

BY-LAW E

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS ENGAGING WITH OR UNDERTAKING ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY

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INTRODUCTION

1. About the British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society

Established by its foundation meeting in October 1971, The British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) is an internationally recognised network of people who are interested in educational organisations as sites for the doing and study of practice.

BELMAS has international reach and significance through the formality of the annual conference, Journal publication, and association with, for example, UCEA (University Council for Educational Administration) in North America and CCEAM (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management), and the informality of networks and personal friendships that have grown over time.

2. The BELMAS Code of Conduct

Many of the Society's members voluntarily contribute their time and expertise to support and engage with a wide range of activities. Their contributions are very much valued by all who benefit from them.

In order to support them and to assist and guide them in understanding our expectations whilst engaging in BELMAS activities, the Society has adopted this Code of Conduct which sets out the behaviours of members.

All individuals associated with the Society should endeavour to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. This Code does not cover research ethics.

There is a separate Code of Conduct specifically for Trustees outlined within these By-Laws.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3. Why does the Code of Conduct exist?

This Code applies to all members and non-members while participating in Society-organised, or supported, events during their attendance at such events.

The code is designed to:

- protect BELMAS members.
- protect others that may be potentially affected by members' actions.
- ensure the highest possible standards of fairness, honesty and behaviour.
- reduce the risk of harm, injury, and harassment.
- ensure that any member can feel included and welcomed to the Society.
- allow members to learn from genuine mistakes.
- ensure that issues are resolved preventing further unnecessary continuation of conflict.

4. Vision and Charitable Objectives

The principles outlined in this Code of Conduct are aligned with the Society's Vision and Charitable objectives. This Code, however, does not relate to professional standards (for example, allegations of plagiarism, defamation, corruption, etc.) which should be dealt with by and between institutions and individuals.

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission: Where Research Meets Practice in Educational Leadership, Management and Administration

Vision: Our Vision is to be an Innovative, Globally Recognised and Respected Learned Society for the Development of Educational Leadership, Management and Administration

Values:

Integrity - We are transparent, honest and hold ourselves and others to high standards

Scholarship - We are a global learning community that embraces difference of opinion

Social Justice - We are brave and equitable

Inclusion - We are recognise many voices and celebrate diversity in all of our work

Charitable Objects

The objects of the BELMAS as per its Constitution and governing document is: *To promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public by the advancement of the practice, teaching, study of, and research into educational leadership, management and administration.*

BELMAS MEMBERSHIP

5. Who can become a Member?

Membership is open to all individuals a corporate body, or an individual or corporate body representing an organisation which is not incorporated who are:

- Academic members of staff and practitioners in educational leadership, management and administration, and related subjects.
- Postgraduates, researchers, undergraduates and students of educational leadership, management and administration, and related subjects.
- Concerned with the advancement and development of educational leadership, management and administration knowledge through research and its dissemination through teaching and research.

6. Membership Types and Fees

The membership fees are determined by the Society's Board of Trustees.

By creating a member profile and providing the Society with your personal information, you consent to the storage and processing of the information provided by you. The Society's Privacy Policy, which is GDPR compliant, can be found on the BELMAS website.

Additionally, individuals warrant that the information provided is accurate.

Membership to the Society is on a rolling basis, and lasts for a year.

Non-payment of membership fees constitutes as a non-renewal and will result in cancellation of your membership.

Membership is non transferrable.

7. Renewing Membership

Membership auto-renews annually. All members are sent renewals reminders to their registered email address.

All membership renewals are processed through the BELMAS website.

8. Cancellation and Termination of Membership

The reasons/methods for cancelling or terminating membership are:

- The member writes to terminate their membership.
- The member does not renew their membership at the end of their membership period.
- The member has been found to have breached/violated any of the principles stated in this Code.
- If a breach has occurred, the member's membership may be terminated as per the complaints process outlined in this By-Law.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

All members are expected to act in accordance with the principles outlined in this document. The Code is based on seven key principles outlined below:

9. Responsibility & Accountability

All members should be aware of their ethical, legal and professional responsibilities incumbent to the specific community in which they work, and also to this Society.

All individuals should avoid personal and professional misconduct that might bring the Society or the reputation of the profession into disrepute, recognising that, in particular, legal action that reflects on an individual's suitability to operate in the field of educational leadership, management and administration may be regarded as misconduct by the Society.

Members are encouraged to advance public knowledge and understanding of educational leadership, management and administration.

Members shall encourage and support fellow members in their professional development and, where possible, engage with, and mentor, new entrants to our community.

