



**Republic of Somaliland,  
Ministry of Education**

**Teachers' Code of Conduct  
&  
Professional Ethics**

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# Teachers Code of Conduct And Professional Ethics

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## **Acronym**

<b>CEC</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Community Education Committee</b>
<b>CoC</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Code of Conduct</b>
<b>CRC</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Child Rights Convection</b>
<b>DEO</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>District Education Officer</b>
<b>H/Teacher</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
<b>HTP</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Harmful Traditional Practice</b>
<b>MoE</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Ministry of Education</b>
<b>REO</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Regional Education Officer</b>
<b>TVET</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Technical Vocational Education Training</b>

# **Teachers' Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics**

## **Introduction**

The Ministry of Education of Somaliland (MoE) recognizes that the capabilities and conduct of teachers greatly affect the quality of education provided to students in the public and private schools. Students deserve and the general public expects each teacher to demonstrate a commitment to excellence, equity and effectiveness in performing the roles and responsibilities of a teacher.

Teaching profession is to guide children, youth and adults in the pursuit of knowledge and skills, to prepare them in ways of democracy and to help them to become happy, useful, self-supporting citizens. The ultimate strength of the nation lies in the social responsibility, economic competence and moral strength of the individual.

The role model provided by teachers is an important influence on the ethical and behaviour of students. However, codes and professional ethics can be an effective supplement to ethical teaching practices and a valuable means by which teachers can foster ethical conduct.

Government has taken basic policy measures to facilitate smooth implementation of the education system. National Education Policy, National Education Act (2009), National NFE Policy (2004), National Teacher Policy (draft), TVET Policy, ABE implementation guideline etc. are some of the policy documents in place.

Taking the fast expansion of the education systems and its working force, it is time that the government puts in place a teacher's code of conduct and professional ethics which will establish beliefs, values attitudes to be accepted and followed by all teachers and stakeholders.

## **Objectives**

- To enhance equitable and inclusive access to quality of education through nurturing teacher professionalism in Somaliland
- Acknowledge that code of conduct upholds and promotes basic human rights

- To be responsive to the existing social, cultural, child rights and religious values of Somaliland
- To emphasise and encourage improvements in individual conduct
- To define appropriate standards of conduct for teachers in the public and private schools in Somaliland
- To clarify the code and ethics of the teaching profession
- To inspire the quality of behaviour which reflects the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- To encourage and emphasize those positive attributes of professional conduct that characterise strong and effective teaching
- To enable teachers to appraise and reflect on their ethical decisions

## **Definitions**

**Teaching** is a profession with its own standards, values and practices that all teachers are expected to adhere to and practice.

**Ethics** is a branch of philosophy that deals with the theory of value.

**Ethics of the teaching profession** are the moral beliefs and roles about right and wrong that influence teachers' behaviour, attitude and ideal.

**Code of Conduct** can be defined as a written principles or standards of right conduct. Code of conduct can also contain values, rules and guidelines.

In Somaliland context, it is behaviour, attitude and character exhibited for by anyone within and outside the working environment. The standards of conduct generally required of any teacher in Somaliland would be leadership, selflessness, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting work and status of the teaching profession.

## Principles

The guiding principles are categorized under six major subtopics. These subtopics are as listed below:

### **Principal 1: Teacher and Pupil/Learner**

The primary professional obligation of teachers, in Somaliland context, is to guide children, youth and adult in the pursuit of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to prepare society committed to the preservation and enrichment of cultural values and traditions based on genuine Islamic principles and also to help them to become happy, useful and self-supporting citizens with good conduct. There are acceptable moral values and behaviours that teachers are expected to practice and behave as models and respectable members of the society. These values include honesty, discipline, free from any form of unacceptable addiction, neatness, etc. On the other hand, there are professional or work ethics that teachers are required to follow in their work places. These include among other things, regular preparation, professional development, regular assessment of learners, cooperation with other colleagues and fairness to all children, etc.

