

MAY 2011

Contents:

1.	Law, governing document and standards	Page 2
2.	Objectives, vision and policies	Page 2
3.	Responsibilities and relations with others	Page 3
4.	Committee and Meetings	Page 3
5.	Guild of Students Staff	Page 4
6.	Events	Page 5
7.	Protecting the reputation of the Guild of Students	Page 5
8.	Financial Responsibilities	Page 5
9.	Personal gain	Page 5
10.	Conflict of interest	Page 6
11.	Principles in public life	Page 6
12.	Performance	Page 7

Guild Officer Code of Conduct

As an elected Officer of the Guild, I agree to the following:

1. Law, governing documents and standards

- 1.1 I will conduct myself in a highly responsible and professional manner, and in accordance with the law, which includes for these purposes, charity law, company law, the Education Act 1994 and any other relevant legislation or regulations that impact on any aspect as a Guild Officer.
- 1.2 I will be familiar with and act in accordance with the governing documents of the Guild of Students. The governing documents include for these purposes the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Bye-Laws, Guidance & Strategy documents, and relevant policies and procedures.
- 1.3 I will support the Guild of Students in its commitment to upholding and promoting the highest standard of behaviour and integrity. I accept that the Guild of Students places obligations upon all of its Officers and that each of us owes a duty of care and responsibility to the Guild of Students.
- 1.4 I acknowledge that I am accountable to the members of the Guild of Students in accordance with the governing documents and through Guild Council, and also to the Trustee Board of the Guild of Students. I accept that the Guild Officer Group is expected to work together under the concept of collective responsibility in the best interests of the Guild of Students.
- 1.5 I acknowledge that the purpose of this Code of Conduct is to promote the highest standards of behaviour amongst the Officers and to secure the proper working of the Guild of Students. The Guild of Students may exercise disciplinary authority over its Officers in line with the Guild Officer Group Discipline and Appeals Policy [and any other relevant Guidance & Strategy documents].

2. Objectives, vision and policies

- 2.1 I will promote the objectives of the Guild of Students and in particular my own Officer remit.
- 2.2 I will regularly review the Guild's vision, values and long term strategy and communicate with others to ensure targets and goals are met.
- 2.3 I will demonstrate appropriate examples of leadership, such as understanding delegated responsibility, ensuring that the Guild of Students complies with the law and not acting in a way that contradicts the Guild of Students' policies and procedures.
- 2.4 I will ensure that policies agreed by the Officer Group through correct channels are implemented effectively across the Guild of Students.

3. Responsibilities and relations with others

- 3.1 I understand that I share a collective and individual responsibility to the rest of the Guild Officers and to the Guild of Students.
- 3.2 I will produce plans outlining my actions for an effective year of office, and will work with the staff team to ensure synergy with on-going projects. I will act constructively with the Guild President and CEO to prioritise actions in line with the Guild's Strategic plan, and I recognise my responsibility to support the Guild President, my fellow Guild Officers, the CEO and other senior staff members.
- 3.3 I will strive to establish respectful, courteous and supportive relationships with all whom I come into contact with in my role as Guild Officer.
- 3.4 I will seek to provide high quality and professional representation to all members of the Guild of Students.
- 3.5 I will seek to complete the hours required to meet the requirements of my Officer post. I acknowledge that this may include evenings and weekend as required.
- 3.6 I will produce effective handover of duties to the incoming Guild Officer team and will support the Guild of Students in its annual training and development period and handover phase to ensure all Officers receive adequate training.

4. Committees and Meetings

- 4.1 I will strive to attend all Guild and University committees and meetings which are relevant to my post.
- 4.2 I will be punctual and in any cases where I am unable to attend a Guild or University committee/meeting, I will submit apologies in advance to the appropriate secretary or chair of the meeting. I understand that if I fail to attend three meetings, without submitting apologies, I may be required to face disciplinary action.
- 4.3 I will ensure that I have prepared well in advance of any meetings I attend, by reading any minutes, agenda and accompanying papers. I will attend to any necessary action points prior to the relevant meeting. I will also attend appropriate briefing sessions with Guild staff prior to meetings as and when required.
- 4.4 I will honour the authority of the chair of the relevant committee/meeting and respect his or her role as leader.
- 4.5 I will engage in debate and voting at committees/meetings in accordance with the applicable procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.
- 4.6 Where decisions of the committee/meeting are made by majority, I will accept a majority vote on an issue as decisive and final, and will not act individually unless specifically authorised to do so.

- 4.7 I will maintain confidentiality about what is discussed and happens at a committee/meeting unless authorised by the relevant chair or the Trustee Board to speak of it.
- 4.8 If I am attending an external meeting, conference or event as a representative of the Guild of Students (for example, NUS Conference or a regional conference), and I am invited to speak or vote on a motion or policy, I will speak and vote in line with the policy of the Guild of Students and the collective decision of the Guild Officer Group. If I feel unable to do so, I will abstain from speaking and voting, and will not actively campaign against Guild policy or the collective decision of the Guild Officer Group.

