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Version 1 – 01.06.2026	<i>Georgie Mann</i>	On behalf of the Senior Management Team

## Professional Standards Policy

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## 1. Purpose

Heritage Skills Academy is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical conduct in all aspects of its work.

This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all employees, associates, contractors, volunteers, governors, and anyone acting on behalf of the Academy. It supports our commitment to delivering high-quality apprenticeship training in historic motor vehicle restoration, maintenance, conservation, and associated heritage skills while safeguarding learners and maintaining public confidence.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Freelance trainers and assessors
- Contractors and consultants
- Volunteers
- Directors, trustees, and governors
- Anyone representing Heritage Skills Academy in a professional capacity

## 3. Professional Values

All individuals working for or representing Heritage Skills Academy are expected to demonstrate:

### Integrity

- Acting honestly, fairly, and ethically.
- Being trustworthy and accountable for decisions and actions.
- Declaring any conflicts of interest.
- Using HSA resources responsibly.

### Respect

- Treating learners, employers, colleagues, and visitors with dignity and respect.
- Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Valuing different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

### Professionalism

- Maintaining high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- Acting as positive role models for learners.
- Demonstrating reliability, punctuality, and preparedness.
- Taking responsibility for personal performance and development.

### Excellence

- Striving for continuous improvement.

- Maintaining current industry and educational knowledge.
- Delivering high-quality teaching, learning, assessment, and support.

#### **4. Expected Standards of Conduct**

Staff and representatives of Heritage Skills Academy must:

- Comply with all HSA policies and procedures.
- Follow all safeguarding and Prevent Duty requirements.
- Behave professionally at all times.
- Communicate respectfully and appropriately.
- Maintain professional boundaries with learners.
- Promote a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- Report concerns promptly through appropriate channels.
- Cooperate with quality assurance and regulatory requirements.

Individuals must not:

- Engage in bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation.
- Abuse their position of trust.
- Use inappropriate, offensive, or discriminatory language.
- Engage in behaviour that may bring HSA into disrepute.
- Misuse Academy property, systems, or confidential information.

#### **5. Relationships with Learners**

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries with learners at all times.

This includes:

- Treating all learners fairly and consistently.
- Avoiding favouritism.
- Communicating through approved HSA channels wherever possible.
- Maintaining appropriate professional relationships.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately.

Staff must not:

- Enter into inappropriate personal or intimate relationships with learners.
- Engage in conduct that could be interpreted as grooming or exploitation.
- Share inappropriate content through social media, messaging services, or electronic communications.
- Accept gifts or hospitality that could compromise professional judgement.

#### **6. Safeguarding Responsibilities**

All staff share responsibility for safeguarding learners.

Staff are expected to:

- Complete mandatory safeguarding and Prevent training.
- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, or harm.
- Report concerns immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Failure to comply with safeguarding requirements may result in disciplinary action.

## **7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Heritage Skills Academy is committed to creating a culture that values diversity and promotes inclusion.

All staff are expected to:

- Support equal opportunities.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- Foster an environment of mutual respect.
- Ensure that learners are treated fairly regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

## **8. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Standards**

Those involved in teaching, assessing, mentoring, or supporting learners must:

- Deliver learning that meets awarding organisation and apprenticeship requirements.
- Prepare effectively for learning sessions.
- Assess learners fairly and consistently.
- Maintain accurate and timely records.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Promote learner progress and achievement.
- Participate in observation, quality assurance, and continuous improvement activities.

Staff are expected to maintain appropriate occupational competence within their specialist areas, including historic motor vehicle restoration and heritage engineering skills.

## **9. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Individuals must:

- Handle personal and sensitive information appropriately.
- Comply with UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation.
- Maintain confidentiality unless disclosure is required for safeguarding, legal, or regulatory reasons.
- Use HSA systems securely.

Confidential information must not be disclosed without proper authority.

## 10. Use of Social Media and Technology

Staff should ensure that personal and professional use of social media does not compromise the reputation of Heritage Skills Academy.

Staff must:

- Use professional judgement when posting online.
- Protect confidential information.
- Maintain professional boundaries with learners.
- Avoid content that could damage public confidence in the Academy.

The Academy reserves the right to investigate conduct on social media where it affects professional standards.

## 11. Continuous Professional Development

Heritage Skills Academy is committed to maintaining a highly skilled workforce.

Staff are expected to:

- Participate in continuing professional development (CPD).
- Maintain industry knowledge and occupational competence.
- Engage with quality improvement activities.
- Reflect on and improve their professional practice.

CPD activities may include:

- Industry placements and updates.
- Heritage vehicle sector training.
- Teaching and assessment qualifications.
- Safeguarding, Prevent, and compliance training.
- Attendance at professional events and networks.

## 12. Conflicts of Interest

Individuals must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could influence decision-making or compromise professional judgement.

Examples include:

- Personal relationships with learners or employers.
- Financial interests in organisations connected to HSA activities.
- Secondary employment that may conflict with HSA responsibilities.

## 13. Breaches of Professional Standards

Any breach of this policy may be investigated and addressed through HSA disciplinary procedures.

Examples of serious breaches include:

- Safeguarding failures.
- Dishonesty or fraud.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Abuse of professional position.
- Serious misconduct affecting learners or the reputation of HSA.
- Deliberate breaches of confidentiality.

## 14. Responsibilities

### Senior Management Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of professionalism.
- Monitoring compliance with this policy.
- Providing appropriate training and support.

### Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Modelling professional behaviour.
- Addressing concerns promptly.
- Supporting staff development.

### Staff and Representatives

All staff and representatives are responsible for:

- Understanding and complying with this policy.
- Maintaining professional standards.
- Reporting concerns or breaches appropriately.

## 15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, regulatory requirements, or organisational changes require amendment.

## 16. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with HSA's related policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy