

Wigan Autistic Theatre: Code of Conduct.

It is the primary objective for all associated with our theatre company to ensure that the working environment – for members, volunteers and patrons – ensures a positive theatre experience.

1. Purpose

This Code is intended to promote a harmonious and respectful working environment for all Wigan Autistic Theatre members and volunteers and to ensure that the Wigan Autistic Theatre complies with the requirements of the UK Health and Safety Act 1997, relating to workplace violence and harassment. It aims to set the highest standards of service integrity, to minimise discord and to promote the resolution of conflicts among or between members, volunteers and the public.

2. Application

The code applies at all times when members and volunteers are engaged in activities at, or are representing, Wigan Autistic Theatre

3. General Expectations

Members and volunteers are expected at all times to:

Treat one another and the public with dignity, respect and hospitality;

Act with honesty, integrity and professionalism;

Observe high standards of appearance and conduct;

Avoid conflicts of interest;

Conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best traditions of the, Wigan Autistic Theatre reflects positively on our public image, and fully supports our mission and mandate.

4. Unacceptable Conduct

Conduct considered unacceptable is what most of us reasonably understand as unbecoming or inappropriate in a workplace serving the public. It includes violence. It also includes harassment of one person by another, or others, on any basis, including: race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability or any other prohibited ground of discrimination recognized under the EU Human Rights Act.

The UK Health and Safety at Work Act 1997 defines “workplace violence” as

- (a) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker,
- (b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,
- (c) A statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

It defines “workplace harassment” as engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome;

Harassment is often based on the perceptions of people – having something said or done to them that causes distress or discomfort. It can be culturally based – what is accepted in one culture may be inappropriate in another. However, one’s culture or ethnic background is not a legitimate excuse for inappropriate or unwanted behaviour or actions. Awareness and understanding of conditions causing harassment is crucial to maintaining good relationships among employees, volunteers and the public.

Harassment can include, but is not limited to, slurs, epithets, teasing, threats, verbal or physical abuse, derogatory comments or jokes, and the display or distribution of derogatory pictures or material.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following sorts of unwelcome conduct: comments or jokes of a sexual nature, the display or distribution of pornographic pictures or material, inappropriate or uninvited touch or contact, sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or, sexual assault.

Unacceptable conduct must be discouraged at all times.

5. Complaints and Reports about Unacceptable Conduct

Violence

If violence occurs or is likely to occur, those involved or witnessing it must inform the Management as soon as possible

Other forms of Unacceptable Conduct

If any other form of unacceptable conduct occurs, those involved in or witnessing it should make a reasonable effort to resolve the situation immediately. If that approach proves unsuccessful, or the behaviour continues or increases, the conduct should be reported as soon as possible to Management

Complaints

Any person who perceives that they have been subjected to unacceptable conduct and that the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, may, without delay, make a complaint in writing to the Management.

The Management of Wigan Autistic Theatre will provide an initial response within 14 working days of receiving notice of a complaint, take such action as s/he considers appropriate and report back to the complainant and respondent on the process taken to address the issue.

6. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when, in the course of a member's or volunteer's activities at Wigan Autistic Theatre, they are called upon to deal with a matter in which they have a direct or indirect personal and/or financial interest. A direct interest can occur when an individual may derive, or be seen to derive, some financial or personal benefit or avoid financial or personal loss. An indirect interest may arise when the potential benefit or loss would be experienced by another person having a relationship with the employee or volunteer. These benefits, losses, interests and relationships are generally financial in nature but may be of some other personal nature. In other words, a conflict arises when an employee participates in activities, which could advance a personal interest at the expense of Wigan Autistic Theatre interests. Any behaviour that is, or could be perceived as, a conflict is prohibited.

Some Examples of conflicts of interest are:

Giving preferential treatment to relatives, friends or associates, or to organizations or businesses of which they or their relatives, friends or associates have an interest in, financial or otherwise;

Deriving financial gain from the use of confidential information acquired in the course of their activities at Wigan Autistic Theatre

Using Wigan Autistic Theatre equipment or resources for personal purposes unrelated to Wigan Autistic Theatre

Accepting any personal gift, service or favour from any person, business or organization in recognition of their activities at Wigan Autistic Theatre, other than in the course of Wigan Autistic Theatre member or volunteer recognition events or programs or the normal exchange of hospitality.

Conflicts of interest for members of Wigan Autistic Theatre may also arise from employment or business activities outside Wigan Autistic Theatre. Subject to their membership, members may engage in these activities if they do not interfere with the performance of their duties as members of Wigan Autistic Theatre and are not otherwise incompatible with their performances/rehearsals/activities.

7. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Members or volunteers who believe they are in, or about to enter into a conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived, are to report the matter to the Management.

8. Confidentiality

Wigan Autistic Theatre Members Privacy Policy applies to information contained in, or related to, reports and complaints under this policy. Such information is confidential and may only be disclosed as necessary for dealing with the matter it concerns and in accordance with the law.