



THE
NORTHERN
SCHOOL
OF **ART**



HR POLICIES HANDBOOK

FOR STAFF

2025-2026



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1. SAFER RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

- 1.0 It is the School's policy that any member of staff that works at the FE site is required to have an enhanced DBS check with barred list.
- 1.1 The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment whilst adhering to Safer Recruitment guidelines.
- 1.2 The School will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job based on merit. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the School.
- 1.3 The School wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment process as required in order for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post.
- 1.4 The School wishes to encourage the recruitment of staff from minority backgrounds.
- 1.5 The School will ensure that the recruitment and selection of staff are conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner whilst complying with current employment legislation.
- 1.6 The School will ensure that at least one member of the panel has been trained in Safer Recruitment.
- 1.7 High standards of recruitment and selection are important in maintaining and enhancing the reputation of the School. The School will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate's experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- 1.8 The School will promote best practice in recruitment and selection. It will continuously develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- 1.9 The School will ensure that its recruitment and selection process is cost-effective.
- 1.10 If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
- 1.11 All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Applicants will have the right to access any documentation held on them under the Data Protection.

2. RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

- 2.0 As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- 2.1 The School undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

3. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS (DBS)

3.0 The School uses the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information.

4. REFERENCES

- 4.0 There is no legal obligation for the School to provide references for employees or former employees. However, a refusal to provide a reference may be unhelpful to other employers and is likely to be interpreted as an indication that there was a problem with the individual, which might then disadvantage them. Therefore, it is the School's policy to provide references on request unless there is a good reason not to do so.
- 4.1 All reference requests for past employees should be completed by Human Resources (HR).

5. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD

5.0 It is the School's policy to ensure that all vetting checks carried out on employees are stored appropriately on the School's Single Central Record (SCR).

5.1 The Safeguarding Strategic Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will sign off the SCR as a true record on an annual basis.

6. RELOCATION EXPENSES

6.0 The School will allow new employees whose current home address is not within 80 miles of their base of work, e.g. Hartlepool or Middlesbrough; to claim relocation expenses. The maximum relocation expenses payable to any individual will normally be up to £1,000.

7. INDUCTION AND PROBATIONARY PERIODS

Induction

7.0 The School recognises that its staff are fundamental to its success. To enable all staff to become effective and efficient in their role as quickly as possible, it is essential that all staff new to the School, or the role, receive a timely induction.

7.1 The School places critical importance on thorough induction procedures which make new staff feel welcome, valued and settled in their new role. This then forms the basis from which staff can quickly get up to speed, perform their duties effectively and begin to contribute to their team, the department and the School.

Probationary Periods

7.2 Probationary periods are intended to be a positive experience, which gives the individual the opportunity to learn and settle into their role at the School. However, it is important to recognise the potential for someone to fail their probationary period.

7.3 It is the School's policy to ensure that the employee understands the probationary period process, the requirements it places upon them, and the consequences of failing the probationary period.

8. LIFE MODELS

- 8.0 The School recognises the need to employ life models. All life models will be employed on an hourly paid basis.
- 8.1 It is advised that life models are never left with students in a 1:2:1 situation.
- 8.2 HR will ensure that the contact list for all life models is up to date. Members of staff requesting a life model can use this contact list to contact the life model directly.
- 8.3 It is School policy that only life models on the contact list are eligible to work for the School.

9. STAFF PAY, RECOGNITION AND REWARD

Staff Pay

9.0 The School aims to attract and retain employees to deliver its objectives. The School is committed to ensuring a fair and transparent approach to determining pay.

9.1 The School's principles with regard to pay are:

- to be fair, reasonable and transparent;
- to be affordable;
- to maintain rates of pay which are both competitive in the marketplace and reflect the need to retain critical skills; and
- to maintain a 0% equal pay rate.

Recognition and Reward

Employee Recognition Programme – £15 Voucher

9.2 The School's policy with regard to reward and recognition is an Employee Recognition Programme which is a peer to peer based formal recognition programme that encourages and empowers all employees to recognise the contributions of others in the workplace.

9.3 This policy is a corporate, monetary recognition programme that provides employees with the opportunity to acknowledge colleagues for their contributions and/or commitment to the School by nominating them for a £15 voucher reward.

Employee Recognition Programme – £200 Voucher

9.4 This policy is an Employee Recognition Programme which is a formal recognition programme whereby a Vice Principal can nominate an employee who has gone far beyond what is expected of them for their role. The reward for this recognition is a £200 voucher.

