



Code of Conduct

Environmental Sustainability Policy

Managing Diversity Policy

Statement of Purpose

Registered Charity No. 1085697

Plumpton Old Hall, Plumpton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 9NP  
01768 885 800 fcs: 01768 885 801  
[institute@outdoor-learning.org](mailto:institute@outdoor-learning.org) [outdoor-learning.org](http://outdoor-learning.org)

# Code of Professional Conduct

The purpose of this Code is to set out the standards of behaviour agreed to and upheld by members of the Institute as they cultivate and promote the special values and importance of outdoor learning experiences.

## 1. Maintaining the Professional Integrity of the Institute

- 1.1 The Institute may be judged by the conduct of its Members, Regional, Management and Executive Committees. All members of the Institute should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the Institute's professional values.
- 1.2 The logo of the Institute may only be used in circumstances prescribed by the Executive Committee. Members should ensure they comply with this.
- 1.3 The Institute strives to ensure that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity is manifested and developed in all areas of its work. A full of statement of intent and definition can be found in the 'Managing Diversity' policy. Members should have read this, agree to abide it and promote its key values in their work.
- 1.4 The Institute has a commitment to promoting care of the environment. A full description of the Institute's commitment can be found in the 'Environmental' Policy. Members should have read this and agree to abide by it and promote its key values in their work.

## 2. Members' Responsibilities in Professional Relationships

- 2.1 Members should present themselves as responsible persons and in a manner that inspires confidence and trust. Members should have a professional attitude towards other members, agencies, clients, participants, sponsors and the general public.
- 2.2 Members have a duty of care to each participant and should accept their responsibility to protect the dignity, privacy and safety of all those for whom they are responsible. Members should define and respect the boundaries between personal and working life and never misuse a leadership position whatever the age of the client.
- 2.3 Members should manage the activities for which they are responsible with due regard to participants, client and staff emotional and physical welfare. Where a member delegates any activity or welfare responsibilities they should understand that the ultimate responsibility remains with oneself.
- 2.4 Members should safeguard confidential information relating to participants and use discretion when there is a particular need to share essential information with professional colleagues.
- 2.5 Members should respect fellow members. Public or private reference to the conduct, integrity or quality of service of another member should be expressed with due care, accepting that there is a clear moral obligation to challenge unprofessional conduct.

## 3. Professional Standards

- 3.1 Members should adhere to legal requirements and to commonly accepted current best practice. Members should ensure they remain up to date in legal, professional, technical and safety matters.
- 3.2 Members should maintain and develop their professional competence, share expertise and good practice with other members and contribute constructively to relevant debates on professional matters.
- 3.3 Members should respect the responsibilities of other institutions, associations, agencies and professions that share a common interest in Outdoor Learning.

## 4. Members responsibility for Sustainable Outdoor Practice and Care of the Environment

- 4.1 Members should conserve the natural environment, endorsing the principles of sustainable use and minimum impact.
- 4.2 Members should be sensitive to the impact of their operation on the local community and cultural setting within which they work and minimise any adverse effects.
- 4.2 Members should seek to develop their own, and others', understanding of the environment and the behaviours that can adversely affect it.

The Institute reserves the right to withdraw membership from an individual or organisation deemed by the Executive committee, after investigation, to be a case of serious professional conduct as stated in the constitution.

The revision, updating and use of the Code shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee of the Institute. Changes are subject to ratification at an AGM.

# Managing Diversity

## Statement Of Intent

The Institute for Outdoor Learning strives to ensure that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity is manifest and developed in all areas of its work.

The Institute for Outdoor Learning accepts that discrimination, harassment and bullying have no place in outdoor learning and therefore need to be constructively challenged whenever they are displayed.

The Institute for Outdoor Learning will actively seek to enhance the understanding and practice of all members with regard to equal opportunity and the management of diversity.

The Institute for Outdoor Learning strives to:

- \* Conform to the letter and intent of the current legislative requirements
- \* Develop appropriate local strategies to manage diversity across the regions of the UK
- \* Create a culture within the Institute for Outdoor Learning of openness and trust that recognises the diversity and value of individuals
- \* Adopt mechanisms for dealing with bullying, harassment and discrimination
- \* Adopt and maintain standards of good practice
- \* Regularly monitor and review this policy and practice

The Institute for Outdoor Learning believes that:

... All people should have the opportunity for Outdoor Learning experiences

... That Outdoor Learning is a lifelong process and should therefore be accessible throughout life

... Equality of opportunity is not achieved through "one size fits all" but by recognising and meeting the needs of individuals and - by managing their diversity, thus enabling access for all.

## Definition of Terms

Managing diversity is the principle that people are valued and treated fairly as individuals for business, social and moral reasons. People from different backgrounds bring fresh ideas and perceptions into the workplace and outdoor learning arena, adding value to our work and the outdoor learning environment.

Managing diversity involves challenging such issues as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and bullying. These may be on grounds of sex or marital status, pregnancy, racial grounds, or grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, religious beliefs, political opinions or other personal attributes.

## What is Discrimination?

Discrimination is treating a person less favourably because of things such as gender, pregnancy, marital status, disability, ethnic origin or race. It can be either direct or indirect. It is currently illegal to discriminate in the workplace on grounds of sex, race and disability.

**Direct discrimination** occurs when a person is treated less favourably for a reason unconnected with their ability.

Examples:

- \* Deciding to offer or not to offer someone the job because of their disability or gender
- \* Making a decision about who should or should not attend a course because of their ethnic background
- \* Dismissing, refusing to promote or withdrawing a job offer because an employee is pregnant

**Indirect discrimination** occurs where an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied which, although in theory applies to everyone, in practice is more difficult for one particular group of people to meet or fulfil.

Examples:

- \* Insisting that a particular post is linked to a particular office space - if this space happens to be difficult for a wheel chair user to access
- \* Setting standards that some potential delegates are less likely to be able to achieve because of their gender, race, disability etc.

**Harassment** is behaviour the recipient finds unacceptable and unwelcome. It can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical.

Examples:

\* Sexual Harassment may be directed at both men and women. It is any unwelcome and/or unwanted comments, looks, actions, jokes, innuendoes, suggestions, or physical contact of a sexual nature that upsets or offends the recipient

\* Racial Harassment is any unwelcome and/or unwanted comments or behaviours, such as racial mockery, innuendo, abusive language or derogatory remarks based on a person's race, colour or ethnic origin.

**Bullying** is persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, which amounts to an abuse of power or position and leaves the recipient feeling upset, humiliated or vulnerable. Bullying undermines a target's self-confidence and may cause stress.

## **Procedures**

### **General**

The Executive (IOL Trustees) are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and monitored across the scope of the Institute for Outdoor Learning's work.

It is the responsibility of all working for or on behalf of the Institute for Outdoor Learning to work in a fair manner and to constructively challenge discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying through electronic or paper media will not be tolerated. This would include racist or sexist remarks, and any other form of harassment.

People working for or on behalf of The Institute for Outdoor Learning will be managed in a fair manner. The Trustees will seek guidance where necessary to comply with existing legislation, particularly in their dealings with volunteers, management group members, trustees and employees in the following areas:

- Recruitment and selection
- Remuneration
- Working conditions
- Development opportunities

Training and development opportunities in equal opportunities and the management of diversity will be available as required.

### **Membership**

The Institute for Outdoor Learning strives to value the skills and abilities of all its individual members and will continue to strive to:

- ... Enhance the diversity of the membership
- ... Provide a broad range of support and channels for communication
- ... Challenge stereotypical attitudes including gender, race, culture, age, sexual orientation, ability and geographical location
- ... Value members' contributions and achievements and create an environment of trust and support
- ... Encourage and support a variety of interest groups
- ... Identify strengths of all members and utilise this expertise for the benefit of all
- ... Ensure that all members have access to opportunities to represent the Institute for Outdoor Learning
- ... Support a wide variety of activities and services.

The Institute for Outdoor Learning will actively encourage members to develop programmes with their clients that are inclusive and in which differences are celebrated.

### **Implementation of the policy**

The Executive will ensure that membership structure is monitored and formally evaluated at least annually.

The Executive will ensure that an implementation plan is written annually. This will include action to be taken in the light of the evaluation of the membership structure.

# Environmental Sustainability

One of the main pillars of the IOL is an understanding of and responsibility for the Environment. This is identified in IOL statement of Purpose and is reflected in the Code of Professional Conduct.

IOL is fully aware of the conflicts between using a sensitive outdoor environment for study / activity and the preservation of that environment. IOL respects the fact that certain members may have objectives that relate to access to the countryside but not directly to environmental sustainability. However, members must be aware that it is in their interests to preserve the resource on which they depend and thus the following are considered essential.

## **A. Sustainable Use of the Outdoor Environment**

Members must:

1. Exercise care and concern for the environment.
2. Avoid using sites, when requested by Land Managers, due to environmental concerns.
3. Monitor locations used for environmental damage.
4. Consider modifying the use of the locations so as to reduce damage.
5. Consider assisting with the repair or maintenance of sites, especially if their work has significantly contributed to that damage.

In addition those who use of the outdoors for study must:

6. Follow good practice for field study activities (see National Association of Field Studies Officers publication: 'Quality, Safety and Sustainability' - [www.nafso.org.uk](http://www.nafso.org.uk)).

## **B. Avoiding Conflict with the local community**

Members must:

1. Respect the interests of others, especially those who live, work, manage or carry out their recreation in the environment of our work.
2. Comply with bylaws and access agreements.
3. Liaise with landowners, local communities and other organisations over any activities, which may affect them, the land over which they have control, or an interest in.
4. Be sensitive to the potential and actual impact of their operation on an area.
5. Follow the countryside code.

## **C. Educate participants about the natural environment and local area**

Members should:

1. Promote awareness and respect for the natural environment.
2. Encourage greater understanding of the natural world and the cultural setting of the surroundings.
3. Educate participants as to the appropriate way to enjoy, explore, move or live in the countryside.

## **D. Conserving Global resources**

Members should consider:

1. Reducing their use of global resources.
2. Recycling waste products.
3. Using materials from sustainable sources and recycled materials.
4. Using environmentally efficient equipment.

---

## Statement of Purpose

The Institute for Outdoor Learning supports, develops and promotes the achievement of learning through purposeful and planned outdoor experiences. It believes in the value of challenge and adventure in an outdoor setting. Such activities experienced and reflected upon not only enhance the quality of life of anyone of any age or ability but additionally develop

• self-awareness; understanding and tolerance of others; an appreciation and understanding of and responsibility for the diversity of the environment

Through outdoor experiences, which may encompass: physical; intellectual; social; spiritual; and emotional aspects of personal development

people are encouraged to extend themselves and to build values about: inter-personal relationships; the sustainable use of the environment; and their relationship with and responsibilities towards their community and the wider world in which they live and play a part

The Institute for Outdoor Learning holds that all people are to be valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential, without discrimination on any grounds, but with due consideration for their fears and frailties, their strengths and qualities. The Institute believes that responsibility for: self; for others; and for the environment

are outcomes to be desired and striven for in all its work and to this end it aims to increase the recognition, quality and safety of activities and experiences in the outdoors.



Registered Charity No. 1085697

Plumpton Old Hall, Plumpton, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 9NP  
01768 885 800 fcs: 01768 885 801  
[institute@outdoor-learning.org](mailto:institute@outdoor-learning.org) [outdoor-learning.org](http://outdoor-learning.org)