Members shall not speak in the name of the Society, or committees, without the authorisation of the Trustee Board.

10. Integrity & Honesty

All members should:

- Be honest and accurate in representing their professional affiliations and qualifications, including such matters as knowledge, skill, training, education and experience.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that their qualifications and competencies are not misrepresented by others, and to correct any misrepresentation identified. Members must recognise and clarify the limits of their knowledge, skills, training, qualifications, educations and experience.
- Be honest and accurate in conveying professional conclusions, opinions, and research findings, and in acknowledging the potential limitations.
- Not use their membership as a means of conveying a level of competency or professional standards, as the Society is not an accrediting body, and there is no assessment of competency to attain/retain membership.

11. Respect & Fairness

BELMAS is committed to maintaining and promoting a professional environment within which its members treat each other with dignity and respect.

All members will not discriminate against, bully or harass others on the basis of: cultural and role difference, including (but not exclusively) those involving: age, disability, education, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, language, national origin, political beliefs, philosophical beliefs, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital or family status, and socio-economic status.

Members should respect the knowledge, insight, experience and expertise of fellow members (regardless of career stage and length of BELMAS membership), relevant third parties, and members of the general public.

Bullying

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving an abuse or misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, undermined, humiliated, denigrated or threatened.

Power does not always mean being in a position of authority and can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Like harassment, bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Bullying behaviour may be in person, by telephone or in writing, including emails, texts or online communications such as social media. It may be persistent or an isolated incident and may manifest obviously or be hidden or insidious.

Whether conduct constitutes bullying will depend on both the perception of the person experiencing the conduct and whether it is reasonable for that person to have perceived the conduct as bullying.

Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, such as shouting, swearing, threatening, insulting, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others, inappropriate nicknames or humiliating language;
- Abuse of a similar nature carried out in writing or electronically (including posters, graffiti, emails, messages, clips or images sent by mobile device or posted on the internet);
- Physical or psychological threats or actions towards an individual or their personal property;
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or rituals;
- Overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision or micro-management, including preventing someone from undertaking their role or following agreed policies and procedures;
- Abuse of authority or power, such as placing unreasonable expectations on someone in relation to their job, responsibilities or hours of work, or coercing someone to meet such expectations;
- Ostracising or excluding someone from meetings, communications, work events or socials;
- Sending, distributing or posting detrimental material about other people, including images, in any medium.

Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. All harassment, regardless of whether or not it relates to a protected characteristic, is covered by this policy.

Harassment may be persistent or an isolated incident and can either be manifest, hidden or insidious. It may take place in person, by telephone or in writing, including emails, texts or online communications, including social media.

Harassment can be intentional or unintentional. It can occur where A engages in conduct which has the effect of violating B's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for B, even if A didn't intend this. Whether conduct constitutes harassment will depend on both B's perception and whether it is reasonable for B to have perceived A's conduct in that way.

A person may also be harassed even if they were not the intended 'target' of harassment. For example, a person may be harassed by jokes about a religious group that they do not belong to, if these jokes create an offensive environment for them.

Examples of harassment, other than sexual harassment, may include, but are not limited to:

- Sending or displaying offensive material in any format (including posters, graffiti, emails, messages, clips or images sent by mobile phone or posted on the internet);
- Mocking, mimicking, belittling or making jokes and comments about a person (or a group stereotype);
- Use of unacceptable or inappropriate language or racial or other stereotypes (regardless of whether the complainant is in fact a member of the group stereotyped);
- Deliberately holding meetings or social events in a location that is not accessible for an individual (by reason of disability, religious prohibitions or otherwise);
- Using profanities or swearing that could have the effect of creating an offensive environment for a person to work in.

12. Privacy & Confidentiality

All members should respect the individual and collective rights to privacy and maintain confidentiality in compliance with UK and International law and regulations.

13. Personal Gain & Conflict of Interest

All members should neither offer nor accept bribes or inducements, either on a personal basis or on behalf of the Society.

All members should declare to the Society's Trustee Board any competing professional or personal interests that may be pertinent to their activities within BELMAS and its supported events and research groups.

This includes any professional/academic disputes, whistle-blowing activity within their academic work, and issues/disputes over the member's research integrity.

Any activities undertaken in the Society's name must be consistent with the Society's vision, strategic objectives and the principles outlined in this guide.

If a conflict of interest does arise, the individual must inform the Trustee Board through the BELMAS Office as the matter becomes apparent and must take the following actions:

- Abstain from the activity in question;
- declare the conflict of interest and pass the role to a colleague, or;
- stand down/withdraw from the activity.

