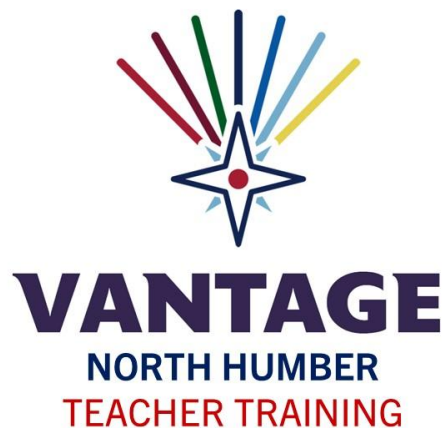




Professional Code of Conduct & Fitness to Practice

Version 1

Note: This policy can only be considered current and valid when viewed on the VNHTT portal and website. If this document has been printed or saved from another location, you must check the version number matches that of the online copy.

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Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practice (Initial Teacher Education)

For those students undertaking a programme which leads to a professional qualification there is a *Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practise*. For Initial Teacher Education this code is cross-referenced to the Teachers' Standards (DfE, May 2012. Please note, this is the current Code of Conduct and is subject to change on an annual basis).

1. Introduction.

1.1. I understand that successful completion of the academic qualification I am seeking leads to admission to the teaching profession and that I am required, during my studies, to adhere to the requirements of that professional body and any related statutory body (currently the Department for Education (DfE)) and associated organisations). I recognise that this Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practice identifies the behaviour required of me, and that it is supplemented by the Teachers' Standards (DfE, May 2012) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2024).

1.2. I understand that breaches of this Code may lead to disciplinary action under Vantage North Humber Teacher Training (VNHTT)'s Cause for Concern policy which might result in my removal from the VNHTT ITT Programme or the inability of the SCITT to provide me with a supportive professional or character reference.

2. Personal Behaviour.

2.1. I will at all times behave in a manner appropriate to my position as a student of VNHTT studying for a qualification, the successful completion of which leads to entry to the teaching profession (VNHTT reserves the right to review your social media posts).

2.2. I understand that allegations of behaviour including but not limited to, for example, dishonesty, indecency, harassment, bullying, violence, abuse of drugs or alcohol will lead to investigation and possible disciplinary action as detailed in the VNHTT Cause for Concern Policy. It may also lead to my removal from the programme of study. I recognise that such disciplinary action will include consideration of any criminal convictions, including those for offences that are not connected with my studies and for offences committed prior to my registration as a student of the VNHTT. I understand that, where relevant, consideration will also be given to any disciplinary action by a current or previous employer.

2.3. I undertake to notify the appropriate person in VNHTT should I be subject to a criminal conviction or caution subsequent to my application to the Programme. I understand that a criminal conviction, caution, Fixed Penalty Notice, Community Resolution Order and/or any other penalties or orders imposed by the police, may lead to my suspension from certain aspects of my study until the relevant provider's duty of care can be assured. I understand that this may lead to the need for me to extend my studies where it has not

been possible to arrange replacement activities. I understand that the Offenders Rehabilitation Act (2014) will not apply to the professional body to which I am seeking membership. This Act sets out the circumstances in which an individual can be asked about spent convictions and when an employer can consider these. This includes "any employment as a teacher in a school or establishment for further education and any other employment which is carried out wholly or partly within the precincts of a school or establishment for further education, being employment, which is of such a kind as to enable the holder to have access to persons under the age of 18 in attendance at the school or establishment for further education in the course of his normal duties." Therefore, teaching applicants would still be required to disclose spent convictions. You would not, however, be required to disclose protected convictions and protected cautions.

2.4. I understand that if there is reasonable suspicion that I may have committed a disciplinary offence or have otherwise behaved in such a way that a placement provider is not willing to continue to provide the placement I may be suspended from attending my placement and, ultimately may be asked to leave the programme following the enacting of VNHTT Cause for Concern Policy.