10. OVERTIME AND TIME OFF IN LIEU (TOIL)

- 10.0 It is the School's policy that in most cases, time off in lieu will be given instead of overtime. However, the School does understand that there are some circumstances where TOIL is not feasible and, therefore, each case will be assessed on an individual basis by the Line Manager.

11. SALARY ADVANCE

- 11.0 The School recognises that employees on occasion may need to ask for an advance on their wages in emergency situations.
- 11.1 Advances should be requested only when all other methods for obtaining goods/services have been exhausted and should be kept at a minimum level with a maximum an employee can borrow of £2,500.
- 11.2 An employee can only apply for one advance in any 12-month period.

12. PAYMENT OF PROFESSIONAL FEES

- 12.0 This School recognises that the reimbursement of professional fees is both an illustration of the School's commitment to the development of its staff and of its provision of a professional service for its students.
- 12.1 It is the Schools aim to reimburse the professional fees of its employees, where this is essential to carry out their role or where their performance in the job would be enhanced by membership of an appropriate professional body.
- 12.2 The School also understands that where it is not possible for an employee to pay their subscription fee, the School can pay this directly to the professional body on their behalf.

13. STAFF REGRADE

- 13.0 The School recognises the commitment of its employees, it is, therefore, the School's aim to reward members of staff in a fair, equitable and consistent manner for the work they are required to undertake. The School will always adhere to equal pay for work of equal value.
- 13.1 The School recognises that, due to business needs and requirements, roles can change in terms of demand, responsibility, accountability and complexity. The School, therefore, provides a mechanism whereby, following a substantive change in role requirements, the grading of a post can be reviewed.

14. PERSONAL USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

- 14.0 The School recognises that it has a number of items and facilities which staff may wish to make use of. To help retain and support its staff the School permits personal use of its equipment and facilities by staff, subject to Health and Safety Considerations.
- 14.1 When using the School's equipment and facilities employees should note that they are responsible for any property belonging to the School that is under their control or in their possession and must take proper care of any such items. Any deliberate or negligent failure to take proper care of company property may be viewed as misconduct and will lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

15. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- 15.0 It is the School's policy whereby any Intellectual Property (IP) created by employees of the School, whether employed full or part-time, shall be considered to be owned by the School, where this IP is related to the work, duties or directed activity of the individual concerned, or where School resources have been used during development. This applies to all staff with a contract with the School.
- 15.1 The IP in teaching materials produced for use with School students (including, but not limited to, those designed for distance or e-learning) is the property of the School.

16. VISITORS

16.0 The School's policy is to manage visitors in a way that ensures the safety of children and adults on site. The responsibility for this lies with the Principal, the Principalship team and the Governing Body.

16.1 This policy applies to:

- all external visitors entering the School site during the day or for after School activities (including suppliers and ex-students);
- all parents and volunteers; and
- building & maintenance and all other independent contractors visiting the School premises.

17. CHILD VISITORS

17.0 The School's policy ensures that any visit a child has on the School premises will be safe.

17.1 Health and Safety law defines people by age, as shown below:

- a young person is anyone under 18 years of age (young people); and
- a child is anyone who has not yet reached the official age at which they may leave school.

18. TEMPORARY WORKERS

- 18.0 Temporary workers are personnel who will be employed by the School for a limited period. The School may, from time to time, employ temporary workers in any capacity, to deal with peak workload, changes in work, staff absences and other reasons.
- 18.1 It is the School's policy to ensure that the temporary workers are protected in terms of their Health and Safety to the same high standards which apply to permanently employed workers.

19. CLOSE PERSONAL OR SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STAFF AND STUDENTS, AND BETWEEN STAFF AND STAFF

- 19.0 Entering into or attempting to enter into a sexual relationship with a student who is under the age of 18 is strictly forbidden and would be considered potentially gross misconduct. The School acts in loco parentis for students under age 18. **No member of staff should enter into a sexual relationship with any student who is under the age of 18.**
- 19.1 Sexual relationships with students who are age 18 or over where the staff member has direct responsibility for or involvement in that student's academic studies and/or personal welfare are prohibited. The normal professional relationship between staff and students is not equal. All students are entitled to equality of treatment and it is important that this is maintained and is seen to be maintained.
- 19.2 Direct responsibility includes direct management, direct supervision, assessing students' work and welfare or pastoral roles.
- 19.3 Staff have an obligation to declare an intimate or close personal relationship with any other student, for whom they do not have direct supervision, (whether new or existing), to enable the School to assess whether any potential or actual conflict of interest exists.
- 19.4 It is recognised that it is not uncommon for people who work for the same organisation may have or develop a close personal relationship on either a permanent or short-term basis. Where this develops **between an employee and someone with line management responsibility for them (either directly or indirectly)** this should be declared to the employee's Line Manager.

