



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Code of Conduct



Message from the Director General

Students are at the heart of everything we do.

Being entrusted with their education and care is not only a privilege, but a great responsibility. We work together to shape the future of education in this State, each with our part to play in enabling meaningful pathways for all students.

To achieve this, we seek to create a culture and work environments that enable us to meet the needs and ambitions of our students. It is important that all of our decisions and actions are reflective of our values and behaviours.

Our **Code of Conduct** is built on our shared values: **Integrity, Equity, Voice, Truth-telling, Teamwork, Care, and Learning**; and our workplace behaviours: **Purposeful, Connected, High Performing, and Ethical Leadership**.

These values and behaviours are at the core of everything we do and every decision we make.

The Code provides a set of standards ('the Standards') for employees to adhere to when making both professional and personal decisions. It is our individual responsibility to understand and comply with the Code, the Standards and all relevant policy and legal obligations.

Principals and line managers are expected to use the Code to build integrity and accountability, and drive an ethical and values-based culture.



Lisa Rodgers
Director General





Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which our students live and are educated throughout Western Australia.

We acknowledge and understand that Elders, parents, families and communities are the first educators of their children and we recognise and value the cultures and strengths that Aboriginal children bring to the classroom. Aboriginal people have a long tradition of teaching and learning through sharing their connections with country, community, language and culture, and through their oral histories, stories and lived experiences that are passed from generation to generation.

We recognise and value the learning that Aboriginal children bring with them from their homes and communities into the classroom.

The word Aboriginal is taken to mean Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and Indigenous. When referring to individuals, use the term Aboriginal person.

Awareness

In working for the Department, we agree to embrace the values, practise the behaviours and we must meet the Standards of this Code of Conduct.

It is important that, as public officials, we conduct ourselves in a way that meets community expectations and maintains public confidence in the Department.

As Department representatives, including all contractors and volunteers, we must ensure our conduct outside of work maintains the integrity of the Department and does not impact our ability to perform our duties.

This Code has been prepared and should be read in conjunction with the Commissioner's Instruction No. 7 – Code of Ethics.

Our values

The Department promotes ethical practice and appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour. We are committed to teaching, learning and working environments where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

The actions of staff are to be guided by our values which reflect the social responsibilities owed to students, parents and carers, communities, stakeholders and each other.

These values should be given practical expression in the day-to-day operations of the Department.



Integrity

We believe a good education is the bedrock upon which everything else stands. We do not take this responsibility lightly and feel privileged to be part of it.

We act in the best interest of students and the community at all times.

We are accountable and honest and have strong ethical and moral principles.

Equity

We recognise the different circumstances, needs and aspirations of students and staff.

We strive for learning and work environments that are free from racism, discrimination, bullying, abuse or exploitation.

We believe in more than one path to success and our purpose is to help every child find theirs.

Voice

We attentively listen to each other and our students, families, communities and stakeholders.

We encourage honest and respectful expression of ideas and diversity of thought.

We empower the voice of children and young people to be partners in their education.

Truth-telling

We commit to learning about the diverse histories, experiences and worldviews of Aboriginal people.

We create culturally safe learning and work environments, and culturally responsive services, free from racism and discrimination.

Teamwork

We support, encourage and inspire each other and value the contribution of all.

We champion trust and inclusivity.

We recognise the importance of collaboration to help students achieve their best.

Care

We practise mutual respect and accept our responsibility to develop and maintain appropriate relationships.

We are attentive and considerate.

We strive to keep ourselves, others and our resources safe.

Learning

We have a positive approach to learning and encourage it in others.

We advance student learning based on our belief that all students have the capacity to learn.

Our workplace behaviours

Purposeful

We put the needs and ambitions of every student at the heart of our decisions and actions.

Connected

We connect our expertise to deliver responsive services.

High Performing

We work collectively to get the whole job done and to achieve the best outcome.

Ethical Leadership

We hold each other to account to create solutions that make a difference.

Our Standards

The Code provides a set of standards to guide us in our conduct as employees.

These standards are designed to give guidance when making both professional and personal decisions. Decisions made in the context of our private lives may also impact our professional standing.

It is our responsibility to understand and adhere to the Standards and they should be read in conjunction with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures. In addition, we should exercise fairness, impartiality and timeliness in our decision making.

Behave professionally and with integrity

We are honest and trustworthy in our relationships, and demonstrate dignity and integrity at all times, both at work and in the community.

Create cultural safety

We create and sustain culturally safe and responsive work and learning environments.

Embrace equity, diversity and inclusion

We celebrate and embrace people from all backgrounds and value every person as an individual.

Maintain safety and wellbeing

We maintain the safety and wellbeing of ourselves, our students, our colleagues and our stakeholders.

Maintain accurate records

We are rigorous in recording, managing and maintaining information.

Protect official and confidential information

We access and use official and confidential information only for authorised purposes.

Behave honestly

We are honest and truthful in our behaviours and we call out instances of fraudulent and corrupt conduct.

Use public resources responsibly

We use the resources of the State in a responsible and accountable manner.

Manage gifts and benefits

We observe integrity and ethics when receiving or offering gifts and benefits.

Declare and manage conflicts of interest

We ensure that our personal or private interests and affiliations do not conflict, or appear to conflict, with our public duties.

Recruit equitably

We follow the Public Sector Commissioner's Employment Standards and the Department's human resources policies, procedures and guidelines.

Make accountable procurements

We conduct ethical, honest and fair procurement activities, and manage contracts appropriately.



Understanding misconduct

As employees, we must follow the Department's Code of Conduct and be mindful of the Standards.

Behaviour which fails to do this can bring the Department into disrepute, affect the credibility of staff at work or in the community, and have detrimental impacts on the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and the students in our care.

Staff who do not meet these expectations, may be in breach of the Code and may be subject to a formal disciplinary process and action, up to and including termination of employment.

A breach of the Code of Conduct may also, in certain circumstances, give rise to concerns that a serious criminal offence may have been committed.

Reporting staff conduct that does not meet our Standards

We all need to speak up about any inappropriate, unprofessional or unlawful behaviour we see or hear. The action we need to take will vary depending on the nature and severity of the behaviour we have witnessed or been subjected to. However, the important thing is that we **speak up**.

If you are unsure of what action to take, or you don't feel that you are able to resolve the grievance or conflict, in a professional manner, at the earliest opportunity, directly with the person concerned, you should discuss the matter with your principal or line manager, without concern for reputational damage or retribution.

If this is not appropriate for your situation a report should be made to a more senior person, or if that is not possible a report can be made directly to Standards and Integrity.

Staff requiring further information on the Standards and their supporting policies plus access to Accountable and Ethical Decision Making training should refer to [lkon](#).

If you have any queries or require further guidance on any aspect of the [Code and Standards](#), please contact:

Professional Standards and Conduct

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Advice Line

1800 655 985

Residential Colleges Reporting Line

1800 011 114

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