2.5. I understand that if at any time during my programme my behaviour results in safeguarding concerns being raised, or if there is an allegation that my behaviour is inappropriate, suspension from the programme will be considered pending investigation as detailed in the VNHTT's Cause for Concerns Policy. If, as a consequence of this investigation there is evidence to call into question my suitability to work with children and young people, I can expect to be excluded from the programme and the evidence related to my behaviour passed to the relevant authorities (including the Police) for further consideration.

2.6. I recognise that in the course of my studies and training I may be placed in a 'position of trust' within the meaning of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 ('the Act'). I further understand that committing an abuse of a position of trust under the Act has serious implications as it will lead to investigation and possible disciplinary action and may result in my exclusion from the programme of study as well as criminal prosecution.

2.7 I acknowledge the duty on me in the course of my placements to report to the relevant authorities (including as appropriate the host school or if deemed appropriate Children's Social Work Services) any reasonable concern I may have about the possible abuse of a child or children with whom I may come into contact.

3. Behaviour towards others.

3.1. I will at all times treat my pupils, colleagues, staff and other members of VNHTT or partner institutions with due respect and conduct myself in a professional, honest, decent and courteous manner. During the course of my studies, I will use language appropriate to the situation and people involved.

3.2. I will acquire an understanding of working with diversity, including gender, ethnicity, cultural heritage, sexual orientation, disability and other forms of difference, in order to work appropriately with pupils, staff and peers.

4. Appearance.

4.1. I will ensure that I maintain a standard of appearance that will be perceived as professional by such persons as I may encounter in the pursuit of my studies, and follow any VNHTT guidance I am given on this.

4.1.2 I will follow any guidelines or requirements of any partnership school in which I am to undertake a placement and I will familiarise myself with any such guidelines or requirements before commencing the placement; and

5. Learning.

5.1. The content of my programme of study is designed to meet the requirements of a professional and/or statutory body (currently Teachers' Standards, DfE May 2012). I will pursue my studies with reasonable diligence ensuring that I avail myself of the educational opportunities made available and I will seek to acquire the range of skills and knowledge identified in the relevant professional and/or statutory body guidance (Teachers' Standards, DfE May 2012).

5.2. On each placement, and at intervals throughout the year, judgements will be made about my progress through VNHTT assessment processes. My progress against VNHTT's curriculum is recorded at key Review Points and, ultimately, is used as evidence toward achieving the Teachers' Standards.

5.3. I understand that I cannot pass the course without achieving all the Teachers' Standards.

5.4. I understand that if there are significant concerns about my progress while on school placement, the school or my mentor(s) may request that the Cause for Concern policy is enacted.

5.5. I understand that all professional judgements are made on the basis of programme leads', professional tutors' and mentors' experience and that I should listen to and act on advice given throughout my course.

5.6. I understand that I must take responsibility for my own learning through attendance at lectures, tutorials, seminars and other training events and through being suitably prepared for them. I will notify the appropriate person or department, in accordance with VNHTT guidelines, if I am to be absent from any part of the course, due to sickness or other reasons, and I will make up the lost learning opportunity, making appropriate use of VNHTT

support structures. I understand that if I persistently fail to follow my programme of study with reasonable diligence that I will be subject to disciplinary action under this Code.

5.7. I further acknowledge that full engagement with designated learning activities of programmes and modules is required and that:

5.7.1. Notification of illness and requests for leave of absence should be submitted in accordance with published VNHTT procedures;

5.7.2. I must meet the high expectations for attendance as set out in the VNHTT attendance policy to meet the award or qualification requirements.

5.7.3. Individual modules may incorporate a specific attendance requirement as part of the assessment criteria for successful completion of a module;

5.7.4. Following a four working week period of continuous lack of engagement with designated learning activities of the programme, trainees who do not respond to communications from VNHTT regarding this, may be deemed to have withdrawn from their programme of study. The date of withdrawal will be recorded as the last day of attendance.

5.8. I will not disrupt the delivery of teaching or the learning experience of fellow students, and will not jeopardise the health and safety of those involved, during attendance at lectures, tutorials, seminars and other training events.

