

Code of Conduct

The following document applies to all staff

Open Awards recognises that all staff work together for the benefit of the organisation and do their jobs to the best of their ability. Everyone at Open Awards has a responsibility to ensure that colleagues and customers receive; and continue to receive the best possible level of service and support. This is achieved through reviewing and improving systems, supporting and developing staff and through personal behaviour in respecting each other.

The Code is to inform staff of expected behaviour in the workplace and whilst on Open Awards business. It has been drawn up and is based on guidance from ACAS so as to ensure that all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities. It will help to safeguard the organisation and all employees in their everyday work and whilst conducting business on behalf of Open Awards. The Code applies to all staff regardless of their position in the organisation.

Staff are expected to perform to a competent level and this will be the subject of regular reviews and appraisal.

Open Awards expects staff to:

- Attend for work during work hours unless agreement has been sought to vary working hours or under the flexible working policy where this applies.
- Report any sickness absence in accordance with the appropriate requirements.
- Implement the Open Awards Equality and Diversity policy in the performance of their duties.
- Observe health and safety requirements when carrying out their duties whether in the office, working at home or when attending meetings outside the office.
- Act with respect, courtesy and consideration towards work colleagues, visitors and when attending meetings.
- Use the name of Open Awards, colleagues and customers in a respectful manner

- You must use items of Open Awards equipment and property only for their designated purposes and in accordance with instructions given in the ICT Usage Policy.
- You must take care to ensure that no loss or damage occurs to Open Awards equipment/property. If any loss or damage occurs, you must report this immediately to your line manager.
- Ensure that all records that you are required to keep or entries in records and/or databases you are required to make are accurate and true.
- Observe the confidentiality of all information and not disclose this to a third party without seeking agreement from your line manager.
- Comply with all reasonable requests made by managers in the performance of their duties.
- Use the internet only for work purposes - personal use is only acceptable during breaks times
- Personal calls of a non-urgent nature should be kept to a minimum during working hours and where possible should be made during break times. Mobile phones should be switched to silent during working hours except where required for Open Awards business.
- Comply with all Open Awards policies and procedures.

Where the code of conduct is breached, staff may be subject to disciplinary action

Professional Conduct

Open Awards expects all staff to behave in a professional and courteous manner at all times whilst in the office or engaged upon Open Awards business.

Staff should be aware that all behaviour can reflect upon the organisation and this can include inappropriate use of social media, taking part in civil unrest, criminal actions or behaviour on company social events. Guidance is contained within Open Awards policies and procedures. If you have any concerns please discuss with your line manager as soon as possible.

Open Awards is a customer facing organisation and staff must answer all phone calls with care and professionalism. Colleagues unattended extensions

must be answered and care taken to divert phones to another extension if you are away or in a meeting. Headphones and radios should not be used for private use in the office during office hours. Noise in the office does carry due to open planning please be aware of this and keep the noise levels to a minimum to respect others e.g. do not shout across the office, be aware of telephone conversations taking place. If engaged in a task in the office requiring quiet time you should discuss this with your line manager.

Customers do attend Open Awards office and all staff should dress appropriately and professionally unless agreed otherwise. Staff who attend meetings should have a regard for their own health and safety. Open Awards expect staff to dress in a manner that is appropriate for a professional office environment whilst recognising any religious and cultural needs. The minimum standard expected will mean dressing in “smart business” clothes. Below is an indication of what may not be deemed as ‘smart business’. Everyone should dress with appropriate modesty and with regard to the sensitivities of those they work with. This applies to all staff, those working in the office as well as visiting customers or attending events representing Open Awards.

Items not deemed as smart business include:

Shorts, jeans, trainers, sports wear, beach wear, flip-flops, casual tee-shirts.

Financial Matters

It is important that you do not expose Open Awards to any financial activities that could be seen as inappropriate. If you suspect any financial irregularities you are expected to report them to your line manager.

You should not apply for Trade cards for your personal use in the name of Open Awards.

Any contracts must be handled in a transparent way. You must make your line manager aware of any perceived possible conflicts of interest due to personal interests.

You should not commit to or order any goods or services without authorisation from your line manager or another member of the management team.

