

Code of conduct

Introduction

The Exchange is a community space where people make and make things happen. It is a place where everyone is welcomed, respected, and valued, and a place we hope all will have a good or rewarding experience. This Code of Conduct is to ensure The Exchange remains a safe and welcoming space for all, including staff, volunteers, members, and visitors. It is important that we all understand our responsibilities and commitment to this code of conduct and can be confident in how we all behave to achieve this. This code of conduct was approved by The Exchange's members at the annual general meeting 2021 and is reviewed annually.

Some Context

As a community owned organisation, we are committed to transparent and democratic decision-making processes, and to taking decisions that benefit the community.

The Exchange is dedicated to supporting, developing, and promoting equality and diversity, and celebrates the rich diversity of communities and cultures in Erith.

We encourage honest discussions about our community and its values. At times we may have difficult conversations on controversial issues. These should be conducted with respect while valuing each other's contributions and allowing all opinions to be heard. However, we will not tolerate any discrimination, harassment, or violence of any kind.

We encourage all staff, volunteers, board members, members and visitors to share in the below principles of personal conduct:

- Inclusivity. We welcome different ideas, opinions, and people.
- Equality. Everyone has an equal opportunity to enjoy the resources and facilities of the Exchange and to make the most of their time and talents.
- Respect. We value one another, listen to each other, and acknowledge everyone's opinions and experiences.
- Honesty and Trust. We all have good intentions. We communicate them truthfully and believe that others do the same.
- Kindness. The Exchange is a friendly place. We are considerate of others and their needs.
- Empathy. We treat people with compassion and actively try to understand their experiences and feelings.

While you are at the Exchange, please:

- Follow instructions of staff, workshop leads, board members and project leads.
- Enter the top floor, workshops spaces or The Bookstore kitchen only after approvals have been obtained.
- Only use equipment that you have been training and approval.
- Smoking is only permitted outside. Ensure that you are away from any doorways.
- Always keep your dog on a lead.
- Drink responsibly.
- Report any health and safety hazards (spills/ blockages/ damage) to a member of staff immediately.
- Disclose any unusual behaviour or breaches of this code of conduct immediately to a member of staff.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

The Exchange will treat all breaches of the code in accordance with the severity of the breach.

In case of misconduct the person should expect a verbal warning and/or a written warning.

Examples of Misconduct

- Misuse of materials or equipment
- Disruptive behaviour
- Contravention of minor safety regulations
- Intruding on or interrupting private meetings, personal conversations, and personal space.

In case of repetitive breaches of or a gross misconduct the person should expect a written warning and any of the following actions:

1. The person will be asked to leave the premises.
2. The person will be banned from the premises temporarily or permanently in case of gross misconduct or if breaches repeat.
3. The management may terminate the person's membership or volunteer status (if applicable).

Examples of other Gross Misconduct

- Hate speech / derogatory language
- Any kind of abuse: including intimidating, yelling at, or humiliating someone
- Physical or verbal violence
- Unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments
- Visual displays such as derogatory or sexually oriented pictures or gestures
- Spreading malicious rumour or gossip
- Taking or possession of illegal drugs
- Physical conduct including assault or unwanted touching
- Deliberate misbehaviour

Any type of victimisation, or harassment; including physical, sexual, verbal, or other, is a gross misconduct and will result in disciplinary action. Victimisation and harassment can include actions, language, written words, or objects that create an intimidating or hostile environment.

What We, The Exchange, Erith aim to do

- Resolve issues informally where possible
- Address issues thoroughly and as speedily as possible and tell you when you can expect a reply at all stages of the process
- In case you have witnessed or experienced any kind of harassment or if there is any other reason for an official complaint, please speak to The Exchange staff. You may be asked to fill in a complaint form that will be kept in our records. [Complaint forms](#) can also be accessed via the website
- We will follow our code of conduct fully and as outlined above highlighting any gross misconduct with our Board members also
- We will learn and reflect on issues raised ensuing any amends or improvements to our own processes are shared and implemented
- We will review our policy annually and ensure any changes are presented to the members

Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

By becoming a member, or by leading, volunteering or participating in a workshop(s), activities and or event(s), you acknowledge that:

- You have read the entire code of conduct and understand your responsibilities related to it
- You have had the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any unclear aspects of the code
- You agree to abide by its principles
- You agree to report to The Exchange's staff any violations of the code
- You agree to cooperate in any investigations of violations of the code