Appearance and Dress Code Policy
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Introduction

This Policy establishes the Academy’s position regarding standards of dress and appearance for all employees including those with temporary contracts, agency workers and volunteers. It is supported by guidelines which the Academy sees as necessary to assist staff in adhering to the Policy as it is recognised that a considerable range of dress and appearance is appropriate and that this will vary, dependent on the working environment and range of services provided to differentiate the different user groups in the Academy.

The Academy considers the way employees dress and their appearance to be of significant importance in portraying a professional image to all users of its services.

Policy Statement

This Policy is underpinned by a number of principles:

- All members of staff will take a sensible and safe approach to dress and appearance, cleanliness and personal hygiene.
- Every member of staff will be responsible for promoting a professional and positive image of the Academy.

Clothing and appearance will not deliberately cause offence to people who come into contact with, or use, the Academy services. It should be non-offensive and contain no provocative logos or remarks which are inappropriate or likely to give offence to others.

- Clothing should be worn appropriately for the work being undertaken.
- Staff exposed to the sun during work-based activities should adhere to the HSE guidance.
- Clothing for particular purposes should be worn in accordance with guidance set out in the Academy’s Health and Safety Manual.
- Protective clothing should always be available and should, in addition to any other control measure, be worn when carrying out hazardous duties under Health & Safety Regulations.
- The requirements of particular faiths to wear specific types of clothing or to dress modestly will be respected so long as the item of clothing does not pose a hazard to the health and safety of employees or contravene any reasonable and legitimate requirements of the Academy.
- Employees who do not comply with these standards may be subject to the Academy’s normal disciplinary procedure. In serious cases, where an employee’s appearance is, in the Academy’s view, unacceptable, he or she will be required to return home to change.
- Employees have the right to lodge an appeal against a decision on the acceptability of their appearance using the Academy’s normal grievance procedure.
Guidelines

Footwear

It is the responsibility of all employees to wear footwear suitable for the duties undertaken. Footwear should be of a "sensible" nature and worn appropriately, particularly in areas involving direct delivery of services to students, staff, parents and other members of the Academy community. “Sensible” includes no flip-flops or other strapless sandals which will impede safe lifting and handling, and occasions when the use of restraint is required. Footwear that might cause injury to others during normal working duties should also be avoided.

For specific areas of work, footwear should be worn in accordance with Health and Safety Regulations.

Injury associated with wearing inappropriate footwear will invalidate any claim against the Academy.

Sports Clothing

It is recognised that some activities require the wearing of tracksuits or shorts. However, it is expected that staff will revert to normal clothing once the activity is completed. It is acknowledged that there are some areas of work where, due to the continuous nature of the activity, appropriate tracksuit attire is acceptable, e.g. PE staff.

Uniform

Some staff may be required to wear a uniform to ensure compliance with Health and Safety Regulations and to ease identification (i.e. security). The uniform should be worn throughout working hours and maintained in a clean and tidy condition.

Employees designated to wear uniform will be issued with the appropriate garments free of charge and subject to service requirements, these will be replaced at regular intervals.

Jewellery

It is good practice to avoid the wearing of jewellery, such as necklaces and earrings that can be hazardous, especially where these can get caught or pulled. The wearing of small studs or sleepers is more appropriate when working in areas where students are or can be challenging in their behaviour. Injury arising from wearing inappropriate jewellery will invalidate any related claim against the Academy.

Badges

Only work related badges should be worn. Academy photo identity badges must be visible at all times for security reasons.

Hair

Certain hairstyles and colouring can affect the way people perceive us. Whilst the Academy is tolerant of differences, consideration should always be given to the impact our appearance might have on others. Long hair should always be worn tied back during hazardous procedures or when handling food.
Summer Clothing

During periods of warm weather staff clothing must remain appropriate and suitable. Employees should be aware that certain items of clothing could be seen as provocative, e.g. short, revealing or tight garments, and therefore these are not acceptable for work.

Style of Clothing

It is not acceptable to wear clothing that over-exposes parts of the body, e.g. stomach, chest, etc, or that is transparent or see-through. Dresses or skirts should be of a reasonable length.

Tattoos

Tattoos on the face or visible above the collar are not permitted. To retain a professional image, where feasible, all other tattoos must be covered.

Anyone who has a visible tattoo which could be construed as being offensive to any religion or belief, or is in any way discriminatory, violent or intimidating, will compromise their employment at the Academy. Likewise, an existing member of staff who becomes tattooed in this way may, after investigation, become subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is provided strictly for occasions where the risk cannot be controlled adequately, or more effectively, by other means.

Where safety clothing and personal protective equipment is issued, it must be worn where the risk assessment dictates or as directed in accordance with Health and Safety requirements. It will be provided free of charge.

Certain jobs will require employees to wear protective footwear. These staff must wear the correct footwear for undertaking these tasks and if they are uncertain, they must check with their line manager.

*Failure to comply with any Health and Safety dress requirement may result in disciplinary action being taken.*

Personal Hygiene

Employees are required to have a clean appearance. The Academy recognises that problems in personal hygiene can be related to illness and stress. If a member of staff is concerned about their own or a colleague’s personal hygiene, they should speak to their line manager or Human Resources. All discussions will be dealt with confidentially and discreetly.

Should any employees have difficulties in maintaining these standards they should discuss the matter with their line manager, or the Human Resources department if they prefer.

Consideration of circumstances will be taken into account in a confidential manner.
Roles & Responsibilities

The competent Health and Safety Advisor - will advise on any need for specific safety procedures or protective clothing etc. and discuss how to raise any concerns over health and safety issues.

The Learning Zone Director or Course Leader - will ensure that the principles of this policy are implemented within the Faculty/subject area under their responsibility.

The Line Manager/Supervisor - will ensure staff compliance with this policy.

Line managers must ensure that instructions relating to dress and appearance are complied with and that a high standard of personal appearance is maintained. They must decide on the suitability of dress and appearance taking into account these instructions, as well as the role being undertaken. In addition, consideration must also be given to likely extremes of temperature, health and safety, hygiene, ethnic, cultural, religious or medical factors and equality.

Where line managers are concerned about an individual’s appearance, they should discuss their concerns with that person in the first instance. They must take care not to ignore matters of concern expressed by the member of staff, while ensuring that a reasonable and culturally sensitive dress code is observed. Managers should remember that they have an option of seeking further advice on the matter from The Principal or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Employee

All employees are individually responsible for their general presentation, appearance and personal hygiene, and have a responsibility to consider how others may perceive their appearance. Employees are responsible for following the standards of uniform and dress and appearance as laid down in this policy and should understand how the dress code relates to their working environment, health and safety, their specific role and duties and their contact with others during their employment.

Failure to adhere to the Academy’s standard of dress and appearance may constitute misconduct and could ultimately result in formal disciplinary procedures being implemented.

Where a corporate uniform has been issued, it must be worn at all times. If, for some unforeseen reason, an employee cannot wear the uniform on a given day, they should report this to their line manager.

Monitoring and Review

Under the direction of the Principal, this policy will be reviewed annually, and a report made to the Governing Body.