



STAFF HANDBOOK

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BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Na Píobairí Uilleann (NPU, the Society of Irish Pipers) was founded by uilleann pipers in 1968 in order to promote the uilleann pipes and its music, both products of Irish tradition and inspiration.

In 1968 there were only an estimated 100 players of the instrument, around half in Ireland and the remainder spread across the world. Today NPU is a thriving arts organisation dedicated to Sharing the Sound of Ireland through Access, Education, Performance and Preservation, delivered through the organisation's commitment to excellence in values, governance and processes.

Since 1979 NPU has been based in Dublin's Henrietta Street, establishing a centre for piping and the other traditional arts with a focus on the study and practice of uilleann piping. NPU's pipe making training centre, PipeCraft opened in 2011 providing courses in uilleann pipe making.

NPU provide a regular programme of piping tuition, pipe making tuition, music performances and publications, with a dedicated website for uilleann pipers and traditional music lovers in Ireland and worldwide.

Na Píobairí Uilleann's primary funding agencies include the Arts Council/An Comhairle Ealaíon, The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

PURPOSE

Promote the teaching, making, playing and cultural heritage of the uilleann pipes.

VISION

Uilleann Piping is an enduring and uniquely Irish art form that enriches people's lives. We commit to safeguard and promote uilleann piping nationally and internationally as an inclusive cultural practice.

MISSION

Share the Sound of Ireland through Access, Education, Performance and Preservation, underpinned by excellence in values and processes.

VALUES

- Demonstrated commitment to inclusion
- Apply unyielding integrity in everything we do
- Open and transparent approach
- Teamwork

Introduction

REPORTING STRUCTURES

All staff refer to the Administrator on payroll administration matters and to their Line Manager on terms and conditions of employment.

The term Administrator can also be referred to /read as Line Manager where appropriate.

Section 1 – Recruitment and selection

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

NPU is an equal opportunity employer, and we appoint individuals solely based on their suitability and potential for the job. We recognise that our organisation's performance and growth is dependent on appointing and retaining the most suitably qualified candidate for every position, taking account of education, experience, and expertise.

We are committed to equality of opportunity and operate our recruitment and selection procedures in full compliance with all legal requirements. At all times, applicants will be treated in a fair and consistent manner, and discrimination will not be tolerated in respect of age, gender, race, disability, family status, civil status, religion, sexual orientation, or membership of the Traveller community.

Job Requirements

When specifying requirements, only characteristics such as qualifications or experience essential to the performance of the role will be used.

No position will be classified by reference to gender, civil, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the Traveller community.

Job descriptions will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, and where a vacancy arises, a review of the job description must be conducted before any recruitment can commence. All job descriptions must be signed off before the recruitment process proceeds.

Advertising

Advertising of positions are usually carried out both internally and externally. NPU may decide to advertise internally and externally depending on the role and skills needed. Advertisements will make clear, in both wording and illustration, that the positions are open to all suitably qualified candidates, regardless of gender, civil, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the Traveller community.

Details of all available positions will be fully circulated to ensure access to all suitable applicants. This includes forwarding internal advertisements to employees on leave including maternity leave and parental leave.

All advertisements will carry the statement “This company is an equal opportunities employer”.

Interview Process

The interviewing process will be carried out in the following way:

- No assumptions will be made on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the traveller community
- Questions will relate to the requirements of the job as established in the job description, the person specification and will not be of a discriminatory nature
- Applicants will be assessed at the end of the interview process against pre-defined criteria
- Interviewers will complete Interview Evaluation Forms for each candidate

Promotion and advancement will be made on merit and all decisions relating to this will be made within the overall framework and principles of this policy. All promotion will be in line with this policy.

Internal Recruitment

To provide opportunities for career development, we will favourably consider employees for internal vacancies and promotional opportunities where possible. We believe that everyone should have the chance to increase their knowledge, skills, responsibility and earnings and we encourage you to seek out opportunities as they arise.

Training and job experience needed for promotional opportunities will be open to all employees. Promotional decisions are based on the employee's experience, qualifications, and overall suitability for the position as well as ongoing business requirements.

Unsuccessful internal candidates will be given feedback to facilitate improvement.

