



LAMBERT SCHOOL

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Code of Conduct

Respect for people.

Lambert School is committed to a workplace that provides dignity and respect. Our daily interaction with others reflects on the school's reputation. Therefore, all employees are expected to be approachable, courteous and prompt in dealing with other people, including students, other employees (irrespective of their position or seniority) and members of the community. In dealing with other people, they should be able to accommodate and tolerate different opinions and perspectives, and sort out disagreements by rational discussion.

Rational discussion presupposes that there is open communication and the freedom to voice another point of view. Such a discussion should not involve verbal abuse or physical intimidation. For example, you may criticise a person's ideas but you should not criticise the person; and you should not verbally abuse, vilify or belittle students or colleagues personally or to others.

Unfounded complaints should not be made with malicious, frivolous or vexatious intent against another employee or students. Employees who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students. Modelling effective leadership and respect in your interactions with students can have a profoundly positive influence on a student's personal and social development. Similarly, it is important to treat colleagues with respect.

Rude or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening or derogatory language and physical abuse or intimidation towards other employees is unacceptable. Information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phones, text or instant messaging and websites to engage in behaviour that could reasonably be considered to have a negative impact on another person should not be used to cause harm, or make other employees feel unsafe

Duty of Care

Duty of care is essentially a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from foreseeable harm. While this applies in all aspects of an employee's work, it is particularly important for those employees who have interaction with and responsibility for students. Teachers have a particular duty of care towards students and to have a relationship based on trust. All students have a basic and expected right to a physical and emotional environment that is free from unreasonable risk of harm. Harm includes any significant detrimental effect to the student's physical, psychological or emotional well-being.

Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:

- 3.3.1 physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect
- 3.3.2 sexual abuse or exploitation
- 3.3.3 domestic or family violence
- 3.3.4 student bullying
- 3.3.5 one's own actions.

Psychological harm

Employees must not behave in ways that a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening. Such conduct might include, but not be restricted to, targeting students with unfair and continued criticism; making excessive or unreasonable demands of others; and making any form, either oral or written (including electronic communication), of derogatory comments to students, parents, work colleagues or the general public. Should such unacceptable behaviour occur, then all recipients of such behaviour have recourse to the processes contained within the school's Grievance Policy.

Physical conduct with students

Employees must not engage in conduct that could physically harm a student and this should be noted especially in cases involving disciplinary action. Corporal punishment is prohibited. There may be occasions, however, where physical intervention is appropriate in order to protect students, self and others. In these circumstances this would be deemed reasonable action providing that the physical intervention is to prevent harm or further harm to students and that the employee seeks to avoid inflicting physical harm where possible. The physical intervention would need to be proportionate to the circumstances.

Professional relationships between employees and students

Physical punishment must not be imposed on a student in the course of professional duties. A relationship with any student that is, or that can be misinterpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student should never be developed. A sexual relationship with a school student, whether homosexual or heterosexual, consensual or non-consensual or condoned by parents or caregivers is prohibited.

A romantic or sexual relationship with any student (including any adult student) that you are responsible for teaching, tutoring, advising, assessing, or for whom you provide pastoral or welfare support is also forbidden and to do so raises serious questions of conflict of interests, trust, confidence, dependency, and of equality of treatment. Such relationships may also have a negative impact on the teaching and learning environment for other students and colleagues.

All students have a right to a safe physical and emotional environment. A teacher is expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people, actively seeking to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed. While not all employees are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all employees to understand and observe child protection policies.

Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites

Lambert School provides electronic communication facilities for its students and employees for educational or administrative purposes. It reserves the right to monitor and view any data stored or transmitted using these facilities. By its nature, electronic communication is a fast and informal way of communicating. However, once a document or image has been sent there is no way to recall it and it exists forever.

You must, therefore, comply with the school's ICT POLICY and:

- exercise good judgment when using electronic mail, following the principles of ethical behaviour
- use appropriate language in electronic mail messages

- be aware that if an issue addressed in an email becomes the subject of a legal dispute, then those emails would be discoverable: that is, the court and all parties to the dispute would be entitled to see them
- not send messages that are harassing, defamatory, threatening
- not invite students into your personal social network site, if it contains personal information or inappropriate comments or images
- remember transmission, storage, promotion or display of offensive, defamatory, or harassing material is strictly forbidden
- report any situations where you become aware of the inappropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites.

Use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco

As an employee, you must:

- not attend work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances
- not endanger your own safety or the safety of any other person in the workplace by consuming alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances
- notify the principal if you are aware that your work performance or conduct could be adversely affected as a result of the effect of a prescribed drug
 - take action to resolve any alcohol or other drug-related problems that you have
- consult with the principal if you are concerned about working with other employees who may be affected by drugs or alcohol.

Drugs

Lambert School is committed to providing a productive, safe and healthy workplace. You are responsible for ensuring your capacity to perform your duties is not impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs, and that the use of such substances does not put at risk you or any other person's health and safety.

As an employee, you must not:

- give students or other employees illegal drugs or restricted substances, or encourage or condone their use
- have illegal drugs in your possession while at work. Any illegal drugs found on school property or in the possession of any person on school property will be reported to the police.

Alcohol

Being under the influence of alcohol while you are 'on duty' could affect your ability to work safely and efficiently, especially when you have a responsibility to supervise students or work in close proximity to them. You must not take alcohol to a school or consume it during school hours or at any school function at any time school students are present, including those events conducted outside school premises.

Therefore:

- you must not purchase alcohol for, or give alcohol to, any school student or other person under the age of 18 years
- you must not encourage or condone the use of alcohol by students of any age during educational activities

Tobacco

- You must not smoke or permit smoking in any school buildings, enclosed area or on school grounds. This includes all buildings, gardens, sports fields, cars and car parks.
- You must not purchase tobacco or tobacco products for any school student, or give them tobacco or tobacco products

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest may exist when an employee's private interests have the potential to interfere with the proper performance of his / her work duties. A potential or actual conflict of interest must be identified, declared and avoided or resolved in favour of the public interest and should not be undertaken without the express permission of the Principal. It is understood that situations may occur where employees are working with family members or with persons with whom they develop close personal relationships. Where such relationships exist between employees or with prospective employees, then the potential for conflict of interest should be noted.

As a general principle, all employees who participate in procedures for selection, granting of tenure, performance appraisal, termination or transfer of any person who is a family member or with whom they have, or have had, a close personal relationship should declare any potential conflict of interest. However, the existence of a close personal or family relationship should not constitute a bar to the employment, promotion, granting of tenure or transfer of any individual.

In many cases only individual employees themselves will be aware of the potential for conflict. The onus therefore is on the individual in these cases to notify the principal of this potential.

Privacy and confidentiality

As an employee of Lambert School you may be entrusted with access to information of a sensitive nature to enable you to carry out your duties. Employees must ensure that confidential, private and sensitive information is handled carefully and that the integrity of such information is maintained at all times in compliance with relevant privacy legislation. An employee must not, after leaving employment with the school, use confidential information obtained during the course of his / her employment for other work or non-work related purposes.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AND APPARENT BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Potential breaches of the Code of Conduct, including apparent breaches and allegations, will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Potential breaches may be addressed in the context the established grievance policies. In cases of alleged serious misconduct, employees should be aware that the relevant governing body may apply sanctions if this Code of Conduct is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, various sanctions such as the following may be applied:

- appropriate warnings
- counselling
- suspension
- dismissal
- laying of criminal charges or civil action