Staff Code of Conduct

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Notes	This document should be used in conjunction with the HBXL Staff Handbook and HBXL Tutor Standards, where appropriate.

1. Aims and Scope

This Staff Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all HBXL Skills Academy staff are expected to observe. As a member of the HBXL Skills Academy community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the education provider.

The Staff Code of Conduct will be shared with all employees as part of their induction programme. Thereafter, all employees will be expected to revisit the Code of Conduct on an annual basis, along with other Skills Academy policies, including Adult Safeguarding and Health and Safety policies.

Please note, the Staff Code of Conduct should be followed in conjunction with HBXL's Staff Handbook and, where appropriate, Tutor Standards. This Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the HBXL Skills Academy.

2. Underpinning Principles

a. The welfare of the learner is paramount.

b. Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners.

c. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

d. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

e. Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations by learners are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.

f. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the Skills Academy Lead if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.

g. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.

h. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to carry out their role.

j. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity.

k. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.

l. Staff should be aware of and understand the statutory frameworks in which they must act, the HBXL Adult Safeguarding policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff and Whistleblowing procedure.

m. Tutors must also have regard for the Tutor Standards. Part two of the standards are included as an appendix to this document.

3. Setting an Example – General Obligations

All staff who work in the HBXL Skills Academy set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by learners. Staff must therefore set an example to learners. They will:

a. avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

b. demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage learners to do the same.

c. show tolerance and respect for the rights of others.

d. not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

e. express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

f. avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

4. Safeguarding Learners

a. Staff have a duty to safeguard learners from harm, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, extremism and radicalisation.

b. The duty to safeguard learners includes the duty to report concerns about a learner to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

c. Staff will familiarise themselves with the Adult Safeguarding policy and procedures, Prevent policy and Whistleblowing procedure and ensure that they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a learner.

d. Staff must not demean or undermine learners.

e. Staff must take the upmost care of learners under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

5. Learner Development

a. Staff must comply with HBXL Group's policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of learners.

b. Staff must cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of learners.

c. Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of learners.

6. Staff/Learner Relationships

a. Staff will observe proper boundaries with learners that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.
b. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and learners. This includes social media profiles.
c. If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a learner may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to the Skills Academy Lead.

7. Confidentiality

a. In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about learners. This information will never be:
    - Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
    - Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
    - Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
b. All staff may at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential for example, where a learner is bullied by another learner (or by a member of staff). Such incidents need to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate procedure. They must not be discussed outside the HBXL Skills Academy and should only be discussed with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.
c. However, staff have an obligation to share with HBXL's Designated Safeguarding Lead, any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a learner. Staff must never promise a learner that they will not act on information that they are told by the learner.

8. Honesty and Integrity

a. Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the use of HBXL's property and facilities.
b. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure.
c. Gifts from suppliers or associates of the HBXL Skills Academy must be declared to the Skills Academy Lead, with the exception of "one off" token gifts (with a value of less than £20/£30) from learners. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to learners are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.
d. Staff will ensure that all information given to the HBXL Skills Academy about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

9. Conduct Outside Work

a. Staff must not engage in conduct outside work that could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the HBXL Skills Academy. This covers negative comments about the HBXL Skills Academy on social media.
b. Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct and are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.

10. Use of Electronic Technologies and Personal Communication Devices

a. Staff must exercise caution when using communication technologies and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves or the HBXL Group into disrepute.
b. Staff must only use their HBXL Group email accounts, WhatsApp account or other work platforms when communicating electronically with learners.

11. Disciplinary Action

a. All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.