



BURY COLLEGE

CODE OF ETHICS

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Introduction

The Code of Ethics lays down general principles which can be used to determine action, which will conform to the standards and values expected within Bury College.

A. General

1. In all College activities it is important to develop and promote a set of core values, relevant to the College mission.
2. The Corporation Board:
 - 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
 - In addition, given the specific nature of further education, the Code of Good Governance also adopts the values and behaviours of being:
 - Respectful,
 - Professional,
 - Prudent, and
 - Passionate about education and good governance.
 - recognises its obligations to all those with whom it has dealings - students, employees, employers, suppliers, other educational institutions and the wider community - and also to the taxpayer.
 - seeks 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.
 - is committed to securing equality of opportunity for staff and students alike.
3. The reputation of Bury 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.

4. Bury College demands and maintains the highest ethical standards in carrying out its activities.
5. In its dealings with individuals the College will adhere to the principles of natural justice.
6. The Code of Good Governance is based on the following expectations of good governance, which illustrate the values and beliefs of college governors and trustees:
 - Putting the student first; promoting high expectations and ambitions for students and staff.
 - Ensuring inspirational teaching and learning.
 - Creating a safe environment for students to learn and develop.
 - Providing strong leadership to both the senior team and the community the college serves.
 - Setting the strategy and acting as guardians of the college's mission.
 - Demonstrating accountability to students, parents, staff, partners, employers, funders, the local community (where relevant, other communities) served and other stakeholders, including publishing accurate and timely information on performance.
 - Listening to students, parents, employers and staff.
 - Ensuring the achievement of equality of opportunity and diversity throughout the college.
 - Using the college corporation's autonomy and independence to meet local education and skills needs.

B. Students

Bury 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 and, therefore, it will:

- strive to provide high quality teaching and learning for all students;
- offer impartial learning support, information, advice and guidance in the best interests of the student, aimed at their achieving the highest possible outcomes;
- deliver learning programmes and support services to meet the individual needs of students, efficiently and effectively to accepted quality standards;
- take steps to rectify any shortcomings in the service delivered in the context of a commitment to continuous improvement;
- avoid untruths, concealment and overstatement about its programmes and achievements in all advertising and public communications;
- avoid recruitment practices which involve the offer of improper financial or other inducements to students;
- adopt a charter setting out what students and others can expect of Bury College;
- deal with all students with equal care and respect;
- ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and efficiently; and,
- maintain the confidentiality of information on individual students within the requirements of the law.

Bury College will not give deliberately inadequate or misleading information on its learning programmes or other services.

C. Educational Partners

Bury College will:

- compete vigorously but honestly with other educational institutions offering similar learning opportunities.
- consult with partners who might be affected on any significant proposals for change in the learning programmes or services it offers.
- provide information on individual students to other institutions and organisations engaged in providing for the learning needs of the student in accordance with agreed procedures, within Data Protection Act guidelines.

Bury College will not:

- seek to damage the reputation of competitors either directly or by innuendo.
- seek to acquire information regarding competitors by unfair or disreputable means.
- engage in unfair or restrictive practices in regard to the recruitment or retention of students.

D. Corporation Board

The Corporation Board:

- has adopted a Code of Conduct consistent with the principles laid down by the Nolan Committee and the requirements of its Instrument and Articles of Government of the College and the Code of Good Governance

The Code of Conduct requires the maintenance of a register of Corporation Members' interests which is open to inspection by the public. Corporation Members are 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.

- 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.
- 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 setting the framework for the appointment, discipline, pay and conditions of service of staff, in accordance with the Articles of Government.
- will continue to have in place procedures which ensure sound financial decision-making, control and monitoring to meet the requirements of the Funding Agencies and public audit.
- will ensure that information on its decisions is made widely available, having regard to confidentiality where deemed necessary.

E. Management and Staff

1. There will be a Code of Conduct for employees, based on similar principles to that for Corporation Board Members.
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; and,

- be consistent with the College Code of Practice on 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 they do so lawfully, without malice and in the public interest.
3. 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.
 4. The Principal as Accounting Officer for the College will be responsible for the propriety of financial decision making, and will advise the Corporation Board of any requirements in respect of matters before it.

F. External Relationships

1. Bury College recognises its responsibilities to the community it serves and will take steps to ensure that information on its activities is made widely available and will publish on its website (at least Annually) an account of the College's engagement with the main communities that it serves; the progress made towards meeting their needs for education and training and how it aims to meet future needs.
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;
 - provide timely and accurate information on individual students to employers or others providing sponsorship, subject to ensuring compliance at all times with current Data Protection Legislation; and,
 - 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 Conduct for staff; and,
 - 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.
2. The Corporation Board will designate a person to be responsible for monitoring adherence to the Code of Conduct for Members, investigating

alleged breaches and reporting to the Corporation Board. The Board will decide on any action to be taken to ensure compliance with the Code.

3. The Principal 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.
4. The College auditors may be asked to report on any practice which appears to breach the Code.
5. The College will ensure that its Codes are published and made widely available.

Initial Code of Ethics approved by the Bury College Further Education Corporation Board on 24 February, 1999

First updated April 2001

Updated September 2013

Updated and agreed 26th April 2022 – next review Spring Term 2025.