

HAWKESDALE P12 COLLEGE



Staff Code of Conduct Policy

POLICY PURPOSE

To provide a framework for effective behaviours and communication across all areas at Hawkesdale P12 College.

CONTEXT

It is an expectation that in the workplace all staff members, irrespective of their role within the school, should feel comfortable and safe within their work environment.

The Staff Code of Conduct outlines the expectations, rights and responsibilities of all staff in ensuring that colleagues are treated in a professional manner, with respect and consideration of differing roles, perspectives and beliefs.

This policy ensures that staff are able to be at work without fear of prejudice, anxiety and harassment due to the behaviour of a colleague or colleagues.

FOCUS

All staff are expected to abide by the protocols detailed in this policy – this includes teaching staff, education support staff, pre-service teachers and visiting teachers.

In deciding how we behave we should keep in mind the following;

- What type of first impression will we make on students, parents and other staff?
- If you were a parent what would you expect of the staff at your child's school?

This Code of Conduct is underpinned by the VIT standards and Professional Code of Practice. All staff must uphold and comply with these established standards. Ministerial Order 199 also sets out the duties and obligations of the teaching profession.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy includes the following documents:

- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Workplace Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff Dress Code
- Complaint Process

In general staff are expected to:

- Use appropriate language in their interactions with colleagues, parents and students.
- Abide by Anti-Bullying and Sexual Harassment legislation as well as

Anti-discrimination & Equal Opportunity Legislation:

- Staff are prohibited from using the college resources or infrastructure for personal gain.

GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Attendance

- Staff are required to be on time for all scheduled classes/ events
- Hours of duty: Teaching staff are required to work a 38 hour week (or pro rata for part time teaching staff). Teaching staff are required to attend two hours of meetings per week as part of their teaching role.
- Hours of duty: ES staff have different hours of work and conditions. These are set out in their employment arrangements. Staff in a position of responsibility will attend other meetings as well as part of that particular role.
- All staff are required to attend staff briefing at 8.45am on Monday to Friday mornings (unless these are cancelled or staff member is on yard duty).

Interaction with Colleagues

- Professional courtesy must be in evidence in all public forums including, but not limited to, meetings, guest speakers, school and year level assemblies and whole school events such as the Athletics Carnival.
- Staff must be aware of their impact on others at all times. In work staff rooms staff need to be aware of the possible impact that personal conversations may have on those around them. This is particularly so during work hours when staff are preparing and correcting work with the expectation of a quiet and calm environment.
- When conversing staff should also be aware of their language and the topics discussed. Coarse language and some topics may be offensive to others.
- Hawkesdale P12 College staff must not criticise the professional competence or professional reputation of a colleague. If there is an issue then it must be resolved through the appropriate channels (see the complaints process) and in a confidential manner. If there is a professional issue then this should go through the formal channels.

Professional Requirements

- Hawkesdale P12 College staff must constantly strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competency. It is an expectation that staff regularly update and improve their professional knowledge through participation in relevant professional development.
- Hawkesdale P12 College staff are expected to engage in collegiate and other activities that assist in the professional growth of colleagues through the sharing of ideas, knowledge and information.
- Staff should not engage in any outside employment which may impair the nature and effectiveness of their position and responsibilities within Hawkesdale P12 College.
- Staff must not divulge confidential information about a student. If there is an issue then it must be passed on to the appropriate person such as the Principal, relevant Student Manager or the Well Being Team Leader.
- All staff are required to meet deadlines in a timely manner, for example, reports, excursion paperwork and exam preparation

Communication with Colleagues, Students, Parents and members of the school community

- Staff must respect the learner's rights and dignity without prejudice to gender, colour, age, race, place of origin, socioeconomic background, family status, religion, disability, physical status etc.
- Students should address staff by using their formal name. Staff should not invite students to address them by their first name or nickname.
- Hawkesdale P12 College staff must not be verbally abusive or threatening to students in anger or with the intention of intimidation unless there is a situation in which the health or safety of another person is threatened.
- All staff are expected to create an environment that fosters mutual respect amongst peers.
- College staff must, in the case of a conflict or dispute with another staff member, seek assistance where necessary from a relevant principal class member. It is an expectation that reports made to the principal class may initiate the start of a formal complaint process. All staff should

remember that 'behaviour unchallenged is behaviour condoned' and feel comfortable enough to seek assistance where necessary.

