

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Organisation Name: Culturalinks Community CIC

Policy Owner: Oksana Logvynenko, CEO

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1. Introduction

At Culturalinks Community CIC, we are committed to providing high-quality services while maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct. This Code of Conduct outlines the behaviours and attitudes expected from all staff and volunteers to ensure we operate ethically, safely, and effectively.

Professional boundaries are essential in creating and maintaining an environment that respects the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of everyone connected with our organisation. This document provides a framework to guide decision-making and behaviour in various situations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

- Set clear expectations for professional behaviour and boundaries
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment
- Protect service users, staff, volunteers, and the organisation from harm
- Establish a foundation for addressing conduct concerns
- Ensure consistency in how we work and interact with others
- Uphold Culturalinks Community CIC's values and reputation

3. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All employees (full-time, part-time, fixed-term, and temporary)
- Volunteers at all levels
- Trustees and board members
- Students on placement
- Contractors and consultants working on behalf of the organisation

The Code applies during working hours, at events and activities connected with Culturalinks Community CIC, and when representing the organisation in any capacity, including on social media.

4. Our Values

This Code of Conduct is underpinned by our organisational values:

- **Respect:** Treating everyone with dignity and consideration
- **Integrity:** Being honest, transparent, and accountable
- **Inclusivity:** Embracing diversity and promoting equality
- **Empowerment:** Supporting individuals to develop and grow
- **Excellence:** Striving for the highest standards in all we do
- **Collaboration:** Working together effectively with others

5. General Conduct

All staff and volunteers must:

5.1 Professional Behaviour

- Act with honesty, integrity, and transparency at all times
- Maintain a professional demeanor and appearance appropriate to your role
- Take responsibility for your actions and decisions
- Work collaboratively with colleagues and partners
- Be punctual, reliable, and committed to fulfilling your responsibilities
- Use resources responsibly and efficiently
- Follow all organisational policies, procedures, and guidelines
- Report any concerns about misconduct, safeguarding, or health and safety promptly
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality about sensitive information
- Engage in continuous professional development

5.2 Communication

- Communicate clearly, respectfully, and professionally with all stakeholders
- Listen actively and value others' perspectives
- Use appropriate language, tone, and non-verbal communication
- Be mindful of cultural differences in communication styles
- Provide constructive feedback in a supportive manner
- Maintain appropriate digital communication boundaries
- Document communications accurately and appropriately

6. Professional Boundaries

Maintaining appropriate professional boundaries is essential for ethical practice. All staff and volunteers must:

6.1 Relationships with Service Users

- Establish and maintain clear professional boundaries with service users
- Avoid dual relationships (e.g., providing services to friends or relatives)
- Decline personal gifts or favours that could compromise objectivity
- Refrain from sharing excessive personal information
- Never engage in romantic or sexual relationships with current service users

- Never engage in romantic or sexual relationships with former service users for at least 12 months after the professional relationship has ended
- Avoid physical contact beyond what is necessary and appropriate for the role
- Meet with service users in appropriate settings during designated hours
- Not provide services outside authorized scope or practice
- Maintain consistent boundaries with all service users

6.2 Financial Boundaries

- Never borrow money from or lend money to service users
- Do not enter into financial transactions or business arrangements with service users
- Be transparent about any fees or charges for services
- Follow organisational procedures for handling money or resources
- Never accept gifts worth more than £20 without declaring them to management
- Never solicit gifts, favours, or services from service users or their families

6.3 Social Media and Digital Boundaries

- Do not connect with current service users on personal social media accounts
- Maintain separate professional and personal online identities where appropriate
- Use organisation-approved platforms for digital communication with service users
- Do not share service users' information or images without explicit consent
- Be mindful that online content may be viewed by service users even if not directly shared with them
- Report any concerning online interactions with service users to management

6.4 Personal-Professional Boundaries

- Maintain a clear distinction between professional and personal life
- Do not share personal contact information with service users
- Avoid meeting service users in non-professional settings
- Do not discuss personal problems with service users
- Recognise and manage your emotional responses to service users
- Be aware of power imbalances in professional relationships
- Seek supervision when boundaries become unclear or challenged

7. Safeguarding

All staff and volunteers must:

- Prioritize the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- Follow Culturalinks Community CIC's safeguarding policies and procedures
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding lead
- Never engage in or tolerate any form of abuse or exploitation
- Complete required safeguarding training appropriate to your role
- Understand and recognize the signs of abuse and neglect
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with vulnerable individuals

- Never be alone with a child or vulnerable adult unless authorized and necessary for the role
- Document any safeguarding concerns accurately and promptly

8. Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

All staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect regardless of background, identity, or beliefs
- Challenge discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping
- Promote an inclusive environment that values diversity
- Make reasonable accommodations for individuals with specific needs
- Be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences
- Reflect on and address personal biases that may affect your work
- Use inclusive and respectful language
- Provide equal opportunities and fair treatment to all
- Report instances of discrimination or harassment

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All staff and volunteers must:

- Maintain confidentiality of personal and sensitive information
- Only share information on a need-to-know basis and with appropriate consent
- Follow data protection legislation and organisational policies
- Store and dispose of confidential information securely
- Report any data breaches immediately
- Use secure methods for transferring sensitive information
- Clearly explain confidentiality limits to service users
- Never discuss service users or colleagues in public spaces
- Password-protect electronic devices used for work purposes
- Only use organisation-approved systems for storing service user information