No employee will be overlooked in relation to a promotion or experience opportunity because of their reluctance to apply or accept on a previous

occasion. The process surrounding promotion will be free from discrimination.

The opportunity and responsibility for career advancement lies with an employee's initiative to seek out situations where their strong performance record and skills can be put to good use.

Induction

A smooth and systematic orientation of new employees leads to a more positive integration into NPU. When a new employee joins NPU they will immediately undergo induction training that will include details of their job responsibilities, training plan, work and safety instructions, dignity and respect, grievance and disciplinary procedures and general work guidelines about how NPU operates. The Administrator is responsible to ensure that a new employee receives adequate support in their first weeks with NPU.

REFERENCE CHECKING

It is the policy of NPU to collect two references for prospective employees after interviews have been held, and before making an appointment. Ideally, the references will be from the current/previous employer, and another employer. Where a candidate is unable to provide two employment-related referees, NPU will, depending on circumstances, consider alternative references for the candidate, such as an academic reference, a client/customer reference, or a character reference.

Permission will be sought from the candidate prior to any referee being contacted.

Where the referee does not meet the organisation's normal requirements (i.e., not an employment-related reference, or the referee is a colleague rather than a line Manager, or the referee is for an employment wholly unrelated to the new role), NPU may ask the candidate to nominate another more suitable referee. If the candidate is unwilling or unable to do so, the matter will be referred to the CEO and

Board, if necessary, where the issue will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

NPU will contact referees over the telephone. It will only consider taking written references from the candidate's previous employers where there is no other option.

If an unsatisfactory reference is received for a candidate, it will be brought to the attention of the CEO before progressing the appointment any further.

Academic Qualification Verification

It is the policy of NPU to request candidates to provide evidence of their educational qualifications.

EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN NATIONALS

To meet our obligations under the Employment Permits (Amendment) Act 2014, we will need to ask all prospective employees if they are legally entitled to work in the Republic of Ireland. NPU will only employ workers who are legally entitled to work in Ireland, and all relevant foreign nationals will have to obtain appropriate employment permits as required by the Employment Permits Acts.

NPU or the foreign national will apply for the permit, as appropriate. The company is obliged to carry out a labour market needs test prior to employing a non-EEA foreign national. This will involve the company advertising the vacancy with the DSP Employment Services/EURES website for a minimum of two weeks, and advertising in local newspapers or jobs sites for a minimum of three days prior to submitting the permit application. NPU will keep appropriate records as prescribed by the Acts, including where necessary, records of the number of EEA and non-EEA employees. The company will also require a copy of all other visa requirements including a copy of the Garda National Immigration Bureau Card. On expiry of the work authorisation all relevant employees will be required to produce a copy of their new authorisation. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Since 01 September 2016, any non – EEA National who is currently holding a Stamp 2 Student visa can only work full and part time on the following specific dates:

- 40 hours per week only during the months of June, July, August and September and from 15th December to 15th January inclusive. At all other times students holding Immigration permission Stamp 2 will be limited to working 20 hours per week.

The only exception to the general rule is set out in the notice – Students availing of Third Level Graduate scheme – Stamp 1G.

The company is obliged to notify the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Innovation of any change in NPU of the employer as a result of a Transfer of Undertaking or if the permit holder is made redundant with four weeks of dismissal.

RECORDS

NPU will retain, for at least one year, all records arising through the recruitment process.

Garda Vetting for Working with Children

Everyone working with children must be included in the Garda vetting process. In certain cases, disclosures may impact the terms and conditions of your employment and may result in your dismissal. Documentation from the Garda Síochána will be kept on file. During the period for clearance to be completed, all work with children will be supervised and each employee will be required to sign a declaration of compliance to the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policy.

EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

As an equal opportunity employer, NPU will consider applications from relatives, partners, and friends of current employees, as it would any other application. However, NPU retains the right to ensure that close relatives shall not be permitted to work in a position or department,

where it is deemed inappropriate, especially where one relative would directly or indirectly supervise another.

WORK EXPERIENCE/INTERNSHIP

We welcome school and transition year students in their application for work experience within the organisation. NPU is committed to providing a positive experience during the student/applicant's placement. The work experience programme is administered by the Administrator. NPU accepts placements at any time of the year however due to the small nature of our organisation, we can only take a limited number of students in any calendar year.