In fulfilling the obligation of the first principle;

#### ***The teacher will:***

- (1) Deal justly and impartially with pupils regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, political, economic, social, racial or religious (Islamic) practices
- (2) Accept diversity and recognize the differences among pupils and seek to meet their individual needs
- (3) Encourage pupils to formulate and work for high individual goals in the development of their physical, intellectual, creative and spiritual endowments
- (4) Avoid insulting, use of foul or vulgar language that may injure pupils self esteem in and out of school.
- (5) Be a role model to be imitated to by pupils in displaying good disposition, dressing neatly in community accepted styles/normal hair cutting, speaking politely with audible tones and kind fatherly attitudes

- (6) Not practice bad habits particularly smoking and chewing Kat in school compound and in public places on pupils presence
- (7) Abstain from any form of physical and psychological punishment against pupils
- (8) Refrain from unacceptable close relationship with his/her pupils, specifically grown up girls, that may arouse suspicion or lead to be linked to bad intension or any form of child abuse.
- (9) Assist pupils to develop an understanding and appreciation not only opportunities and benefits of positive democracy but also of the obligations to it
- (10) Respect the right of every pupil to have confidential information about himself/herself withheld except when its release to authorized agencies or it required by law
- (11) Set assessments/exams fairly and correct/record justly pupils' scores and performance evaluations
- (12) Accept no remuneration for tutoring by enhancing students academic performances except in accordance with approved policies of the government and communities
- (13) Understand and efficiently apply inclusive education guides, cross cutting issues in education (HIV/AIDS, HTP), gender consideration, equity and equality of pupils, CRC principles and be able to provide particular care for children with special needs/disabilities
- (14) Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the children
- (15) Mobilization of students to make riots/demonstrations which are not peaceful and have political motives are considered as crime
- (16) Rape/sexual harassment of school girls is a crime

## **Principle 2: Teacher and the Parents**

The teachers share with parents the task of shaping each pupil's purposes and behaviour towards socially acceptable ends. The effectiveness of many methods of teaching is dependent upon cooperative relationships within the parents.

In fulfilling the obligations of the second principle;

### ***The teacher will:***

- (1) Respect the basic responsibilities of parents for their children
- (2) Seek to establish friendly and cooperative relationships with parents
- (3) Help to increase the pupils' confidence in his/her home/parents and afford disparaging and discouraging remarks which undermine that confidence
- (4) Provide parents with information that will serve the best interests of their children, and be discreet with information received from parents
- (5) Seek pupils behaviour and activities at home and keep parents regularly informed about the progress, punctuality, weaknesses, strengths and inherent talents of their children as interpreted in terms of the learning purposes
- (6) Try to solve patiently and wisely any issue arising against his/her personal dignity. Parents should avoid believing everything but ensure the validity of what is told from teachers before taking any measures
- (7) Promote good relationships with parents and recognize them as partners

## **Principle 3: Teacher and Community**

The teaching profession occupies a position of public trust involving not only the individual teacher's personal conduct, but also, the interaction of the school and the community. Education is most effective when these many relationships operate in a friendly, cooperative and constructive manner.

In fulfilling the obligation of the third principle;

***The teacher will:***

- (1) Adhere to any reasonable pattern of behaviour affected by the community for professional persons
- (2) Perform the duties of citizenship and participate in community activities with due consideration for his obligations to his/her peoples, his/her family and himself/herself
- (3) Discuss controversial issues from an objective point of view, thereby keeping his/her class free from partisan opinions
- (4) Play the role of community leader/social developer and demonstrate good behaviour and accepted best norms deemed by the society including adopting all required good Islamic practices such as praying.
- (5) Recognize that publicly supported schools belong to the people of the community, encourage participation in shaping the purpose of the school and strive to keep the public informed of the educational program which is being provided
- (6) Respect the community in which he/she is employed and be loyal to the school system, community, region, MoE and nation
- (7) Take active part in community conflict resolutions and work to improve education in the community and to strengthen the community's moral, spiritual and intellectual life
- (8) Play major role in community mobilization and sensitization activities to empower the sense of ownership, school improving plans and sustainability
- (9) Follow and respect the religion, norms, customs and traditions of the community which he/she belongs to, or is a teacher for their children

**Principle 4: Teacher and Employer (MoE/Private Sector)**

Teachers have inescapable obligations with respect to employment. These obligations are nearly always shared employer-employee responsibilities based upon mutual respect and good faith. It should be kept in mind that teachers

will effectively apply and efficiently adopt professionally teachers' codes of conduct and ethics that are in place if teacher' needs are met and quality education services will be delivered if required resources availed.

