



Code of Conduct

1. Code of conduct

- 1.1 The Code of Conduct ('Code') relates to GNS Wholesale Stationers ('GNS Wholesale Stationers') and, where relevant, operates in conjunction with other policies relating to minimum standards of behaviour and conduct, the Contract of Employment or Contract for Services.

2. Commencement of the code

- 2.1 This Code will commence from June 30th 2015. It replaces all other previous codes of conduct of GNS Wholesale Stationers, if any (whether written or not).

3. Scope

- 3.1 The Code applies to all employees, agents and contractors (including temporary contractors) of GNS Wholesale Stationers, collectively referred to as 'workplace participants'.
- 3.2 The Code does not form part of any person's contract of employment. Nor does it form part of any other workplace participant's contract for services.

4. Purpose

- 4.1 GNS Wholesale Stationers recognises the importance of a work environment which actively promotes best practice. The purpose of this Code is to describe the standards of behaviour and conduct expected from workplace participants in their dealings with customers, suppliers, clients, co-workers, management and the general public.
- 4.2 GNS Wholesale Stationers expects all workplace participants to observe the standards set out in this Code. Compliance with this Code is expected and non-compliance may result in disciplinary action including the termination of employment or contract for services.

5. The code requirements

- 5.1 All workplace participants are expected to observe the highest standards of ethics, integrity and behaviour during the course of their employment or engagement with GNS Wholesale Stationers. This Code provides an overview of GNS Wholesale Stationer's fundamental business values. It is by no means exhaustive, but summarises some of [GNS]'s most important policies, which are based on standards that underlie business ethics and professional integrity, standards that apply to all workplace participants.
- 5.2 As representatives of GNS Wholesale Stationers, all workplace participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner and observe the following standards of behaviour both inside the workplace and outside

the workplace where the workplace participant can be perceived as representing GNS Wholesale Stationers:

- a) Comply with all laws, policies, procedures, rules, regulations and contracts.
- b) Comply with all lawful and reasonable directions from GNS Wholesale Stationers.
- c) Be honest and fair in dealings with customers, clients, suppliers, co-workers, management and the general public.
- d) Display the appropriate image of professionalism at the workplace. Wear the required uniform, safety equipment or work clothes, and if a workplace participant wears their own clothes, ensure their appearance is neat and tidy.
- e) Treat customers, clients, suppliers, co-workers, company management and the general public in a non-discriminatory manner with proper regard for their rights and dignity. In this regard, discrimination, victimisation or harassment based on a person's race, colour, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy or potential pregnancy, union membership or non-membership, mental or physical disability, or any other classification protected by law will not be tolerated.
- f) Promptly report any violations of law, ethical principles, policies and this Code.
- g) Maintain punctuality. If a workplace participant is late or cannot report for work, please telephone and let the supervisor know as soon as possible.
- h) Do not use work time for private gain. If a workplace participant is required to leave the work premises for personal reasons they should advise their Manager well in advance.
- i) GNS Wholesale Stationers has a legitimate interest in the private activities of workplace participants where such activities may bring disrepute upon GNS Wholesale Stationers in its relationships with customers, clients, suppliers, and the general public at large and may possibly call the workplace participant's fitness for continued employment or to provide services into question.
- j) Maintain and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out duties and responsibilities.
- k) Observe health and safety policies and obligations, and co-operate with all procedures and initiatives taken by GNS Wholesale Stationers in the interests of work health and safety.
- l) Be truthful in all dealings with persons encountered at the workplace. Workplace participants must not make false or misleading declarations during the performance of their duties or when providing services on behalf of GNS Wholesale Stationers. A declaration can be considered to be misleading if information is omitted or presented in a manner that enables a misleading view of the situation to be formed. This including failure to comply with reporting requirements and falsifying records and other documents.
- m) Refrain from any form of conduct which may cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment or give rise to the reasonable suspicion or appearance of improper conduct or biased performance.
- n) Not act for an improper or ulterior purpose to the detriment (whether perceived or actual) of GNS Wholesale Stationers.

