



## The TUIS Code of Ethics for Teachers

Each teacher employed at TUIS assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

### **The standards of professional conduct are as follows:**

1. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
2. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
3. A teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
4. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
5. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
6. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to appropriate personnel.
7. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
8. A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
9. A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.

### Code of Teacher Ethics

The purpose of the Code of Teacher Ethics is to serve as an ethical guide for teachers. The code establishes principles for ethical best practice, mindfulness, self-reflection and decision-making, setting the groundwork for self-regulation and self-accountability. There are five principles, which broadly define critical dimensions of ethical practice expected of the professional teacher each followed by performance indicators that more specifically define aspects within each principle.

### **Principle I: Responsibility to the Profession**

The professional teacher is aware that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional conduct and responsibility that may be higher than required by law.

The professional teacher demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional by:

1. Acknowledging that lack of awareness, knowledge, or understanding of the Code is not, in itself, a defense to a charge of unethical conduct;
2. Knowing and upholding the procedures, policies, laws and regulations relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views;
3. Holding oneself responsible for ethical conduct;
4. Monitoring and maintaining sound mental, physical, and emotional health necessary to perform duties and services of any professional assignment; and taking appropriate measures when personal or health-related issues may interfere with work-related duties;

5. Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community;
6. Avoiding the use of one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety;
7. Taking responsibility and credit only for work actually performed or produced, and acknowledging the work and contributions made by others.
8. The professional teacher fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues by:
9. Confronting and taking reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the Code and the implicit or explicit demands of a person;
10. Maintaining fidelity to the Code by taking proactive steps when having reason to believe that another teacher may be approaching or involved in an ethically compromising situation;
11. Neither discriminating nor retaliating against a person on the basis of having made an ethical complaint;
12. Neither filing nor encouraging frivolous ethical complaints solely to harm or retaliate.
13. Cooperating fully during ethics investigations and proceedings

The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community by:

1. Influencing and supporting decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services;
2. Engaging in respectful discourse regarding issues that impact the profession;
3. Enhancing one's professional effectiveness by staying current with ethical principles and decisions from relevant sources including professional organisations;
4. Actively participating in educational and professional organisations and associations; and
5. Advocating for adequate resources and facilities to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.

### **Principle II: Responsibility for Professional Competence**

The professional teacher is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence.

The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice through:

1. Incorporating into one's practice required standards, including those specific to one's discipline;
2. Using the Code to guide and frame educational decision-making;
3. Advocating for equitable educational opportunities for all students;
4. Accepting the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of training of one's position;
5. Reflecting upon and assessing one's professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis; and
6. Committing to ongoing professional learning.
7. The professional teacher demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, research and assessment by:
8. Appropriately recognising others' work by citing data or materials from published, unpublished, or electronic sources when disseminating information;
9. Using developmentally appropriate assessments for the purposes for which they are intended and for which they have been validated to guide educational decisions;
10. Conducting research in an ethical and responsible manner with appropriate permission and supervision;
11. Seeking and using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice;

12. Creating, maintaining, disseminating, storing, retaining and disposing of records and data relating to one's research and practice; and
13. Using data, data sources, or findings accurately and reliably.

The professional teacher acts in the best interest of all students by:

1. Increasing students' access to the curriculum, activities, and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience.
2. Working to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps; and
3. Protecting students from any practice that harms or has the potential to harm students.

### **Principle III: Responsibility to Students**

The professional teacher has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and well being of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.

The professional teacher respects the rights and dignity of students by:

1. Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting and socioeconomic context;
2. Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings;
3. Communicating with students in a clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner;
4. Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one's interactions and relationships with students;
5. Considering the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students;
6. Engaging in physical contact with students only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits the student and continually keeps the safety and well-being of the student in mind;
7. Avoiding multiple relationships with students which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to student learning or well-being or decrease teacher effectiveness;
8. Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for teachers to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students; and
9. Considering the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship of any kind with a former student, including but not limited to, any potential harm to the former student, public perception, and the possible impact on the teacher's career. The professional teacher ensures that the adult relationship was not started while the former student was in school.
10. The professional teacher demonstrates an ethic of care through:
11. Seeking to understand students' educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as students' values, beliefs, and cultural background;
12. Respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture; and
13. Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual safety of all students.

The professional teacher maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:

1. Respecting the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of student communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice;
2. Upholding parents'/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student; and
3. Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

#### **Principle IV: Responsibility to the School Community**

The professional teacher promotes positive relationships and effective interactions, with members of the school community, while maintaining professional boundaries.