5. Guild of Students Staff

- 5.1 I will ensure that under no circumstances will I partake in discussion on matters relating to staff performance, pay or behaviour etc. other than at R&HR Committee and the Trustee Board. During formal meetings, I will refer to staff by post title, rather than name.
- 5.2 At meetings at which staff matters are discussed, I understand that minutes shall be held in reserved or closed business, and the minutes will not be published. The Chief Executive (or nominee) will keep a written confidential record of the discussion which will be signed as an accurate record by the Chair of the meeting.
- 5.3 I will ensure that there is no reference to staff members through any form of student media, elections or referenda save for sign posting services provided by the Guild of Students.
- 5.4 I acknowledge that in order to provide advice and continuity on Guild business, the Chief Executive or his or her nominee will be in attendance at all meetings of the Sabbatical Officer Group, Guild Officer Group, committees of the Trustee Board and Guild Council. While the Chief Executive will normally be invited to attend meetings of the Trustee Board, the trustees reserve the right to meet without the Chief Executive.
- 5.5 I acknowledge that courtesy between Officers and staff is expected at all times, and I will seek to establish respectful, courteous and supportive relationships with all staff with whom I come into contact.
- 5.6 I will always take an active role in motivating staff members and will never act in a way to discourage individuals from becoming involved in the Guild of Students.
- 5.7 I will seek appropriate professional advice from Guild staff, in line with my post. Whilst I may accept or reject this advice, I understand that if I wilfully reject advice, with detrimental consequences for the Guild of Students, staff members will raise this with their line manager.
- 5.8 I will observe the line management reporting structure, and I understand that the Chief Executive is delegated from the Trustee Board with the day to day management of the Guild of Students, and is the senior staff member

responsible for the overall staffing team. Staff matters should therefore be directed to the CEO or his or her nominee.

6. Events

- 6.1 I will seek to portray a professional and positive manner at all events, including social occasions, conferences, seminars and meetings. I will adhere to any event guidelines, policies and procedures which are in place.
- 6.2 I will be mindful that at any event that I attend (in my capacity as an Officer), I will be representing the Guild of Students. I will be particularly mindful of this where alcohol is likely to be available, and I will take prior advice from the President regarding the consumption of alcohol.
- 6.3 Where I am invited to speak or vote at an external event, in my capacity as a Guild Officer, I will speak and vote in line with the Guild of Students policy or, if I feel unable to do so, I will refrain from speaking or voting.

7. Protecting the reputation of the Guild of Students

- 7.1 I will seek to reflect the professional image of the Guild at all times, including by dressing smartly as and when required, acting in a professional manner and always being polite and courteous. I will take responsibility for my actions and behave in a manner that does not damage the reputation of the Guild.
- 7.2 When I am speaking as an Officer of the Guild of Students, including to the media or in a public forum, my comments will be considered and will reflect current Guild policy even when these do not agree with my personal views.
- 7.3 When speaking as a private citizen, I will strive to uphold the reputation of the Guild of Students and those who work in it, remembering that even in this capacity my responsibility to the Guild of Students is not diminished.

8. Financial Responsibilities

I will demonstrate high levels of financial responsibility, in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in detail in the Financial Procedures Manual and the Delegated Authority document.

9. Personal gain

- 9.1 Unless specifically and lawfully authorised to do so (for example, under the Education Act 1994), I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as an Officer, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.
- 9.2 I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.

10. Conflicts of interest

- 10.1 I will always strive to act in the best interests of the Guild of Students and its present and future membership.

- 10.2 Unless lawfully authorised, I will not put myself in a position where my personal interests conflict with my duty to act in the interests of the Guild of Students.
- 10.3 I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises.
- 10.4 I will submit to the judgment of the Trustee Board and do as it requires regarding potential conflicts of interest.
- 10.5 I understand that a failure to declare a conflict of interest may be considered to be a breach of this Code of Conduct.

11. Principles in public life

As an Officer of the Guild, I promise to abide by the seven principles in public life. These are:

11.1 SELFLESSNESS

The Guild Officer Group should act solely in the best interests of the Guild of Students and its present and future membership. They should not act in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

11.2 INTEGRITY

The Guild Officers should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

11.3 OBJECTIVITY

In carrying out their duties and responsibilities, and in making decisions, the Guild Officer Group should make choices on merit and objective grounds.

11.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

The Guild of Students and its Officers will be accountable for their decisions and actions. Everything the Guild of Students and its Officers do will be able to stand the test of scrutiny by the Guild's students, the University of Birmingham, the public, the media, charity regulators, funders, Parliament and the courts.

11.5 OPENNESS

The Guild of Students seeks to maintain an atmosphere of openness throughout its organisation. The Guild Officers should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. Whilst respecting confidentiality, they should seek as far as is appropriate to give reasons for their decisions in order to promote confidence in the Guild of Students by its members and staff, the University of Birmingham, the public, charity regulators and Parliament.

11.6 HONESTY

The Guild Officers have a duty to declare and properly manage any conflicts of interest and should seek to uphold the principle of honesty in all their dealings.

11.7 LEADERSHIP

The Guild Officers should promote and support the above principles by leadership and example.

12. Performance

12.1 I understand that failure to perform to expected standards or substantial breaches of any part of this Code of Conduct may ultimately result in my removal as a Guild Officer.

12.2 I acknowledge that any such performance matters will be dealt with in the first instance by the President, via an informal process (or, in the case of the President, by a Lay Trustee). If the matter is not resolved, the matter will escalate to the formal Officer disciplinary process, as outlined in the Guild Officer Group Discipline and Appeals Policy.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....