Healthy Working Environment

Open Awards is committed to creating a healthy working environment. The Code of Conduct is intended to do this by setting out the standards expected of all staff. Open Awards Health and Wellbeing Group review the actions that the company takes to maintain a healthy workplace. Open Awards expects all staff to:

- Maintain the Open Awards Health and Safety Policy; as well as associated policies and procedures
- treat others courteously and with respect.
- remember that the actions of others are not usually intended to be negative or create conflict
- accept that manipulative behaviour is destructive and should be avoided
- accept that we are all busy and, at times, under pressure
- try to have a healthy attitude to work and to create a positive environment for everyone
- never intentionally or unintentionally isolate a member of staff.
- maintain a clean and tidy environment/work space
- recognise that people may need to express their feelings but that this should be done with regard to the feelings of others and its impact on the office

If you have any concerns regarding colleagues or yourself please discuss them with your line manager as soon as possible.

Open Awards will not tolerate customers abusing staff and any such incidences must be reported to your line manager as soon as practical. Please refer to the following policies for details on how we deal with vexatious behaviour:

- Open Awards Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures document posted on the Open Awards website.
- Anti Harassment and Bullying Policy (staff handbook).

Acceptance of Gifts, Rewards or Hospitality

Gifts, rewards or hospitality must only be accepted if there is not a risk that Open Awards or employees will become obligated or be perceived to be obligated to the person/organisation presenting the gift.

Any offers of this nature, other than small gifts such as pens and chocolates must be recorded with Open Awards. Your line manager will agree an

appropriate response if a gift is not acceptable. Please refer to the Anti-Bribery Policy for further details on acceptance of gifts, rewards or hospitality.

Outside Interests of Employees

You are responsible for ensuring that there is no conflict of interest between your interests outside work and your role at Open Awards and that you do not bring Open Awards into disrepute.

If you are planning to take up an additional paid post it should not require attendance during normal Open Awards working hours or be carried out on Open Awards premises. You should discuss this with your line manager so Open Awards can be satisfied there is no conflict of interest and this will not impact on your duties or adversely affect your ability to carry out your duties effectively.

You must not represent Open Awards in any official capacity without prior approval from your line manager. Your line manager should agree the content of any material to be published in the name of Open Awards.

Resolving Issues and Conflict

All staff have a responsibility to resolve issues and conflict in the work environment through their own behaviour and by bringing issues to the attention of their colleagues and line manager, as appropriate, rather than allowing issues to develop.

Staff should

- Think about how an issue can be resolved and talk to the colleague(s) concerned
- Raise the issue with your line manager if the above approach fails to resolve the issue

In addition to subscribing to the above, Line Managers will:

- Support staff in dealing with issues
- Deal with any issues or problems arising between staff in accordance with the grievance procedure
- Treat any casual remarks or reported issues/problems which may be prejudicial to a healthy working environment seriously and deal with them formally where required.

Line Management Responsibilities

- The Chief Executive has management responsibility for the Senior Management staff.
- The Director of Corporate Services has management responsibility for the Customer Relationship Manager, Programme Approval Officer, & ICT staff, and is Company Secretary.
- The Head of Business and Development has management responsibility for the Product Development Manager, Business Relationship Managers, and Marketing and Communications Officer.
- The Head of Quality and Standards has management responsibility for the Quality Manager, EQA Manager, Trainers and all personnel contracted as moderators/verifiers.
- The Finance & Resources Manager has responsibility for the Finance and Resources Administrator.
- The Product Development Manager has management responsibility for the Online Learning Designer.
- The Quality Manager has management responsibility for the Quality Reviewers, Quality Officer and Quality Administrator.
- The EQA Manager has management responsibility for the Lead EQA Reviewers.
- The Customer Relationship Manager and Programme Approval Officer have management responsibility for the Customer Service Advisors/Administrator, and Clerical Administrator.
- If one of the line managers is absent, the Chief Executive or other line manager will assume the others line management responsibility.
- The Management team will work together on organisational management issues, delegating to the Senior Officer team as appropriate.

Dealing with problems/issues

1. Where any problem/issue is identified to the line manager, however informally, it will be dealt with as a line management issue.

2. When problems arise between staff, the staff member should raise this informally with the staff member concerned. If this is not possible, the staff member should bring this to the attention of the line manager.
3. If the line manager is not able to resolve the issue/problem informally to the satisfaction of the staff member, the grievance procedure may be utilised by the staff member.
4. If the issue/problem is with either one of the line managers, and the staff member feels unable to discuss this informally then the issue should be resolved in accordance with the Open Awards grievance policy.