5.9. I agree to abide by the academic regulations of The University of Hull in relation to the completion of assignments for the PGCE. I understand that if I behave dishonestly during the assessment process (including plagiarism or other forms of cheating) I will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Academic Regulations of The University of Hull and may be excluded from my PGCE programme of study. I also understand that in the event of any such disciplinary action I may also be subject to further disciplinary action by VNHTT under section 2 of this Code.

5.10. I understand that if I behave dishonestly in relation to my attendance or the attendance of others by falsifying signatures or other means I will be subject to disciplinary action under this Code.

6. Barriers to Learning or Professional Practice including health and physical capacity to teach.

6.1. I understand that I must meet the Secretary of State for Education's requirements for physical and mental fitness to teach.

6.2. Health issues developing during the course can be identified via multiple sources, for example teaching staff or school partners, and should be brought to the attention of VNHTT leaders.

6.3. In the event of health issues occurring I will follow advice and instructions from my medical advisor regarding my programme of study. I understand that any serious concerns identified should be referred to the ITT Programme Director for advice.

6.4. I have reported to the appropriate authority within VNHTT any specific requirements I may have to enable me to follow my programme of study (including any physical, health or learning requirements) and I undertake to work with VNHTT or support services provided to address these requirements.

6.5. I undertake to report to the appropriate authority within VNHTT any pre-existing or new condition, which may affect my ability to follow my programme of study or take up the profession to which the qualification I am seeking leads, as soon as I become aware of it. In the event of any pre-existing or new condition arising I undertake to work with VNHTT or support services provided.

6.6. I understand that failure to report any condition, which may affect my ability to follow my programme of study or take up the profession to which the qualification I am seeking leads, may lead to removal from my programme of study.

7. Duty of care.

7.1. I will at all times act in the best interests of my pupils and conduct myself in a professional manner in all aspects related to pupil care.

7.2. I will undertake to familiarise myself with all VNHTT and partner institution guidelines, including health and safety guidelines or any guidelines or requirements in relation to standards of dress, professional codes of conduct (including Teachers' Standards, DfE May 2012 and Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, September 2021) and will apply these guidelines. I understand that breaching these guidelines and codes of practice, may lead to disciplinary action under this Code, which may result in exclusion from my programme of study.

7.3. I understand that dishonesty, involving the falsification of pupil records, will lead to disciplinary action which may lead to exclusion from my programme of study.

7.4. I recognise that in the course of my studies and training I may be placed in a 'position of trust' within the meaning of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 ('the Act'). I further understand that committing an abuse of a position of trust under the Act has serious implications as it will lead to disciplinary action under this Code and may result in my exclusion from the programme of study as well as criminal prosecution.

8. Safeguarding and Duty to report.

8.1. I acknowledge that I have read the Vantage North Humber Teacher Training Safeguarding Policy.

8.2. I understand that as part of my induction at all placement schools I will receive a suite of Safeguarding policies detailed in the Vantage North Humber Safeguarding Policy and be provided with the name and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8.3. I understand the duty placed upon me to report to the Head of Vantage North Humber Teacher Training as soon as is practicably possible and prior to commencing any activities with children if I am not provided with the suite of Safeguarding policies during my induction at placement schools.

8.4. I undertake to report to the appropriate authority in my placement schools any action by others which may put pupils at risk. I understand that failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action being taken against me.

8.5. I acknowledge the duty on me in the course of my placements to report to the relevant authorities (including as appropriate the host school or if deemed appropriate Children's Social Care Services) any reasonable concern I may have about the possible abuse of a child or children with whom I may come into contact.

9. Confidentiality.

9.1. I understand that I may have access to confidential personal information and that I am required to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (superseded by the General Data Protection Regulation 2018). I understand that I may not disclose this information to any third party, other than in accordance with the relevant professional code or in accordance with the law. I understand that failure to comply with this requirement will lead to disciplinary action under this code.

