



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
NEW UNIVERSITY

EST. 1891



# Code of Conduct for Staff

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This document has been designed to be accessible for readers. However, should you require the document in an alternative format please contact the University Secretariat.

## **Background**

- 1 The code of conduct sets out the values and behaviours within which employees of the University are expected to conduct themselves. The University expects all staff to conduct themselves to the highest standard of behaviour, in a professional manner and with a commitment to perform their work to the best of their ability.

## **Purpose Statement**

- 2 The purpose of the code of conduct is to provide standards within which employees including associate lecturers, atypical workers, and contractors of the University are expected to conduct themselves in their role in order to contribute to the continued success of the University.

## **Applicability and Scope**

- 3 This applies to all employees, associate lecturers, atypical workers, and contractors of the University.

## **Responsibilities**

- 4 All employees, associate lecturers, atypical workers, and contractors have a responsibility to familiarise themselves and implement the University's *Code of Conduct*.

## **Definitions**

- 5 **Code of Conduct** outlining the standards, values and behaviours expected by the University.

## **Principles**

- 6 The University is a large organisation and the actions and behaviour of its employees can have an impact on the education and livelihood of its people, as well as the local environment and the community. Employees are expected to have a regard for their personal behaviour at the University, in the community, with colleagues, customers, students and in their overall environment.

### **Standards of Behaviour**

#### **7 Equality of Opportunity**

The University values equality, diversity and inclusivity and wants everyone to be treated with respect. All members of staff and students, regardless of their protected characteristics will be supported and encouraged to reach their potential. See the University's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion pages](#).

#### **8 BNU Values and Behaviours**

Our BNU Values are to be Dynamic, Responsible, Inclusive, Visionary and Empowering. All employees should act professionally, be respectful and courteous towards others, be role models of the values and adhere to rules and instructions given by those supervising or managing their activities and/or work areas. All of this should be done in accordance with their contract of employment and the University's *Code of Conduct*.

## **9 Performance Development Reviews (PDR)**

The University is committed to supporting staff in their role to maximise contribution and in furthering their development. All employees are required to take part in the annual PDR processes. For more information please refer to the HR organisation on Blackboard.

## **10 BNU Academic / Professional Frameworks**

The University is committed to providing clarity of expectations to all staff to allow them to make a significant contribution to the University's educational priorities, but to also contribute to other areas including research and enterprise, or professional practices. All academics are expected to take part in the BNU self-assessment. For more information please refer to the HR organisation on Blackboard.

## **11 Email Etiquette**

All employees should organise out of office messages during periods of absence to ensure staff, students and external contacts are provided with a nominated colleague, who has been briefed and available to provide cover. The agreed template for email signatures can be found on our [website](#). Further details on this policy can be found in our [Email Policy](#).

## **12 Dress Code**

The University does not operate a formal dress code for its employees, other than for those who are provided with a uniform and/or protective clothing in specific areas. Employees must ensure that their dress is appropriate for the situation in which they work and that they present a professional image, with regard to attire, personal hygiene, appearance and one that reflects sensitivity to customer/student perception. This may reflect their ethnicity and lifestyle, but should not cause offence to those with whom they have contact.

## **13 Academic Integrity**

The University strives to maintain the highest standard in all teaching and research that it undertakes, and staff must not conduct themselves in ways that may undermine the academic standards of its awards or the conduct and dissemination of its research. Further details are available on our main [policies webpage](#).

## **Financial Prouity**

### **14 Compliance with Financial Regulations**

The University's financial regulations create a framework of financial controls within which the staff of the University must operate. These regulations are designed to protect the University and individual members of staff. Failure to comply with these regulations may lead to the loss of assets, significant delays in payments to employees and suppliers, and additional work for colleagues.

Employees must not accept gifts or hospitality that could give rise to a suspicion that they have a conflict of interest or have been influenced in a decision. Further details can be found in our *Financial Regulations*.

## **15 Prevention of Theft, Bribery and Fraud**

The University will not tolerate any form of fraud, bribery, corruption or dishonesty by, or of, its employees, agents or consultants or any person or body acting on its behalf in any jurisdictions. Further details can be found in our [Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy](#).