- Any absences from school should be received by the school before 7.30am on the morning of the absence. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, it is an expectation that staff will leave work for classes to complete.
- Staff must be aware of the legal requirements of duty of care in regards to students, particularly their legal responsibilities when in class and on yard duty.

Meeting Protocols

1. We understand that there is an expectation that all teaching staff and ES staff attend their professional sessions.
2. We start and finish on time.
3. We all actively participate and contribute – everyone is given opportunity to voice their opinions.
4. Digital devices to be used only when required.
5. We follow-up on the actions we are assigned responsibility for and complete them on time.
6. We give and receive open and honest feedback in a constructive manner.
7. We use evidence to make decisions
8. Time is allocated to reflect.

Electronic communication, social networking & use of email

Emails are a permanent record and can be used in disputes or complaints. The following protocols should be followed when using emails and other forms of electronic communication:

- All emails need a subject header
- All emails remain official records, so be aware of the tone and content of e mails.
- Staff should not become 'friends' with current students on social networking sites (as per advice and guidelines from VIT)
- It is recommended that a signature be added to email. This should include staff member's hours of work. (see IT support to have a default signature added to your account)
- When using email as a communication tool with parents a response to a query or concern should be made, where possible, within a 48 hour timeframe.
- Email communication with parents should occur within normal work hours. Staff should include with their electronic signature when they are available e.g. when part time what days they are working.
- Do not use school email accounts for sending 'junk mail', for profit messages or chain letters.
- Be careful when responding to an email if you find it upsetting. Sometimes no response is better and a follow up conversation can take place. Never respond in anger to an email.
- Be careful when responding to a DL Message, by pressing 'reply all' everyone receives your reply. Please 'reply' to the sender only.

Roll Marking

- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they have an accurate roll for each class.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Focus

Hawkesdale P12 College aims to provide a welcoming, supportive, and emotionally and physically secure learning and working environment for every member of the school community.

Hawkesdale P12 College recognises and promotes human rights, and values the diversity of culture, beliefs, practices, customs, physical and intellectual abilities and life experience of the whole school community.

Rationale

Equal opportunity is essential to the wellbeing of the school community and key to the creation of a safe and inclusive school. No one can work or study to their full potential if they are being discriminated against, harassed, vilified or victimised.

Promoting equality and diversity enriches school culture through knowledge and information exchange, offering insights and understanding that can bring out the best in every member of the school community. As centres of learning, schools are well placed to model this kind of exchange, and promote human rights culture.

Our Commitment

Hawkesdale P12 College aims to create an inclusive school culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge, promote student and staff wellbeing and help everyone achieve their full potential. This school is enriched by and celebrates the diversity of our whole school community. Hawkesdale P12 College is committed to ensuring that the working environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation. This school acknowledges that in society some people are treated unfairly or unfavourably because of personal characteristics such as their sex or race. This school supports the Charter of Human Rights and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), which says that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone, including students and school staff, because of their actual or assumed:

- age
- carer status
- disability/impairment
- gender identity
- lawful sexual activity
- marital status
- parental status
- physical features
- political belief or activity
- pregnancy
- race
- religious belief or activity
- sex
- sexual orientation
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

No member of the school community will be treated less favourably because they possess any of these personal characteristics nor will such characteristics affect access to benefits and services Hawkesdale P12 College provides. Discrimination is unacceptable at Hawkesdale P12 College.

