



cetb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí
*Cork Education and
Training Board*

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CODE OF ETHICS

Introduction

Cork Education and Training Board (CETB) has adopted this Code of Ethics for members and staff of the Board. A copy of the Code will be available upon request and be placed on the Board's website. The Code consists of this document together with the 'Code of Ethics for Board Members' and the 'Code of Conduct for ETB Staff' which follow this document.

The Board is a service organisation, providing educational services within its area of remit and phrases such as "conduct of business" or "business transactions" should be read in this context.

Intent and scope

The purpose of the Code is to provide guidance to the Chairperson, members and staff of CETB in performing their duties.

Objectives

The objectives of the Code are:

- To set out an agreed set of ethical principles (i.e. a fair and just set of rules for the conduct of the Board and its staff and the operation of its services)
- To promote and maintain confidence and trust in the Board and staff of CETB
- To promote the development and acceptance of ethical practices in all the Board activities
- To promote the highest legal, management and ethical standards in all the activities of CETB
- To promote compliance with best current management practice in all the activities of CETB.

General Principles

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

In many cases, a decision as to what is ethical is clear cut and will be obvious to any reasonable person and will rarely require reference to a Code of Ethics. In some situations, however, there may be circumstances where an element of doubt or ambiguity arises. To help in those circumstances and to protect and guide individual Board members and staff of CETB, a written Code of Ethics provides a basis for the conduct of these activities.

It is not possible to provide for every situation in the Code of Ethics. If there is doubt about the probity of any particular situation, the Chairperson in the case of a Board Member or the CE in the case of a staff member must be consulted about that situation by the individual(s) concerned. The Chairperson or the CE will keep a record of his/her decisions in such matters.

All members of the Board and all staff are required to observe the following fundamental principles, as set out under the following headings:

- Integrity
- Confidentiality
- Obligations
- Disclosure of Interest
- Loyalty
- Fairness, and
- Consideration for work/external environment.

Integrity

Each Board member and each member of staff is expected to observe the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all his/her dealings either as a member or employee of the Board. Therefore, each Board member or member of staff must:

- Ensure that CETB collaborate vigorously, energetically, ethically and honestly with other educational institutions, commercial and other providers of research and advisory services;
- Ensure that CETB is conducting its purchasing activities of goods/services in accordance with public policy and best business practice and its purchasing regulations reflect this;
- Ensure that CETB acquires information or sensitive business information by proper means only;
- Ensure that engagement of consultancy and other services is in compliance with public policy guidelines;
- Refrain from giving and 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 the activities of the Board and report any such approaches in writing to the Chairperson in the case of a Board Member or the CE in the case of a staff member;

- Avoid the use of CETB resources or time for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with the institutions or services of the Board;
- Avoid misrepresentation, being ambiguous or misleading.

In addition, each Board Member must:

- Ensure that the accounts/reports accurately reflect the performance of the Board and are not misleading or designed to be misleading;
- Disclose outside employment/business interests which they consider may be in conflict or in potential conflict with the activities of CETB;

Each staff member must also:

- Not engage in outside employment/business interests which would reasonably be considered to be in conflict or in potential conflict with the activities of CETB or their responsibilities as staff of CETB;

Confidentiality

CETB is committed to providing access to general information relating to its activities in a way that is open and enhances its accountability to the general public.

Members of the Board and staff are required to respect the confidentiality of sensitive information held by CETB. This would constitute material such as:

- Personal information;
- Information received in confidence by CETB;
- Any commercially sensitive information or other information sensitive to the reputation of CETB;
- Any other material, release of which might constitute an unlawful or unethical act.

Staff members and individuals on work placement/experience/internship have responsibilities to:

- respect the privacy of all staff, including individuals on work placement/experience and internships etc;
- respect the confidentiality of all data and records;
- follow office procedures designed to protect privacy;
- act in a professional manner at all times;
- not discuss or disclose any information of a confidential nature except in the proper course of their employment. This restriction continues to apply

after the termination of an employment contract, work placement or internship.

CETB will observe appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest.

Members and staff of CETB will comply with all relevant statutory provisions (e.g. Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003, and the Freedom of Information Act, 1997) in accordance with the regulations when issued.

Members of the Board and staff will observe the strictest confidentiality in relation to all discussions and decisions taken at meetings of the Board, Sub-committees and meetings of such other bodies/agencies on which they represent CETB.

Obligations

CETB will fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on CETB by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 and other relevant legislation;

- Board members will make every reasonable effort to attend all Board and Sub-committee meetings and meetings of such other bodies/agencies on which they represent CETB;
- Board members will ensure that CETB has introduced controls 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 and Staff will ensure, to the extent that it is in their power and remit, that such controls will be put in place and operated.
- Members and staff of the Board will ensure that CETB complies with detailed tendering and purchasing procedures, as well as complying with prescribed levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure;
- Board members and staff acknowledge that the acceptance of positions following employment and/or engagement by CETB can give rise to the potential for conflicts of interest and to confidentiality concerns. The Board will also ensure that any procedures that it may put in place in this regard are monitored and enforced and Staff will comply with procedures that may put in place in this regard.

Loyalty

The Board members and staff of CETB acknowledge the responsibility to be loyal (i.e. to be faithful to the underlying principles of the Board and reliable and dedicated in seeking to carry them out) to CETB and to be fully committed to all its activities while mindful that CETB itself must at all times take into account the interests of its students and funders including tax payers.

The Board and staff of CETB acknowledge the duty of all to conform at all times to the highest ethical standards.

Fairness

CETB is committed to complying with employment equality and equal status legislation. In this regard both Members and Staff will ensure, to the extent that it is in their power and remit, that CETB

- is committed to and complying with employment equality and equal status legislation;
- is committed to fairness in all dealings relating to its activities; and
- values its students, staff, suppliers, and customers and treats all its students, staff, suppliers and customers with fairness and equality.

Work/External Environment

- The Board and staff of CETB place the highest priority on promoting and preserving the health and safety of its staff and students;
- Both Members and Staff will ensure, to the extent that it is in their power and remit, that community concerns in general are fully considered in its activities and operations;
- CETB will minimise any detrimental impact of its operations on the environment.

Responsibility

- CETB will agree and adopt a Code of Ethics for Members of the Board and members of its staff.
- CETB will circulate this Code of Ethics (and a Policy Document on Disclosure of Interests) to all members of the Board and relevant staff for their retention;
- CETB will ensure that all members of the Board, its staff and agents receive a copy of the Code and understand its contents;
- CETB will provide practical guidance and direction as required on such areas as gifts and entertainment and on other ethical considerations, which arise routinely.

Review

- CETB will review this Code of Ethics, as appropriate.
- Any proposed revisions to this Code must be considered and approved at a meeting of the Board and submitted to the Minister for approval.

NOTES:

1. Breaches of the Code of Ethics for Board members will be notified to the Audit Board and to the Comptroller and Auditor General and may be notified to the Minister for Education and Skills with the annual accounts and report.

2. Breaches of the Code of Ethics for Staff will be regarded as a breach of discipline and will be dealt with, in accordance with the disciplinary code, by the Chief Executive Officer or by the delegated officer, as appropriate.

3. Staff must bear in mind that, under the Data Protection Acts, Personal information must comply with the following principles;
 - 1) Be obtained and processed fairly
 - 2) Kept it only for one or more specified and lawful purposes
 - 3) Processed only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given initially
 - 4) Kept safe and secure
 - 5) Kept accurate and up-to-date
 - 6) Be adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - 7) Retained no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes
 - 8) An individual must be given a copy of his/her personal data, on request.



Signed: _____

Mr. T. Owens

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 25 June 2018