 2018 and any other legal requirements.

- 4.4 The College will not seek to acquire information regarding competitors by unfair or disreputable means.
- 4.5 The College will not engage in unfair or restrictive practices in respect of the recruitment or retention of learners.
- 4.6 The College will consult with institutions and/ or service providers who might be affected on any significant proposals for change in the learning programmes or services it offers.

**5. Governing Body (Corporation)**

- 5.1 The Governing Body will adopt a Code of Conduct for itself consistent with the principles laid down by the Nolan Committee and the requirements of its Instrument and Articles of Government.
- 5.2 The College will maintain a register of Governors' interests that will be open to inspection by the public. Governors will be required to register those interests, which are of relevance to the work of the College, in sufficient detail to allow the nature of those interests to be understood by enquirers.
- 5.3 The Governing Body of the College will seek to ensure that its members are appointed on merit, after an open selection process, and are drawn widely from the community it serves, having regard to the need for continuity and freshness, and for a range of skills and interests.
- 5.4 The Governing Body is responsible for determining the educational character and mission of the College and for oversight of its activities; for the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the Corporation, and the safeguarding of its assets; for the approving of annual estimates of income and expenditure; and for the appointment, discipline, pay and conditions of service of staff, in accordance with the Articles of Government.
- 5.5 The Governing Body will adopt procedures that ensure sound financial decision-making, control and monitoring to meet the requirements of the funding body and public audit.
- 5.6 The Governing Body will ensure that information on its decisions and the work of the College is made widely available, having regard to proper confidentiality as determined by the Governing Body and any legal requirements.

## **6. Management and Staff**

- 6.1 The College will adopt a Code of Conduct for its employees, based on similar principles to that for members of the Corporation.
- 6.2 The staff Code of Conduct will forbid employees from soliciting or accepting inducements in respect of any matter connected with the operation of the College.
- 6.3 The staff Code of Conduct will be consistent with the principles of Freedom of Speech, in respecting the freedom within the law of academic staff to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas or controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing their employment in jeopardy. This includes the right of staff to speak freely and without being subject to disciplinary sanctions or victimisation about academic standards or related matters, provided that they do so lawfully, without malice and in the public interest.
- 6.4 Where the College includes confidentiality clauses in severance contracts this will not prevent staff who have legitimate concerns about malpractice raising those concerns with the appropriate authority.
- 6.5 As Accounting Officer for the College under the Financial Memorandum the Principal will be responsible for the propriety of financial decision making and will advise the Governing Body of any requirements in respect of matters before it.

## **7. External Relationships**

- 7.1 The College recognises that it is responsible to the community it serves and will take steps to ensure that information on its external activities is made widely available, noting any requirements for confidentiality that may be applicable and which shall be explained as necessary.
- 7.2 The College will be responsive to its community and within the framework of its own Mission Statement will seek to provide programmes and services relevant to the needs of individuals and employers.
- 7.3 The College will provide timely and accurate information to the best of its abilities on individual learners to employers or others providing sponsorship; within the confines of the GDPR 2018 and any other relevant legal requirements.
- 7.4 The College will ensure that its contracts with organisations comply with acceptable ethical standards and any legal duties, for example the general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate race discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good race relations.

## **8. Compliance and Verification**

- 8.1 The College will require all its employees to adhere to its Code of Conduct for staff.

- 8.2 The College will create mechanisms by which employees and learners can express genuinely held concerns about behaviour or decisions they perceive to involve serious impropriety, and have them investigated, with every reasonable assurance of confidentiality as appropriate.
- 8.3 The Corporation will appoint a person to be responsible for monitoring adherence to the Governors' Code by members of the Governing Body, investigating alleged breaches and reporting to the Governing Body. The Governing Body will decide on any action to be taken to ensure compliance with the Code.
- 8.4 The Director of People & Culture, will be responsible for initiating and supervising investigations into alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct by members of staff, and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken. The Chair to the Board, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair is responsible for the process of investigating any alleged breaches relating to senior post-holders or the Governance Officer.
- 8.5 The College auditors may be asked to report on any practice that appears to breach the Code.
- 8.6 The College will ensure that its Codes are published and made widely available.

## **9. Conclusions**

- 9.1 The Corporation will review this Code every two-years unless circumstances require an earlier review.