Rights and Responsibilities

The role of the **school leadership** is to publicly model and promote EO principles and human rights practice by:

- Promoting a safe and inclusive school which encourages a human rights culture
- Affirming the diversity of the school community
- Being a positive role model
- Implementing the school's EO policy
- Being aware of current Departmental and legislative requirements in relation to equal opportunity, the Charter discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation
- Proactively identifying discrimination and equal opportunity trouble spots at the school
- Responding promptly and appropriately to inappropriate behaviours and clearly stating the school's policy of no discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification or victimisation
- Taking all EO issues and complaints seriously and acting promptly to resolve them

School **staff** members have the responsibility to:

- Behave fairly and respectfully at all times towards all members of the school community
- Be aware of current Departmental and legislative requirements in relation to the Charter of Human Rights, discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation
- Actively discourage discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation
- Ensure discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification and victimisation are speedily addressed

- Ensure they do not participate in discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification or victimisation
- Be positive role models

As well as staff responsibilities already listed, **staff** have the responsibility to:

- Help implement the school's EO policy when developing and delivering curriculum and student services
- Help students to understand human rights and challenge discriminatory attitudes and behaviour

WORK PLACE ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Focus

To provide all staff with a workplace that is free from bullying.

Rationale

Bullying in the workplace is not to be tolerated as it is contrary to promoting and maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and can cause stress for individuals and poor morale within the workplace.

Guidelines

Workplace bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health and safety.

Workplace bullying can include such behaviour as deliberately changing work routines to victimise particular employees, verbal abuse, physical abuse, ridiculing someone's opinions, excluding someone from workplace activities, or humiliating someone through sarcasm, insults or intimidation.

Every staff member has a responsibility to behave in a professional manner, to comply with this policy and to treat everyone who works at the college with dignity and respect.

Hawkesdale P12 College is committed to providing all employees with a healthy and safe workplace free from bullying and intimidation.

Hawkesdale P12 College will not tolerate bullying behaviour in the workplace or at activities organised through the workplace.

Bullying is not an acceptable part of our work culture as it can harm a person's health and wellbeing.

Any staff member who experiences or witnesses workplace bullying should report it to the Principal as soon as possible.

Anyone who experiences or witnesses bullying involving the Principal should report it to the Regional Director.

When bullying is reported it will be investigated quickly and in accordance with DET's complaints procedures.

- If there is no response from the relevant authority, the complainant is entitled to approach the school's occupational health and safety representative.
- Where necessary, a formal investigation will be undertaken following the procedures described in relevant DET materials. Disciplinary action may result.

What bullying is not

Bullying does not include reasonable and legitimate actions of the employer in managing an employee's performance, workload, or other duties. Bullying is not Principals carrying out their required responsibilities in relation to the investigation of complaints or the management of unsatisfactory performance.

Other Supporting Documents

- Complaints resolution procedures Department of Education and Training, available at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/workm/perform/comres.htm

- Health, safety and wellbeing policy, DEECD, 2003, available at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/ohs/other/legisl.htm
- Prevention of Bullying and Violence at work: Guidance Note, WorkSafe Victoria, February 2003, available at: www.workcover.vic.gov.au/www/home.msf/pages/b&y.intro
- Sexual harassment policy and procedures, DEECD 2002, available at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Docs/SexHarPolicy.doc

Some Useful Contacts

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| • Conduct and Ethics Unit | 9637 2594 |
| • Diversity and Equity Unit | 9637 2454 |
| • Employee Health Branch Counselling and mediation | 9637 2395 |
| • Policy and strategy | 9637 2385 |
| • South Western Region | 9637 2354 |
| • Merit Protection Boards | 9651 0290 |
| • Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission | 8281 7111 |

STAFF DRESS CODE

Context

The Hawkesdale P12 College Dress Code has been developed to codify the statutory and professional obligations and expectations set out in Ministerial Order 199 and further developed in the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Ministerial Order 199 states: "Whilst on duty, an employee's dress and appearance should be neat, clean and appropriate to the employee's duties."

Whilst the VIT Code of Conduct identifies a set of principles which describe the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of a teacher by their colleagues and the community, it does not cover every situation and acknowledges that schools may set down procedures to cover issues specific to their settings.

The Hawkesdale P12 College Dress Code has also been developed to meet Sun Smart and safety standards as well as seeking to build effective practices to promote a respectful and productive workplace.