20. CODE OF CONDUCT

20.0 The School aims to ensure that staff adhere to the expectations regarding employees' behaviour towards their colleagues, supervisors, students and overall organisation.

20.1 The School promotes freedom of expression and open communication. The School does, however, expect all employees to follow the School's behavioural descriptors, which include:

- operating a fair, respectful, helpful & honest culture;
- working together to demonstrate ethical professional behaviour at all times;
- courtesy and politeness;
- no inappropriate language e.g. swearing in front of students;
- positivity towards supporting School policies and procedures and no trivial fault-finding or making excuses;
- respect for colleagues e.g. if an employee has a problem with someone talk to them instead of talking to someone about them;
- communicating with clarity;
- problem-solving and initiative;
- accountability – Taking responsibility for own actions;
- make the best use of time;
- embracing change;
- challenging culture – Feeling able to challenge inappropriate behaviour; and
- support the School's strategic plan.

21. SOCIAL NETWORKING

- 21.0 The School recognises and embraces the benefits and opportunities that social media can bring as a tool. Social media is defined as a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums, anonymous apps, blogs, video and image-sharing websites and similar facilities. It can be used to share news, information and successes, keep staff and students up to date with important developments and promote healthy academic debate about controversial subjects and areas of research.
- 21.1 There is, however, an inherent risk involved in using social media, in that, it is an instantaneous and far-reaching form of communication and inappropriate use can impact upon staff, students and the reputation of the School.
- 21.2 The School encourages employees to engage, collaborate and innovate through social media; however, wherever and whenever the employee does this, they must be aware of the potential impact on both themselves and the School.
- 21.3 To minimise the risk of social media usage the School aims to provide managers and individual employees with information concerning the use of, or the development of, any social media application, and to help them get the best out of the tools available whilst maintaining a safe professional environment and protecting themselves, as well as the School.

22. GRIEVANCE

22.0 The School defines a grievance as any complaint, problem or concern of an employee regarding their workplace, job or co-worker relationships.

22.1 Employees can file grievances for any of the following reasons:

- workplace harassment;
- health and safety;
- manager's behaviour; and
- adverse changes in employment conditions.

22.2 This list is not exhaustive. However, employees should try to resolve less significant issues informally before they resort to a formal grievance.

22.3 The School encourages employees to communicate their grievances in order to foster a supportive and pleasant workplace for everyone.

22.4 The School will ensure that employees with a grievance relating to their employment are resolved as quickly and as fairly as possible. Matters will be addressed within the workplace that are of concern to individual members of staff, in order to promote a positive and constructive working environment and working relationships.

23. DISCIPLINARY

23.0 Where appropriate, informal action will be considered before recourse to the formal procedure.

23.1 The Staff Disciplinary Procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants it.

23.2 It is School policy to ensure that any disciplinary matter is dealt with quickly and efficiently. However, they may be extended in consultation with HR to ensure a fair process.

24. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 24.0 The School ensures that all employees are able to achieve and maintain high standards of job performance whilst attending work.
- 24.1 The School recognises that performance management should be managed and implemented using tools, techniques and processes which are consistent with its values and comply with legal requirements. The School expects all its employees to participate in the performance management process positively and constructively, regardless of whether they are either conducting or receiving a review.
- 24.2 The School will also ensure appropriate procedures are in place to identify where performance can be enhanced, or where there are knowledge/skills gaps or low performance, and to deliver appropriate training, support or other action.

25. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

- 25.0 The School is committed to reimbursing staff for additional expenses in undertaking work on behalf of the School.
- 25.1 It is the School's policy that all expense claims must be approved by the budget holder and/or Line Manager as appropriate.
- 25.2 Authorised expenses will be paid directly into the employee's bank/building society account at the same time as monthly pay.

26. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- 26.0 The School is committed to providing staff with development opportunities to ensure that individuals and departments are able to contribute fully to the achievement of the department and the School's objectives in the context of the strategic plan.
- 26.1 All staff at the School should also be engaged in continuous learning to enhance their performance in their current roles.

27. SICKNESS ABSENCE

- 27.0 The School is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all employees. This policy aims to promote supportive and effective management of absence due to ill health (commonly known as sickness absence) and that any support is considered as early as possible.
- 27.1 This policy aims to maximise employee attendance while recognising that there are occasions when employees may be unable to attend work due to their own ill health.
- 27.2 The School provides a clear framework (Sickness Absence Procedure) for reporting and recording sickness absence and outlines the fair and consistent management of short and long term sickness absence across the School. It also ensures that employees have the support they need from their managers, as well as access to support services provided by the School.

28. CAPABILITY

- 28.0 The School aims to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all and to assist any employee who is considered to be experiencing difficulties in performing satisfactorily the duties required of the post to which they were appointed.
- 28.1 All employees should be made fully aware of the performance standards they are expected to deliver and should have regular meetings with their managers to discuss their work and performance.
- 28.2 It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that any performance issues are addressed at an early stage and where possible resolved on an informal basis without recourse to the formal procedure.
- 28.3 Where any instances of underperformance are identified, the Capability Procedure provides a framework for managing cases in a constructive, fair and consistent manner.
- 28.4 The School aims to resolve performance problems by providing appropriate support to enable the employee to perform to the standard required.

29. ABSENT WITHOUT AUTHORISED LEAVE (AWOL)

- 29.0 Employees have a duty to be at work in accordance with agreed working practices unless authorisation has been given for absence.
- 29.1 Employees are required to inform HR if they are unable to attend work as a result of illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Failure to be at work and to report absence may be an act of gross misconduct and potentially a breach of contract.
- 29.2 An employee will be considered AWOL when they are absent from work and have not contacted HR.

30. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

30.0 Domestic violence is a public concern that affects employees in the community and the workplace. In addition to its multiple negative consequences for victims and survivors, domestic violence can spill over into the workplace, compromising the safety of both victims and co-workers and resulting in lost productivity, increased healthcare costs, increased absenteeism, and increased employee turnover.

30.1 The School aims to:

- provide immediate assistance to employees who are being subjected to domestic violence;
- help ensure that the workplace is a safe environment for all employees;
- create and implement a training framework that increases awareness of domestic violence and establishes responsive procedures and practices;
- create a supportive environment where employees are comfortable seeking help from appropriate resources if they are victims of domestic violence; and
- ensure that assistance and/or disciplinary action is available in relation to employees who have perpetrated domestic violence at the workplace or using employer resources.

31. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- 31.0 The School is committed to maintaining a working environment that is respectful, professional, and free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of any kind, whether verbal, physical, visual, or digital, will not be tolerated. All employees, regardless of position, are expected to treat one another with dignity and respect.
- 31.1 Any employee who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to report it promptly. Reports will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and addressed appropriately. No employee will face retaliation for reporting a concern in good faith.
- 31.2 The School is dedicated to ensuring a safe workplace where everyone can thrive.

32. HARRASSMENT AND BULLYING

32.0 The School has an obligation under the Health & Safety Act 1974 to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. The School will also ensure it looks after the wellbeing of all employees. It is, therefore, essential a culture is established where bullying and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

32.1 The School will ensure that the workplace is free from abuse, offensive behaviour, harassment, bullying, prejudice, discrimination and victimisation.

32.2 The School will ensure:

- staff raise complaints of harassment, discrimination or bullying in a timely manner and without unreasonable delay. Unless incidents of harassment, discrimination or bullying are notified within a reasonable length of time, the School may find itself unable to adequately investigate and take steps to prevent or eliminate harassment, discrimination or bullying;
- all parties involved should act in good faith to seek a successful resolution of the complaint at as early a stage as possible;
- all parties will be treated fairly, consistently and with respect;
- a member of staff raising a complaint has the right to have the complaint investigated and handled appropriately and meetings, decisions and confirmation of decisions will not be unreasonably delayed;
- the individual or individuals against whom the complaint is made has the right to respond to the allegations.
- every effort is made to resolve complaints informally or at the early formal stages of the procedure; and
- a malicious or vexatious complaint may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

33. DEALING WITH DRUGS AND ALCOHOL MISUSE

33.0 The School recognises that problems with drinking and drug abuse are primarily health and social problems which require assistance and treatment.

33.1 It is the School's policy to:

- promote awareness of the harmful effects of drug misuse and excessive drinking through the provision of information and education for staff;
- encourage and assist staff whose problem is affecting their work performance to seek help at an early stage;
- provide help as far as possible and preserve maximum confidentiality; and
- support staff as far as possible until restored to full health.

34. VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

- 34.0 It is the School's policy that it protects all members of staff from violence and aggression.
- 34.1 The School recognises the potentially damaging effect on an employee's wellbeing of all categories of violence - actual physical attack, the threat of violence and verbal abuse. It regards all types of violence as unacceptable and will take effective action to deal with violent incidents.
- 34.2 The School has a duty under the Health & Safety Act 1974 to minimise the risk of violence to all employees so far as is reasonably practicable.

35. ANNUAL LEAVE

35.0 The School provides annual leave which exceeds the requirements of current employment legislation.

35.1 The School aims to:

- ensure employees understand their responsibilities in relation to using annual leave;
- ensure that managers understand their responsibilities in managing leave within their teams or work area and helping their employees achieve a positive work-life balance; and
- provide general guidance for dealing with instances where specific requests for annual leave cannot be accommodated.

36. BUYING ADDITIONAL ANNUAL LEAVE

- 36.0 The School aims to provide employees with more opportunities to balance work and personal life while ensuring that any such arrangements are beneficial to the business.
- 36.1 The School will allow employees to apply to buy up to 2 weeks (pro rata) of additional annual leave. The additional annual leave is effectively unpaid since the cost is deducted from the employee's gross pay.

37. ADVERSE WEATHER

37.0 The School recognises that adverse weather conditions can prevent employees from reaching their normal place of employment.

37.1 All employees are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work, but without compromising their health and safety. If it is unavoidable for staff to be absent from the workplace, with the agreement of their Line Manager and subject to operational needs one of the following options may be agreed upon:

- work from home (if practicable);
- make the lost time up; or
- take unpaid leave.

38. MATERNITY LEAVE

38.0 This School's policy aims to:

- support staff to balance work and family life;
- outline the statutory entitlements for maternity leave and pay;
- outline the School's additional provisions for maternity pay;
- highlight the provision for entitlement to shared parental leave and pay;
- ensure managers are aware of their responsibilities to employees who are covered by maternity leave;
- provide clear guidance on employee rights and responsibilities prior to, during and after maternity leave;
- maintain contact with staff and assist them in their return to work;
- retain staff and thereby encourage equality and diversity within the workplace; and
- support best practice concerning maternity, recognising the value of achieving a gender-diverse workforce and retaining and promoting female talent.

39. NEONATAL CARE LEAVE

39.0 The School recognises that some parents face the unexpected challenge of their baby requiring specialist neonatal care after birth. The School is committed to supporting its employees during this difficult time by providing fair and compassionate arrangements for leave and pay in line with UK legislation.

39.1 The School's Neonatal Care Procedure is designed to:

- Ensure eligible employees can take time away from work to care for and support their baby without undue financial hardship;
- Provide clear guidance on entitlement, eligibility, and the process for requesting leave;
- Promote a supportive and understanding workplace culture for staff balancing work and family responsibilities; and
- Comply fully with UK employment law, including forthcoming statutory neonatal leave and pay provisions.

39.2 The School is committed to supporting the wellbeing of its employees and their families, and will manage all requests for neonatal leave with care, respect, and confidentiality.

40. ADOPTION LEAVE

40.0 The School's policy aims to:

- support staff to balance work and family life;
- outline the statutory entitlements for adoption leave and pay;
- outline the School's additional provisions for adoption pay;
- highlight the provision for entitlement to shared parental leave and pay;
- ensure managers are aware of their responsibilities to employees who are covered by adoption leave;
- provide clear guidance on employee rights and responsibilities prior to, during and after adoption leave;
- maintain contact with staff and assist them in their return to work; and
- retain staff and thereby encourage equality and diversity within the workplace.

41. PATERNITY LEAVE

41.0 This School's policy aims to:

- support staff to balance work and family life;
- outline the statutory entitlements for paternity leave and pay;
- outline the School's additional provisions for paternity pay;
- highlight the provision for entitlement to shared parental leave and pay;
- ensure managers are aware of their responsibilities to employees who are covered by paternity leave;
- provide clear guidance on employee rights and responsibilities prior to, during and after paternity leave;
- maintain contact with staff and assist them in their return to work; and
- retain staff and thereby encourage equality and diversity within the workplace.

42. PARENTAL LEAVE

42.0 The School will ensure that staff are entitled to 18 weeks' unpaid leave for each child and adopted child, up to their 18th birthday.

