

GCSE



CCEA GCSE TEACHER/STUDENT
GUIDANCE

Learning for Life and Work

Unit 1: The Seven Principles of Public Life
and The Rules of Conduct



The Seven Principles of Public Life

1. **Selflessness:** Members should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. **Integrity:** Members must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. **Objectivity:** Members must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. **Accountability:** Members are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. **Openness:** Members should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. **Honesty:** Members should be truthful.
7. **Leadership:** Members should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The Additional Assembly Principles of Conduct

8. **Equality:** Members should promote equality of opportunity and not discriminate against any person, treating people with respect regardless of race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion, marital status and whether or not a person has dependents.
9. **Promoting Good Relations:** Members should act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by tackling prejudice, promoting understanding and respect and encouraging participation between people on the grounds of different religion, political opinion, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability.
10. **Respect:** Members should show respect and consideration for others at all time.
11. **Good Working Relationships:** Members should work responsibly with other Members of the Assembly for the benefit of the whole community. Members' working relationship with Assembly staff should at all times be professional, courteous and based on mutual respect.

The Rules of Conduct

Members must abide by the following rules of conduct:

1. You shall base your conduct on a consideration of the public interest, avoid conflict between personal interest and the public interest and resolve any conflict between the two, at once, and in favour of the public interest.
2. You shall uphold the criminal law. You fail to uphold the law only if you are convicted of, or admit formally, an offence committed when acting in your capacity as a Member.
3. You shall uphold the law in relation to equality. You fail to uphold the law in relation to equality only if a court or tribunal makes a finding against you, or you accept formally that you have breached the law, when acting in your capacity as a Member.
4. You shall register in the Assembly's Register of Members' Interests details of all registrable interests. A registrable interest means an interest specified in Chapter 1 of the Guide to the Rules. [The categories of registrable interest are set out in Schedule 1]
5. You shall declare, whether in Assembly proceedings or in any approach to a Minister, public representative, public body or public official, any relevant interest which might reasonably be thought to influence your approach to the matter under consideration. A relevant interest means an interest to which Chapter 2 of the Guide to the Rules applies, and may include a registrable interest.
6. You shall not accept any gift, benefit or hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence your actions as a Member.
7. You shall not, in return for payment or benefit, advocate or initiate any cause or matter on behalf of any outside body or individual. Nor shall you, in return for benefit or payment, urge any other Member to do so.
8. You shall not seek to confer benefit exclusively upon a body (or individual), from which you have received, are receiving, or expect to receive a financial or material benefit, or upon any client of such a body (or individual).
9. You shall not misuse any payment, allowance or resources available to you for public purposes. You shall strictly observe the requirements of any determination made by the Independent Financial Review Panel and any rules made by the Assembly Commission applying to these or any other payments, allowances and resources.
10. You shall observe and comply with the Rules on All-Party Groups and any policy, guidance or instructions of any kind approved by the Assembly, or issued by the Assembly Commission or Assembly secretariat staff on its behalf or with its authority.

11. You shall use information which you receive in confidence only in your capacity as a Member. You shall never use, nor attempt to use, such information for the purpose of financial gain.
12. You shall disclose confidential or protectively marked information only when you are authorised to do so.
13. You shall not act in any way which improperly interferes, or is intended or is likely to improperly interfere, with the performance by the Assembly of its functions, or the performance by a Member, officer or staff of the Assembly of their duties.
14. You shall not use, or attempt to use, your position as a Member to improperly confer an advantage or preferential treatment for either yourself or any other person; or to avoid disadvantage or create disadvantage for someone else.
15. You shall not subject anyone to unreasonable and excessive personal attack.
16. You shall co-operate at all times with any investigation by or under the authority of either the Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards or the Assembly.
17. You shall not disclose details in relation to such an investigation except when authorised by law or by the investigatory authority.
18. You shall not lobby a member of the Committee on Standards and Privileges, or the Commissioner in a manner calculated or intended to improperly influence their consideration of whether a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred.
19. You shall take reasonable care to ensure that your staff, when acting on your behalf, uphold these rules of conduct.
20. You shall, if approached by anyone to act in a way that would breach the Code of Conduct, report without delay details of the approach to the Committee on Standards and Privileges, and to any other appropriate authority.
21. You shall not urge another Member to contravene any rule of conduct.

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/standards-and-privileges/reports/20160628-code-of-conduct.pdf>

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A Young Person's Guide to the MLA Code of Conduct

In groups, simplify the MLA Code of Conduct for a Year 10 class.

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