

### 42.01 Employee Code of Conduct

#### 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Nova Scotia Community College's mission of building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation requires a shared commitment to the College's core values and to high standards of ethical conduct. At NSCC, we hold ourselves accountable for the embodiment of these values and standards.
- 1.2 The Employee Code of Conduct focuses on standards of conduct by which NSCC employees are expected to govern themselves in carrying out College business and in interacting with each other, our learners and the communities we serve.

#### 2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This Code applies to all current employees regardless of status. It applies to all employee behaviour on campus, on-line or off-site, which may undermine the College's mission and values or detrimentally affect the College's reputation.

#### 3.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- 3.1 The actions we choose to take as individual employees reflect on us all and influence how others perceive NSCC. The Employee Code of Conduct provides an overview of key practices and behaviours which support NSCC's values and Mission. Complying with the behavioural expectations set out below is a condition of employment.
- 3.2 Our guiding values are: student success, employee success, accessibility, diversity and inclusion, safety, innovation, sustainability and public accountability. As members of the NSCC community, employees must act in a manner which supports these values, both in performing their daily job functions and in relation to any off-duty activities, which could negatively impact:
  - a. NSCC's pursuit of its mission and vision
  - b. the employee's ability to perform their duties satisfactorily;
  - c. NSCC's management and support of employees and students;
  - d. the working and learning environment; or
  - e. NSCC's reputation.
- 3.3 College policies set out standards of behaviour and expectations of NSCC employees which support NSCC's values and operations. NSCC requires that its employees are familiar with its policies and act in accordance with them.

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3.4 Employees must lead by example by acting with professionalism. Professionalism is a set of attitudes, behaviours and characteristics appropriate to an organization and/or profession. At NSCC, professionalism includes demonstrating integrity, respect, accountability and a commitment to NSCC's Mission, Vision and Values. Core elements of appropriate professional behavior include:

**a. Responsible, Safe and Ethical Job Performance**

- i. meeting all work obligations (being on time, present and productive);
- ii. devoting time, energy and ability to their position, as required by their employment responsibilities and any governing professional standards;
- iii. encouraging positive work behaviour, including promoting appropriate personal and professional workplace relationships and boundaries;
- iv. when on College business or learning activities (including conferences, etc.), refraining from engaging in behaviour that may bring their own reputation or that of the College into disrepute;
- v. performing their work in a safe, responsible manner free from the influence of drugs or alcohol; and,
- vi. complying with NSCC policies.

**b. Respectful Interaction with Others**

- i. treating others with respect, dignity, courtesy, honesty and fairness, and with proper regard for their rights, safety and welfare;
- ii. contributing to a workplace that is free of harassment, bullying or discrimination against employees, students, or members of the public; fostering a climate of diversity and inclusion and seeking to avoid or remove obstacles to accessibility within the scope of their role; and,
- iii. working together as a team to build a positive work environment built on open communication, constructive interpersonal relationships, effective conflict and issues resolution, cooperative problem solving and reporting issues or concerns appropriately to the manager.

**c. Acting with Integrity**

- i. refraining from all professional or personal relationships, including consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships, which could create a potential conflict of interest or commitment for the employee. In the event such relationships exist or develop, they must be disclosed per the Conflict of Interest & Commitment policy.

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### 42.01 Employee Code of Conduct

- ii. refraining from consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships with students. NSCC prohibits such relationships between its employees and students, while they are pursuing studies at the College, as they can give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest, undermine the integrity of the learning environment and pose a risk that they exploit the relationship of authority and trust that is inherent in the relationship between employees and students. In the event such relationships are pre-existing, they must be disclosed per the Conflict of Interest & Commitment policy.
  - iii. safeguarding NSCC assets, resources, information, data, etc. and using them responsibly and only as required for College purposes;
  - iv. only using College information for authorized purposes and in a manner aligned with any applicable legal, ethical and professional standards;
  - v. complying with copyright laws and policies and upholding NSCC values of academic integrity; and,
  - vi. refraining from unethical behaviour such as misappropriation or misuse of College assets, theft, or inaccurate reporting of financial information for personal advantage of oneself or others.
- d. Avoiding Inappropriate Communications**
- i. respecting the privacy and confidentiality interests of the College and others and avoiding any inappropriate disclosure of personal or confidential information; and,
  - ii. not using social media or any other public forum to disparage NSCC, co-workers or students and not contributing content that would bring the College, yourself or other employees or students into disrepute or would harm their standing in the community.

### 3.5 Code Compliance

- a. Conduct which undermines NSCC's values or which breaches any of the standards of conduct set out above, or any other NSCC policy, is a breach of this Code (See Appendix A for examples of breaches). Employees must not tolerate or participate in behaviour that is inconsistent with College policies and the Employee Code of Conduct. Employees who are uncertain as to whether a particular course of action or decision is or would be contrary to the Code or any other NSCC policy should consult with a manager or senior leader to obtain direction or guidance.
- b. A suspected breach of the Code may be pursued, as determined by the College, under applicable Policies and Procedures or as matters of discipline under collective agreements.
- c. Code breaches will result in sanctions and may include disciplinary measures up to, and including, termination of employment.

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### 42.01 Employee Code of Conduct

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- d. Anyone with information suggesting that a breach of the Code has been committed is expected to report it to his/her manager or a Senior Leader. Reports of potential breaches shall be passed along to the HR Consultant in confidence for advice and guidance regarding next steps.

#### 3.6 Confidentiality

The College will maintain strict confidentiality at all times in the reporting and investigation of alleged violations of the Code. All records are to be kept confidential and securely filed within Central Human Resources. The College will take every reasonable precaution to protect the concerns and identity of those involved to the greatest extent possible. All parties will be required to maintain confidentiality to ensure the integrity of process.

#### 3.7 Abuse of Policy

The College requires any employee raising concerns regarding an alleged breach of the Employee Code of Conduct do so in good faith based on an honest belief a violation has occurred. An individual acting in good faith will not be disadvantaged or lose their employment status by reporting their concerns, even when concerns cannot be substantiated under the applicable policy. However, the willful misuse or abuse of the Code may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

#### 3.8 Reporting

The Director of Human Resources will provide the President and Executive team an annual report summarizing activity and College response under the Employee Code of Conduct.

#### 3.9 Communication and Acknowledgement

In order to communicate the College's expectations with respect to the Employee Code of Conduct, the College will provide every employee, regardless of status, with a copy of, or electronic access to, the Employee Code of Conduct. For new hires, this will be carried out at time of hire as part of the offer of employment/during orientation to the College, and will require their signed acknowledgement.

#### 3.10 Regular Review

The Employee Code of Conduct shall be reviewed in accordance with the NSCC Policy Review Schedule.

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## 4.0 SUPPORTS

### Related Contracts

- Faculty Collective Agreement
- Professional Support Collective Agreement
- Operational Support Collective Agreement

### Related Guidelines

- Management/Confidential Employment Guidelines

### Supporting Documents

- Employee Code of Conduct (42.02) Appendix A – Examples of Breaches
- Frequently Asked Questions
- About our Code

### Related Policies

- |                                       |                                  |   |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| • Academic Integrity                  | • Email                          | • Research Ethics Board   |
| • Alcohol and Drug                    | • Employee Success               | • Research Integrity  |
| • Asset Management                    | • Employment of Relatives        | • Respectful Working and Learning Environment (Discrimination & Harassment) |
| • Attendance Management               | • Entertainment                  | • Safe Disclosure (“Whistleblowing”)  |
| • College Purchase Card               | • Environmental                  | • Smoke-free NSCC   |
| • Computer Usage                      | • Fair Hiring                    | • Social Media  |
| • Conflict of Interest and Commitment | • Fraud                          | • Travel and Reimbursement  |
| • Use of Copyright Materials          | • Intellectual Property          | • Violence Prevention   |
|                                       | • Occupational Health and Safety |   |
|                                       | • Procurement                    |   |

### Related Laws are all applicable laws including but not limited to the following:

- Nova Scotia Human Rights Code
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Criminal Code
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Trade Union Act/Labour Standards Code

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