



msletb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board

Code of Conduct for Members of the Board

MSLETB,
Corporate Services Department,
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Castlebar,
Co. Mayo
F23 DV78

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Business Unit	Corporate Services, MSLETB
Work Category	Code of Conduct
Document Title	MSLETB Code of Conduct for Members of the Board
Document No.	Final

Rev (per footer)	Status	Author(s)	Reviewed By	Approved By	Office of Origin	Issue Date
V1 10.12.19	D01	DES, Code of Practice Appendix 9(a)	OR, PH	SMT 12 th November 2019 MSLETB Board 10 th December 2019	HQ, Castlebar	10 th December 2019

1. Introduction

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) have developed this Code of Conduct for Members of the Board. The Code takes account of the implications of the *Ethics of Public Office Act, 1995* and the *Standards in Public Office Act 2001*.

2. Intent

The purpose of the Code is to provide guidance to the Chairperson and members of MSLETB in performing their duties.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the Code are:

- To set out an agreed set of ethical principles;
- To promote the highest legal, management and ethical standards in all the activities of MSLETB;
- To promote compliance with good current management practice in all the activities of MSLETB;
- To promote and maintain confidence and trust, and
- To prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices.

4. General Principles

It is the policy of MSLETB to maintain a high reputation for ethical behaviour and fair dealing in the conduct of its business.

It is not possible to provide for every situation in the Code of Conduct. If there is doubt about the probity of any particular situation, a member must consult the Chairperson of the Board.

5. Availability of the Code

MSLETB will:

- make available this Code of Conduct, and a policy document on disclosure of interests, to all members of the Board and will make all members aware of its importance and availability.
- ensure that all members of the Board acknowledge receipt and understanding its contents;
- provide practical guidance and direction as required on such areas as gifts and entertainment and on other ethical considerations, which arise routinely.

6. Review

MSLETB will review this Code of Conduct as appropriate. Any proposed revisions to this Code must be considered and approved at a meeting of the Board.

7. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be notified to the Chairperson and to the Controller and Auditor General, and may be notified to the Minister for Education and Skills with the annual accounts and report.

8. Fundamental Principles

The members of the Board are required to observe the following fundamental principles, as set out under the following headings:

- (a) Integrity;
- (b) Information;
- (c) Obligations;
- (d) Loyalty;
- (e) Fairness;
- (f) Consideration for Work/External Environment.

(a) Integrity

Members of the Board will:

- disclose outside employment/business or other interests which objectively would be considered to be in conflict or in potential conflict with the business of MSLETB;
- avoid the acceptance of further employment where the potential for conflict of interest arises during a reasonable period of time after a person has ceased to be member of the Board;
- refrain from giving or receiving corporate gifts, hospitality, preferential treatment or benefits which might affect or appear to affect the ability of the donor or the recipient to make independent judgement on business transactions;
- collaborate vigorously, energetically, ethically and honestly with other educational institutions, commercial and other providers of research and advisory services;
- claim expenses only as appropriate to business needs and in accordance with good practice in the public sector generally;
- ensure that MSLETB engages consultancy and other services in accordance with public policy guidelines;
- satisfy themselves that the accounts/reports accurately reflect the Board's performance and are not misleading or designed to be misleading;
- avoid the use of MSLETB's resources or time for personal gain, for the benefit of persons/organisations unconnected with the ETB or its activities;
- ensure that MSLETB is committed to acquiring information or business secrets by proper means only.

(b) Information

Members of the Board will:

- ensure that the Board is committed to providing access to general information relating to its activities in a way that is open and enhances its accountability to the general public;
- respect the confidentiality of sensitive information held by MSLETB, having regard to paragraph 13 of Schedule 3 of the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013*. Sensitive information would constitute material such as:
 - Personal information;
 - Information received in confidence by MSLETB;
 - Any commercially sensitive information or other information sensitive to the reputation of MSLETB;
 - Any other material, release of which might constitute an unlawful or unethical act.

- ensure that MSLETB observes appropriate prior consultation procedures with third parties where, exceptionally, it is proposed to release sensitive information in the public interest;
- ensure that MSLETB complies with all relevant statutory provisions (e.g. *Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2018*, and the *Freedom of Information Act, 2014*);
- observe the strictest confidentiality in relation to all discussions and decisions taken at in-camera meetings of the Board and in MSLETB;
- continue to observe the strictest confidentiality with regard to sensitive information and to discussions and decisions taken at meetings of the Board and in MSLETB when Board membership has ended.

(c) Obligations

Members of the Board will:

- fulfil all regulatory and statutory obligations imposed on MSLETB by the *Education and Training Boards Act 2013* and other relevant legislation;
- ensure that controls are in place to prevent fraud and to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures in relation to levels of authority for sanctioning any relevant expenditure including expenses for business travel;
- make every reasonable effort to attend all Board meetings;
- co-operate with internal audit in the internal audit process.
- ensure conformity with procedures laid down by the Board in relation to conflict of interest situations. This includes acceptance of positions and/or engagement by a State body that may give rise to the potential for conflicts of interest and to confidentiality concerns. The Board will also ensure that any procedures that it may put in place in this regard are monitored and enforced;
- acknowledge the duty to conform to highest standards of ethics.

(d) Loyalty

Members of the Board will acknowledge the responsibility to be loyal to MSLETB and to be fully committed to all its activities while mindful that MSLETB itself must at all times take into account the interests of its students and funders, including tax payers.

(e) Fairness

Members of the Board will:

- ensure that MSLETB is committed to complying with employment equality and equal status legislation;
- ensure that MSLETB is committed to fairness in all business dealings;
- ensure that MSLETB values its students, staff, suppliers and customers, and treats all its students, staff, suppliers and customers equally.

(f) Work/External Environment

Members of the Board will:

- Promote the development of a culture of 'speaking up' whereby workers can raise concerns regarding serious wrongdoing in the workplace without fear of reprisal;
- place the highest priority on promoting and preserving the health and safety of its staff and students;
- ensure that community concerns are fully considered in its activities and operations;
- minimise any detrimental impact of MSLETB's operations on the environment.

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