



<b>Name of Policy:</b>	University Code of Ethics
<b>Scope of Policy:</b>	<p>The Code is a broad statement of the ethical principles, values and behaviours that govern relationships and actions both within the University and between members of the University and parties external to the University.</p> <p>The Code is also intended to assist staff to identify and resolve ethical issues that might arise in the course of their employment.</p>
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<b>Applicable to:</b>	Staff
<b>Consultation Process:</b>	-
<b>Approval Body:</b>	Board of Governors
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	July 2013
<b>Date of Implementation</b> (if different from date of approval):	As above
<b>Review Date:</b>	To be confirmed
<b>Version:</b>	As referenced in footer

## Preamble

This Code of Ethics is founded upon the University's Mission which states:<sup>1</sup>

*Our Mission: A University looking to the future where we serve and develop our local, national and international communities by creating purposeful knowledge and research, confident and creative graduates and a dynamic and engaged workforce.*

In pursuing this mission, the members of the University are guided by a shared commitment to behaviour and practices that conform to the highest ethical standards. The University has developed this Code of Ethics to record the ways in which individuals at Lincoln, through their personal relationships, activities and conduct, create and sustain a community that exemplifies the University's values.

## Introduction

The University of Lincoln's Code of Ethics is a broad statement of the ethical principles, values and behaviours that govern relationships and actions (including a failure to act in appropriate circumstances) both within the University and between members of the University and parties external to the University.

The Code is also intended to assist staff to identify and resolve ethical issues that might arise in the course of their employment. It is designed to guide them in their dealings with colleagues, students, the University's partners, third parties and stakeholders.

The Code of Ethics records are a set of general principles rather than a series of detailed prescriptions. It complements and informs, but does not exclude or modify, the legal rights and duties of staff.

The University recognises that many of its members of staff are bound contemporaneously by codes of ethics or conduct required by membership of professional or learned societies, institutions or groups. In the unlikely event of a conflict arising between the University's Code of Ethics and a staff member's external professional obligations, advice should be sought from an appropriate source within the University. This may be a line manager or other suitable senior manager.

The Code includes references to relevant University policies, procedures and other resources. These references are not exhaustive, and may be updated from time to time. The Code is intended neither to increase nor reduce the scope or coverage of any University policy.

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<sup>1</sup> [University of Lincoln Strategic Plan 2011-16](#)

## **Compliance with Applicable Laws, Regulations, and University Policies**

The University functions within a highly regulated environment and staff should conduct themselves in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations that apply to their activities.<sup>2</sup>

Members of staff are expected to be familiar with and follow all University policies and procedures.<sup>3</sup> Many offices and individuals across the University have responsibility for providing guidance on and ensuring compliance with laws, regulations, policies and procedures, and all members of staff are encouraged to consult such persons when requiring guidance or raising concerns having an ethical dimension.

## **Respect for Others**

The University respects the intrinsic worth of each individual and takes pride in its diversity.<sup>4</sup> Lincoln is an inclusive community committed to equal opportunities<sup>5</sup> and does not tolerate bullying or harassment.<sup>6</sup> In their actions on behalf of the University, members of staff should treat others with respect and courtesy and refrain from abuse of power or authority conferred by their positions or roles. The University values academic freedom<sup>7</sup> and freedom of speech and expression and these rights should be exercised in a way that is mutually respectful and does not involve the expression of hatred or discrimination towards particular individuals or groups.

## **Individual Responsibility & Accountability**

Ethical behaviour is an individual and collective responsibility and the University relies on the integrity of each staff member, whether acting in an individual or collective capacity, to observe appropriate ethical standards. The University operates on the principle of individual accountability within a system of defined roles, and individuals should assume the responsibilities that are appropriate to their University positions and functions. Everyone is accountable to the University and to each other for their actions and is expected to exercise sound judgment and to act in good faith in performing their responsibilities. If roles, responsibilities or reporting relationships are unclear, individuals should seek clarification from the appropriate source.

## **Honesty, Integrity & Good Faith**

Honesty, integrity and good faith are fundamental to ethical behaviour and members of staff are required to conform to these ethical values in all their activities and interactions with colleagues, students and other stakeholders.<sup>8</sup>

## **Ethical Conduct in Student Education and Research**

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<sup>2</sup> [Code of Conduct for Staff](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Staff Handbook](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Respect Charter](#)

<sup>5</sup> [The University's Commitment to Equality and Diversity](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Anti Bullying and Anti Harassment](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Academic Freedom Policy](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Staff-Student Relationship Framework](#)

The University of Lincoln is committed to the highest standards in education and research, and to conducting these activities with integrity, objectivity and fairness and in compliance with all applicable laws.<sup>9</sup> It is expected that staff will be open and transparent in their relationship with students and conform to best safeguarding practice when engaged in educational activities.<sup>10</sup> It is also expected that staff will pursue their research with rigour and intellectual honesty; refrain from research misconduct; protect the welfare of human and animal research subjects and obtain appropriate approval and consents for studies involving such subjects; be accountable for research, consultancy and other like funds; and comply with grant and contract requirements and University policies and procedures regarding research.<sup>11</sup>