Failure to do so, may lead to the imposition of actions, including a ban on attendance/participation at specific events or activities, and potentially termination of their membership.

14. Collegiality & Collaboration

Collaboration with external learned societies and organisations is encouraged in order to develop the transfer and sharing of knowledge and to help disseminate learning and good practice.

If members put in place barriers or are obstructive to such collaboration or act in a way that brings the Society into disrepute through these collaborations they may be in breach of this Code and may face sanctions.

15. Freedom of Speech

BELMAS recognises the right to a member's freedom of speech, which is outlined within the Constitution. Members are reminded that "being offended" by a person's opinion and freedom of expression, is not the same as bullying and/or harassment.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS

16. What happens if the Code of Conduct has been breached?

BELMAS is committed to addressing all breaches of the Code of Conduct and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for members to participate in. If you are aware of a breach of the Code of Conduct, please inform a member of the BELMAS Office.

17. Informal Resolution

If it is safe and appropriate to do so, BELMAS staff will work with members to resolve the issue informally as outlined in the By-Laws.

To assist members, staff may recommend support services or training for those who have breached the Code of Conduct or been affected by a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Members should not investigate a breach of the Code of Conduct on their own and should not remove or seek to remove members at their own discretion.

However, members are always encouraged to support members to resolve minor disagreements when safe to do so as outlined within the Constitution.

18. Complaints against Members

If you are not satisfied with the response or if it is not safe to resolve the issue in this way, you can submit a complaint using *By-Law F – Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure for Members of BELMAS*. A member of staff can help you to do this and explain what will happen next.

If a law has appeared to have been broken, the organisation may refer this to the police. No complaint will be processed until any legal procedures have concluded.

BELMAS will not usually investigate anonymous allegations. If a complainant has legitimate concerns about their identity being disclosed as part of a disciplinary investigation, they should make those concerns known in the process of reporting the misconduct allegation, so that the BELMAS can consider whether appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard the rights of the complainant as well as the member(s) of which the allegations are being made.

19. Sanctions for Breaching the Code of Conduct

Complaints Panels considering sanctions against those who have breached the Code of Conduct will give consideration to the matrix below. The matrix details the decision-making process and potential sanctions.

20. Code of Conduct Decision Matrix

Breach of the Code of Conduct	Risk of harm to individuals or the organisation			
		Slightly harmful Risk of minor injury and/or mentally or personally hurtful to individuals. Risk of minor reputational damage.	Harmful Risk of external intervention (e.g. hospitalisation or other) Considered Bullying and/or Harassment. Local level reputational damage to BELMAS.	Extremely harmful Risk of serious physical or mental harm. Considered persistent or a second offence within Bullying and/or Harassment. National level reputational damage to BELMAS.
Minor breach		1	2	4
Moderate breach Organisational rules broken		2	3	6
Major breach Civil/criminal law broken		4	6	9

21. Individual Sanctions

Below are a list of sanctions that a Disciplinary Panel can impose on individuals. They are the maximum sanctions and therefore, a panel cannot impose sanctions higher than the matrix allows.

1	Warning.
	Letter of apology to be written.
2	Final warning.
	Ban from any Society activity for a period of up to three months, except the right to vote. Membership will not be revoked.
3	Ban from any Society activity for up to six months, except the right to vote. Membership will not be revoked.
	Unable to apply for or win Awards or Grants for a period of up to one year.
4	Refer to Police for criminal investigation (if applicable).
	Membership revoked for a period of up to one year without refund.
	Unable to apply for or win Awards or Grants for a period of up to one year.
6	Refer to Police for criminal investigation (if applicable).
	Ban from any Society activity for a period of up to three years without refund.
	Membership revoked for a period of up to three years.
	Unable to apply for or win Awards or Grants for a period of up to three years.
9	Refer to Police for criminal investigation (if applicable).
	A lifetime ban from BELMAS membership without refund.

SUPPORT

22. Where can I get support?

There may be occasions where an incident has happened that isn't a legitimate case for a complaint, but a member still requires support. BELMAS generally always advises members to reach out to their social support networks.

There are a range of useful links at the bottom of this By-Law for members to self-help.

If you or anyone else is in immediate danger, please always call 999.

23. Useful Links

Bullying UK	https://www.bullying.co.uk/
MIND	https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services
National Bullying Helpline	https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/
Samaritans	https://www.samaritans.org/