

**HARINGTON STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT/BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

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This guidance aims to help staff understand the standards of conduct expected of them. It provides guidance on how to reduce the risk of conduct which could be mistakenly interpreted as improper or conduct that may lead to allegations being made against a member of staff.

As employees representing the Harington Scheme it is important that you are accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills. The Harington Scheme is in a position of trust, and we must uphold public trust and confidence in the provision of our services.

It is not possible to write an exhaustive list of rules governing staff conduct. Staff are trusted in the discharge of their responsibilities, which implies allowing room for initiative and judgement. This document, however, provides a consistent framework and guidelines.

Each member of staff is expected to abide by the terms and conditions of their employment and to fulfil the requirements of their agreed job specification. This Code of Conduct applies to all staff when working at the Harington sites or at other locations. Harington expects all staff to always follow this Code of Conduct.

**1. Principles**

- The welfare and safety of our staff and learners is paramount.

- Harington aims to provide a high quality of experience to our learners, clients and colleagues.

- Staff take responsibility for their own actions and act in a transparent and ethical way.

- Staff respect the dignity, views and choices of learners and other service users

**2. Policies and Procedures**

The Harington has in place a range of policies and procedures which apply to staff. These are available in the Staff Handbook folder on the server (shared/info/staff handbook). All staff should read these policies and comply with their terms. The failure of any member of staff to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against them under the Harington disciplinary procedure. Harington expects all staff to conduct themselves in a reasonable and responsible manner when undertaking their duties and fulfilling their responsibilities, and to comply with lawful and reasonable instructions from managers.

It is expected that staff will display integrity, honesty and impartiality in all dealings, and work always within the spirit of Harington’s mission statement and code of conduct and values. Certain types of conduct are unacceptable and could result in disciplinary action (which may include dismissal) being taken. Each case would be judged within the context of the circumstances. The following list is indicative and is neither exhaustive nor exclusive (see Disciplinary Policy):

- Refusal to carry out a lawful and reasonable instruction from a line manager

- Disregard for the health and safety of oneself or other persons

- Dishonesty, theft or fraud - including unauthorised removal of property, falsification of documentation

- Absence from duty without approval, including persistent lateness. Staff should arrive in good time to begin work at normal start time

- Rudeness or abusive behaviour to colleagues, learners or other customers

- Physical violence or bullying

- Deliberate damage to property

- Serious misuse of an organisation’s property or names

- Breaches of confidentiality

- Deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material

- Unlawful discrimination or harassment

- Bringing the organisation into disrepute

- Incapability at work brought on by use of alcohol or illegal drugs

- Causing loss, damage or injury through negligence

- Breach of this code of conduct

**3. Appearance and Manner**

All staff are representing Harington standards and professional status at all times including learner holiday periods, whether this is when at the Harington sites, when working for gardening clients, when travelling as part of work, at external training and meetings, with clients and at presentations. Therefore, staff are expected to present an appropriate professional image of Harington, ensuring that they are appropriately dressed for the work they are undertaking and the area in which they work and that their dress and general appearance is as smart and as tidy as is practicable in the circumstances. In some roles within Harington, staff will be provided with and are required to wear uniform and/or Personal Protective Equipment.

Examples of inappropriate clothing may be:

- displays inappropriate slogans or images

- reveals underwear or inappropriate bare flesh

- is revealing or sexually provocative

- is dirty, holed or fraying

- resembles beachwear, including vests and flip flops

Our personal clothing reflects different cultural backgrounds which is welcomed.

Staff should:

- be polite and courteous in their dealing with colleagues, learners and clients.

- attend meetings on time, achieve deadlines and fulfil their job role to the best of their ability.

- refrain from any conduct whether inside or outside of Harington which could bring the organisation into disrepute, at all times.

- exercise care and sensitivity in dealing with learners, be approachable, understanding and discreet.

- not use their personal mobile whilst working with learners, including whilst travelling. Personal phone calls/messaging during work time should be kept to an absolute minimum.

**4. Professional Behaviour**

Those entrusted to supervise, manage and teach others are role models who have a particular responsibility to maintain standards of professional behaviour by demonstrating positive behaviours. They should always deal with conduct which has fallen below that which is expected in a timely and effective manner.

**5. Working Relationship with Learners**

All staff should ensure that they maintain appropriate professional boundaries with learners so that their relationship with learners never compromises their professional responsibilities. This includes never:

- giving personal phone numbers to learners

- accepting learners on to Facebook or other social media sites

- discussing learners with friends/colleagues on social media sites

- visiting at home or allowing learners to come to staff homes

- giving lifts to learners in own car/vehicle (without direct permission)

- consoling or reprimanding learners in a physical manner

- using discriminatory or inappropriate language

- using inappropriate remarks.