## **Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest**

Members of staff must conduct their University-related activities in a manner that is objective, independent and impartial and that prioritises and protects the interests of the University. Even the appearance of bias or a conflict of interest with respect to one's actions or refusal to act on behalf of the University can be harmful, thus all members of staff must be sensitive to both the reality and the perception of their action or inaction, particularly with respect to external professional activities, personal financial interests and the granting or receipt of benefits to or from third parties.<sup>12</sup> Potential conflicts must be disclosed so that they may be evaluated and, when necessary, eliminated, managed, or reduced as appropriate.

## **Gifts and Donations to the University**

Gifts offered to the University from whatever source must be scrutinised and accepted or rejected in accordance with the University's Prevention of Bribery and Accepting and Giving Gifts and Hospitality Policy.<sup>12</sup>

## **Record keeping and Reporting**

To ensure transparency, sound business practice, and compliance with law, and because of its obligations as an organisation entrusted with public and private funding, the University depends on rigorous observance of accounting, financial recordkeeping, reporting and other standards and policies and on the maintenance of internal audit, internal control and compliance mechanisms<sup>13</sup>. When such tasks are required by their job responsibilities, staff must record, allocate, and document revenue, expenditure, time, effort and other information in a way that is accurate, clear, complete and timely. Staff should also perform their duties with due care for the safety, security, preservation and good stewardship of all resources.<sup>14</sup>

## **Health and Safety**

The University is committed to protecting the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors and ensuring the security of University premises and facilities. The University and its staff must observe, and facilitate the observance of relevant law, regulations, standards and policies and adhere to sound practices relating to matters of health and safety, including lecture theatre, laboratory and workplace safety, the handling and disposal of hazardous materials, and the operation of University facilities, vehicles and equipment. Individuals

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<sup>9</sup> [Research Ethics](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Staff / Student Relationships Framework; Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Ethical Approval of Research by External Bodies](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Prevention of Bribery and Accepting and Giving Gifts and Hospitality](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Financial Regulations](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)

should report promptly any threat or risk to health or safety, whether it be their own or others', and should take reasonable steps to promote physical security<sup>15</sup>.

## **Environmental Sustainability and Appropriate Use of University Resources**

The University aims to minimise its environmental impact and to use resources in an efficient and sustainable manner and is committed to establishing a culture where environmental sustainability is continually improved. The University promotes environmental awareness among its staff, students, suppliers and contractors in order to ensure that everyone has a role in minimising adverse effects on the environment.<sup>16</sup> Members of staff are responsible for managing and protecting University property, financial assets and other resources with due care. They should ensure that the University's resources are employed appropriately for the benefit of the University and in a manner consistent with all legal requirements. They should neither waste University resources nor use them for personal benefit or for the benefit of a non-University entity, unless appropriate approval has been obtained. The University pursues a policy of ethical investment of its funds<sup>17</sup> and through its procurement processes ensures its suppliers conform to ethical standards.<sup>13</sup>

## **Reputation**

The University of Lincoln controls and protects the use of its name and insignia in order to safeguard the University's reputation and to ensure that their use is consistent with the University's mission and corporate identity.<sup>18</sup>

## **Information Privacy, Confidentiality and Security**

Members of staff should handle information in ways that respect individual privacy and protect the University's interests. They may, by virtue of their roles and responsibilities have access to information that is personal, confidential, sensitive or legally protected. Such information may relate to students, employees, alumni, donors, research subjects, research sponsors, contractors, and others. Careful treatment of such information, including observing applicable laws, policies and procedures for obtaining, securing, maintaining, handling, divulging and destroying it, is of utmost importance, as is limiting the use of such information to the purpose for which access was granted<sup>19</sup>.

## **Reporting Ethical Breaches**

Members of staff are encouraged to report suspected ethical violations including violations of this Code, to their line managers or other appropriate colleagues or, if warranted, the persons identified in the University's Whistleblowing Policy<sup>20</sup>. Those who make reports in good faith of suspected violations are protected by the University's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **Compliance Reporting and Development**

Compliance reporting will be required in particular areas of University activity from time to time in accordance with sector, professional and other requirements. In order to ensure that

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<sup>15</sup> [Health & Safety](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Environmental & Sustainability Strategy 2013-17](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Policy to be approved](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Corporate Identity](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Data Protection](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

the University has as comprehensive an overview of ethical compliance as possible, relevant parts of the organisation will be required to prepare a short report for the Board of Governors, so that the Board can have the necessary assurance that the University is, as far as can be reasonably expected, ethically compliant. Each area of the University will also be responsible for ensuring that its ethical responsibilities are kept up-to-date and for including development and review within its work plan.

Approved by the University of Lincoln Board of Governors  
July 2013