

# Integrity Code

## Esprit Schools

Amsterdam, approved by the Executive Board after the approval of the Joint Participation Council dated 23 October 2014

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# 1 Introduction

The Behavioural and Integrity Code in front of you applies to Esprit schools.

This code is intended for everyone employed by Esprit and who works for Esprit, both internally and externally: employees, trainee teachers, those on internships, temporary workers, guest lecturers and volunteers. Esprit expects externally contracted parties to act in accordance with this code when fulfilling tasks for which they were contracted. To behave or act with integrity is defined as carrying out your function or contracted task openly and transparently, taking into consideration your responsibilities and the applicable rules, and with respect towards others. Where no rules apply, you assess and act in a way that is morally responsible, on the basis of generally accepted social and ethical norms. You accept responsibility for your own actions, you are accountable for your behaviour and you call others to account for their behaviour.

The code provides a framework for interpreting, assessing and weighing up whether behaviour is or is not acceptable. For instance, how one deals with gifts from parents and business contacts, and with private use of a telephone and computer, or how to deal with businesses when you are responsible for purchasing and how you deal with colleagues who act without integrity.

Esprit subscribes to - and also hereby implements - an important aspect of the national Code of good educational administration, which was drawn up in August 2011 for primary and secondary education.

Esprit schools are well known in Amsterdam. Esprit stands for high-quality education that is results-oriented, international and dynamic. The group of schools is made up of eleven schools, each with their own education profile and culture of learning. The breadth of education available includes primary, secondary - from practical training to grammar schools, including bilingual HAVO<sup>1</sup> and VWO<sup>2</sup> - and international education. The employees are dedicated and contribute wherever possible to fulfilling an important social task: preparing young people, by providing good education, for their full participation in society as responsible citizens.

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<sup>1</sup> Senior General Secondary Education

<sup>2</sup> Pre-university education

## 2 Integrity and the Education Manifesto 2013-2017 of Esprit Schools

It is Esprit's ambition to be a professional organization with skilled professionals. Professionals who are characterized by responsibility and quality, by loyalty and integrity. Esprit has the following to say in the Education Manifesto:

*We do our work with integrity and care. We conduct ourselves in compliance with the laws and regulations that apply to our educational sector, and we do our very best to be a credit to our profession and sector. The 6 cornerstones of our Educational Manifesto serve as a motivating and moral basis for understanding and accepting our responsibility for our role and for making our contribution to Amsterdam society. The item 'Integrity' is one of the six cornerstones on which our Education Manifesto is constructed.*

*Esprit believes that transparency and accountability are intrinsic values for putting public resources to responsible and effective use.*

*Esprit aspires to a culture in which it is logical and normal that during working hours a person's own interest is outweighed by the interest of the students and the school. We believe that a culture in which a person favours themselves or others is improper.*

*We call one another to account about matters that involve integrity. We do this top-down, bottom-up and also, of course, directly between colleagues.*

## 3 Esprit Schools Integrity Code - values and rules of the game

### 3.1 Values

As touchstone for integrity Esprit adopts the basic values of Openness & Transparency, Accountability, Respect and Social Involvement

#### a. Openness & transparency

Esprit defines openness as being receptive to the opinions of others and to new experiences. Being open also means offering full disclosure about yourself and being forthcoming about your own opinions. Being open also means transparency, verifiability where necessary, accessibility when it is requested. A learning organization is an open organization in which colleagues dare to call one another to account about matters.

#### b. Accountability

A learning organization also demands that everyone is given and accepts the accountability that is in keeping with his or her role and function. Everyone must therefore be prepared to account for the way in which he or she exercises this accountability. Personal accountability is impossible without open and active participation. Responsibility is impossible without accountability.

#### c. Respect

Esprit defines respect firstly as avoiding damage being afflicted on people or matters. But respect also means in particular showing respect to other people.

#### d. Attention to Society

Esprit expects its employees to pay attention to and participate in the social environment. Today's student in Amsterdam is tomorrow's world citizen. This is why it is Esprit's ambition to deploy the abundance of cultural diversity to realise greater social cohesion and active world citizenship. Internationalisation offers more opportunities for the future, is a differentiator and attractive to students and parents.

## 3.2 Rules of the game for all who are employed by - or work for - Esprit

These rules of the game are public. Persons who are employed by - or work for - Esprit receive a copy of the rules of the game upon commencement of their work. In cases not covered by the rules, or where their application is not unequivocal or leads to manifest unfairness, the executive board decides. If any doubt exists or if you feel you are faced with a dilemma, you should initially approach the school's management.

### a. Respectful interaction and respectful behaviour towards one another and towards third parties

Respect means in particular showing respect to other people.

Respect is treating another person in the same way as you would like to be treated. For Esprit respect is also showing care and diligence in dealing with matters that come to an employee's attention or that belong to someone else, to society or to the organization. Esprit demands a respectful, representative attitude.

### b. Keeping private and work separate: we keep private matters and work separate

*-Personal relationships:* Where professionals work together, relationships may develop, or may already exist, that go further than a professional relationship. A non-professional, personal relationship at work can lead to problems. The perception of conflicts of interest, or the possibility thereof, and favouritism are not entirely inconceivable. The manager should be notified about the development or existence of a non-professional, personal relationship with a colleague. Consideration can then be given to each individual situation as to whether suitable measures are needed, and if so which. Openness and good communication are extremely important in this type of situation.

