

Supervision of Staff Policy

Last review: January 2022 | Next review: January 2025



The Democracy School is committed to the highest standards of professional delivery and wants to help not only members of staff, but also fellows and associates, to achieve optimal levels of performance, even if they are independent and subject to policies of other organisations. Hence we see it as our responsibility to identify, monitor and maintain good performance levels across all projects we lead.

Our approach with regards to performance standards is based on a continual process of improvement. This means:

- performance will be discussed regularly
- good performance will be recognised and praised
- causes of poor performance will be identified and tackled promptly, and the focus will be to work together to improve standards
- where it is considered that ill-health or disability may be an underlying factor in poor performance, appropriate advice will be sought

When a project starts, the fellow appointed as Project Manager (PM), will give a clear explanation of required performance levels as this is a key part of delivering the School's projects and setting and maintaining good performance.

The PM, on the School's behalf, will then be responsible for setting, appraising and maintaining the performance of everyone working on his/her project team. There will be regular discussions to ensure standards are communicated and maintained.

The PM will be receptive to innovative ideas for improving work methods etc. and negotiating development where appropriate. When new tasks are being introduced any further training needs will be discussed.

The PM will identify promptly below-standard performance, tell the person in question and work with him or her to achieve improvement, identifying through dialogue the causes of the problem and ensuring that corrective action is taken.

The standards for managing performance are not intended to be used for misconduct, which is handled under the disciplinary procedure. Where poor

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performance is judged to be the result of wilful action, the disciplinary procedure may be used instead.

Disciplinary procedure

This procedure is designed to help Democracy School staff, fellows and associates achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of behaviour. Its aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for everyone.

It is not intended to apply to issues of poor work performance, which are handled under a separate process.

No disciplinary action will be taken without a prompt and thorough investigation into the circumstances by the Director of the School and a documented meeting will then be undertaken to agree the next steps with the member of staff, fellow or associate.

Handling Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is generally seen as misconduct serious enough to destroy the employment contract between the Democracy School and the member of staff, fellow or associate in question, making any further working relationship and trust impossible.

Examples of the sort of conduct that the Democracy School regards as gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice include:

- Financial misconduct
- Serious misuse of the School's property or that of a client
- Bringing the Democracy School into disrepute
- Serious abuse of computer equipment or software
- Misuse of any position as part of the School's work, for personal gain
- Serious breach of any professional code of conduct applicable to the job
- Dishonesty, including theft and deliberate falsification of records
- Acceptance of bribes
- Physical violence

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- Serious bullying, discrimination or harassment
- Deliberate damage to property
- Being incapable of adequately performing duties as a result of drink or illegal drugs
- Serious negligence which causes or might cause unacceptable loss, damage or injury
- Serious infringement of health and safety rules
- Serious sexual misconduct (this refers to behaviour at or away from work that affects suitability for employment e.g. child protection issues)
- Serious breach of confidence (e.g. inappropriate disclosure of confidential information)

Note, appropriate use of whistleblowing would not be a serious breach of confidence but would be handled by the Director in liaison, as appropriate, with clients.

Records will be kept detailing the nature of any breach of disciplinary rules, the Democracy School's response, the action taken and the reasons for it.