In fulfilling the obligations of the fourth principle;

***The teacher will:***

- (1) Have to fulfil the established selection criteria which include:
  - Mentally fit
  - Good education background (Minimum of secondary education or equivalent)
  - Free from use of drugs (e.g. smoking, chewing, drinking alcohol, etc
  - Practice Islamic Principles
  - Professional trust
  - Nationalistic spirit
  - Somaliland citizen
- (2) Conduct professional work ethics through the proper channels.
- (3) Refrain from discussing confidential and official information with an unauthorised persons
- (4) Apply for employment on the basis of competence only, and avoid asking for specific position known to be filled by another teacher
- (5) Seek employment in a professional manner, avoiding such practices as the indiscriminate distribution of applications
- (6) Refuse to accept a position when a vacancy has been created through unprofessional activity or pending controversy over professional policy or the application of unjust personal practices and procedures
- (7) Adhere to the conditions of the contract until a service under it has been terminated by mutual consent or the contract has otherwise been legally terminated

- (8) Give and expect due notice before a change of position is to be made
- (9) Be fair in all recommendations that are given concerning the work of other teachers
- (10) Engage in no gainful employment outside of his/her contract where the employment affects adversely his/her professional status or impairs his/her standing with pupils, associates and the community
- (11) Cooperate in the development of the school policies and assume his/her professional obligations thereby incurred
- (12) Welcome supervision, monitoring and evaluation activities from his/her line supervisors
- (13) Expect to get periodical performance appraisals and compensations, increment, promotion and termination benefits based on merit from his/her employer (Government/Private Sector)
- (14) Accept his/her obligations to the employing body (Government/ Private Sector) for maintaining a professional level of service
- (15) Receive appropriate disciplinary measures if he/she commits misconducts or serious misconducts against pupils, other teachers/school administrators, parents/CECs or school regulations
- (16) Recognize the employer as a partner
- (17) Acknowledge that employer has responsibility and authority and the right to serve for the employer to the best of his/her ability

### **Principle 5: Teacher and Profession**

The teaching profession is distinguished from many other occupations by the uniqueness and quality of the professional relationships among all teachers, community support and respect are influenced by the standards of teachers and their attitudes towards teaching and other teachers.

In fulfilling the obligations of the fifth principle;

***The teacher will:***

- (1) Deal with other teachers of the profession in the same manner as he/she himself/herself wishes to be treated
- (2) Stand by other teachers who have acted on behalf of his/her request
- (3) Speak constructively of other teachers, but report honestly to responsible persons in matters involving the welfare of pupils, the school system and the profession
- (4) Maintain active membership in legally allowed professional organizations/associations and through participation strive to attain the objectives that justify such organized groups
- (5) Seek to make a professional growth continues by such procedures as strengthening mastery of subject matter through planned training, improving teaching/learning modern approaches and techniques, continuous study, computer literacy, research, travel, conferences and attendance at professional meetings
- (6) Be proactive, initiate positive changes and make the teaching profession so attractive in ideals and practices that able young people will like to enter it
- (7) Acknowledge that his/her duties require cooperation with and support of colleagues
- (8) Accept that he/she has a professional obligation towards education and to induct new members into teaching profession
- (9) Contribute to the development and promotion of sound educational policy
- (10) Speak out if the behaviour of a colleague is seriously in breach of this code
- (11) Assist the new comers to the profession.

## **Misconducts**

### ***Introductions***

The education of the pupils of this country has been largely entrusted into the hands of the Ministry of Education of Somaliland. MoE takes responsibility which requires exceptionally high standard of behaviour and conduct

***Code of conduct*** in this context is behaviour, attitudes and character exhibited for example, by anyone within and outside the working environment. The standards of conduct generally required of any member of Somaliland Ministry of Education would be leadership, integrity, impartiality, fairness and honesty in matters affecting by work and status of the teaching profession.