42.1 The limit on how much parental leave each parent can take in a year is 4 weeks for each child.

42.2 The School requires employees to take parental leave as whole weeks (e.g. 1 week or 2 weeks) rather than individual days unless the child is disabled. The leave is not required to be taken all at once.

42.3 A 'week' equals the length of time an employee normally works over 7 days.

43. CARER'S LEAVE

43.0 The School recognises that some employees may have caring responsibilities for dependants with long-term needs. It is committed to supporting staff in balancing their work and caring roles, in line with the statutory entitlement to Carer's Leave under UK employment law.

43.1 The School provides an enhanced benefit by offering up to one week of paid carer's leave each year, instead of the statutory unpaid entitlement.

43.2 The Carers Leave Procedure ensures that:

- Eligible employees are entitled to take up to one week of paid Carer's Leave each year to provide or arrange care for a dependant with a long-term care need;
- Requests for Carer's Leave will be handled with sensitivity, fairness, and confidentiality; and
- No employee will be treated less favourably or face disadvantage for exercising their right to take Carer's Leave.

43.3 The School will implement this policy in compliance with statutory requirements and best practice, helping staff to effectively balance their professional duties with caring responsibilities.

44. EMERGENCY CARER LEAVE

44.0 The School recognises that occasionally members of staff will be faced with periods of urgent domestic distress and will require special leave from work (paid or unpaid).

44.1 All cases will be treated with sensitivity and compassion.

44.2 This policy is, therefore, to help staff balance the demands of domestic, work and other responsibilities at times of urgent and unforeseen need, according to individual circumstances. Leave granted under these arrangements is not intended for long-term domestic and family needs.

44.3 This type of leave is to provide a compassionate response to an employee's immediate needs to take necessary action to deal with incidents involving a dependent. A dependent is defined as:

- the employee's parent;
- the employee's spouse or partner;
- the employee's child;
- any other person who relies on the employee either for assistance when ill or to make arrangements for care; or
- someone who lives with the employee (excluding an employee, tenant, lodger or boarder).

44.4 No more than 3 instances of paid emergency carer leave will be awarded in any 1 year (6 days in total). Employees who regularly apply for more than one instance of emergency carer leave will be asked to consider annual leave, time off in lieu or unpaid parental leave.

45. DISABLED PERSONS

45.0 It is the School's policy to do as much as possible to facilitate the work of persons with disabilities and ensure that as far as practicable the premises do not represent an obstacle to equal opportunities in recruitment, training, promotion, transfers and other employment matters.

46. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

46.0 The School recognises that occasionally members of staff will be faced with periods of distress due to bereavement and will require special leave from work. It is important to treat such cases with sensitivity and compassion.

46.1 Employees have the right to apply for bereavement leave to cover the need to arrange and attend a funeral of a close relative. Normal maximum leave periods are as follows:

- parent, parent-in-law, spouse, or child – up to 10 days' paid leave;
- sibling, or grandparent – up to 5 days' paid leave; and
- cousin, or aunt/uncle – up to 3 days' paid leave.

47. WORK LIFE BALANCE LEAVE

47.0 The School recognises the need for effective procedures that play a key part in supporting an appropriate work life balance. Such procedures are intended to:

- allow a more effective combination of home and work responsibilities;
- enhance equality of opportunity at work;
- maintain competitive advantage of the School by retaining skilled and valued employees; and
- ensure the School meets and attempts to exceed its legal obligations towards ensuring all employees have access to appropriate procedures enabling the maintenance of a healthy work/life balance.

47.1 There are various types of leave included in this policy, including:

- GP, hospital and other medical appointments leave;
- interview leave;
- graduation leave;
- examinations leave;
- study leave;
- moving house leave;
- religious festivals leave; and
- examiners leave.

48. HYBRID WORKING

48.0 The School supports flexible working arrangements that meet both the needs of its employees and the operational requirements of the School. Where suitable, hybrid working enables staff to split their time between on-site and remote work.

48.1 The aim is to:

- Promote a healthy work life balance while maintaining high standards of performance and service;
- Provide flexibility where possible, recognising the diverse needs of staff;
- Ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency in how hybrid working arrangements are agreed and managed;
- Support collaboration, wellbeing, and professional development by maintaining strong connections between staff whether working on-site or remotely; and
- Comply with relevant UK employment law and organisational policies.

Hybrid working arrangements will be considered on a role-by-role basis, ensuring that they are operationally viable and continue to meet the needs of learners, colleagues, and the wider community.

49. FLEXIBLE WORKING

- 49.0 The term 'flexible working' describes any working arrangements where the number of hours worked or the time or place that work is undertaken vary from the standard practice.
- 49.1 All employees no matter their length of service have the right to request a flexible working arrangement.
- 49.2 The School will ensure that every request is considered in a reasonable manner and can only refuse a request for flexible working where there is a clear business reason for doing so.

50. STAFF TRANSGENDER AND GENDER IDENTITY

50.0 The School recognises that individuals may identify either as a gender that does not match their birth gender or as an indeterminate gender and that this should be recognised and reflected in their personal records.

50.1 The School aims to create a trans-friendly culture, free from discrimination and harassment, where all staff are treated with dignity and able to realise their full potential in a fair and inclusive workplace.

50.2 The School condemns all forms of harassment, including discrimination and bullying. Strict disciplinary action is imposed if any staff member is found to have harassed another member of staff.

50.3 The School aims to undertake the following:

- respect the confidentiality of all trans staff and will not reveal information without the prior agreement of the individual;
- staff will not be excluded from employment or promotion because of their gender identity;
- transphobic abuse, harassment or bullying (name-calling/derogatory jokes, unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, intrusive questions) is a serious disciplinary offence and will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure;
- provide a supportive environment for staff who wish their trans status to be known. However, it is the right of the individual to choose whether they wish to be open about their gender identity. To 'out' someone, without their permission is a form of harassment and, possibly, a criminal offence;
- include gender identity issues in equality training;
- welcome, and will seek to provide, appropriate facilities for trans staff groups;
- staff undergoing medical and surgical procedures related to gender reassignment will receive positive support from their managers to meet their particular needs during this period; and
- recognise that trans staff come from diverse backgrounds, and will strive to ensure they do not face discrimination on the grounds of their gender identity or in relation to other aspects of their identity, for example, their race, age, religion, disability or sexual orientation. In addition, assumptions will not be made about the sex of partners of trans staff.

51. APPLICATION FOR REFUND OF COSTS FOR SPECIAL PRESCRIPTION FOR VISUAL DISPLAY UNIT (VDU) WORK OR EYESIGHT TEST

- 51.0 The School recognises the need that some employees may require glasses specifically for VDU use.
- 51.1 The School will ensure that subject to an optician's report, an employee required to use a VDU on a regular basis who requires a special prescription for spectacles specifically to carry out this type of work will be eligible for financial assistance in respect of the prescription up to a maximum of £50.00. Regular use is where an employee operates a visual display unit for at least 50% of the working day. Financial assistance will not normally be given more than once every 2 years unless under special circumstances.
- 51.2 All staff can also claim up to £20.00 for an eye examination whether or not the employee requires a prescription for VDU use. Financial assistance for eye examinations will not normally be given more than once every 2 years unless under special circumstances.

52. STRESS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 52.0 The School aims to provide direction and guidance to all employees and managers on the management of work-related stress, the promotion of mental wellbeing and resilience and the processes for risk assessment based on the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Stress Management Standards.
- 52.1 The School will ensure to maintain a positive and supportive working environment for all its employees. It accepts that stressors in the workplace can have a detrimental and negative impact on the organisation and employees – affecting health, morale, absenteeism and work performance.
- 52.2 The anticipated benefits of maintaining a positive and supportive working environment include:
- improved working climate and culture;
 - greater openness about sources of pressure at work, at all levels;
 - better awareness about stress and mental wellbeing in all employees;
 - the continuing importance of trying to ensure a good work/life balance for all employees;
 - greater consistency of approach from managers in dealing with mental wellbeing;
 - early identification of stress, supporting prompt resolution;
 - greater awareness of the support available to employees;
 - improved stress and resilience management skills in managers; and
 - a reduction in the number of workdays lost to stress-related sickness absence.

53. PUBLIC DUTIES

53.0 The School recognises that occasionally members of staff will be faced with circumstances that will require special leave from work (paid or unpaid).

53.1 These public duties include:

- jury service;
- witness at court;
- magisterial duties; and
- other public duties, e.g. local councillor, School governor, etc.

54. INDUSTRIAL ACTION

- 54.0 The School seeks to maintain a good and constructive relationship with its staff. To this end, the School works with the two Trade Unions (UCU and UNISON) for representation and bargaining purposes.
- 54.1 Industrial action can harm the relationship and hinder the School's ability to deliver excellence to its students, customers, and clients. The School hopes it is a shared objective of this relationship to avoid industrial disputes.
- 54.2 The School seeks to make it clear to staff that industrial action is not cost-free and to discourage them from participating in such action by helping them to understand the impact and cost of such action.