10. Conflicts of Interest

All staff and volunteers must:

- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest to management
- Remove themselves from decision-making when conflicts exist
- Never use position or information for personal gain
- Declare relationships with suppliers, partners, or service users that could influence decisions
- Seek guidance when unsure about potential conflicts
- Update conflict of interest declarations when circumstances change

11. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

All staff and volunteers must:

- Follow health and safety policies and procedures
- Report hazards, accidents, and near misses promptly
- Never work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Inform management of any health conditions that may affect work
- Maintain appropriate self-care and work-life balance
- Seek support when experiencing difficulties that affect work
- Contribute to a positive and supportive work environment
- Take reasonable steps to protect their own safety and that of others

12. Use of Resources

All staff and volunteers must:

- Use organisational resources responsibly and efficiently
- Only use resources for authorized purposes
- Follow procedures for purchasing and procurement
- Report damages or losses promptly
- Return organisational property when requested
- Respect intellectual property rights
- Use technology appropriately and in accordance with IT policies
- Consider environmental impact and sustainability

13. Representing the Organisation

When representing Culturalinks Community CIC, all staff and volunteers must:

- Uphold the organisation's reputation and values
- Ensure statements made publicly align with organisational positions
- Obtain approval before speaking to media on behalf of the organisation
- Make clear when expressing personal views rather than organisational positions
- Dress appropriately for the context and role
- Use social media responsibly, being mindful of association with the organisation
- Be ambassadors for the organisation's mission and values

14. Reporting Concerns and Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers must:

- Report violations of this Code of Conduct to management
- Follow the whistleblowing policy when reporting serious concerns
- Cooperate fully with any investigations
- Support colleagues who raise genuine concerns
- Never victimise or retaliate against those who report concerns
- Seek advice when unsure about appropriate actions
- Maintain confidentiality during investigations

15. Consequences of Misconduct

Violations of this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Informal discussions and guidance
- Formal supervision or performance management
- Additional training or support
- Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- Termination of volunteer agreements
- Reporting to regulatory bodies or authorities where appropriate

The specific response will depend on the nature and severity of the misconduct, the individual's role, and relevant circumstances.

16. Implementation and Compliance

To ensure implementation of this Code of Conduct:

- All staff and volunteers will receive a copy during induction
- Training on professional boundaries will be provided
- Regular supervision will include discussion of boundary issues
- Annual refresher training will be conducted
- The Code will be prominently displayed in workplaces
- Management will model appropriate behaviour
- Regular reviews of the Code will be undertaken

17. Getting Support and Guidance

If you are uncertain about appropriate boundaries or conduct:

- Discuss concerns with your line manager or supervisor
- Consult relevant policies and procedures
- Seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead if related to safeguarding
- Use supervision sessions to explore boundary issues
- Request additional training if needed
- Contact the CEO for guidance on complex situations

18. Related Policies

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy

19. Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understand this Code of Conduct. I agree to adhere to it throughout my employment or volunteer engagement with Culturalinks Community CIC.

Name: _____

Role: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness (Manager): _____

Date: _____

Appendix A: Professional Boundaries Quick Reference Guide

DO:

- Maintain consistent, clear boundaries with all service users
- Be friendly but professional
- Keep relationships focused on the service user's needs
- Document all significant interactions
- Discuss boundary concerns with your supervisor
- Reflect on your practice regularly
- Recognise your own vulnerabilities and triggers
- Use appropriate touch only when necessary (e.g., first aid)
- Meet in appropriate settings during working hours
- Maintain confidentiality within appropriate limits

DON'T:

- Share personal contact details with service users
- Connect with service users on personal social media
- Meet service users outside of professional settings
- Accept or give gifts beyond token value
- Loan or borrow money or items
- Share excessive details about your personal life
- Take on roles outside your professional capacity
- Make promises you cannot keep

- Show favouritism to particular service users
- Use personal devices to communicate with service users

Appendix B: Boundary Violations Reporting Form

Boundary Violation Reporting Form

Date of report: _____

Person making report: _____ Role: _____

Date(s) of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Description of boundary violation (be specific about what happened):

Persons involved:

Any witnesses:

Any immediate actions taken:

Any suggested remedial actions:

Report received by: _____ Date: _____

Action taken:

Follow-up required:

Appendix C: Situations Requiring Particular Boundary Awareness

1. **Home visits** - Always maintain professional demeanour, avoid personal conversations unrelated to service provision, document all visits
2. **Working with vulnerable service users** - Be especially mindful of power imbalances, involve other staff where appropriate, ensure transparency
3. **Emotional attachment** - Recognise signs of emotional dependency (both yours and service users'), seek supervision, maintain professional focus
4. **Gifts and invitations** - Follow clear protocols, discuss with management, document offers and responses
5. **Dual relationships** - Identify potential conflicts when you know someone in another context, discuss with management, consider reassignment if necessary
6. **Extended engagements** - Be aware of boundary erosion over time, maintain consistency, regularly review relationship in supervision
7. **Cultural differences** - Learn about and respect cultural norms while maintaining core professional boundaries, seek guidance when unsure
8. **Digital communication** - Use organisation-approved channels, maintain professional tone, be mindful of timing and frequency
9. **Crisis situations** - Remember boundaries even in emergencies, debrief after intense situations, document any boundary adjustments
10. **End of service relationships** - Manage closure appropriately, be clear about future contact limitations, follow transition protocols