## **16 Modern Day Slavery Statement**

The Modern Day Slavery statement sets out the requirements in the University to ensure there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in its supply chain (procurement of services with third party suppliers) or any part of the business. This will be monitored to ensure compliance with our commitments. Further details can be found on our [Modern Slavery webpage](#).

## **17 Conflict of Interest**

The highest standards of behaviour are expected in all areas of University life, especially where individuals are in positions to make decisions which may have significant impact on others. In all such cases it is important that decisions are taken in a fair and balanced way that can withstand external scrutiny. Conflicts of interest should be identified so that individuals are not involved in decisions where their actions could be seen as biased. Further details can be found in our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

## **18 Intellectual Property in the University**

Where appropriate the rights to personal benefit from inventions, discoveries and patents are defined in the University policy. The University has put in place facilities and procedures to maximise the potential benefits from such intellectual property. Further details can be found in the Terms and Conditions for Academics and additionally in our [Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures](#).

## **Use of equipment and facilities**

### **19 Acceptable Use of IT Facilities and Systems**

IT facilities are provided by BNU for the furtherance of its mission, for example, to support a course of study, research or in connection with your employment by the institution. The acceptable use regulations apply to anyone using the IT facilities (hardware, software, data, network access, third party services, online services or IT credentials) provided or arranged by BNU. The aim of these regulations is to help ensure that BNU's IT facilities and systems can be used safely, lawfully and equitably.

For further information please see refer to the [Acceptable Use of IT Facilities and Systems Policy](#).

## **20 Use of Equipment**

The University will provide employees with all items of property required to undertake the duties of their role. These may include documents, books, computers, laptops, office equipment, keys, security passes, or credit cards.

## **21 Return of Equipment**

The University expects University property to be returned that is in the individuals control or possession no later than the date specified by the University or after the termination of their employment.

Failure to return property to the University will entitle the University to withhold the whole or part of any salary due from the University to the employee up to the current market value of the property not returned, i.e. based on the value of the property at the time that it is not returned.

The University also reserves the right to issue civil proceedings against the employee for breach of contract and/or trespass to the extent that any outstanding salary withheld do not cover the current market value of the property not returned.

## **22 Use of equipment for non-work purposes**

The University normally permits employees (Service Users) to use the facilities for personal use subject to the following conditions which are outlined in our *Statement on Internet Use*.

Discretion is exercised jointly by the Heads of School / Directors, and by IT, and may be withdrawn if any of the conditions outlined in the policy are violated. Serious or repeated violation may lead to disciplinary action under the terms of the *Employee Disciplinary Procedure*.

## **23 Use of Mobiles (Work and Personal)**

The University provides mobile phones and other mobile devices to staff members and business functions where there is a demonstrated business need. Members of staff who are allocated a work mobile device will be held responsible for the handset, all calls made using the device and other charges incurred. Further details can be found in our [Mobile Device Policy](#).

Personal mobile phones for private calls should not be used whilst at work and are only to be used for emergencies during work time.

## **24 Private Telephone Calls**

Employees may use University telephone facilities to make occasional private calls for essential or emergency matters. Private international calls are not permitted without prior authorisation.

## **25 Use of Email**

The University's email facilities are provided primarily to improve communications among staff and students for matters relating to their roles within the University. Limited use for personal and social purposes is tolerated, but such use should not become excessive. The policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of both users and providers of electronic mail for staff. For further details see our [Email Policy](#).

## **26 Internet**

The University provides access to the internet (including, but not limited to, web browser, e-mail packages, Usenet news) enabling employees to undertake their role. The policy sets out how the facilities should be used by employees to ensure the safe use of internet and to ensure that there is no illegal activity. For further information please see our [Statement on Internet Use](#).

## **27 Use of Social Media**

The University uses social media as an important means of communication both to enhance the profile of BNU and the professional profile of individuals. This policy is intended to advise and assist employees using social media either as part of their professional role at the University or in a private capacity where boundaries between work responsibilities and home

life can become blurred. Employees are reminded that they have a responsibility to ensure they do not breach the disciplinary rules of the University outlined in point 32 and point 34 for Grievances. For further details see our [Social Media Policy](#).