The code is classified into minor and serious/major misconducts. Also penalties prescribed for various acts under misconducts are classified into minor or major penalties.

The misconducts identified by the interviewed target groups (children, teachers, H/teachers, parents/CEC, REOs/DEOs/Supervisors, elders and religious leaders and MoE high ranking officials) are classified into two categories:

- I. Serious misconducts
- II. Minor misconducts

### **I. Serious/major misconducts:**

#### **A) *Criminal Offences:***

1. Fighting with weapons in school compound
2. Stealing school properties
3. Rape/sexual harassment of school girls
4. Carrying weapons like guns, pistols, swords, daggers, clubs, etc. into the school

5. Forging school documents and stamps
6. Being a member of illegal associations, unions, organizations, etc.
7. Mobilization of students to perform public demonstrations/riots which are not peaceful and have political motives

**Non-criminal Offences:**

1. Smoking in the classroom or school compound
2. Chewing Kat in the school compound
3. Insulting pupils and using vulgar language
4. Use corporal punishment
5. Violating school rules and regulations
6. Harsh, aggressive and unfriendly
7. Seductive attitudes/relationships with girls
8. Taking bribes during exams
9. Impartiality/unfairness
10. Discrimination against pupils on the grounds, disability, health status, socio-economic status, minorities, etc.
11. Favouritism – giving one pupil more favoured than others
12. Absenteeism – for more than two weeks without justification
13. Unauthorised collection of money, fees from the students without the permission of MoE
14. Practice of uncultured behaviour, customs, norms and any other acts against the Islamic Religion
15. Being a member of illegal associations/unions/organizations, etc.
16. Physical fighting without fatal weapons between teachers in the school

## **Minor Misconducts**

1. Unjustifiable absence from his/her classes for more than a week
2. No lesson plan
3. Neglect to students teaching/learning activities
4. Not completing the syllabus
5. Not serious about setting, correcting and scoring the exams
6. Not following rules and regulations of the school
7. Notion of being temporary teaching profession
8. Poor relations with students
9. Poor relations with H/teachers/parents/CECs
10. Not attending teachers' meeting
11. Not cooperating with others
12. Misuse of school documents, textbooks and other equipments
13. Practice of uncultured behaviour, customs, norms and acts against Islamic Religion

## **Disciplinary Action**

Any one of the above mentioned misconducts may be imposed on an employee/teacher

For any of the major and minor misconduct, the disciplinary committees from different levels of MoE may consider appropriate and deal with it.

Disciplinary actions that may be imposed on the offenders of serious and minor misconducts are as outlined below:

## **Major Misconducts**

- A. ***Criminal Offences***: In accordance with Civil Service Law/Labour Code, *these cases should be submitted to police/courts*
- B. ***Non-criminal Offences***: In accordance with Civil Service Law/Labour Code, these offences will be dealt by School, DEO, REO and MoE disciplinary committees

## **Minor Misconducts**

In accordance with the Civil Service Law/Labour Code, these minor misconducts will be also dealt by school, DEO, REO and MoE disciplinary committees.

In accordance with Civil Service Law/Labour Code, the penalties for the various above mentioned minor misconducts are as follows:

- I. Warning (written once or twice)
- II. Suspension (for specified period)
- III. Fine (for reasonable amount money)
- IV. Disciplinary transfer
- V. Dismissal

## **Levels of authority/board/committee for imposing penalties are as outlined below:**

- 1. School Level
  - Head teacher and school disciplinary committee
- 2. District
  - DEO – district disciplinary committee
- 3. Regional
  - Regional disciplinary committee
- 4. National
  - MoE – MoE disciplinary committee

There shall be MoE disciplinary board/committee that shall consist of the DG as a chairman and department directors will be members of the disciplinary committee who will handle all disciplinary issues that the Director General may refer to it and make decisions and then report to Minister of Education for further consideration

### **Compliance**

This Teachers Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics is compatible and will not be in conflict with the existing professional codes such as the Code of Conduct of Somaliland Civil Service, Labour Code, etc.