Dress Code Overview

- Staff should dress in neat, smart, and tidy clothes so as to present themselves with pride.
- Staff should show respect to others and their role by dressing as professionals.
- Staff should be positive role models to students in choosing clothing which is appropriate to the work or activity being undertaken.
- Staff should dress appropriately for work which involves dealing with members of the general public, parents, and in particular, adolescents.
- Staff should consider whether clothing is too tight, too short or too revealing.

Under these guidelines, it would be inappropriate for staff to wear:

- Any clothing with a low or revealing neckline
- Any clothing that reveals midriff or exposes undergarments
- Singlets or other clothing with shoe-string straps
- Any clothing printed with offensive or inappropriate writing/slogans/images
- Thongs, open toe shoes and unsecured sandals due to safety risk
- Brief or revealing shorts or skirts
- Jeans that are low waisted or torn and frayed

Clothing Specific to Key Learning Areas

- (i) PE and Sport staff- staff should be protected from the sun when working outdoors and wear clothing appropriate to Sunsmart guidelines

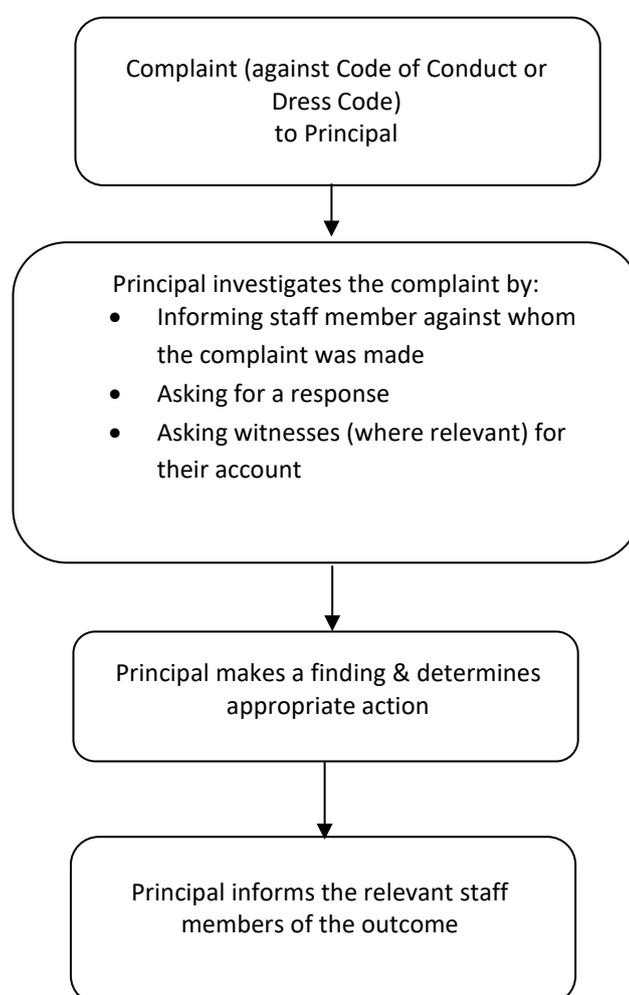
- (ii) Science staff – Protective clothing should be worn by science teachers and technicians when undertaking practical classes involving the use of chemicals or biological materials. This should include the wearing of covered shoes, a laboratory coat, gloves and safety glasses when undertaking experiments. Long hair should also be tied back during practical classes.
- (iii) Kitchen staff – Covered footwear and protective clothing (aprons) should be worn when working in kitchens. Gloves should be worn when cleaning, and long hair tied back when undertaking practical classes.
- (iv) Art and Technology staff – Covered shoes and protective clothing should be worn during practical classes. Long hair should be tied back, and jewellery removed, when using equipment in which it may be caught.

Individual staff would not be expected to “enforce” this code amongst staff members. Complaints about potential breaches of the code should be directed to a principal class member.

Complaints Process

Refer to Complaints policy.

Process



Should a complaint be made of an Assistant Principal, the above process will apply. Should the complaint be made against the College Principal, the complaint may be put to the relevant Regional Staff (on 9637 2354) or to the AEU, as is their right.

This policy was ratified by school council on _____

School Council President

Principal