

# **University of Aberdeen Mooting Society Code of Conduct**

## **Introduction**

In every society, rules of conduct exist for the benefit of the society at large and in order to give freedom for individual members to go about their legitimate business within the bounds of behaviour which are accepted and observed by others. In common with societies within the University of Aberdeen, the Mooting Society (“the Society”) has formulated its own rules as a ‘Code of Conduct’ to define the actions and behaviour expected of the Society’s members practising in everyday student and Society life. This Code of Conduct has been drawn up to reflect the standards of conduct and work expected of all practising members. It is mandatory on all members of the Society, as defined in article 4 of the Society's Constitution and members of the Committee, as defined in article 5 of the Society’s Constitution.

## **Constitutional Authority**

The Society is an integral part of the Association, whose Societies’ Union Committee shall have full authority to ensure the proper and lawful use of the society’s resources. The Society has a constitutional obligation under article 2 to provide the best possible mock trial experience, training and opportunities. The constitutional authority for the Society’s Code of Conduct derives from formal Resolution by the Society’s Committee on [DATE].

### **1. NAME**

The name of this document shall be the University of Aberdeen Mooting Society Code of Conduct (hereinafter referred to as “the Code”).

### **2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the work of the Society. This means we commit to ensuring that there is no discrimination on the basis of any of the following: age, disability, health status (including HIV/ AIDS status), gender, marriage status parental/ caring responsibilities, race, ethnic orientation, religion or belief, sexual orientation. Discrimination on the basis of any of the above constitutes termination of membership of the Society.

### **3. BEHAVIOUR**

All members must always conduct themselves in a professional manner and abide by:

- AUSA Byelaw 11 - Code of Conduct [Included below]
- The University of Aberdeen Mooting Society Code of Conduct.

As ambassadors, members must never abuse or harm (emotional, physical, sexual, neglect or bully) members of the Society, students at the University of Aberdeen or any member of the public. When dealing with everyone whether that be members of the Society, members of the Committee, external speakers and judges, partners, suppliers, fellow members, students and others, we should all treat people fairly, competing fairly, taking the time to understand what others require and providing them with a professional response which deals with their specific requirements.

#### **4. REPUTATION**

We should never behave at work, in public or online in a manner that may damage the Society's reputation.

- a) Making public statements: We must only make statements to external sponsors, partners and invitees if the statements maintain or enhance our reputation. We should not make statements about politics or on any subject that may damage our reputation or cause a loss of confidence in the Society. This applies whether we are making comments about the Society itself, or organisations or people associated with the Society.

Only the President of the Society may talk to the media on behalf of the Society. If you believe that you need to talk to the media as a part of your role, please contact the Committee.

- b) Communicating online: Online communications include email, websites and social media such as blogs, messaging apps, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. You should always be conscious of how you may be associated with the Society in your personal online communications outside of work, and behave appropriately and in line with the Society's values. Your comments and opinions may be associated with the Society, especially if you have named the Society in your social media profile or in any prior online conversations.

Never be offensive about the Society or its activities, nor organisations or people associated with the Society, including members of the Society, Committee, external partners or sponsors. Do not reveal confidential information or disclose any information that might undermine our reputation or be considered a conflict of interest.

Communication includes in person, social media, phone and online.

## **5. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

When we are involved in any aspect of managing resources or assets, or processing or recording financial transactions, we must behave ethically and keep complete and accurate records of decisions and transactions.

## **6. PROPERTY AND ASSETS**

We are all responsible for the Society's property and assets and should take all reasonable measures to protect them from loss or damage.

We should also take precautions against other less routine risks, such as fire, water damage and adverse weather.

Information and products developed and owned by the Society, including copyright, must always be protected. Standards for managing hard copy and electronic documents and records must determine our actions.

## **7. USING FUNDS**

We must not abuse, mispend, misappropriate, defraud or pursue any personal or private matter in the use of our funds and resources.

All grants and funding from Society and non-Society sources must be used in line with the conditions that apply to them.

The delegated authorities must be followed before committing to any expenditure, supply of services or partnerships.

## **8. GIFTS, REWARDS AND PAYMENTS**

The Society, and we as individuals, must not seek advantage by giving or accepting any gifts, entertainment or payments that may be perceived as inappropriate.

Our conduct should be ethical and justifiable under scrutiny from other members of the Society and examination by the Societies' Union Committee.

## **9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

We must avoid any activities that are in conflict or competition with the Society's work or would prejudice it. A conflict of interest means a situation where your separate duties to act in the best interests of two or more Societies in the same or a related matter conflict.

Playing an active role in the community and other outside activities helps us experience and contribute to a wider world. However, we should avoid contributions that may damage or reflect badly on us. When expressing views about public or political issues in speech or writing, we should make a clear distinction between views that are our own and those of the Society, and be aware that even views expressed as personal could adversely affect the reputation of the Society by association.

You cannot act if there is an own interest conflict or a significant risk of one. An own interest conflict means: any situation where your duty to act in the best interests of the Society in relation to a matter conflicts, or where there is a significant risk that it may conflict, with your own interests in relation to that or a related matter.

We should not use our position in the Society for personal advantage or gain. This includes outside business interests or employment.

## **10. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Our conduct at the Society should not be adversely affected by close personal relationships whether with members of the Society, Committee, external invitees or others with whom we study or provide a service to.

## **11. RAISING CONCERNS**

The Society is committed to upholding the highest ethical and legal standards and has zero tolerance for malpractice or wrongdoing anywhere in the organisation. Examples of malpractice or wrongdoing include abuse, theft, fraud, false accounting, misuse of assets, receiving bribes, failing to disclose outside interests and breaches of Societies' Union requirements, as well as breaches of this Code, other Society Resolutions and the AUSA Code of Conduct.

To help us deal with this, we want people to feel that they can speak up and raise concerns about wrongdoing confidentially. For members of the Society this will normally be through the President, Vice-President or Secretary. If this is not appropriate then you should refer to the Societies' Union.

Concerns should not be raised to pursue private disputes and malicious false allegations will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

## **12. INVESTIGATING BREACHES**

Investigations including complaints will be processed in line with AUSA Byelaw 12 – Members' complaints procedure [Included below].