Work experience and Internships involve spending time in NPU to gain insights into the way NPU works and the tasks associated with a particular job and department. The aim of the placement is to develop job seeking skills and to obtain knowledge of a chosen career.

Those on work experience or internships will normally be assigned to a particular area of the business. Work experience or internship placements will vary in the length of time depending on the needs of the student/applicant.

This policy deals with how a work experience or internship placement is approved and organised.

Requests for Work Experience or Internships

Where Students/Applicants have not previously engaged with NPU they should submit their CV by post or email along with one reference which in the case of a student is from a teacher or Department Head and a character reference in the case of other applications.

Student Requirements

- Students must be over the age of 16 to be able to apply for a work experience or internship placement (*Those aged 15 years at the time of work experience in Transition Year can participate with permission of their parents and school.*)

- Students aged 16 or 17 must provide a copy of their birth certificate or alternative proof of age
- Students aged 16 and 17 years of age must not work more than 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week
- Students aged 16 and 17 years of age must not work between 10 pm and 6 am
- Students aged 16 and 17 years of age must receive 12 hours rest per day, 2 days rest per week and a 30-minute break once they have worked 4 hours and 30 minutes.

All others on placement must receive the minimum rest entitlements as per NPU of Working Time Act, 1997.

Remuneration for the placement

Students/Applicants will not receive any remuneration or benefits during a period of placement. Remuneration for University Students on internships will be decided on an individual basis depending on the student's duties and the requirements from the University.

Expenses

No person on a work experience or internship placement will be entitled to expenses.

Insurance

NPU will need students to demonstrate that they are covered by the School/University insurance before a placement can commence and the necessary documentation will need to be provided.

The Placement

Once a placement is confirmed the Administrator must inform the department of the expected arrival of the person.

Induction

On the first day induction will be carried out with the person on work experience or internship and the following will be covered:

- *Emergency Contact Details;*
- *Code of Conduct/Internal Control;*
- *Dress; i.e. Neat Casual;*
- *Facilities i.e. kitchen;*
- *Health & Safety rules including fire evacuation procedures;*
- *Sign Induction Form;*
- *Explain who contact person will be during their placement;*
- *IT and telephone policy and computer usage.*

The Placement

The Administrator will inform the person of the details of the placement programme which will include details of who the person will be shadowing.

Feedback

NPU will complete any necessary documentation required by the School/University/ Person for completion of the work experience or internship placement.

NPU is an equal opportunities employer.

EMPLOYEE REFERRAL PROGRAMME

NPU values the opinions of all our employees, and we therefore value any referrals for open vacancies. If you know of someone who you feel would be a good candidate for a specific role, please forward their CV and contact details by email to the Line Manager

Section 2 – Conditions of Employment

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The terms and conditions that make up your contractual arrangements with NPU are detailed in your:

- Letter of Appointment/Contract of Employment
- Employee Policies and Code of Conduct
- The Safety Statement

Given the nature of the ever-changing environment within which NPU operates, and the likelihood of changes to employment legislation and practices, alterations to company policies may occur which could affect terms and conditions of employment. NPU therefore reserves the right to alter or modify terms and conditions. Such changes will, always, be covered by employment law and, following consultation, will be notified to employees within legal requirements.

Holidays, Annual Leave

All employees annual leave entitlements are outlined in their individual terms and conditions. Employees (including part-time or casual part-time) who join during the holiday year will receive a pro-rata holiday entitlement for the first year. Consultants are not entitled to holiday and annual leave.

It is company policy that all holiday entitlements **MUST** be taken in the leave year in which they fall due. An employee cannot forego any period of annual leave and be paid salary in lieu, except in the case of termination of employment.

To balance leave across the year employees are required to use a maximum two weeks (10 days) of their annual leave entitlements at any one time. NPU reserves the right to schedule your annual leave with notice if you have not taken any leave.

Sickness during Holidays

Any day of sickness covered by a medical certificate, which falls within the normal holiday period (excluding public holidays), is not counted as part of holiday leave. However, if are medically certified as sick during a period of annual leave, you must inform your Line Manager immediately. On return to work you must provide a medical certificate that outlines the dates and nature of the illness.

