

Code of Conduct

Youth Start Limited

Company Number: 16864238

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

Website: youthstart.co.uk

Effective Date

1 January 2026

Last Updated

1 January 2026

Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and professional conduct expected of all staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates involved with Youth Start Limited. Youth Start is committed to creating a positive, respectful, and inclusive workplace where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff members employed by Youth Start, as well as mentors, volunteers, and candidates who are involved in Youth Start's activities. It outlines the expectations for professional behaviour, integrity, respect, and compliance with Youth Start's policies and relevant legislation.

Breach of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal for staff, or termination of involvement for mentors, volunteers, and candidates.

Purpose of This Code

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

- Establish clear standards of professional behaviour and conduct
 - Promote a positive, respectful, and inclusive workplace culture
 - Ensure compliance with Youth Start's policies and relevant UK legislation
 - Protect the wellbeing and safety of all individuals involved with Youth Start
 - Maintain the reputation and integrity of Youth Start
 - Provide clarity on what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
 - Support staff, mentors, volunteers, and candidates in understanding their responsibilities
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Scope and Application

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All staff members employed by Youth Start (permanent, fixed-term, and temporary)
- All mentors and volunteers involved in Youth Start's activities
- All candidates participating in Youth Start's placements
- All individuals representing Youth Start in any capacity

This Code applies to conduct during working hours, outside working hours if it affects Youth Start's reputation or operations, and in both physical and online environments (including social media and digital communications).

Core Values and Principles

Youth Start is founded on the following core values and principles:

Respect and Dignity - All individuals are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness - Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are not tolerated - Diversity is valued and celebrated - Individual differences are respected

Integrity and Honesty - All individuals act with honesty and integrity - Information is communicated truthfully and transparently - Conflicts of interest are disclosed and managed appropriately - Youth Start's reputation is protected and upheld

Accountability and Responsibility - All individuals take responsibility for their actions and decisions - Mistakes are acknowledged and addressed promptly - Commitments are honoured and deadlines are met - Performance standards are maintained

Inclusivity and Belonging - All individuals feel valued and included - Barriers to participation are identified and removed - Everyone has a voice and is heard - Diverse perspectives are welcomed and considered

Excellence and Continuous Improvement - High standards of work are maintained - Continuous learning and development are encouraged - Feedback is sought and acted upon - Best practice is pursued

Professional Conduct and Behaviour

Attendance and Punctuality

All staff members are expected to:

- Attend work regularly and on time
- Notify their manager as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work
- Comply with the Sick Leave Policy and Annual Leave Policy
- Maintain accurate records of attendance and leave
- Inform their manager of any patterns of absence or lateness

Failure to maintain acceptable attendance and punctuality may result in disciplinary action.

Performance and Quality of Work

All staff members are expected to:

- Perform their duties to a high standard
- Complete work accurately and on time
- Take responsibility for the quality of their work
- Seek support or clarification if they are unsure about their duties
- Continuously improve their skills and knowledge
- Contribute to the achievement of Youth Start's objectives

Performance concerns will be addressed through the performance management process and may result in disciplinary action if standards are not met.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates are expected to:

- Treat all information as confidential unless explicitly authorised to share it
- Comply with the Data Protection Policy and UK GDPR requirements
- Only access personal data that is necessary for their role
- Not disclose personal data to unauthorised individuals
- Secure all data and documents appropriately
- Report any data breaches or security concerns immediately

Breach of confidentiality or data protection requirements may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a criminal offence.

Use of Youth Start's Assets and Resources

All staff members are expected to:

- Use Youth Start's assets and resources (including equipment, vehicles, and facilities) only for authorised purposes
- Take reasonable care of Youth Start's property
- Report any damage, loss, or theft immediately
- Not use Youth Start's resources for personal gain or benefit
- Comply with Youth Start's IT policies and acceptable use policies
- Return all Youth Start property on termination of employment

Misuse or theft of Youth Start's assets may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a criminal offence.

Honesty and Integrity

All staff members are expected to:

- Act with honesty and integrity in all dealings
- Not make false or misleading statements
- Declare any conflicts of interest
- Not accept gifts or benefits that could compromise their objectivity
- Report any dishonesty or misconduct by others
- Comply with all relevant legislation and regulations

Dishonesty or breach of integrity may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a criminal offence.