55. SUCCESSION PLANNING

55.0 The School aims to encourage a proactive and future-focused process, which enables the School to assess, evaluate and develop a talent pool of individuals who are willing and able to learn and occupy higher positions when needed.

55.1 The desired results of the School are to:

- identify high-potential employees capable of rapid advancement to positions of higher responsibility than those they presently occupy;
- ensure the systematic and long-term development of individuals to replace key job incumbents as the need arises due to deaths, disabilities, retirements, and other unexpected losses;
- provide a continuous flow of talented people to meet the School's management needs; and
- meet the School's need to exercise social responsibility by providing for the advancement of protected personnel within the School.

56. NOTICE PERIODS

56.0 The School requires all members of staff to resign in writing to HR.

56.1 The notice period required by an employee depends on the type of contract an employee is on.

56.2 Employees will be paid for any unused holiday entitlement but should try to use up any holiday before they leave.

56.3 If an employee takes too much holiday than they are entitled to when their contract ends, the final salary will be reduced by an amount equal to the overtaken holiday.

57. RETIREMENT

57.0 The School is committed to creating a positive and inclusive environment, respecting equality and diversity and encouraging good relations between people of all ages. The School recognises the valuable contribution made by employees of all ages and will work towards eliminating prejudice and discrimination irrespective of age.

58. REDUNDANCY

58.0 The intention of the School is that job security will be maintained wherever practicable and every effort will be made to avoid compulsory redundancies. However, it is recognised that circumstances may arise that result in the School seeking a reduction in staffing levels necessarily brought about by economic, technical or organisational constraints affecting operational needs or other organisational issues.

58.1 The School, therefore, recognises the benefit of early consultation with recognised trade unions and the importance of planning resources to avoid or minimise the need for redundancies.

STANDARDS/KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing this staff policies handbook lies with the Vice Principal (People Services). It will be reviewed annually. The annual review may include consultation with recognised trade union representatives.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Northern School of Art is committed to providing an inclusive learning and working environment that recognises the value of every individual regardless of their background or personal characteristics and aims to ensure that all employees and Institution users are treated fairly and equally. It aims to do this by encouraging a culture which actively welcomes, respects, promotes and embraces diversity; employs fairness in all aspects of employment and teaching and thereby creating and sustaining a positive and supportive environment for all members of its community.

All information put into the public domain should be fully accessible to all, regardless of any disability. Wherever possible the font Arial should be used with minimum font size 12, and essential text should never be embedded within graphics. All public information should include a statement that it is available in large format, with the name, email and telephone number of the marketing department who can arrange it, e.g. this information is available in large format print. If you need it in a different format please contact HR by emailing hr@northernart.ac.uk or calling 01642 856126.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING

Under the Equality Act, there are nine protected characteristics:		
gender reassignment marriage and civil partnership pregnancy and maternity	race religion or belief age	sex sexual orientation disability

Assessment:

Is this policy/procedure relevant in terms of equality related to the protected characteristics above? Yes ☒ No ☐ If no, please state why not:	
This is general policy relating to all staff.	
Is there potential for any negative or positive impact on people with protected characteristics? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please provide details:	
Positive	Negative
Could this policy or procedure discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people with protected characteristics? Yes ☐ No ☒ If yes, please provide details:	
The policy has an inclusive approach to staff from all backgrounds.	
Conclusion:	
☒ No barriers identified	
☐ Adaptions or changes to the policy or procedure to eliminate bias	
☐ Barriers and impact identified, however, having considered all available options there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore, proceed with caution with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.	

Completed by:

Name:	Amy Crossland	Job Title:	Vice People (People Services)
Name:	Martin Raby	Job Title:	Principal

APPROVAL PROCESS

This document was APPROVED by Principalship on:	September 2025
Principalship member with primary responsibility:	Amy Crossland, Vice Principal (People Services)
Other staff consulted by primary Principalship member:	Martin Raby, Principal
	John Waddington, Vice Principal (HE)
	Stuart Slorach, Vice Principal (Resources)
	Rob Kane, Vice Principal (FE)
	Mike Wheaton, Vice Principal (Planning & Strategy Implementation)

Elements of this document have been reviewed and approved by School Committees:

Section	Committee	Approval Date