Accrual of annual leave while on certified sick leave

You must produce a medical certificate for all periods of sick leave to be eligible to accrue annual leave. On the employees return from sick leave, NPU reserves the right to determine when this annual leave can be taken where the employee is due to illness, unable to take all or any part of their annual leave during that leave year or where the employee has provided a medical certificate to Line Manager within the period of 15 months after the end of that leave year. The calculation of the annual leave during this period will be in line with NPU of Working Time Act 1997.

Since 1 August 2015, you are entitled to accumulate statutory annual leave entitlement during a period of certified sick leave. Employees on long-term sick leave can retain annual leave they could not take due to illness for up to 15 months after the end of the year in which it is accrued. Workers who leave their employment within 15 months of the end of the year in which this annual leave was accrued, are entitled to payment in lieu of this leave which was untaken due to illness.

Arrangements on Termination of Employment

When an employee is leaving, any additional holidays due will be included in the final pay. *When an employee is leaving, and the paid holidays exceed the paid holiday entitlement as at the date of termination, NPU will deduct the excess holiday pay from their final pay.*

Intention to Take Holidays

NPU maintains the right to determine when an employee takes annual leave. Before making a holiday commitment, employees must submit a holiday request to your Line Manager.

One month's notice of intention to take holidays greater than 5 days should be given to your Line Manager. Two weeks' notice of intention to take holidays greater than 2 days should be given to your Line Manager. The Line Manager must give written approval for all leave applications in advance, and whilst every effort, consistent with the efficient working of the organisation, will be made to grant leave for the period requested, this cannot be guaranteed.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

All employees (not including consultants) are entitled to the benefit of nine public holidays in line with current practice and government regulations. These are:

- New Year's Day (1 January)
- First Monday in February, or 1st February if the date falls on a Friday.
- St. Patrick's Day (17 March)
- Easter Monday
- First Monday in May
- First Monday in June
- First Monday in August
- Last Monday in October
- Christmas Day (25 December)
- St. Stephen's Day (26 December)

Please note that Good Friday is given as an additional paid leave day for all NPU employees.

Part-time employees will receive a pro-rata benefit for a public holiday provided they have worked for at least 40 hours in the preceding five weeks up to the day before the public holiday.

If a full-time employee is required to work on a public holiday, the employee will be provided with an extra day of paid leave in lieu of the public holiday.

WORKING HOURS AND TIME KEEPING

The purpose of our working time policy is to communicate the organisation's commitment to the health, safety, and welfare of all employees regarding their working time. Normal weekly working hours are as laid down in your contract of employment.

There is a legal requirement that all employees, for all employees over 18 and who work for more than 4.5 hours, are required to have a rest break of at least 15 minutes. Employees who work for 6 hours or more are entitled to a rest break of at least 30 minutes, which can include the 15-minute break already referred to. Employees working longer than 6 hours during their working day must take a minimum of 30 minutes break time. These minimum breaks must be taken during the working day and may not be taken at the beginning or end of the day. If you are unable to take a rest break in your job, you must notify your Line Manager in writing (within one week) that you were unable to take this break. The Line Manager will look at the reasons why you were unable to take your break and at any health and safety issues that might or have arisen relating to you and your job. If you do not notify the Line Manager within one week you will forfeit that break. If after investigation you are offered the break and refuse, you are at fault and NPU is not obliged to offer you a further rest break. However, we do ensure employee's rest breaks are taken.

Each employee is entitled to a minimum of 11 hours consecutive rest per day. Every employee must take a complete day's rest once a week, preceded by 11 hours daily rest. Any requirement to work 7 consecutive days will be discussed with the relevant employee and in such instances; the employee will be entitled to 48 hours continuous rest in a 14-day period. Unless stated in a contract of employment, employees' weekly rest period shall include a Sunday.

As per each employee's contract of employment, from time-to-time business dictates the need for you to be flexible in your hours of work. Each employee must be prepared to allocate any additional time necessary to fulfil your role, meet deadlines and complete any tasks reasonably requested at the discretion of the organisation. If employees

are required to work extra hours, every effort will be made to ensure that they are given prior notice as soon as possible to enable them to work.

There is a legal requirement to ensure that employees do not work more than an average of 48 hours a week over a defined reference period. To enable us to regulate all employees' working hours you are required to keep a record of your working hours from the time you start work each day to completion time.

