



ETINED

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*Ethics
Transparency
Integrity*

ETINED
Council of Europe
Platform on Ethics,
Transparency and
Integrity in Education



Ian Smith
University of the West of Scotland

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Volume 3
Ethical behaviour of
all actors in education

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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and Integrity
in Education

Volume 3 – Ethical
behaviour of all actors
in education

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Introduction

The current document is the second of two on the initial development of the Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED). This second document focuses on “the ethical behaviour of all actors in education”, following on from the previous document on “ethical principles” for education (ETINED Volume 2).

Chapter 1 outlines the process of discussion on the document through the ETINED Working Group, including the decision to broaden the document’s scope from the “ethical behaviour of teachers at all levels” to the “ethical behaviour of all actors in education”.

Chapter 2 then re-emphasises the view presented in the earlier “Ethical principles” document that separate documents can be written on “ethical behaviour” and “ethical principles”, although these will necessarily be closely connected, and some organisations merge “ethical behaviour” and “ethical principles” in a single document.

Chapter 3 explains that, given the close connection between “ethical principles” and “ethical behaviour”, the current document’s presentation of “ethical behaviours” will be organised around the previously identified “principles” as “general headings”, with each set of actors being used as “sub-headings” within these.

The previously presented 14 ethical principles (ETINED Volume 2) are listed again at this point. They are:

- ▶ integrity;
- ▶ honesty;
- ▶ truth;
- ▶ transparency;
- ▶ respect for others;
- ▶ trust;
- ▶ accountability;
- ▶ fairness;
- ▶ equity, justice and social justice;
- ▶ democratic and ethical governance and management of the education system and educational institutions;
- ▶ quality education;

- ▶ personal and systems improvement;
- ▶ institutional autonomy/institutional independence;
- ▶ international co-operation.

Chapter 4 then discusses the actors whose “ethical behaviours” will be covered in detail in the current document. The following eight groups of actors in education are identified:

- ▶ teachers in schools;
- ▶ academic staff in higher education (HE);
- ▶ school pupils;
- ▶ HE students;
- ▶ parents/guardians/care givers/carers of school pupils;
- ▶ parents/guardians/care givers/carers of HE students;
- ▶ employers and managers within the education system;
- ▶ relevant public officials, and the political leaders and representatives of broader civil society more generally.

In discussing these eight groups of actors, the following are some of the important points that were highlighted from ETINED Working Group discussions.

The term “pupils” is used to distinguish young people in schools from those who are “students” in HE, but this is not intended to diminish the status of school pupils inappropriately.

While HE students are listed separately from HE academic staff, the close connection between HE students and staff as members of the same HE academic community should be emphasised.

For future work, the “ethical behaviour statements” could be expanded to include separate treatment of the wider workforce of administrative and technical support staff in education (beyond only employers and managers in these areas), and separate treatment of private employers and managers in the wider economy beyond the education sector. Consideration could also be given to the separate treatment of the media as actors in education.

Chapter 5 reviews sources produced by other organisations for possible ethical behaviour statements on the current eight groups of actors. As previously discussed in the “Ethical principles” document, considerable use can be made of documents produced by other organisations for “teachers in schools” and “academic staff in HE”. However, it is generally concluded that similar sources which give comprehensive statements on ethical behaviours are not available for the other actors, meaning less use can be made of other sources in producing statements relating to these actors for the current document.

Chapter 6 is simply a brief link summary confirming that the detailed ethical behaviour statements will be presented using the 14 ethical principles for education as overall headings, and within each of these the eight groups of actors will be used as sub-headings.

Chapter 7 (the main section in the document) then presents the detailed statements on “the ethical behaviour of all actors in education” in the way outlined in Chapter 6.

Chapter 8 concludes the current document. As such a document, it may be possible both to add further content to the document (for example on other groups of actors), and to produce various shorter documents based on extracts from the full document, for example as brief summaries of key relevant aspects for particular groups of actors.



1. Ethical behaviour of all actors in education

The consultants presented a full document on “Ethical principles” for the Pan-European Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) to the informal meeting of the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) in Brussels on 18 December 2014 (Smith and Hamilton 2014).

The consultants also produced an outline document on the “Ethical behaviour of all actors in education”. The current version of this document was presented to the plenary CDPPE meeting on 17 to 19 March 2015.

At the meeting of the ETINED Working Group on 6 and 7 November 2014, it was agreed that this ethical behaviour document would now be titled the “Ethical behaviour of all actors in education”, not the original proposed title of the “Ethical behaviour of teachers at all levels”. This change in title was to reflect a broadening of the “Ethical behaviour” document to include not only schoolteachers and lecturers in higher education, but also other actors, such as education administrators, pupils and students, parents, and elected representatives of civil society (see Chapter 4).