



Waddington Street Centre Limited
**Code of Conduct for People who work for Waddington Street
and
Maintaining Appropriate Professional Boundaries** (page 6 on)

This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations that Waddington Street Centre (WSC) has of those who work for it, i.e. paid staff and volunteers including director / trustees and all sessional tutors including New College. It is based on the premise that WSC is a professional organisation and we expect the conduct of all those who work for it to reflect this.

The code forms part of the wider package of legislation, practice standards and WSC policies and procedures that must be adhered to. These include the centre's Equality and Diversity, Anti-harassment and Confidentiality policies. WSC staff and volunteers are responsible for making sure that their conduct does not fall below the standards set out in this code and that no action or omission on their part harms the wellbeing of service users and the reputation of the Centre. (People who receive services from WSC are known as Waddy members but are referred to in this document as 'service users'). Service users are those individuals who attend the centre through either a third party or self referral route to receive support provided by the centre. This support can be through engagement with learning / social activities, emotional support or a combination of both.

The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the Centre's Equal Opportunities Policy, Contract of Employment and other staffing policies which are available to all staff, volunteers and tutors and are kept in the Centre's operations manual in the manager's office.

WSC staff, volunteers and tutors must:

- Protect the rights and promote the interests of service users;
 - Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users;
 - Promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm;
 - Respect the rights of service users whilst seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people and
 - Be accountable for the quality of their work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills.
 - Maintain the reputation of the Centre.
- 1. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must protect the rights and promote the interests of service users.**

This includes:

- 1.1 Treating each person as an individual;

- 1.2 Respecting and, where appropriate, promoting the individual views and wishes of both service users;
- 1.3 Supporting service users' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive;
- 1.4 Respecting and maintaining the dignity and privacy of service users;
- 1.5 Promoting equal opportunities for service users; and
- 1.6 Respecting diversity and different cultures and values.

2. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users.

This includes:

- 2.1 Being honest and trustworthy;
- 2.2 Communicating in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way;
- 2.3 Respecting confidential information and, where necessary clearly explaining agency policies about confidentiality to service users;
- 2.4 Being reliable and dependable;
- 2.5 Declaring issues that might create conflicts of interest and making sure that they do not influence your judgement or practice; and
- 2.7 Adhering to the Centre's policies and procedures.

3. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.

This includes:

- 3.1 Promoting the independence of service users and assisting them to understand and exercise their rights;
- 3.2 Using established processes and procedures to challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice;
- 3.3 Bringing to the attention of the Centre manager resource or operational difficulties that might get in the way of the delivery of safe care;
- 3.4 Informing the Centre manager where the practice of colleagues may be unsafe or adversely affecting standards of care;
- 3.5 Complying with WSC's health and safety policies;

- 3.6 Helping service users to make complaints, taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person; and
 - 3.7 Recognising and using responsibly the power that comes from your work with service users.
- 4. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must respect the rights of service users while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.**

This includes:

- 4.1 Recognising that service users have the right to take risks and helping them to identify and manage potential and actual risks to themselves and others;
 - 4.2 Following risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of service users presents a risk of harm to themselves or others;
 - 4.3 Taking necessary steps to minimise the risks of service users from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or other people; and
 - 4.4 Ensuring that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments.
- 5. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must uphold public trust and confidence in the Centre's services.**

In particular you must not:

- 5.1 Abuse, neglect or harm service users or colleagues;
 - 5.2 Exploit service users or colleagues in any way;
 - 5.3 Abuse the trust of service users or the access you have to personal Information about them or to their property, home or workplace;
 - 5.4 Form inappropriate personal relationships with service users;
 - 5.5 Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against service users or colleagues;
 - 5.6 Condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by service users or colleagues;
 - 5.7 Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk; or
 - 5.8 Behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work at the Waddington Street Centre.
- 6. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.**

This includes:

- 6.1 Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way;
- 6.2 Maintaining clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for your work;
- 6.3 Informing the Centre manager about any personal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely;
- 6.4 Seeking assistance from the Centre manager if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work, or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter;
- 6.5 Working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect;
- 6.6 (If appropriate) Recognising that you remain responsible for the work that you have delegated to other workers;
- 6.7 Recognising and respecting the roles and expertise of workers from other agencies and working in partnership with them; and
- 6.8 Undertaking relevant training to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and contributing to the learning and development of others.

7. As a WSC staff member, volunteer or tutor you are accountable for your relationship with others.

- 7.1 In order to preserve the independence of the Board of Directors, director/trustees may not be close relatives, partners or in a sexual relationship with paid staff.
- 7.2 Paid staff may not work privately either paid or unpaid, where that work is related to the work of WSC, without the permission of the Manager or Board of Directors.
- 7.3 Paid staff may not become directors / trustees.
- 7.4 Paid staff may join Board of Directors / Committees of umbrella organisations etc., with the permission of the WSC Board of Directors.
- 7.5 Those who work for WSC should not allow personal feelings to affect their professional working relationships.
- 7.6 No employee, volunteer or tutor can receive any money or gifts from a service user.
- 7.7 The normal rule of client confidentiality cannot be observed when abuse is discovered or suspected. When workers suspect, discover or are told/learn about abuse occurring in or outside the Centre they should follow the appropriate reporting procedures as laid down in the operations manual.