- o) Workplace participants must not abuse the advantages of their position for private purposes, or solicit or accept any gift or benefit in connection with their employment or engagement which might compromise, or be seen to compromise their integrity or GNS Wholesale Stationer's reputation.
- p) Respect GNS Wholesale Stationer's ownership of all of its property including but not limited to funds, equipment, supplies, books, records and confidential information (however described).
- q) Maintain during employment with GNS Wholesale Stationers and after the termination of employment, the confidentiality of any confidential information, records or other materials acquired during the employment with GNS Wholesale Stationers.
- r) While employed at GNS Wholesale Stationers, not accept any employment with another organisation that is a supplier or competitor of GNS Wholesale Stationers, or any other employment that is in conflict with your position at GNS Wholesale Stationers.
- s) Not make any unauthorised statements to the media about GNS Wholesale Stationer's business (requests for media statements should be referred to the line manager).
- t) Do not fight in the workplace.
- u) Do not use inappropriate language in the workplace.
- v) Never report for work in circumstances where there is a risk that you could be affected by or 'under the influence' of illicit drugs or alcohol (e.g. if you have ingested or otherwise taken drugs or alcohol the night before or in the period leading up to your next work period). If a workplace participant is taking prescription medication, they must inform their manager at the commencement of their working day. Workplace participants may be required to produce medical evidence to prove their medication does not affect their capacity to perform their duties in a safe manner without harm to themselves or others.
- w) Do not smoke during working hours unless it is during prescribed breaks and within designated areas.
- x) work as part of a team in specific situations.

5.3 Conflict of Interest – Personal relationships

Because people spend a lot of their time at work, GNS acknowledges that it is normal for personal relationships to develop or exist between colleagues within the company from time to time.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of a personal relationship would include a romantic attachment, a close personal friendship, an immediate family member and/or a cohabitation arrangement.

Whilst this may not cause any real or serious issues between staff in different divisions or departments, if a personal relationship develops or exists between GNS employees who are in a direct reporting relationship, it is considered that there is the potential for a real or perceived conflict of interest or for unfair & preferential treatment to occur between those employees.

As such as of the 1st October 2015, any employee who has an existing personal relationship or, develops or intends to develop a direct personal relationship with

their direct line employee or manager has an obligation to divulge this information to HR or the Senior Manager in charge of their department at their earliest convenience.

Each situation will be dealt with in collaboration with the relevant senior manager and or the CEO if required, and any consequences that may occur will be based on the potential seriousness of any conflict of interest that exists or has the potential to develop. That is, any real or perceived negative impact on the business or other employees of such a relationship existing or developing will be assessed.

If possible and if warranted, changes to the reporting relationship will be made. If this is not possible based on the business need and structure, other outcomes will need to be explored which may include the termination of employment of one or both of the employees involved.

- 5.4 Also as of the 1st October 2015, GNS states that it may be unacceptable for any GNS employee to be in a personal relationship with any person who works for, intends to work for or commences working for a business that may be in direct competition with GNS Wholesale.

Due to the intensely competitive nature of this Industry, relationships of this type are considered to be a direct conflict of interest with an employee's employment based on the opportunity to share confidential information between both companies. Therefore GNS reserves the right to explore any subsequent impacts which may result in the termination of the employee's employment.

6. Issues for managers and supervisors

- 6.1 Managers and supervisors should:

- a) Promote a team spirit.
- b) Maintain confidentiality so far as is reasonably practicable when conducting investigations into grievances and disputes.
- c) Avoid bias in decision making.
- d) Ensure compliance with procedures when carrying out counselling and discipline.
- e) Exercise objectivity when administering rewards or discipline.
- f) Not condone, permit, or fail to report any breaches of the Code as outlined above by workplace participants under their supervision.

7. Breaches of this code

- 7.1 A breach of this Code may lead to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, termination of employment or services.

Variations

GNS Wholesale Stationers *reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this Code from time to time.*

Associated documents

Employee Handbook National

The following documents are associated with this Code of Conduct:

- Anti-Discrimination and EEO Policy
- Grievance Form

Code version and revision information

Code authorised by: Jason McLeod

Original issue: 5th December 2014.

Title: COO

Code maintained by: HR Manager

Current version: 2 as of 16.6.2015.

Review date: 30th June 2016.

Workplace participant acknowledgement

I acknowledge:

- *receiving the GNS Wholesale Stationers Code of Conduct;*
- *that I will comply with the Code; and*
- *that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment or contract for services.*

Workplace

participant name:

Signed:

Date:
