

AQA Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Purpose

- Outlines the behaviour that AQA expects from all our staff and associates. This includes trustees, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.
- AQA is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood, and agreed to follow the code of conduct, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
- AQA recognises that by employing staff and associates it is placing them in a position of trust, especially so where the post involves contact with children or adults at risk, however infrequent.
- You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately.
- We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

Diversity and inclusion

You should:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

Responsibilities

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding including following our policies and procedures for safeguarding and whistleblowing
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the code of conduct to your team leader or line manager
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding procedures
- dressing appropriately and professionally
- ensure you are appropriately chaperoned when on a school site.

Respecting children and young people

You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
- communicate with a child or adult at risk in an open, professional manner (including during telephone conversations).
- record video meetings if these are conducted 1-1 with a child or adult at risk, clearly informing them of your intention to do so.
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible or if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow safeguarding procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

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Appropriate relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults. For associates you must follow the chaperone policy when in a school and never be left on your own.
- Maintain an appropriate distance physically and professionally.

Upholding this code of behaviour

- You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.
- If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave AQA. We might also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services.
- If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to your team leader / line manager. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Inappropriate behaviour

When working with children and young people, you **must not**:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- smoke, vape, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or address) or have contact with them via a personal email or social media account
- share the personal email, social media or other personal data of a child or young person with anyone who does not lawfully require it
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory, or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
- arrange situations in which you are left alone with a child or adult at risk.
- act in any way that might make a child or adult at risk feel uncomfortable.
- go beyond the remit of the assessment task; being drawn into personal conversations.
- engage in any form of contact that is not on official premises or outside of business hours, including online contact including through social media or through an online platform provided for the purpose of your work.
- engage in any physical contact with a child or adult at risk even if you consider this to be “horseplay” or to comfort a child or adult at risk who may be upset.
- use or tolerate the use of inappropriate language by any party in the presence of or by a child or adult at risk.