

# **Code of Conduct for Employees**

## **1.Introduction**

Dublin City University has developed this Code of Conduct for Employees pursuant to the requirements of the HEA Code of Governance (2007). This Code of Conduct takes account of the implications of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act 2001 as well as the Universities Act 1997. A copy of the Code will be available upon request and will be placed on the University's website.

## **2. Intent and scope**

The Code of Conduct is an important part of an overall framework within which employees are expected to work. The purpose of the Code is to provide guidance to employees of Dublin City University in performing their duties as employees.

While the conduct of employees is primarily governed by the contract of employment, employees are required to comply with the University Statutes as well as a wide range of policies which include the following: Respect and Dignity by Preventing Harassment and Bullying, Health and Safety, Grievance, Dispute and Resolution, ICT Policies, Ethics in Research, Engagement of Staff in Consultancy Work, and any other policies approved by competent authority from time to time.

For the purposes of this Code, employees are defined as individuals who are in the paid employment of the University whether full-time or part-time and irrespective of whether the University is their primary employer. The Code also applies to employees availing of different forms of University leave.

## **3.Objectives of the Code of Conduct for Employees**

The objectives of the Code are:

- To set out an agreed set of ethical principles
- To promote and maintain confidence and trust in the employees of Dublin City University
- To prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices
- To promote the highest legal, management and ethical standards in all the activities of the Dublin City University
- To promote compliance with best current governance and management practices in all the activities of Dublin City University.

## 4. General Conduct and Behaviour

In the performance of their duties employees shall:

- (i) Maintain high standards in service delivery by
  - Conscientiously, honestly and impartially serving the University
  - Always acting within the law; and
  - Performing their duties with efficiency, diligence and courtesy
- (ii) Observe the appropriate behaviour at work by:
  - Dealing with students and the public with courtesy and respect in a sympathetic, fair and prompt manner
  - Treating their colleagues with respect
- (iii) Maintain the highest standards of probity by:
  - Conducting themselves with honesty, impartiality and integrity
  - Never seeking to use improper influence to affect decisions concerning their official positions
  - Abiding by guidelines in respect of offers of gifts or hospitality Avoiding conflicts of interests.

## 5. General Principles

All employees are required to observe the following fundamental principles:

### 1. Integrity

#### (i) **Conflict of Interest / Exclusivity of Service**

- The employee's contract of employment requires the employee to devote his/her full-time attention and abilities to his/her duties during working hours and to act in the best interest of the University at all times. Employees of the University may not, without the prior written consent of the University, be in any way, directly or indirectly, actively engaged or concerned in any other business or undertaking where this is or is likely to be in conflict with the University's interests.

Full details of the University's Conflict of Interest Policy may be found at <http://www.dcu.ie/staff/conflictguidelines.pdf>

Members of staff who hold certain designated positions for the purposes of the Ethics Acts shall disclose outside employment/business interests in line with the specific requirements as per the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995. Full details may be found at <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1995/en/act/pub/0022/index.html>

**(ii) Gifts**

- Employees will avoid giving or receiving gifts or benefits which might affect or appear to affect the ability of the donor or the recipient to make independent judgement on business transactions.

More specifically,

- Employees should not solicit gifts directly or indirectly.
- Any gift other than a modest token of nominal value should be courteously declined and should be reported to the employee's Head of Department. Gifts of nominal value that are generally considered as common business or social courtesies are acceptable as long as they are reasonable in type, frequency and value. If an employee has any doubt as to what constitutes a modest token, he/she should seek the guidance of his/her Head of Department.
- An employee should not, by virtue of his/her official dealing with a supplier, accept on his /her own or family's behalf, any special facility, or discount on a private purchase or service from the supplier

**(iii) Hospitality**

- Employees will avoid giving or receiving hospitality or preferential treatment which might affect or appear to affect the ability of the donor or the recipient to make independent judgement on business transactions.
- No objection would normally be taken to the acceptance of what is regarded as routine or customary hospitality, for example, a business lunch or attendance at an event, be it a civic or cultural event. Employees should seek guidance from their Head of Department if in doubt. Certain types of hospitality, for example, travelling abroad or holidays shall not be regarded as routine and should be referred to the Head of Department for guidance.

