

AEC Guidelines on Establishing Institutional Codes of Good Practice for Professional Teaching Conduct in Conservatoires



European
Association of
Conservatoires

1 Good Practice for Institutions

Institutions should:

- Possess or develop their own institutional codes of practice on professional teaching conduct
- Ensure that these are consistent with any wider institutional statements about equality, gender issues, harassment, etc.
- Publicise them widely, including on the open-access areas of their websites, and make them freely available to all staff and students in both electronic and written form
- Include a copy among the materials given to new teachers and administrative staff when they are appointed and to new students when they enrol
- Take appropriate action when an incident is reported that infringes the code of practice
- Review them periodically, and include students on the boards/committees conducting these reviews

Institutional Codes of Practice should normally contain the following elements:

- A general description of the rights and responsibilities of teachers, students and administrative staff as understood by the institution
- A broad indication of the types of behaviour in the teaching situation which would be seen as infringing those rights or responsibilities
- Some attempt to define the boundaries of the acceptable and unacceptable – e.g. the amount of body contact that is appropriate in teaching correct breathing procedures and the kinds of protocols that are recommended when operating in these areas (*where such definitions take the form of detailed guidance relevant to a particular department/area of study, it may be more appropriate for them to be complied in the form of departmental supplements to the main code*)
- Guidance on what action to take if an infringement does take place, together with clear indications of the person(s) to whom it should be reported
- An outline of the procedures which would then be enacted by the institution, including some sense of the range of sanctions that might be applied
- A strongly worded statement giving reassurance that those who report incidents in good faith will be supported in doing so and protected as far as possible from any negative repercussions, while, at the same time, confirming that incidents will be investigated in a way that safeguards individuals from malicious accusations
- The inclusion of some kind of reference to the genuinely consensual relationships that may arise from time to time between teachers and their adult students, with a statement as to the overall institutional view on these and clear guidance on the steps that both teacher and student should take – for their own protection and in fairness to others - if they should find themselves in such a situation

2 Good Practice for Teachers

Teachers should:

- Ensure that they are familiar with the code of practice operating within the institution(s) in which they teach
- Check that their students are aware of its existence
- Abide by it at all times
- Try to create and foster an environment in the teaching studio where students feel free to speak their mind and to refuse to participate in any activity which genuinely seems inappropriate to them
- If they find themselves involved in an incident, immediately follow the procedures laid down in the code of practice
- If they become aware of an incident not directly affecting them that infringes the code of practice, report it to the appropriate person

3 Good Practice for Students

Students should:

- Ensure that they are familiar with the code of practice operating within the institution where they are enrolled
- Abide by it at all times
- If they find themselves involved in an incident, immediately follow the procedures laid down in the code of practice
- If they become aware of an incident not directly affecting them that infringes the code of practice, report it to the appropriate person

4 Good Practice for Administrative Staff

Administrative Staff should:

- Ensure that they are familiar with the code of practice operating within the institution where they are employed
- Where appropriate to their role, check that teachers and/or students are also aware of its existence
- Abide at all times by any aspect of it that may apply to them
- Try to contribute to fostering an environment across the institution where all its members, and especially the students, feel free to speak their mind and to refuse to participate in any activity which genuinely seems inappropriate to them
- If they themselves should, for any reason, become directly involved in an incident falling outside what is defined as acceptable in the institutional code of practice, immediately follow the procedures laid down in the code
- If they become aware of an incident not directly affecting them that infringes the code of practice, report it to the appropriate person