- 7.8 It is expected that anyone working in the WSC will act sensibly to minimise the risk of violence, particularly in respect of admitting visitors when working alone.
- 7.9 No one may carry out their duties for WSC if they are incapacitated by drink, drugs or other substances.
- 7.10 Paid staff, volunteers and tutors will not make known the home address or telephone numbers of anyone working for WSC and that also must include their own.
- 7.11 Personal files of paid staff will normally be kept in the office with access restricted to the Manager. During any disciplinary action, or when sensitive material is retained on file, the Chair of the Board of Directors will take steps to further restrict access.
- 7.12 Colleagues should not be critical of one another in the presence of outside agencies.
- 7.13 Volunteers, including director / trustees, should not be expected to take responsibility for work that is the duty of paid staff.

Name..... Date.....

Signature.....

Date this policy was approved by the Board of trustees: 3rd August 2020

Waddington Street Centre Maintaining Appropriate Professional Boundaries



Law, rules and regulation, not Guidelines, specify the requirement for practice and violating them constitutes professional misconduct. Not adhering to these Guidelines may be interpreted as professional misconduct only if the conduct also violates pertinent law, rules and regulations, some citations of which are listed at the end of this Guideline

The concept and practice of professional boundaries separates the supportive and befriending behaviour of staff from behaviour which, well intentioned or not, could lessen the benefit of support to a service user. (People who receive services from Waddington Street Centre are known as Waddy members but are referred to in this document as 'service users')

Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries are an essential part of the work at the Waddington Street Centre. It is crucial for all staff and volunteers to recognise the difference between the supportive relationship and other types of non professional relationship.

Poor boundaries can harm the service users, the staff member or volunteers and possibly others.

There are number of areas where one has to maintain boundaries including:

Self disclosure: Self disclosure is the sharing of personal information to improve the understanding between persons. In some instances self disclosure may be appropriate but only when it is for the benefit of the service user. The blurring of this boundary can confuse the other person with respect to roles and expectations in that it may shift the focus to the needs of the worker or move the professional relationship to one of friendship.

Friendship: Relationships may be a form of befriending but not a friendship. Staff and volunteers should avoid making friendships outside of working time with those persons for whom they are providing a professional service.

Sexual Relationships: Staff members and volunteers must not be involved in a sexual relationship with any service user.


Challenging the behaviour of a colleague: If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of or observes unacceptable behaviour by a colleague they should report the matter immediately to the Manager and follow any relevant procedures. It would be good practice to advise the colleague firstly (if it is safe to do so) of concerns and the nature of action taken. It may be possible to support that colleague in a disclosure before reporting concerns. The safety of the service user is the main consideration. Remember that although there may be serious legal consequences in these circumstances, the test is that the report was made in good faith and based on the reasonable person principle i.e. "what would a reasonable person do in these circumstances".

Managing self: There may be times when a staff member or volunteer recognises that they are having difficulty in maintaining a professional boundary. This may be a feeling of attraction to a service user or an attempt to sexualise a relationship by a service user.

Key signs may be, treating the person preferentially, thinking about them a great deal when out of contact, a very strong feeling of looking forward to meeting the individual or being overemotional with the person or sharing intimate personal details. It may be a miscommunication, a mismanagement of confidential information. In these circumstances the staff member or volunteer needs to act to protect the service user and themselves. Perhaps a discussion with a respected colleague to talk through the issues without prejudice or a discussion with a Manager to ensure appropriate actions and to prevent any escalation of difficulty. Prompt action is required and a recognition of the ethical and legal implications.

It is not possible to make prescriptive guidelines for boundary issues generally so staff and volunteers need to be aware of the different factors which may affect their practice in the various work contexts in order to make appropriate decisions. Regular discussions with colleagues about practice dilemmas is good practice and a means of mutual support.

Professional Boundaries: a simple model

Appropriate Boundaries	Boundary Crossing (‘Grey zones’ of decision making in the worker / service user relationship)	Boundary Violation
		
Indicators	Indicators	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and volunteers perform duties within legislative framework • Avoid personal bias in performance of duties • Promote service users participation • Able to identify own strengths and limitations through supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending free time with service user • Planning others care around a service users needs • Keeping secrets with a service users • Sharing personal information with a service user • Changing dress style when working with a service users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering into a sexual relations with a service user • Borrowing or giving money • The indulgence of personal privilege by a member of staff • Abusive or neglectful behaviour • The colluding with or involvement in illegal behaviours • The breaking of trust/divulgence of privileged or confidential information

Remember:

- **It is your responsibility**, not the service users, to maintain appropriate boundaries in your professional relationship. If a complaint is filled, it will be your responsibility to demonstrate that the service user has not been exploited or coerced, intentionally or unintentionally.
- Be especially vigilant regarding any conduct that could impair your objectivity and professional judgement in serving the service user, and any conduct that carries the risk and/or the appearance of exploitation or potential harm to your client.
- Recognise and avoid the dangers of dual relationships when relating to service users in more than one context, whether professional, social, educational, or commercial. Dual relationships can occur simultaneously or consecutively.

Prohibited dual relationships include, but are not limited to:

- a. accepting as a service user anyone with whom you have had a prior sexual relationship;
- b. forming a sexual relationship with a current service user or someone who has been a service user
- c. working with service users to whom you are related by blood or legal ties;
- d. bartering with service users for the provision of services; and
- e. entering into financial relationships with service users - including borrowing or lending monies.
- f. accepting gifts from service users
- g. not to give out your personal telephone number or that of any other member of staff to service users.

Keep at all times a professional approach in your work. This will protect you and the service user.

Date this policy was approved by the Board of trustees: 3rd August 2020

Staff / volunteer signature.....

Printed Name.....

Date.....