10. Ethics.

10.1 I understand that The University of Hull has a code of conduct for research. I will be informed of the BERA guidelines on educational research and agree to consider ethics within my own research for assignments and within the ITE course as a whole.

11. Information Sharing.

11.1 I consent to VNHTT sharing with a partnership school:

11.1.1 Information contained in my DBS check prior to and as a pre-condition of undertaking a placement; and

11.1.2 Information or documentation in connection with or arising from fitness to practice proceedings taken by VNHTT against me.

11.2 I consent to VNHTT and any relevant partnership school sharing information in relation to any allegation or concern relating to my fitness to practise.

12. Payment of Fees.

12.1 I acknowledge my personal liability to pay the fees as set by VNHTT for participation in the programme and that failure to pay the course fees may result in my participation in the Programme being terminated. I also acknowledge that in the event of non-payment of fees by the published dates will result in arrangements for collection of any outstanding debt being initiated by VNHTT against me.

12.2 I understand that the payments of course fees will be due at intervals during the programme in accordance with a schedule published annually by the VNHTT. Also:

12.2.1 If I withdraw from the Programme part way through, I will still remain liable for payment of fees according to a schedule of fee liability published by VNHTT;

12.2.2 In the event of withdrawal from the Programme no refund of fees paid will be made.

12.3 I understand that the SCITT Programme constitutes a course of study that is recognised by the Student Loans Company (SLC) as being eligible for a Student Loan, but that any arrangements I may make with the SLC are between me and the SLC. I understand that the SLC will release tuition fees direct to VNHTT at intervals during the academic year of my Programme. However, I acknowledge that having a Student Loan that releases tuition fees to the VNHTT does not remove my liability for the payment of the course fees and that any requirement to pursue non-payment of fees will be initiated against me and not the SLC.

12.4 If I am eligible for receipt of a bursary from the DfE in respect of this Programme, I understand that the payment of this bursary will be made direct to the nominated bank account details I provide. I also acknowledge that possession of a bursary does not remove my liability for the payment of the course fees and that any requirement to pursue non-payment of fees will be initiated against me and not the DfE.

12.5 Similarly, if I am eligible for receipt of a scholarship from any relevant Subject Association in respect of this Programme, I understand that the payment of this scholarship will be made direct to the nominated bank account details I provide. I also acknowledge that possession of a scholarship does not remove my liability for the payment of the course fees and that any requirement to pursue non-payment of fees will be initiated against me and not the relevant subject association.

13. Acceptable Use of ICT placement school ICT / VNHTT laptop

When using my placement school's ICT facilities and accessing the internet in school, or outside school on a school or SCITT device, I will not:

13.1 Access, or attempt to access inappropriate material, including but not limited to material of a violent, criminal or pornographic nature (or create, share, link to or send such material)

13.2 Use them in any way which could harm the school's reputation

13.3 Use any improper language when communicating online, including in emails or other messaging services

13.4 Install any unauthorised software, or connect unauthorised hardware or devices to the school's network

13.5 Share my password with others or log in to the school's network using someone else's details

13.6 Share confidential information about the school, its pupils or staff, or other members of the community

13.7 Access, modify or share data I'm not authorised to access, modify or share

13.8 Promote private businesses, unless that business is directly related to the school

13.9 I understand that the school / SCITT will monitor the websites I visit and my use of the school / SCITT facilities and systems.

13.10 I will take all reasonable steps to ensure that work devices are secure and password-protected when using them outside school, and keep all data securely stored in accordance with this policy and the placement school's data protection policy.

13.11 I will let the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and ICT manager know if a pupil informs me they have found any material which might upset, distress or harm them or others, and will also do so if I encounter any such material. I will not share, screen shot or take a copy of such material.

13.12 I will always use the school's ICT systems and internet responsibly, and ensure that pupils in my care do so too.

13.13 I understand that the VNHTT laptop that I have been provided with is on loan and needs to be returned in the same good working condition that I received it.