

What is the Ethics Code?

The Ethics Code is a set of six core principles underpinning life at the LSE. The Code makes reference to relevant policies and procedures of the School, some of which are designed to deal with complaints, disciplinary and other misconduct matters.

What is this document?

This guidance document is integral to the Ethics Code, April 2014. The Guidance provides essential additional details on the core principles that are highlighted in the Ethics Code. The purpose of the Guidance is also to unpack some of the language and to give examples of its application by members of the LSE community and provide further information on how each principle should apply in practice.

Why do we need a guidance document?

It is impossible to devise a single set of rules to resolve every ethical dilemma which members of the LSE community may face. Instead, the principles in the Ethics Code should guide the exercise of judgement in individual cases.

Who does the Ethics Code affect?

Everyone in the LSE community. All staff, students and governors of the LSE are expected to behave in line with the Code.

Who is responsible for promoting, implementing and applying the Ethics Code?

All staff, students and governors are expected to adhere to, uphold and apply the principles of the Code in their day to day activities.

At Institutional level, LSE's Council, Academic Board, their subsidiary committees, the senior management of the School are responsible for the implementation of the Code.

The Students' Union supports the Ethics Code and encourages its societies to act in accordance with the Code.

How can the Code be used to make decisions?

Decision-making step-by-step

Three simple steps should be followed to identify and resolve the ethical implications of individual decisions and actions:

- 1) Consider whether what you plan to do is compatible with the principles in the Ethics Code. Further guidance is available in this document and in the policies that are listed under each heading of the Ethics Code.
- 2) Ask yourself how you would explain your actions if you had to justify them to close friends and family. What would be the impact on your reputation, or that of the School? How would you feel about asking someone else to do what you are proposing to do?
- 3) Seek advice from an appropriate person, such as a colleague or line manager, or one of the School committees tasked with handling ethical matters. Specific committees handle research ethics and the ethics of receiving external grants and donations, while the Ethics Policy Committee will consider dilemmas of particular difficulty where principles may conflict.

For general queries please e-mail ethics@lse.ac.uk

What are the principles set out in the Ethics Code and what do they mean for the way we behave?

1. RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In order to uphold our commitment to responsibility and accountability, we will:

1.1. Embed the principle of individual responsibility at every level of the School's management and governance structures.

What does this mean?

- 1.1.1. Every member of the School community is responsible for upholding the Ethics Code.
- 1.1.2. Those in leadership positions have a particular responsibility to set an example in their conduct and to promote and support good ethical behaviour.

1.2. Raise concerns relating to ethical matters as they arise.

What does this mean?

- 1.2.1. Every member of the LSE community has a responsibility to refer ethical concerns to the appropriate committee or individual within LSE dealing with the particular ethical concern.
- 1.2.2. Individuals (including staff, students and governors) with concerns relating to ethical matters that cannot be addressed under an existing policy or procedure should consider using the LSE Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Procedure.

2. INTEGRITY

In order to uphold our commitment to integrity, we will:

2.1. Be honest and truthful.

What does this mean?

- 2.1.1. Every member of the LSE community should behave honestly. We should communicate truthfully and openly with each other and with outside parties.
- 2.1.2. No one should misrepresent their position as a representative of the School, for example with regard to their capacity to influence admissions decisions, their role in accepting grants and donations, or their authority to make public statements on the School's behalf.

2.2. Act in accordance with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements.

What does this mean?

- 2.2.1. Every member of the LSE community should act in accordance with the law and LSE rules and regulations.
- 2.2.2. No member of the LSE community should offer or accept bribes either on a personal basis or on behalf of the School. Bribes include money, gifts, or hospitality disproportionate to the relevant circumstances.
- 2.2.3. Any member of the LSE community offered a gift in connection with their role at the School should consider before accepting whether it might be intended, or might appear to others to be intended, to influence them to behave improperly.
- 2.2.4. Every member of the LSE community should handle data properly, protecting privacy and confidentiality, and respecting copyright.

2.3. Declare interests and manage appropriately possible conflicts.

What does this mean?

- 2.3.1. Members of the LSE community should declare outside interests relevant to their activities at the School and should take steps to manage or eliminate any potential conflicts that may arise.
- 2.3.2. No one should be involved in making decisions from which they, or anyone with whom they have a close financial or personal relationship, stand to benefit. This applies to all areas where such conflicts may arise, including student admissions, student assessment, disciplinary proceedings, appeals, staff recruitment, staff promotion and remuneration, procurement, and assessing proposed relationships between the School and outside parties.

2.4. Be transparent and consistent in our decision making.

What does this mean?

- 2.4.1. The School's Council, governors, managers, committee members, and staff involved in decision-making -- including student admissions and assessment, staff recruitment and remuneration, and procurement -- should work transparently and consistently, applying publicly-available policies and procedures, and recording a clear rationale for individual decisions. The commitment to transparency should be balanced against individuals and organisation's rights privacy and confidentiality.
- 2.4.2. The School's selection criteria for admissions are based exclusively on academic achievement and potential, and are fully independent of philanthropic support of the institution.

2.5. Maintain our independence in engaging with outside parties.

What does this mean?

