

# CODE OF ETHICS



## **ECIS Ethical Code and Standard of Conduct**

### **Preamble**

The ECIS Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct is fundamental to our values, and therefore essential to achieving our mission to impact lives through international education. We promote the highest standards of ethics and professional excellence for the benefit of the international school sector and, by extension, society at large. High ethical standards are critical to building and maintaining trust in our sector.

All ECIS Members and Candidates for membership (hereafter referred to collectively as “schools”) must abide by the Code and Standards, and are encouraged to notify their boards, owners, or groups of this responsibility. Violations that are brought to the attention of the organisation will be addressed, and may result in disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions may include revocation of membership, revocation of candidacy, revocation of participation in any of our offerings, and revocation of the right to use the ECIS logo or any associated trademarks or service marks.

### **CODE OF ETHICS**

In an age when we must consider the intersection of human capital, organisational capital, safeguarding of all our people and processes, and the uncertainty and opportunities that transitions can bring, all so that we can ensure that we are creating positive impact in the lives of students and employees, ECIS asks schools to observe the following practices, in accordance with host country employment law.

#### **A. Integrity**

1. A school should meticulously carry out the promises and contracts made with any person, school, organisation, or the general public.
2. A school should carefully avoid misleading or ambiguous statements about its work, situation, or status.
3. A school should respect normally accepted conventions regarding confidentiality, in accordance with host country employment law.
4. A school should respect the intellectual property of other organisations.

#### **B. Recruitment**

1. No school should knowingly attempt to influence a person to break a contract already signed with another school. If the school is aware that offering a contract will result in the candidate breaking a contract with a current member school, the school will not extend the offer.
2. Schools should respect the right of a person to visit and to consider employment in a school other than that in which he/she is currently employed.
3. Schools should utilise employment contracts that include a clause in which prospective employees, irrespective of hierarchy in the organisation, certify that they are legally able to sign the contract and are not bound by any other

## **ECIS Ethical Code and Standard of Conduct**

employment contract. Should a school discover, or be informed, that its offer contravenes an existing contract, the school should withdraw its employment offer immediately and without consequence.

4. Schools should include a clause in all employment contracts which identifies that upholding the safeguarding of children is a requirement of all employees. By extension, a school has an obligation to perform reference checks by telephone or videoconference and a background check on a prospective employee.
5. No school should penalise an applicant who wishes to further his/her career and follows the process fairly.
6. In all the above cases, equal opportunities regarding a school's recruitment practices should be evident, in accordance with host country employment law.

### **C. Employment practices**

1. Schools should employ all faculty members/administrative staff under written contracts that provide for adequate salaries, benefits, and working conditions.
2. The performance of personnel should be subject to regular and objective evaluation, formal or informal, by the head of the school or his/her designated representatives.
3. The performance of the head of the school should be subject to regular and objective evaluation, formal or informal, by the Board, a designated committee of the Board, or the Owner of the school.
4. Schools should have an established and transparent procedure for dealing with claims by a faculty member/administrator of unethical treatment or violation of his/her individual rights.
5. Schools should provide for a mutually and reciprocally viable option 'not to renew' at the end of each contract, subject (where applicable) to host country labour law.
6. In any instance in which a school has taken the decision to dismiss personnel, such personnel should be given a fair period of notice and the reasons for the school's decision.
7. In all the above, host country employment law prevails.

### **D. Transfer and enrolment of students**

1. Schools should recognise the right of a student and his/her parents to visit and consider schools other than that which the student is presently attending, as is the right of such other schools to hold preliminary discussions about possible admission without notifying the school of current attendance. However, a school should not itself knowingly initiate an attempt to enrol a student currently enrolled elsewhere.
2. When a student is transferring from one school to another, irrespective of whether either school is an ECIS member, and the first school notifies the receiving school that some financial obligation due to the former remains

## **ECIS Ethical Code and Standard of Conduct**

outstanding, the receiving school should delay admission of the student until a satisfactory arrangement to settle the account has been agreed upon.

3. Schools should consider their most important obligation in enrolling a new student to be the welfare of that student. Financial assistance or any other advantage not regularly accorded to all students should not be offered in such a way as to influence the enrolment decision improperly.

### **STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

#### **A. PROFESSIONALISM**

1. *Knowledge of the Law.* Schools must comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations of any government, regulatory organisation, accreditation/inspection agency, licensing agency, or professional association governing their professional activities. In the event of conflict, schools should comply with the stricter law, rule, or regulation.

2. *Independence and Objectivity.* Schools must use reasonable care and judgment to achieve and maintain independence and objectivity in their professional activities. Schools must not offer, solicit, or accept any gift, benefit, compensation, or consideration that reasonably could be expected to compromise their own or another's independence and objectivity. Schools should take steps to ensure that such stipulations are included in their operational policies.

3. *Misrepresentation.* Individuals must not knowingly make any misrepresentations relating to their qualifications, employment history, criminal background, recommendations, actions, or other professional activities.

4. *Misconduct.* Schools and individuals must not engage in any professional conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, or deceit, or commit any act that reflects adversely on their professional reputation, integrity, or competence. Schools are responsible for reporting to ECIS the misconduct of other schools in this regard.

5. *Respect for the Dignity of Others.* Schools are committed to respect the dignity of others in their relations with faculty, administrators, staff, students, parents, and others.

#### **B. INTEGRITY OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SECTOR**

1. *Material non-public Information.* Schools (or individuals within them) who possess material non-public information that could affect the school fees of an international school must not act or cause others to act on the information.

2. *Sector Manipulation.* Schools must not engage in practices that distort operations or artificially inflate figures of any kind with the intent to mislead current or future stakeholders.

#### **C. DUTIES TO EMPLOYERS**

1. *Loyalty.* In matters related to their employment, individuals within schools must act for the benefit of their employer and not deprive their employer of the advantage of their skills and abilities, divulge confidential information, or otherwise cause harm to their employer.

## **ECIS Ethical Code and Standard of Conduct**

2. *Additional Compensation Arrangements.* Individuals within schools must not accept gifts, benefits, compensation, or consideration that competes with or might reasonably be expected to create a conflict of interest with their employer's interest, unless they obtain written consent from all parties involved.

3. *Responsibilities of Supervisors.* Individuals within schools must make reasonable efforts to ensure that anyone subject to their supervision or authority complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and the Code and Standards.

### **IV. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

A. *Disclosure of Conflicts.* Schools must make full and fair disclosure of all matters that could reasonably be expected to impair their independence and objectivity or interfere with respective duties to their employees, prospective employees, and, if applicable, Owner. Schools must ensure that such disclosures are prominent, are delivered in plain language, and communicate the relevant information effectively.

### **V. RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN ECIS MEMBER OR CANDIDATE**

A. *Conduct as Participants in ECIS Programmes.* Schools and the individuals within them must not engage in any conduct that compromises the reputation or integrity of ECIS or the ECIS Member designation or the integrity, validity, or security of ECIS programmes.

B. *Reference to ECIS, the ECIS Member Designation, and ECIS Programmes.* When referring to ECIS, ECIS membership, any programme designation, or candidacy in any programmes, schools and the individuals within them must not misrepresent or exaggerate the meaning or implications of membership in ECIS, holding ECIS Member designation, or candidacy in any ECIS programme.



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