## **28 External Communication**

The University's external communication is key to building our profile to support our recruitment and retention activity. The Communications team works to protect the University's reputation by managing any issues that arise. Where staff receive any queries asking for information or comment, all media calls must be handled by the Communications team. Staff should not provide answers to any questions raised, even if they believe they know the answer, but instead politely redirect them to the Communications team. The member of staff should alert the Communications team to the media contact that has been received. Staff who are asked to draft an article on any topic that relates to universities administration or policies should discuss the request with the Communications team before accepting it.

All Freedom of Information requests should be sent to the [FOI officer](#).

## **Data Protection**

### **29 Using Confidential information and Data Protection**

Although the University strives to conduct its business in an open fashion there will be times when individuals, through their positions as members of committees, Selectors / Recruiters, Line Managers / Heads of School / Directors, Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice Chancellor, become aware of confidential information, either about other individuals or in connection with the University's commercial / academic activities. Individuals should be aware of the need to keep such matters confidential and to respect the proper channels of communication for such information.

The University holds and processes personal data about its staff, students and other data subjects for academic, administrative and commercial purposes and also to fulfil statutory obligations to the government and other statutory bodies. Please see the [Data Protection Policy](#).

## **30 Information Security**

The University recognises the importance of ensuring that information assets are appropriately secured, in order to protect BNU from security incidents that could have an adverse impact on the operations, reputation and professional standards of BNU or which could result in financial loss. Further details can be found in the [Information Security Policy](#).

# **Procedures**

## **31 Raising matters of concern**

Employees have a right and a duty to raise concerns which they may have which show malpractice or illegal practices in the University. This should be raised normally through their Manager / Head of School / Director but in circumstances where this is not appropriate they may approach the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or HR Directorate in confidence.

No individual who expresses their views in good faith and in line with this guidance will be penalised for doing so. See our [Raising Issues of Concern \(Whistleblowing\) Policy](#).

## **32 Conduct outside of work**

The University does not seek to dictate how employees conduct themselves in their personal lives outside work. However, any unlawful, anti-social behaviour or other conduct (for example; driving offences, criminal convictions, attendance at work events/conferences etc.) which may jeopardise the University's reputation or position will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. Further details can be found in our [Employee Disciplinary Procedures](#).

### **33 Dignity at Work**

The University is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated in line with the BNU values. Each individual within the University has a right to be treated with respect. Further details can be found on our [equality, diversity and inclusion webpages](#).

### **34 Grievances**

Employees who have a concern about their employment, working environment or working relationships should raise this using the [University's Grievance Procedures](#).

### **35 Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

The University is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of its employees. However it is a disciplinary offence to be on University premises and/or carrying out official duties when under the influence of alcohol or substances (i.e. drugs [both prescribed and non-prescribed] and solvents). Further details can be found in our [Employee Handbook](#).

### **36 Health and Safety**

The University believes that health, safety and welfare is everyone's responsibility and will ensure the effective management of risk as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant legislation. All staff should ensure that they conduct their duties in a safe manner in accordance with our [Health and Safety Policy](#).

### **37 Relationships with other members of staff, students and other clients and customers of the University**

Staff should formally declare any family or personal relationships with existing members of staff, students or individuals with links to the University, such as clients, suppliers or partners. Staff should inform their Associate Head of School or Head of School or Professional Director. All declarations should be made in writing to HR. Further details can be found in our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

### **38 Other University policies**

All employees should read and follow the University policies which are available via our main [policies webpage](#).

### **39 Disclosures**

Any employee who is arrested for criminal charges and could bring the University into disrepute should inform their line manager as soon as possible and a risk assessment will be carried out.

In all cases this must be disclosed at the earliest opportunity to allow the University to assess the potential employment risks, reputation and implications (if any). If in any doubt this should be raised with the appropriate managers above. The failure to disclose this information may result in a disciplinary offence.

## **40 Breaches of the Code of Conduct Policy**

This Code of Conduct has been drawn up to provide a source of guidance to the University's employees. All staff must comply with both the provisions of this code and the University's policies and procedures, breaches of which will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Further details can be found in our [\*Employee Disciplinary Procedures\*](#).



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