All employees are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work. If you are sick, you must contact your immediate supervisor before or by 10am on the first day of your sickness. You are required to outline your likely return to work date during the initial contact. If your illness continues, you are required to contact the Administrator by 10am on the date you were due back to work, outlining the revised return to work date.

Double Employment (employees, not including consultants)

It is a condition of your employment that you do not work for, nor have any interest in any other company or business, nor undertake any other activity which might interfere with the proper performance of your duties or compete in any way with NPU activities without first obtaining, in writing, the consent of your Line Manager.

Where permission is granted, there is a legal requirement for NPU to ensure that an employee working outside NPU in their own time does not exceed the maximum 48-hour average working week. Therefore, all employees are required to inform their Line Manager, in writing, should they currently, or intend in the future, to carry out a second job, stating the days/hours of work. Regular reports will be required thereafter.

Absence/Leaving the Premises

Any absence from work during regular working hours which is not agreed with the Administrator may be subject to disciplinary action.

Time Keeping

It is company policy to implement a high standard of time keeping across NPU to facilitate the effective running of the organisation.

Due to the nature of our organisation, start time and locations of start time may vary however NPU expects all employees to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work at the agreed times. All employees are paid based on the hours specified in their contracts of employment and are required to commence and finish work at the designated times. The management has the right to manage time and attendance. Punctuality in terms of employees going to and returning from meal breaks is also essential.

If an employee has a record of lateness this may, depending on the circumstances, be reflected in a meeting/counselling session/performance review. If the problem persists, the disciplinary procedure will be invoked.

USE OF COMPANY CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS

NPU will issue the company credit/debit card to certain employees for use in their role. Credit/debit cards are used to facilitate the authorised user to settle expenses and other related expenditures securely when carrying out legitimate business transactions.

Use of Credit/Debit Cards:

- 1) The card user shall be responsible for all expenditures and charges on the credit / debit card in their care until the receipts for the expenditures are approved.
- 2) The user is responsible for the safekeeping, proper use and reporting of lost or stolen cards in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Credit Card Company/ bank. Lost or stolen credit/ debit cards should be reported to the Administrator who will in turn inform the banking institution.
- 3) The card shall only be used for transactions for legitimate business purposes of the organisation

- 4) All receipts and expense reports shall be submitted within two weeks of the month following the expenditure failure to do so may result in charges to the user.
- 5) NPU will not be held responsible for unvouched expenses outside of the terms of legitimate business expenses.
- 6) The credit card statement is not regarded as a documented receipt. Original and fully detailed receipts (no photocopies) must be provided. Any internet travel bookings using credit / debit cards must attach a printout of the travel invoice.

Unauthorised Use/Termination:

Private expenditure on the credit/debit card(s) is not permitted. All expenses deemed to be of this nature shall be disqualified and the amount repaid immediately. If an individual entrusted with the card fails to repay any unauthorised expenses immediately, the credit / debit card may be withdrawn from the individual immediately.

Where an employee leaves the organisation, the surrender of the card shall be accompanied by a final expenses report.

The final payment shall be withheld pending final validation of credit/debit card expenditures.

Cash withdrawals are not permitted by users of the credit/debit card.

Credit/Debit Card statements will be analysed fully and reconciled by the Administrator who will approve the expenses.

Misuse of a company credit /debit card may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. NPU reserves the right to deduct monies owed, as a result of a breach of this policy, from payroll.

INABILITY TO ATTEND WORK

All employees are expected to make reasonable efforts to attend work each day. However, there are occasions where this may not be possible e.g., adverse weather. Where, for matters outside of your control unrelated to an injury or illness of yourself or a family member, you are

unable to attend for work as normal, you are requested to contact the Line Manager by phone as soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes before your normal start time.

Where you are unable to reach the Line Manager, you are expected to leave a detailed message explaining the reasons for your absence, together with your contact number for the day. Where this is not possible, you are expected to contact the CEO to explain the situation.

Payment

Please note that such absences are not paid for by the organisation. If you have annual leave available, you will be provided with the option to take a days' annual leave, should you wish to do so.

Further Absence

If you anticipate that your absence will be for longer than one day, you are expected to inform your Line Manager of your planned date of return. Each absence will be assessed on its individual merits. However, please note that where NPU finds that an employee could reasonably have attended for work and did not, it reserves the right to handle the matter through the disciplinary policy.