Appendix 1 gives further guidance on Safer Working Practice with learners which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

**6. Beliefs**

Harington will make reasonable adjustments to cater for people's beliefs. Staff shall not seek to influence the beliefs of learners and staff during their duties.

**7. Equality and Diversity**

Staff must promote Equality and Diversity without prejudice or stereotyping and challenge any discriminatory behaviour.

**8. Respect and Courtesy**

Staff must act with self-control, tolerance and use appropriate language and behaviour in dealing with customers, learners and colleagues. Staff must treat learners and colleagues with dignity, respect and courtesy.

**9. Honesty and Integrity**

Harington promotes a positive working environment where staff act with integrity and are open and truthful in their dealings with learners and colleagues. Staff must not knowingly make any false, misleading or inaccurate oral or written statements in connection with any Harington activity.

**10.British Values**

We expect all staff to uphold and promote the fundamental British Values:

- Democracy

- Rule of Law

- Individual Liberty

- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith

**11. Criminal Convictions**

As all staff have a contract of employment requiring disclosure of any criminal convictions (i.e. those not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as amended), then should these occur during employment at Harington the staff member should disclose this information to the Scheme Manager. This should include any convictions which occur during the course of employment with Harington. You also have a duty to disclose any ongoing police investigation on matters which may be relevant to Harington or our students, e.g., offences against the person or Theft Acts offences.

**12 Driving at Work**

Staff who are driving for work purposes must:

* Ensure that they drive in a safe manner, observe all relevant laws, driving codes and traffic/parking notices.
* Refrain from driving if they do not feel fit to do so, for example if feeling very unwell or distressed.

Payment of any fines or penalties incurred whilst driving or when parked will be the responsibility of the driver.

Staff who are driving for work purposes should notify the Scheme Manager if they receive points on their licence as this may need to be notified to our insurers.

Staff who are transporting learners, clients or colleagues in their own vehicles must ensure that the vehicle used is road worthy and that appropriate insurances and licences are held.

**13 Whistleblowing**

Please refer to Harington Whistleblowing Policy

**14 Safeguarding - Low Level Concerns**

Low Level Concerns Low level concerns should be related in all cases to the Designated safeguarding Officer at Harington who will advise how and where these should be recorded. Low level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers; and Harington will consult with their LADO if unsure whether low-level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold.

**15 Procedures for dealing with allegations against staff**

Please refer to Section 4 of Harrington Safeguarding Policy

**16 Smoking Policy**

Harington operates a no smoking policy in all of its buildings, outdoor areas, driveways and vehicles; this includes the use of e-cigarettes. Staff who wish to smoke should only do so during specified breaks and must leave the site to do. Please consider the neighbours if smoking in the neighbouring area. Smoking is not permitted on or outside customer's properties when working with Harington Gardeners. It is not appropriate for staff to smoke whilst they are working with a learner off site i.e. travelling between site/to the shop, whilst coaching on work experience etc. Staff must not buy tobacco products or e-cigarettes for/from learners.

**17 Alcohol and Drugs Misuse**

Staff should not attend work or represent Harington under the influence of drugs (including legal highs) and/or alcohol. If staff attend a social event organised by, or as a representative of, Harington where alcohol is available, they are reminded that they should act responsibly and appropriately.

**18 Harington Property**

All staff have a responsibility to take due care of Harington property and premises. Staff are not to borrow or remove Harington property from the site without written permission from the Scheme Manager. Staff should endeavour to conserve resources (i.e. electric, gas, paper) during the use of the premises. Staff must wear (or where this is not possible, due to the job role, must always carry) their staff identification badge and staff lanyard whilst on Harington premises, to identify themselves as a member of staff. Staff should direct all members of the public accessing the site to report as soon as is practicable to the reception. All staff are responsible for the safety of their own belongings and should take reasonable precautions for the safety of the belongings of learners, colleagues and clients. Possessions left in classrooms, offices, Harington vehicles etc will not be the Harington's responsibility should they go missing for any reason.

**19 Confidentiality**

Staff must not use for their own purpose (or for any purposes other than those relating to Harington) or divulge to any person, corporation, company or other organisation whatsoever any confidential information belonging to Harington. Staff who have any concerns must raise them through the appropriate internal channels.

**20 Media**

Staff should not deal with or make comments to any media contact without the knowledge and support of the CEO.

**21. ICT Acceptable Use Policy and social media**

Staff are required to read and confirm their understanding of the Harington Acceptable Use of ICT Policy prior to using any Harington IT systems. Staff are reminded that they must not make any degrading/defamatory or similar remarks online, regarding Harington, other employees, or learners.

**22. Personal Issues**

Staff who are experiencing personal issues that might affect their ability to do their job competently and safely, should advise and seek assistance from their line managers at the earliest opportunity. Where the situation is of a personal nature, but not an emergency, staff are reminded that they should deal with the situation within their own time and not during working hours.

