

**Loughborough College
Further Education Corporation**

Corporate Governance - Code of Ethics

Introduction

1. This Code does not seek to rehearse the 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.

General

2. In all College activities it is important to develop and promote a set of core values, relevant to the mission to provide high quality learning opportunities for students.
3. As an institution within the public sector, the College accepts that those values must be in conformity within the seven principles laid down by the (Nolan) Committee on Standards in Public Life for those holding public office, namely:
 - (a) *Selflessness*
 - (b) *Integrity*
 - (c) *Objectivity*
 - (d) *Accountability*
 - (e) *Openness*
 - (f) *Honesty*
 - (g) *Leadership*
4. The College recognises its obligations to all those with whom it has dealings - students, employees, suppliers, other educational institutions and the wider community - and also to the taxpayer.
5. The reputation of the College, and the trust and confidence of those with whom it deals, is one of the most vital resources, the protection of which is of fundamental importance.
6. The College demands and maintains the highest ethical standards in carrying out its activities.
7. In its dealings with individuals, the College will adhere to the principles of Natural Justice.
8. 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 has, in addition, adopted procedures on “whistle-blowing” which will enable concerns to be raised on a confidential basis, where that is appropriate, both inside and, if necessary, outside the College.

9. The College is committed to securing equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and students.

Students

10. 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.
11. The College will not give deliberately inadequate or misleading information on its learning programmes and other services.
12. In all advertising and public communications, the College will avoid untruths, concealment and overstatement about its programmes and achievements.
13. The College will avoid recruitment practices which will involve the offer of improper financial and other inducements to students.
14. 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.
15. Learning support, information, advice and guidance offered to students will be impartial and guided by the best interests of the student.
16. 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.
17. The College will ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and efficiently.
18. Within the requirements of the law, the College will maintain the confidentiality of information on individual students.

Educational Partners

19. The College will compete vigorously, but honestly, with other educational institutions offering similar learning opportunities.
20. The College will not seek to damage the reputation of competitors either directly nor by innuendo.
21. The College will provide information on individual students to the Careers Service and other institutions engaged in providing for the learning needs of the student, in accordance with agreed procedures and within Data Protection Act guidelines.
22. The College will not seek to acquire information regarding competitors by unfair or disreputable means.

23. The College will not engage in unfair or restrictive practices in regard to the recruitment or retention of students.
24. The College will consult with partners who might be affected on any significant proposals for change in the learning programmes or services it offers.

The Corporation

25. The Corporation has adopted a Code of Conduct for itself, consistent with the principles laid down by the (Nolan and Neill) Committee on Standards in Public Life and the requirements of its Instrument and Articles of Government.
26. The Code of Conduct requires the maintenance of a register of individual governors' interests, which will be open to inspection by the public. Individual governors 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. This Code also applies to anyone else who serves on the committees of the Corporation who is not a member of the Corporation.
27. The Corporation seeks 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.
28. In accordance with the Articles of Government, the Corporation is responsible for:
 - (a) determining the educational character and mission of the College and for oversight of its activities;
 - (b) the effective and efficient use of resources;
 - (c) the solvency of the Corporation and the safeguarding of its assets;
 - (d) the approving of annual estimates of income and expenditure; and
 - (e) the appointment, discipline, pay and conditions of service of staff.
29. The Corporation has adopted procedures which ensure sound financial decision-making, control and monitoring, to meet the requirements of the funding bodies and public audit.
30. The Corporation will ensure that information on its decisions is made widely available, having regard to proper confidentiality.

Management and Staff

31. The Corporation has adopted a Code of Conduct for its employees, based on similar principles to that for individual governors.
32. The staff Code of Conduct forbids employees from soliciting or accepting inducements in respect of any matter connected with the operation of the College.

33. The staff Code will respect 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 that they do so lawfully, without malice and in the public interest. To that end, the Corporation has adopted a Publication Scheme which defines the arrangements for the disclosure of matters of public interest (“Whistle-blowing”);
34. If 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.
35. 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.

External Relationships

36. 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.
37. 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.
38. The College will provide timely and accurate information on individual students to employers or others providing sponsorship.
39. The College will ensure that it contracts with organisations which comply with acceptable ethical standards.

Compliance and Verification

40. The Corporation requires all of its employees to adhere to its Code of Conduct for staff.
41. The Corporation 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.
42. The Corporation will appoint a person to be responsible for monitoring adherence to the Governor Code of Conduct by its members, investigating alleged breaches and reporting to the Corporation. The Corporation will decide on any action to be taken to ensure compliance with the Code.
43. The Principal will be responsible for initiating and supervising investigations into alleged breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct by members of staff, and for ensuring that appropriate action is taken.

44. The College auditors may be asked to report on any practice which appears to breach either Code of Conduct.
45. The Corporation will ensure that its Codes are published and made widely available.

[This Code was originally adopted by the Corporation in June 1999 and revised in September 2003]