**(iv) Verification of Qualifications**

- Offers of employment are made on the assumption that the information provided by the candidate on the application and at the interview is correct in every respect. Where this is found not to be the case, the University reserves the right to initiate disciplinary procedures which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or take any other action as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. All staff may be required to provide evidence of academic and or other qualifications at any time.

**(v) Criminal Conviction**

- An employee who is charged or convicted of an indictable criminal offence must report that fact to the Director of Human Resources. In certain circumstances, this could have implications for their employment. Such information will be treated in confidence, insofar as possible, and no record of it will be kept unless the information is considered relevant to the employee's employment. If the disclosure of such information necessitates an investigation, it will be conducted in accordance with the principles of fair procedures and natural justice.

**(vi) Garda Vetting**

- Where work undertaken by an employee requires Garda clearance or vetting the employee will cooperate fully with the vetting process.

**(vii) Acquiring Goods & Services**

- Employees must be committed to conducting purchasing activities of goods/services in accordance with public policy and best business practice.
- Employees must be committed to ensuring that their engagement of consultancy and other services is in compliance with public policy guidelines.
- Employees must be committed to ensuring that the accounts/reports accurately reflect the operating performance of the university and are not misleading or designed to be misleading.
- Employees must be committed to having the University compete vigorously and energetically but also ethically and honestly with other educational institutions, commercial and other providers of research and advisory services.
- Employees are required to avoid the improper use of University resources or time for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with the institution or its activities or for the benefit of competitors.
- Employees must be committed to not acquiring information or business secrets by improper means.

## 2. Information

- Employees are committed to providing access to general information relating to their activities in a way that is open and enhances accountability to the general public;
- Employees are required to respect the confidentiality of sensitive information held by the University. This would constitute material such as:
  - personal information;
  - information received in confidence by the University;
  - any commercially sensitive information or other information sensitive to the reputation of the University.
- Employees of the University will observe appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest.
- Employees of the University will comply with all relevant statutory provisions (e.g., data protection legislation, the Freedom of Information Act, 1997). Full details of the University's Freedom Of Information policy can be viewed at <http://www.dcu.ie/foi/foiintroduction.shtml>. Details regarding the University's policy on Data Protection can be viewed at [http://www.dcu.ie/info/regulations/data\\_protection.shtml](http://www.dcu.ie/info/regulations/data_protection.shtml)
- Employees will observe due confidentiality in relation to all discussions and decisions taken at meetings of University's Committees and Boards

## 3. Obligations

- Employees will fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on the University by the Universities Act 1997 and other relevant legislation.
- Employees will comply with detailed tendering and purchasing procedures, as well as complying with prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure.
- Employees will comply with measures the University has introduced to prevent fraud and to ensure compliance with the prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure.

#### **4. Loyalty**

- Employees of Dublin City University acknowledge the responsibility to be loyal to the University and to be fully committed to all its activities, with due respect to the tenets of academic freedom, while mindful that the University must at all times take into account the interests of its students and providers of funds including taxpayers.
- Employees of the University acknowledge the duty of all to conform to highest standards of business ethics.

#### **5. Fairness**

- Employees of the University are committed to complying with employment equality and equal status legislation.
- Employees of the University are committed to fairness in all business dealings.
- Employees of the University value its students, suppliers, employees and customers and treats all its students, suppliers, employees and customers equally.

#### **6. Work/External Environment**

- Employees of Dublin City University place the highest priority on promoting and preserving the health and safety of its employees and students. Full details of the University's Health and Safety Policies can be viewed at <http://www.dcu.ie/safety/policies.shtml>.
- Employees of Dublin City University will ensure that community concerns are fully considered in its activities and operations.
- Employees of Dublin City University will minimise any detrimental impact of its operations on the environment.

#### **7. Responsibility**

- Dublin City University will circulate this Code of Conduct (and a policy document on disclosure of interests) to employees for their retention.
- Dublin City University will provide practical guidance and direction as required on such areas as gifts and entertainment and on other ethical considerations which arise routinely.

**8. Implementation**

- This Code applies to all employees of the University. Breaches of the Code may result in the University's Statute on Suspension and Dismissal being invoked, which may result in dismissal.

**9. Orientation Session**

- All new employees will be invited to orientation sessions.

**10. Review**

- The Governing Authority will review this Code of Conduct at 3-year intervals or as appropriate.