- 2.5.1. Members of the LSE community should avoid personal complicity, or the appearance of personal complicity, in conduct inconsistent with the School's objectives or the principles set out in the Ethics Code.
- 2.5.2. The Council should oversee transparent systems for and record the approval of new institutional relationships with outside parties, and by which the appropriateness of existing institutional relationships can be monitored. Institutional relationships include academic partnerships, commercial contracts and procurement arrangements, financial grants and donations, and sponsorship agreements.
- 2.5.3. The School's institutional relationships should be consistent with the Strategic Plan and the principles set out in the Ethics Code, and should be assessed in light of the outside party's objectives in seeking association with the School.
- 2.5.4. In its dealings with states, organisations, and individuals, the School should not enter into any relationship that compromises, or could reasonably be perceived to compromise, its values, or that makes it complicit in illegal activity or the suppression of human rights. This standard should be applied transparently, with wide and appropriate consultation throughout the LSE community, and drawing on internal and external independent expertise.

2.6. Conduct fundraising activities in line with the principles set out in the Ethics Code.

What does this mean?

- 2.6.1. Members of Council, as the School's charitable trustees, are under a general obligation to accept financial grants and donations offered to the School, except where the funds offered derive from illegal activity, where acceptance would be contrary to the School's objectives or to the principles set out in the Ethics Code, or where acceptance of one grant or donation might jeopardise its ability to raise funds in future.
- 2.6.2. No member of the LSE community should solicit a financial grant or donation to the School, or to any of its departments, research centres, or associated entities, without following the School's guidance on the receipt of grants and donations.
- 2.6.3. Potential donors, funders, and commercial partners should be made aware that the School will not compromise on its objectives or on the principles set out in the Ethics Code, and that no constraints on intellectual freedom, student admissions and assessment are acceptable.
- 2.6.4. The School will not accept donations from donors who are known to be registered students or close relatives of registered students.
- 2.6.5. The School's selection criteria for admissions are based exclusively on academic achievement and potential, and are fully independent of philanthropic support. The School will not enter into discussions with donors who are known to be applicants, relatives or any individual or organisation who offers a donation in relation to an application.

3. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

In order to uphold our commitment to intellectual freedom, we will:

3.1. Protect individuals' freedom of expression.

What does this mean?

- 3.1.1. Every member of the LSE community should recognise the right of others to freedom of expression within the law. Freedom of expression does not absolve individuals of the responsibility for treating others with courtesy and respect (see number 4 below).

3.2. Uphold the freedom to research and convey research findings.

What does this mean?

- 3.2.1. Members of the LSE community engaged in research at the School are free to research and to publish their findings, subject only to legal restrictions and guidance on the ethical conduct of research issued by the Research Ethics Committee.

4. EQUALITY OF RESPECT AND OPPORTUNITY

To uphold our commitment to equality of respect and opportunity, we will treat all people with (equal) dignity and respect and ensure that no person will be treated less favourably because of her/his role at the School, age, disability, gender (including gender reassignment identity), ethnicity and race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and social and economic background.

What does this mean?

- 4.1.1. Every member of the LSE community should treat other people with dignity and respect, whether on or off LSE premises.
- 4.1.2. Bullying and harassment are not acceptable.
- 4.1.3. Every member of the LSE community should treat other people properly, regardless of their different roles at the School, political opinions, ethnicity and race, gender (including gender reassignment identity), disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social and economic background, and personal history.
- 4.1.4. Everyone should work to promote a culture free of discrimination.

5. COLLEGIALITY

In order to uphold our commitment to collegiality, we will promote within the School an inclusive and participatory working and social environment in which we encourage, support and behave appropriately to one another.

What does this mean?

- 5.1.1. Every member of the LSE community should seek to be a good citizen and work in the best interests of the community as a whole.
- 5.1.2. The LSE has a strong tradition of democratic consultation in major decision-making among both students and employees. Every member of the LSE community should seek to support democratic consultation by participation in collective deliberations.
- 5.1.3. Every member of the LSE community should seek to contribute to the governance of the School to the best of their knowledge and abilities, and should work to maximise others' opportunities to do so.
- 5.1.4. Every member of the LSE community should meet the highest standards of good personal, professional, and academic conduct applicable to their role at the School.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

In order to uphold our commitment to sustainability, we will minimise any negative impact we may have on the natural and built environment by effectively managing our resources.

What does this mean?

- 6.1.1. Every member of the LSE community should be mindful of the impact of their activities on the environment and seek to minimise their negative impact.
- 6.1.2. Every member of the LSE community should seek to exercise good stewardship of the financial, physical, human, and intellectual resources entrusted to them, acting in line with the School's financial regulations and the principles set out in the Ethics Code.

October 2015

Version	Date	Changes
V1	January 2015	First draft of guidance developed by EPC
V2	May 2015	Revision to strengthen the statement on the Guidance in 'What is this document?' section.
V3	September 2015	Revision to further strengthen the statement on the Guidance in 'What is this document?' section.
V4	October 2015	The Students' Union supports the Ethics Code and encourages its societies to act in accordance with the Code. Removed reference to justifying decision to newspapers.
V5	September 2016	Revision to 2.6.4 and 2.6.5 – updated to bring inline with prohibition on donations from registered students and their parents. Revision to Equality of Respect and Opportunity to update according to EDI taskforce recommendation on terminology.