*-Personal interests:* Employees of Esprit schools are not allowed to have a direct or indirect private interest in the allocation of work or the supply of goods and services to Esprit. The rules that apply to ancillary activities are as indicated per collective agreement.

*-Employees of Esprit schools are not allowed to use personnel or material or immaterial property of their employer for their own benefit. In respect of ICT, you are requested to refer to the ICT user regulations for students and employees.*

*-Personal data may be processed by educational institutions. Esprit strictly observes the privacy rules that apply to educational institutions. These document how schools should deal with the processing of these data, the provision of data, the right of inspection and the retention obligation.*

### **c. Gifts and gratuities**

An employee is allowed to accept and keep a gift or gratuity whose value is less than €50, given as an incidental recognition of a service rendered in the form of, e.g., a bouquet of flowers or a bottle of wine, as long as he/she reports it to his/her manager. Except in the case of specific school customs and in exceptional situations, gifts and gratuities in excess of the above-mentioned sum are always submitted, for assessment by the school principal, and with the approval of the Executive Board, to the school management. The school management will then decide upon an appropriate use. In principle, gifts and courtesies at Christmas and New Year are collected per school and raffled off among all employees of the school. Gifts and gratuities may not be offered nor accepted in return for having brought about a business relationship between Esprit and third parties.

### **d. Excursions, work-related visits, study trips, congresses and events**

Invitations for excursions, work-related visits, study trips, congresses and events are never accepted by way of reciprocation. An invitation must be within the bounds of what is reasonable. Ultimately it is up to the manager to decide whether an invitation is within the bounds of what is reasonable or is no longer acceptable for the school. Furthermore, participation in this type of activities must be functional and in the interest of carrying out one's function. If this is not the case, but participation could still be useful, whether an exception can be made should be decided in consultation with the manager. In any case full openness must exist regarding the activity in which participation is being offered.

### **e. Lunches, dinners and receptions.**

Participation in lunches, dinners or receptions at the invitation of the organization's business contacts must be functional. The manager should be informed about the invitation, where possible in advance. Such invitations must in any case remain within the bounds of what is reasonable. An invitation will not be accepted in a case involving current negotiating situations. Invitations may not be offered nor accepted in return for having brought about a business relationship between Esprit and third parties.

### **f. Carrying out incidental activities for third parties during working hours.**

Requests to incidentally carry out activities for third parties, for example, hold a speech or make a presentation, should be put to the manager in advance for approval. If this involves payment in kind, for example a book voucher, this may be kept if its value does not exceed €50. If the value exceeds €50, then it must be handed over to the manager. Payments in cash or gift vouchers shall revert to the organization in so far as these exceed a sum of €50.

### **g. Conflict of interests and awarding contracts**

Employees who maintain more or less personal contact with one of Esprit's (potential) contractors may not participate in decision-making on allocating contracts to that

contractor. Esprit observes General Purchasing Conditions for the supply of goods and services.

An employee of Esprit Schools may not be simultaneously hired as an 'external employee' or contractor to carry out work for Esprit.

#### **h. Job performance, ancillary activities, secrecy, intellectual property and security**

For the above-mentioned topics, the provisions apply as recorded in the Collective Agreement for Primary Education (CAO PO) and in the Collective Agreement for Secondary Education (CAO VO).

## 4 Use of the Integrity Code

### a. Reporting transgressive behaviour

If you are of the opinion someone has behaved in a way that is contrary to this code, then you should discuss the matter with your school manager (if the school-related matter does not involve the school manager).

If it is a report that involves the school manager, or it is of a nature that transcends the school, then you should contact the Chairman of the Executive Board.

If it is a report that involves the Executive Board, then you can contact the Supervisory Board.

### b. Submitting a complaint or objection

The legislature has given all those involved in education a right to complain. For information, see the “Complaints Procedure of the Esprit Association of Schools”. Complaints could be about, for instance, the guidance of students, the use of punitive measures, assessment of students or about undesirable behaviour (namely: sexual intimidation, discriminating behaviour, aggression, violence and bullying). The suspicion of a sexual crime involves a statutory obligation to disclose and a notification requirement.

### c. Disclosure - cases of abuse

In the event of abuse or the suspicion of abuse: if a suspicion is based on reasonable grounds, then it is also possible to make use of “Esprit’s Regulations on Reporting Abuse”. These regulations apply to:

- violating laws or policies
- misleading the judiciary
- a danger to public health, safety or the environment, or
- consciously withholding information about these crimes in situations that could possibly lead to abuse
- an offence

### d. Measures that apply when the rules of play are broken

If an employee (or someone else who works at or for Esprit) acts contrary to this code, it is a serious matter. Measures will be taken, depending on the seriousness. These could lead to a disciplinary measure against an employee, possibly involving discharge, or terminating the collaboration.

## 5 Lastly

For the sake of completeness, Esprit reminds you of the existence of the (external) Confidential Advisors. You can enlist the help of a Confidential Advisor within the framework of situations similar to those described in this Integrity Code.

The Esprit Schools Integrity Code was drawn up in consultation with the MT.  
This code was approved by the Joint Participation Council on 7 October 2014.  
The code was approved by Esprit's Executive Board on 23.10.2014  
after the approval of the Supervisory Board on .....