

Title	LWETB Code of Conduct for Staff
Date	1 st March, 2016
Approved By	LWETB Meeting 1 st March, 2016
For Review by	LWETB Board

LWETB Code of Conduct for Staff Members

1. Introduction

Longford and Westmeath ETB has developed this Code of Conduct for ETB Staff. This Code of Conduct takes account of the implications of the Ethics of Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act 2001.

2. Intent

The purpose of the Code is to provide guidance to the staff of the LWETB in performing their duties.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Code are:

- To set out an agreed set of ethical principles;
- To promote and maintain confidence and trust in the staff of LWETB;
- To promote the development and acceptance of ethical practices;
- To promote the highest legal, management and ethical standards in all the activities of LWETB;
- To promote compliance with best current management practice in all the activities of LWETB.

4. General Principles

It is the policy of LWETB to maintain a high reputation for ethical behaviour and fair dealing in the conduct of its business.

It is not possible to provide for every situation in the Code of Ethics. If the Chief Executive is concerned about the probity of any particular situation, he/ she must consult the Chairperson of the Board. A member of staff, other than the Chief Executive, who is concerned about the probity of any particular situation must consult the Chief Executive or Chief HR Officer.

5. Availability of the Code

LWETB will:

- make available this Code of Conduct, and a policy document on disclosure of interests, to all members of staff of the ETB and will make all members of staff aware of its importance and availability;
- provide practical guidance and direction as required on such areas as gifts and entertainment and on other ethical considerations, which arise routinely.

6. Review

LWETB will review this Code of Conduct as appropriate. Any proposed revisions to this Code must be considered and approved at a meeting of the Board.

7. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the Chief Executive or by a delegated officer as appropriate. A breach of the code by the Chief Executive will be dealt with by the Chairperson of the Board. Breaches of the Code of Conduct will also be notified to the Chairperson and to the Comptroller and Auditor General, and may be notified to the Minister for Education and Skills with the annual accounts and report. The LWETB's disciplinary procedures may be invoked, if appropriate.

Members of staff and of the LWETB are required to observe the following fundamental principles, as set out under the following headings:

- (a) Integrity;
- (b) Information;
- (c) Obligations;
- (d) Loyalty;
- (e) Fairness;
- (f) Consideration for Work/External Environment.

(a) Integrity

Members of staff of the LWETB will:

- disclose outside employment/business or other interests which objectively would be considered to be in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of the ETB;
- not be involved in outside employment/business or other interests in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of the ETB;
- avoid the acceptance of further employment where the potential for conflict of interest arises during a reasonable period of time after a person has ceased to be a member of staff of the Board;
- will refrain from giving or receiving corporate gifts, hospitality, preferential treatment or benefits which might affect or appear to affect the ability of the donor or the recipient to make independent judgement on business transactions;
- collaborate vigorously, energetically, ethically and honestly with other educational institutions, commercial and other providers of research and advisory services;
- conduct purchasing activities of goods/services in accordance with public policy, best business practice, and the ETB's purchasing regulations ;
- will claim expenses only as appropriate to business needs and in accordance with good practice in the public sector generally;
- engage consultancy and other services in accordance with public policy guidelines;
- ensure that the ETB's accounts/reports accurately reflect its performance and are not misleading or designed to be misleading;
- avoid the use of the ETB's resources or time for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with the institutions or its activities;
- acquire information or business secrets by proper means only.

(b) Information

Members of staff of the board will:

- provide access to general information relating to its activities in a way that is open and enhances its accountability to the general public;
- respect the confidentiality of sensitive information held by the ETB, having regard to paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. Sensitive information would constitute material such as:
 - ▶ Personal information;
 - ▶ Information received in confidence by LWETB;
 - ▶ Any commercially sensitive information or other information sensitive to the reputation of LWETB;
 - ▶ Any other material, release of which might constitute an unlawful or unethical act.
- observe appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest;
- comply with all relevant statutory provisions (e.g. Data Protection Acts, 1998 and 2003, and the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 to 2013);
- observe the strictest confidentiality in relation to all discussions and decisions taken at meetings of the Board and in the ETB.
- continue to observe the strictest confidentiality with regard to sensitive information and to discussions and decisions taken at meetings of the Board and in the ETB when employment in the ETB has ended.

(c) Obligations

Members of staff of the ETB will:

- fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on LWETB by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 and other relevant legislation;
- comply with detailed tendering and purchasing procedures, as well as complying with prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure;
- ensure controls are in place to prevent fraud and to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures in relation to levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure including expenses for business travel;
- conform with procedures laid down by the Board in relation to conflict of interest situations;
- acknowledge the duty to conform to highest standards of ethics.

(d) Loyalty

- Members of staff of the ETB will acknowledge the responsibility to be loyal to the ETB and to be fully committed to all its activities while mindful that the ETB must at all times take into account the interests of its students and funders, including tax payers.

(e) Fairness

Members of staff of the ETB will:

- comply with employment equality and equal status legislation;
- commit to fairness in all business dealings;
- Value the ETB's students, staff, suppliers and customers, and treat all its students, staff, suppliers and customers equally.

(f) Work/External Environment

Members of staff of the ETB will:

- place the highest priority on promoting and preserving the health and safety of its staff and students;
- ensure that community concerns are fully considered in the ETB's activities and operations;
- minimise any detrimental impact of the ETB's operations on the environment.