Health and Safety

All staff members are expected to:

- Comply with the Health & Safety Policy
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others
- Report any hazards, accidents, or incidents immediately
- Cooperate with health and safety procedures and training
- Not work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Raise any health and safety concerns with their manager

Failure to comply with health and safety requirements may result in disciplinary action.

Respect, Dignity, and Equality

Discrimination and Harassment

Youth Start is committed to providing a workplace free from discrimination and harassment. All staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates are expected to:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity
- Not discriminate against anyone on the basis of protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)
- Not engage in harassment, bullying, or victimisation
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour and report it to their manager
- Support colleagues who have experienced discrimination or harassment

Discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Dignity at Work

All staff members are expected to:

- Treat colleagues with courtesy and respect
- Communicate respectfully, even in disagreement
- Not engage in gossip or spreading rumours
- Respect others' privacy and personal space
- Support a positive and collaborative working environment
- Address conflicts constructively and respectfully

Behaviour that undermines the dignity of others may result in disciplinary action.

Inclusive Language and Behaviour

All staff members are expected to:

- Use inclusive language that respects all individuals
- Avoid language that is offensive, derogatory, or discriminatory
- Be mindful of cultural and religious differences
- Make reasonable adjustments to support individuals with disabilities
- Welcome and value diverse perspectives
- Challenge stereotypes and assumptions

Use of offensive or discriminatory language may result in disciplinary action.

Safeguarding and Duty of Care

Protection of Young People

Youth Start works with young people aged 18 to 24 and is committed to their safety and wellbeing. All staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates are expected to:

- Comply with Youth Start's Safeguarding Policy
- Treat all young people with respect and dignity
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Report any concerns about a young person's safety or wellbeing immediately
- Not engage in any behaviour that could be harmful or exploitative
- Participate in safeguarding training and updates

Breach of safeguarding responsibilities may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a criminal offence.

Duty of Care

All staff members are expected to:

- Take reasonable care of the health, safety, and wellbeing of others
- Report any incidents or accidents immediately
- Cooperate with investigations into safety concerns
- Support colleagues who have experienced harm or distress
- Maintain appropriate professional relationships

Failure to fulfil duty of care responsibilities may result in disciplinary action.

Conflicts of Interest

All staff members are expected to:

- Declare any conflicts of interest to their manager
- Avoid situations where personal interests could conflict with Youth Start's interests
- Not accept gifts, hospitality, or benefits that could compromise their objectivity
- Not engage in business activities that compete with Youth Start
- Recuse themselves from decisions where they have a conflict of interest
- Seek guidance from their manager if they are unsure about a potential conflict

Failure to declare or manage conflicts of interest appropriately may result in disciplinary action.

Outside Employment and Business Activities

Staff members may engage in outside employment or business activities, subject to the following conditions:

- The activity does not conflict with Youth Start's interests or operations
- The activity does not interfere with their duties or performance at Youth Start
- The activity is disclosed to their manager
- The activity does not breach any confidentiality or intellectual property obligations
- The activity is not conducted during working hours or using Youth Start's resources

Failure to disclose outside employment or business activities, or engaging in activities that conflict with Youth Start's interests, may result in disciplinary action.

Conduct Outside Working Hours

Youth Start recognises that staff members have a right to a private life outside of work. However, conduct outside working hours may be subject to this Code of Conduct if it:

- Affects Youth Start's reputation or operations
- Involves breach of confidentiality or data protection
- Involves criminal behaviour or serious misconduct
- Affects the individual's ability to perform their role safely and effectively
- Involves inappropriate conduct towards colleagues, young people, or others connected with Youth Start

Serious misconduct outside working hours may result in disciplinary action.

Social Media and Digital Communications

All staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates are expected to:

- Use social media and digital communications responsibly
- Not disclose confidential information about Youth Start or individuals
- Not post content that could damage Youth Start's reputation
- Not engage in harassment, bullying, or discriminatory behaviour online
- Not impersonate Youth Start or represent Youth Start without authorisation
- Maintain professional standards in online communications
- Be mindful that online behaviour can have real-world consequences

Misuse of social media or digital communications may result in disciplinary action.

