

Employee and Employer Expectations (incorporating Whistleblowing)

1 Purpose of this Policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy Document is to inform First College employees of what they can expect from the company in terms of the way it is directed and how employees will be managed. This Policy Document also describes what the company expects from its employees.

2 The Company

- 2.1 The Company will act in a professional way and as a responsible and caring employer. The Board of Trustees are the guardians of policy and tasks the Chief Executive to implement policy and to ensure that the company complies with legislative and contractual requirements. The company is registered as charitable trust and is a "not for profit" company. It is managed with a measured level of commercial reality.
- 2.2 The company commitment to Health and Safety and Safeguarding covers every employee as well as each client group.
- 2.3 The company commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion covers every employee as well as each client group.
- 2.4 The company will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment. We encourage staff to report an incident of sexual harassment immediately or report situations where they felt at risk, even if nothing happened. Line Managers are responsible for recognising any form of sexual harassment. Any complaint over sexual harassment would be taken through our Grievance Procedure Policy or if appropriate through our Disciplinary Procedure Policy. If someone makes a complaint that is not upheld, they will not face any disciplinary action, as long as their complaint was not malicious.
- 2.5 The company promotes Health, Wellbeing and work-life balance for all employees.
- 2.6 All employees have the legal right to request flexible working and can do so from their first day of employment and make two further requests per year. Employees can make request a change to the hours they work, when they start and finish, the days they work and where they work. The company will deal with requests in a reasonable manner and make a decision on any request within two months or longer if agreed with the employee. The company will consult with the employee before its decision. The company can refuse a request for a permitted business reason such as additional costs, impact on meeting customer demand, inability to re-organise work, impact on performance and impact on quality of standards.
- 2.7 The company will ensure that employees are provided with personal development opportunities, support and mentoring to help them to be able to carry out their duties and responsibilities.
- 2.8 The company will act in a timely manner to investigate grievances that are notified by employees in accordance with the Grievance Procedure.
- 2.9 The Board is committed to the company objectives in respect of High Quality Learning Services, Financial Viability, to provide staff with a positive, rewarding and safe working environment and to adhere to our Customer Service Values.
- 2.10 The Company is committed to keeping its employees well informed and will continually develop its internal communication and technology systems.

2.11 The company will encourage and facilitate employee input to the way the company operates and welcomes the views, opinions, comments, concerns and suggestions of staff. Feedback from Staff Team meetings and from individuals is welcomed. Staff are able to improve and develop the Quality System by using the "Suggested Amendment" procedure. Staff input to the annual Business Planning process is invited each year during the period April to June.

2.12 *Whistleblowing*

The Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) deals with Whistleblowing Law. It provides the right for a worker to take a case to an Employment Tribunal if they have been victimised at work or they have lost their job because they have 'blown the whistle'. Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing.

To be covered by Whistleblowing Law, a worker who makes a disclosure must reasonably believe two things;

1. That they are acting in the public interest. This means in particular that personal grievances and complaints are not usually covered by Whistleblowing Law.

2. The worker must reasonably believe that the disclosure tends to show past, present or likely future wrongdoing falling into one or more of the following categories:

- Criminal Offences (this may include, for example, types of financial impropriety such as fraud)
- Failure to comply with an obligation set out in law
- Miscarriages of justice
- Endangering of someone's health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Covering up wrongdoing in the above categories.

In support of Whistleblowing, First College promotes an open, transparent and safe working environment where staff feel able to speak up. All of our policies relating to communication, culture such as our RESPECT acronym as detailed within our Business Plan and raising grievances fit well together with the principles of Whistleblowing Law. First College positively promotes Whistleblowing where applicable for the benefit of all individuals and the organisation. We continuously seek to maintain an open culture and to support individuals where necessary to embrace the principles of being open and honest and raising any concerns including Whistleblowing concerns immediately. It is important to be clear that if a member of staff raises a personal grievance this is not usually covered by Whistleblowing Law. Where a genuine case of Whistleblowing arises the company will take all reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the Whistleblower where it is requested (unless required by law to break that confidentiality). The Staff, contractors and subcontractors are encouraged to inform the Chief Executive in writing if they have a genuine and legitimate concern about malpractice, fraud or corruption (Whistleblowing) in the college so that management have an opportunity to take appropriate action promptly. The Chief Executive has a duty to copy any such communications to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of First College within seven days of the disclosure being raised. The college will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of an individual who raises a concern in good faith, whether or not it proves well founded. This does not however include mismanagement, which may, for example arise from weak management rather than malpractice. For more information on the victimisation procedure see Policy Document 6 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and 4.1 Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace.

Useful links:

- Whistleblowing for Employees on the GOV.UK website
www.gov.uk/whistleblowing
- How to make direct disclosures to the ESFA
www.gov.uk/guidance/how-esfa-handles-whistleblowing-disclosures
- The Protect website (formerly 'Public Concern at Work'), which is a whistleblowing charity that advises and supports individuals and organisations
www.protect-advice.org.uk

2.13 Counter Fraud and Error

The company is committed to ensuring we uphold the law relating to bribery. Bribery can be defined as the offering or accepting of any gift, loan, payment, reward or advantage for personal gain as an encouragement to do something which is dishonest, illegal or a breach of trust. We will uphold laws relating to bribery and will take disciplinary action against any individual or other relevant action against persons working on our behalf or in connection with us, should we find that an act of bribery, or attempted bribery has taken place.

3 First College Employees

- 3.1 First College expects and requires its entire Staff to be fully aware of the organisation's Customer Services Values and adhere to the company's Customer Service Standards thereby delivering a high level of respect and tolerance.
- 3.2 First College expects the staff who interface with our learners to provide responsive, impartial, quality information and advice, which focuses on the needs of the individual. First College expects all staff coming into contact with learners or potential learners by other means such as by the telephone to be able to provide quality information and signposting.
- 3.3 First College promotes a culture of openness. A shared sense of integrity will be encouraged by inviting managers and staff to act responsibly in upholding the reputation of the College and maintaining public confidence.

First College is aware of the dangers of social media and whilst accepting free speech, staff need to be aware of their responsibilities to the company and in law in relation to any statements they make on any platform or forum.

- 3.4 Employees of First College are required and expected to:
- (a) Comply with all Company Policies
 - (b) Comply with the First College Quality System
 - (c) Comply with legislative, contractual and quality requirements
 - (d) Comply with First College Administrative Systems and Procedures
 - (e) Comply with their Terms and Conditions of Employment
 - (f) Comply with the duties and responsibilities detailed in their Job Description
 - (g) Engage in learning activities designed to benefit staff, learners and the general public
 - (h) Answer incoming telephone calls promptly and politely. It is everyone's responsibility to answer calls
 - (i) Meet and greet visitors to the centre when you are the nearest person available
 - (j) Comply with rules and procedures connected to car park permits
 - (k) Be responsible for your own working area premise and shared staff areas in terms of tidiness, safe environment, securing buildings, electricity usage, alarms and generally ensuring that premises remain in a clean and useable state
 - (l) Take any reasonable actions in situations where your Health, Safety and Wellbeing and that of others could be or is being adversely affected
 - (m) Any equipment provided remains the property of First College and should be

treated with care and respect including ensuring not to render equipment unusable by not keeping password records. Any problems should be promptly reported and in accordance with internal procedures

- (n) Operate to achieve objectives/targets and developments detailed in the Business Plan
- (o) Achieve a level of ICT literacy that provides administrative self-sufficiency
- (p) Keep First College advised promptly of changes of Address / Next of Kin / Doctor / Car Insurance, Bank Details, Medical conditions
- (q) Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- (r) Report H & S concerns to the H & S Manager
- (s) No alcohol or illegal substances are allowed on First College premises. During working hours, and whilst on First College business, staff will not partake of alcohol or illegal substances.
- (t) If you have any problems understanding any Employee and Employer Expectations Policy Document Number One please contact the Chief Executive

3.5 Relationships between staff and learners should be of a professional nature with the aim of supporting the learner to complete their training programme and qualifications. Personal relationships are normally viewed as not appropriate and will usually be strongly discouraged.

Signed



Paul McCooey

INTERNAL