The professional teacher promotes effective and appropriate relationships with parents/guardians by:

1. Communicating with parents/guardians in a timely and respectful manner that represents the students' best interests;
2. Demonstrating a commitment to equality, equity, and inclusion as well as respecting and accommodating diversity among members of the school community;
3. Considering the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to parents/guardians; and
4. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality with respect to student information disclosed by or to parents/guardians unless required by law.

The professional teacher promotes effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues by:

1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise;
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully;
3. Keeping student safety, education, and health paramount by maintaining and sharing educational records appropriately and objectively;
4. Collaborating with colleagues in a manner that supports academic achievement and related goals that promote the best interests of students;
5. Enhancing the professional growth and development of new teachers by supporting effective field experiences, mentoring or induction activities across the career continuum;
6. Ensuring that teachers who are assigned to participate as mentors for new educators, cooperating teachers, or other teacher leadership positions are prepared and supervised to assume these roles;
7. Ensuring that educators are assigned to positions in accordance with their educational credentials, preparation, and experience in order to maximize students' opportunities and achievement; and
8. Working to ensure a workplace environment that is free from harassment.

The professional teacher promotes effective and appropriate relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:

1. Advocating for policies and laws that the educator supports as promoting the education and well-being of students and families;
2. Collaborating with community agencies, organisations, and individuals in order to advance students' best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration; and
3. Maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school within the community and in public communications.

The professional teacher promotes effective and appropriate relationships with employers by:

1. Using property, facilities, materials, and resources in accordance with policies;
2. Respecting intellectual property ownership rights (e.g. original lesson plans, curricula, syllabi, gradebooks, etc.) when sharing materials;
3. Exhibiting personal and professional conduct that is in the best interest of the organisation, learning community, school community, and profession; and
4. Considering the implications of offering or accepting gifts and/or preferential treatment by vendors or an individual in a position of professional influence or power.

The professional teacher understands the problematic nature of multiple relationships by:

1. Considering the risks that multiple relationships might impair objectivity and increase the likelihood of harm to students' learning and well-being or diminish educator effectiveness;
2. Considering the risks and benefits of a professional relationship with someone with whom the educator has had a past personal relationship and vice versa;
3. Considering the implications and possible ramifications of engaging in a personal or professional relationship with parents and guardians, student teachers, colleagues, and supervisors; and
4. Ensuring that professional responsibilities to other staff members do not interfere with responsibilities to students, their learning, and well-being.

#### **Principle V: Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology**

The professional teacher considers the impact of consuming, creating, distributing and communicating information through all technologies. The ethical teacher is vigilant to ensure appropriate boundaries of time, place and role are maintained when using electronic communication.

The professional teacher uses technology in a responsible manner by:

1. Using social media responsibly, transparently, and primarily for purposes of teaching and learning. The professional teacher considers the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology on one's interactions with students, colleagues, and the general public;
2. Staying abreast of current trends and uses of school technology;
3. Promoting the benefits of and clarifying the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members;
4. Knowing how to access, document and use proprietary materials and understanding how to recognise and prevent plagiarism by students and educators;
5. Understanding the implications of the use of technology and communication;
6. Consider the implications of sharing sensitive information electronically either via professional or personal devices/accounts; and
7. Exercising prudence in maintaining separate and professional virtual profiles, keeping personal and professional lives distinct.

The professional teacher ensures students' safety and well-being when using technology by:

1. Being vigilant in identifying, addressing and reporting inappropriate and illegal materials/images in electronic or other forms;

2. Respecting the privacy of students' presence on social media unless given consent to view such information or if there is a possibility of evidence of a risk of harm to the student or others; and
3. Monitoring to the extent practical and appropriately reporting information concerning possible cyber bullying incidents and their potential impact on the student learning environment.

The professional teacher maintains confidentiality in the use of technology by:

1. Taking appropriate and reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of electronic or computer technology;
2. Understanding the rights of privacy and how it applies to sharing electronic student records; and
3. Ensuring that the rights of third parties, including the right of privacy, are not violated via the use of technologies.

The professional teacher promotes the appropriate use of technology in educational settings by:

1. Advocating for equal access to technology for all students;
2. Promoting the benefits of and clarifying the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members; and

Promoting technological applications (a) that are appropriate for students' individual needs, (b) that students understand how to use and (c) that assist and enhance the teaching and learning process.