



South Birmingham College

Code of Ethics

CODE OF ETHICS FOR SOUTH BIRMINGHAM COLLEGE

Introduction

This paper sets out a model Code of Ethics for the Colleges. It does not seek to rehearse this legal framework governing the operation of the college, but takes as its starting point the distribution of powers and responsibilities set out in legislation. Nor does it seek to provide detailed guidance on every question of conduct which might arise: rather it lays down general principles which can be used to determine action, which will conform to the standards and values expected within further education.

A. General

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 students.
2. As an institution within the public sector, the college 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
 - Leadership
3. The college recognises its obligations to all those with whom it has dealings, namely students, employees, employers, suppliers, other educational institutions and the wider community – and also to the taxpayer.
4. The reputation of the college and the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals is one of its most vital resources, the protection of which is of fundamental importance.
5. The college demands and maintains the highest ethical standards in carrying out its activities.
6. In its dealings with individuals the college will adhere to the principles of natural justice.
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 students. It will in addition adopt procedures on whistleblowing which will enable concerns to be raised on a confidential

basis, where that is appropriate, both inside, and if necessary outside, the organisation.

8. The college is committed to securing equality of opportunity for staff and students alike.

B. Students

1. The college believes that integrity in dealing with its students or prospective students is a prerequisite for success, and an important statement of the values it offers.
2. The college will not give deliberately inadequate or misleading information on its learning programmes or other services.
3. In all advertising and public communications, the college will avoid untruths, concealment and overstatement about its programmes and achievements.
4. The college will avoid recruitment practices which involve the offer of improper financial or other inducements to students.
5. The college will deliver learning programmes and support services to meet the individual needs of students, efficiently and effectively to accepted quality standards, and will take steps to rectify any shortcomings in the service delivered.
6. Learning support, information, advice and guidance offered to students will be impartial and guided by the interests of the students.
7. The college will adopt a charter setting out what students and others can expect of the college. It will deal with all students with equal care and respect.
8. The college will ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and efficiently.
9. Within the requirements of the law, the college will maintain the confidentiality of information on individual students.

C. Educational Partners

1. The college will collaborate with other educational institutions offering similar learning opportunities.
2. The college will not seek to damage the reputation of competitors either directly or by innuendo.
3. The college will provide information so far as it able, on individual students to appropriate organisations engaged in providing for the learning needs of the student in accordance with agreed procedures, within Data Protection Act guidelines.

4. The college will not seek to acquire information regarding competitors by unfair or disreputable means.
5. The college will not engage in unfair or restrictive practices in regard to the recruitment or retention of students.
6. As far as it practical and reasonable, the college will consult with partners who might be affected on any significant proposals for change in the learning programmes or services it offers.

D. Corporation

1. The Corporation 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.
2. The Code of Conduct will require the maintenance of a register of Governors interests which 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.
3. The Corporation of the college will seek to ensure that its members are appointed on merit and for their commitment, after an open selection process, and are drawn as widely as possible from the community it serves, having regard to the need for continuity and freshness, and for a range of skills and interests.
4. The Corporation 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. The Corporation will adopt procedures which ensure sound financial decision-making, control and monitoring to meet the requirements of the LSC and public audit.
6. The Corporation will ensure that information on its decisions is made widely available, having regard to proper confidentiality.

E. Management and Staff

1. The college will adopt policies and procedures for its employees, based on similar principles to that for the Corporation.

2. These policies and procedures will forbid employees from soliciting or accepting inducements in respect of any matter connected with the operation of the College.
3. These policies and procedures will be consistent with any college Code of Practice or policy on Freedom of Speech, in respecting the freedom within the law 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.
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.
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 Corporation of any requirements in respect of matters before it.

F. External Relationships

1. The college recognises that it is responsible to the community it serves and will take steps to ensure that information on its activities is made widely available.
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.
3. The college will provide timely and accurate information on individual students to employers or others providing sponsorship.
4. The college will ensure that it contracts with organisations which comply with acceptable ethical standards.

G. Compliance and Verification

1. The College will require all its employees to adhere to its Code of Ethics.
2. The college will create mechanisms by which employees and students can express genuinely held concerns about behaviour or decisions they perceive to involve serious impropriety, and have them investigated, with a guarantee of confidentiality where needed.
3. The Corporation will appoint a person to be responsible for monitoring adherence to the Corporation's Code by members of the Corporation, investigating alleged breaches and reporting these to the Corporation. The Corporation will decide on any action to be taken to ensure compliance with the Code.

4. The Principal will be responsible for initiating and supervising investigations into alleged breaches of the Code by members of staff, and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken.
5. The college auditors may be asked to report on any practice which appears to breach the code.
6. The college will ensure that its Codes are published and made widely available.

**AS A MEMBER OF SOUTH BIRMINGHAM COLLEGE CORPORATION I
AGREE TO OBSERVE THIS CODE OF ETHICS TO THE BEST OF MY
ABILITY.**

Name:

Signature:

Date: