

ITALIA CONTI

Staff Code of Conduct

Excerpt from Staff Handbook

This document is an excerpt from the Italia Conti Staff Handbook. It sets out the professional standards expected of staff and others working with or on behalf of Italia Conti.

Students may wish to refer to this excerpt where a concern involves staff behaviour, professional boundaries, communication, use of authority, role-modelling, position of trust, or conduct that may affect student safety, welfare, dignity or confidence in the Italia Conti community.

This excerpt is provided to help students understand the standards expected of staff. It does not replace the full Staff Handbook or the relevant staff, HR, safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

Version control and archive note

This is the reference document that was most up to date at the time of publication of Italia Conti's Single Comprehensive Source of Information for OfS Condition E6: Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.

This document will be reviewed and updated in line with its normal policy review cycle. Where a newer version is approved, the Single Comprehensive Source and linked policy folder will be updated accordingly.

Archived copies of previous versions of this policy and the 'Preventing and Addressing Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Violence' guide are available [here](#).

Published to website 16/06/2026

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 999

For support contact wellbeing@italiaconti.co.uk

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Staff Code of Conduct (2023-2024) extracted from Staff Handbook

Introduction. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers at Italia Conti regardless of their position, role or responsibility. It sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff (as defined below). Staff are also asked, in tandem with this section, to familiarise themselves with the Student Code of Conduct which is accessible on Microsoft Teams on the 'Policies' site.

References to “staff” throughout this policy relate to all of the following groups:

- all members of staff including teaching/student-facing and support staff
- governors
- volunteers
- casual workers
- temporary staff and freelancers, either from agencies or engaged directly; and
- student placements and apprentices.

The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

Staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students at Italia Conti.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of Italia Conti, both inside and outside working hours and the work setting.

Italia Conti requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy. Breach or failure to observe this policy may result in action being taken under Italia Conti's disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This Code of Conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff

are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of Italia Conti and its students.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Anti-Bullying and Bullying & Harassment Policies;
- Data Protection Policy;
- E-mail and Internet Policy (Employee Handbook);
- Emergency Actions Policy (Guildford & Barbican);
- Emergency Actions Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Fire Safety Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Safe Touch Policy;
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy;
- Safer Recruitment Policy for Safeguarding Children & Young Adults;
- Social Media Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff should ensure that they have read and are familiar with these policies and procedures.

Staff are also required to read and understand Part One of the Department for Education's statutory guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education, Keeping Children Safe in Education. All senior members of staff and those staff working directly with children and young people will also be required to read Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education in addition to Part One.

Attendance and timekeeping. Should you need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, you should ask your line manager in advance when possible. If this is not possible, please contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the earliest opportunity.

Smoking. To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on our sites. You must not smoke on Italia Conti premises or outside our buildings. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the premises.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising students offsite.

Alcohol and illegal drugs. Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on the premises, save where at a production or event or as otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted.

Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties.

Security. In the interests of security, employees must carry their identity card whilst on site and produce it on request. You must not remove any Italia Conti documents from the site or take any photographs without due permission. Italia Conti reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. Staff may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

Health and safety. All staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and staff are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and their responsibilities set out in the Health and Safety Policy.

Personal appearance. We regularly receive visits from parents, prospective students and parents and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation. Therefore whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, staff are, nonetheless, required to wear suitable attire for their role at all times.

Mobility and flexibility. Due to the demands and nature of the work of Italia Conti, employees should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently and/or to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the individual is adequately trained.

Gifts, rewards and favours. Staff should take care to ensure that they do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

Staff should exercise care when selecting students for productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when excluding students from activities without prior consultation with the relevant Course Leader.

Staff should not give presents/rewards to an individual outside of established Italia Conti reward systems.

Communication. Good communication between all members of the Italia Conti community is vital. All communication between staff, students and parents should take place within clear, explicit and professional boundaries. Relationships between staff and students should be respectful at all times; shouting, bad language or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

Communication with parents. Staff should not usually communicate with parents of students over 18 unless we have consent from the student. Staff can contact parents of students under the age of 18, where appropriate, by telephone, e-mail or letter. Staff should not contact students, parents or conduct any Italia Conti business using personal email addresses.

Where a member of staff receives an email from a parent (of a student under the age of 18), a reply should normally be made within one working day. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of staff should send a brief acknowledgment e-mail and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.

Staff sending emails to parents/carers are advised to send a copy (cc or bcc) to the Course Leader or Head Tutor or Safeguarding Team, as appropriate.

Staff must inform their line manager if they receive an offensive email.

Communication with students. Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with students so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to students, nor should they communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a student by telephone, they should use one of Italia Conti's telephones, withhold their personal number, or e-mail using an Italia Conti e-mail address. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take an Italia Conti mobile phone with him/her and may ask the students for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups.