Personal phone calls or communications, incoming or outgoing, must be kept to an absolute minimum within working time and ideally, where possible, restricted to emergency situations only. This includes time spent travelling for work (with learners or Harington Gardeners).

**23. Personal Relationships (with other members of staff)**

Where a personal relationship overlaps into a working relationship, staff must ensure that they do not leave themselves open to allegations or commit acts of impropriety, bias and/or abuse of authority. Personal relationships in this context refer to:

- a family relationship

- a sexual/intimate relationship

All such relationships should be transparent and should be declared to the staff member’s line manager(s). Where a personal relationship currently exists or develops between members of staff, where a line management arrangement exists (whether it is an immediate or higher management reporting line), it must be declared to the Scheme Manager who will consider the risks (e.g. unfair advantage or disadvantage). Harington may consider a change to line management arrangements if appropriate.

**24. Conflicts of Interest**

If staff find themselves in a situation where there might be a conflict of interest, they should report this to their line manager who will take advice from the Scheme Manager. Such conflict might include personal, familial, financial or other connection. You may not, without the prior written consent of the Scheme Manager engage, directly or indirectly, in any business or employment which is similar or in any way connected to or competitive with the business of the Harington, or which might reasonably be considered to impair your ability to act at all times in the best interest of the Harington. No private work must be done in Harington time. Harington Gardeners customers must not be approached for private work by staff.

**25. Concerns about Improper Conduct**

Any staff who have concerns about:

- improper conduct

- illegal conduct

- unethical conduct

- breach of professional codes of practice

- misuse of public money

- unlawful activity by others

should raise these concerns using the procedure outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy.

**26. Disputes**

If there is a dispute regarding any aspect of this code of conduct, staff should seek further information/support from their line manager or the Scheme Manager.

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**Appendix. 1 Safer Working Practice**

This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The guidance also aims reduce the risk of adults working with learners being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

These simple steps will help ensure that professional boundaries and Harington policies are maintained.

***All staff should make sure they have read the Harington Scheme’s Staff Code of Conduct*.**

* When working one-to-one with a learner at Harington or on work experience:
	+ try to avoid spending long periods of time unobserved, for example by leaving the door open, making sure the viewing panel and/or window is not covered or working in sight of others.
	+ if the one-to-one work is not scheduled (i.e. not on the timetable or different to the usual pattern of work) inform another member of staff of your whereabouts and approximately how long you will be with the learner.
* Workers and volunteers should watch out for each other. Are colleagues being drawn into situations which could be misinterpreted? How colleagues view each other’s practice will be how outsiders view it, including parents or carers.
* Be aware of any physical contact with learners and avoid unnecessary physical contact. An example of necessary contact would be: when there has been an accident ensure that you are treating the person for the injury.
* Do not have or be perceived to favourites.
* Do not offer lifts to learners outside your normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of your line manager or the Safeguarding Team and has been agreed with the parents/carers.
* In an emergency situation, where a learner needs to be transported to a place of safety or to hospital, speak to the duty manager and consult the learner risk assessment to decide whether the learner should be accompanied; by whom and how they will travel (e.g. ambulance, taxi, car etc).
* Where it has been authorised that you may transport a learner/s in your car, ensure that your manager knows how long you will be and ensure that you take a mobile telephone with you in case of unexpected delay. Ask the learner/s to sit in the back.
* Do not invite or take a learner to your home.
* Do not visit learners in their home without a specific purpose and express permission of your line manager.
* Do not befriend learners on your personal Facebook account or other social media.
* Do not use your personal mobile phone to contact learners or allow learners to contact you outside working hours.
* Do not under any circumstances use any physical punishments or take actions towards learners that deprive them of liberty, including locking of classroom doors.
* Do not arrange meetings outside working hours. Do not develop social relationships with learners. If you come into contact with a learner in a social setting, maintain professional boundaries. Pay attention to your own behaviour in such a setting.
* Do not buy goods from or use the services of learners or their friends.
* Do not accept any money or gifts from learners. Tell learners it is Harington’s policy and ensure that the learner does not feel offended. The only exception to this is when

learners/parents/carers bring in small gifts to celebrate a major religious festival, e.g. Eid or Christmas; when a learner is leaving or at the end of the academic year. In these circumstances the person giving the gift should be informed that it will be shared by the staff team. You must inform your manager of any gift accepted.

* Do not give money or gifts to learners, including cigarettes.
* Do not lend or borrow money from learners.  If you are in doubt as to whether a proposed action is consistent with safe conduct you should err on the side of caution and consult your line manager.
* Do not discuss your personal life with learners or express overt distress / anger in front of them.
* Do not express thoughts or feelings towards a learner which may be construed as embarrassing, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.
* Avoid over-sympathising with learners who disclose a safeguarding issue e.g. that happened to me etc.
* Always refer on, do not get overly involved with any safeguarding issue.