Substance Abuse

All staff members are expected to:

- Not attend work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Not use illegal drugs or controlled substances
- Not abuse prescription or over-the-counter medications
- Seek support if they have concerns about substance abuse
- Comply with any reasonable requests for drug or alcohol testing (where applicable)

Attending work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or use of illegal substances, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Dress Code and Appearance

All staff members are expected to:

- Maintain a professional appearance appropriate to their role
- Dress in a manner that is respectful and appropriate for the workplace
- Follow any specific dress code requirements for their role or activities
- Ensure their appearance does not compromise health and safety or professional standards

Youth Start will make reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities or religious beliefs.

Compliance with Policies and Procedures

All staff members are expected to:

- Read and understand all Youth Start policies and procedures
- Comply with all policies and procedures
- Seek clarification if they are unsure about any policy
- Report any breaches of policy by others
- Cooperate with investigations into policy breaches
- Acknowledge receipt of policies and confirm their understanding

Failure to comply with Youth Start's policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Reporting Concerns and Whistleblowing

All staff members are encouraged to:

- Report any concerns about misconduct, breach of policy, or illegal activity
- Raise concerns through the appropriate channels (manager, senior manager, or designated whistleblowing contact)
- Participate in investigations into concerns
- Seek support if they have raised a concern

Youth Start is committed to protecting individuals who raise concerns in good faith and will not tolerate retaliation or victimisation. Refer to the Whistleblowing Policy for further information.

Compliance with Laws and Regulations

All staff members are expected to:

- Comply with all relevant UK laws and regulations
- Not engage in any illegal or criminal activity

- Report any illegal activity to the appropriate authorities
- Seek guidance if they are unsure about legal compliance

Engagement in illegal activity may result in disciplinary action and may result in criminal prosecution.

Performance Management and Disciplinary Action

Performance Concerns

If a staff member's conduct or performance falls below the standards set out in this Code of Conduct, Youth Start will:

- Discuss the concern with the staff member
- Provide support and guidance to help improve conduct or performance
- Set clear expectations and timelines for improvement
- Monitor progress and provide feedback
- Take further action if improvement is not achieved

Disciplinary Action

Breach of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Suspension
- Demotion or redeployment
- Dismissal

The severity of disciplinary action will depend on the nature and seriousness of the breach, the individual's previous conduct record, and any mitigating circumstances.

Serious misconduct (such as theft, violence, gross negligence, or safeguarding breaches) may result in dismissal without notice.

Disciplinary Procedures

All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures. Staff members have the right to:

- Be informed of the allegations against them
 - Respond to the allegations
 - Be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative
 - Appeal against any disciplinary decision
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Mentors, Volunteers, and Candidates

Mentors and Volunteers

Mentors and volunteers are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct in the same way as staff members. Breach of the Code may result in:

- Verbal or written warning
- Suspension from activities
- Termination of involvement with Youth Start

Candidates

Candidates are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct while participating in Youth Start's placements. Breach of the Code may result in:

- Discussion with their mentor and employer
- Suspension from the placement
- Termination of the placement

Acknowledgment and Training

All staff members, mentors, volunteers, and candidates are required to:

- Read and understand this Code of Conduct
- Acknowledge receipt of this Code
- Confirm their understanding and agreement to comply
- Participate in any training or induction related to this Code

Failure to acknowledge receipt or comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action.

Review and Monitoring

This Code of Conduct is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains current and effective. The review considers:

- Changes to UK legislation or employment law
 - Changes to Youth Start's operations or values
 - Staff feedback and suggestions
 - Industry best practice and guidance
 - Incidents or concerns that have arisen
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Contact Information

If you have any questions about this Code of Conduct, or if you wish to report a concern, please contact Youth Start Limited using the following contact details:

Youth Start Limited

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

Email: contact@youthstart.co.uk

Telephone: 07470435603

Website: youthstart.co.uk

Relationship with Other Policies

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Health & Safety Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Sick Leave Policy
 - Annual Leave Policy
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Acknowledgment

By accepting employment or involvement with Youth Start, you acknowledge that you have read this Code of Conduct, understand it, and agree to comply with all standards of behaviour and conduct set out in this document.

Last Updated: 1 January 2026

Next Review Date: 1 January 2027