The Italia Conti mobile should be used for any contact with students that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of students' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that students delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

Students – particularly those under the age of 18 – should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a student sees a member of the safeguarding and wellbeing team.

Relationships with students. Staff should understand that they are in a position of trust in relation to students, giving them influence and power by virtue of the knowledge they have and/or the authority vested in their role. Staff should ensure that their relationship with students clearly takes place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others.

Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of power, even if the child is over 16 and the relationship is consensual.

Infatuations. On occasion, students may develop an infatuation for a member of staff. If a member of staff suspects or becomes aware of an infatuation, the advice of the Course Leader and a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be sought immediately.

Other members of staff must alert a colleague to the possibility of an infatuation in order that appropriate steps can be taken.

Staff should deal with these situations sensibly and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.

Relationships between staff and former students have occasionally been known. In order to ensure an appropriate professional distance, we ask that such relationships are not pursued until a period of 6 months has elapsed after a student's graduation.

One to one situations. Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations and take reasonable and sensible precautions to ensure the safety and security of the student and themselves. Staff should refer to the separate Safe Touch Policy for further guidance.

Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and student at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.

Physical contact with students. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, particularly in a performing arts environment, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

Physical contact may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- when a student needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g. instruction or correction in a dance class; or
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an incident or injury.

Where a student may require comfort or reassurance e.g. following an accident or personal crisis it is far more preferable to refer the matter to the Welfare & Safeguarding Team than to engage in any form of physical contact.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten

or be sexually inappropriate. Staff must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background and any special educational needs.

Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with students and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by students or onlookers. For further guidance, staff should refer to the Safe Touch Policy.

Transporting students. In most cases staff should not be asked to drive individual students alone in private cars and minibuses.

Where students are transported in cars owned and driven by members of staff Italia Conti will make appropriate checks on the competency and suitability of the driver, and that there is the necessary cover for insurance in place and ensure that there are either at least 2 adults or 2 pupils during transportation.

Prior to transporting students offsite, consent must be obtained from a student's parent/guardian if they are under the age of 18, and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of students is their responsibility if they are under the age of 18.

Staff should never be alone in a vehicle with a student, except in cases of an emergency.

Contact with students outside of Italia Conti. Staff should not:

- arrange meetings with students off Italia Conti's premises without the prior approval of the Course Leader;
- arrange private tuition of any of Italia Conti's students either on or off the premises, whether in term-time or outside of term-time, without the prior written approval of a member of the Senior Leadership Team; nor
- give students their home address or any of their personal contact details.

Acceptable use of technologies. Staff should ensure that they are familiar with and comply with Italia Conti's E-mail and Internet Policy (contained in the Staff Handbook) and the Social Media Policy at all times. In particular, staff must:

- not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, Italia Conti or the Italia Conti community into disrepute;
- adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have;
- remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups;

- exercise care when using dating websites where Staff could encounter students; and
- not make contact with students, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow students' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform.
- not connect with students personally via social media or other methods of communication until at least 6 months after the student has left. It is acknowledged that, on occasions, staff may engage or work with students or recent graduates in a professional capacity outside Italia Conti. If this is the case, we ask staff to make their line manager aware. Permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

Equal treatment. We are committed to equal treatment for all staff and students regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each student. Staff will be required to undertake regular consultation activities with students e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in relevant events such as Black History Month and so on, student feedback questionnaires and course evaluation forms and speaking to students about their experiences.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our students and parents fairly and with consideration which we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the Staff and Italia Conti. Staff should ensure that they are familiar with Italia Conti's staff Equal Opportunities Policy and Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and student policies on Equal Opportunities Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Photographs. Many of our activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, productions, extracurricular activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with data protection legislation, the image of a student is personal data.

Consent is not required to use photographs/ videos for assessment purposes as such processing is necessary for the performance of the contract to provide the chosen academic programme.

Where photographs or videos are taken by staff to evidence a student's progress, photos must be downloaded onto Italia Conti's systems and deleted from personal devices. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside Italia Conti.

Low level concerns. Italia Conti is committed to engendering a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately. This is to ensure that problematic or inappropriate behaviour is identified early, the risk of abuse is minimised and that all adults working at Italia Conti are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of Italia Conti.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of Italia Conti may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

Further information about low level concerns and the reporting procedure is set out in the Italia Conti Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Concerns or complaints. Italia Conti aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in the spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur, and we have a Complaints Policy and Procedures to deal with this.

Staff complaints. Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with Italia Conti’s Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.

Student or parental complaints. Staff must ensure that student and parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with Italia Conti’s Complaints Policy.

Safeguarding. For procedures for dealing with allegations or concerns about a student or disclosures/allegations of abuse, Staff should refer to Italia Conti’s Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.