EXPENSES

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of your duties will be paid to you in accordance with rates approved by NPU. Employees are required to have prior approval for all expenses in advance of incurring the expenditure. Unapproved expenses will not be paid under any circumstances.

Employees requesting reimbursement of travel expenses must submit an Expense Reclaim Form to the Line Manager for approval. The Expense Reclaim Form must detail the travel and subsistence expenses and be accompanied by all supporting receipts.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All new employees are required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period of a minimum of 6 months. During this period, performance on the

job and potential abilities are evaluated to determine suitability for the position and NPU. At the end of this probationary period, a formal performance review meeting will be held between the employee and their Line Manager and if satisfactory, your position will be confirmed.

NPU reserves the right to extend the probationary period of an employee for up to 9 months, should this be deemed necessary and following discussions with the employee, in order to adequately evaluate the individual's overall suitability.

During the probationary period either party may terminate the contract by giving one weeks' notice in writing. The organisation, at all times, reserves the right to pay you your basic salary in lieu of notice, except in the case of summary dismissal outlined under the disciplinary procedure.

Once you have successfully completed the probationary period, you may become eligible for additional company benefits described in your contract of employment.

SHORT-TIME/LAY-OFF

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure that will be followed in the event that short time or lay-offs are required.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees who are working under a contract of employment and are on the organisation's payroll.

Notification

Short-Time

Short-time working is a temporary arrangement which may be necessary should NPU experience a reduction in available work, for example due to a loss of contract/s, reduction in funding or business. In such circumstances, NPU may need to implement short time working. This

involves NPU either reducing an employee's earnings to less than half the normal weeks' earnings or reducing the number of hours an employee has to work to less than half the normal weekly hours on a temporary basis. During this time, the employee will only be paid for hours actually worked.

Lay-off

A lay-off is a temporary arrangement which may be required should NPU experience a reduction in available work, for example due to a loss of contract/s or business. Should this occur, NPU may need to implement lay-offs. This will involve the suspension of employment of an employee, or a number of employees, on a temporary basis. During this time, the employee will not receive payment.

Duration of Short-Time or Lay-Off

Short-time working, and lay-offs are temporary arrangements and NPU will endeavour to minimise the duration of these periods.

Procedure

In the event of the need to introduce either short-time working or lay-offs, NPU will notify, as soon as is reasonably practical, all relevant employees. NPU will outline the reason for the lay-offs or short-time working and will also confirm the date from which it becomes effective. NPU will adhere to all statutory requirements and will provide all relevant employees with the appropriate documentation. NPU will endeavour to keep employees informed of developments relating to these reduced working arrangements and their possible duration.

Returning to Work following a period of Short-Time or Lay-off

If the situation improves in NPU and that NPU requires you to resume full-time working, NPU will notify you in writing, as soon as is reasonably practical, of the date and time you will resume normal working. Normal remuneration and benefits will return to what they were before the short-time/lay-off situation. Please note that you are expected to resume your full attendance within 7 working days of notification. Failure to do so will be considered a breach of organisation policy.

Redundancy

If the situation does not improve NPU may have to consider implementing redundancies.

USE OF COMPANY PHONES

If you have been issued with a company mobile phone, you are responsible for the safekeeping and condition of the phone at all times and you will be responsible for any cost of repair or replacement other than reasonable wear and tear.

If the phone is lost or stolen, NPU must be notified immediately in order to cancel the number and arrange for a replacement.

Upon termination of your employment, if you do not return your company mobile phone or should your phone be returned in an unsatisfactory condition, the cost of replacement or a proportionate amount of this, as decided by NPU, will be deducted from any final monies owing to you, or you will otherwise reimburse NPU.

Where it is deemed that an unreasonable amount of personal calls/internet usage has been made using the mobile phone, NPU reserves the right to deduct those costs through payroll. Excessive use, or a breach of this policy, may also result in disciplinary action.

Business telephones, mobiles, and the use of internet on mobile phones are not for private use. Where there is an emergency or a specific business need, then personal calls and use of the internet can be made/taken/used during business hours. Abuse of this facility may lead to disciplinary action. Where employees possess mobile phones, they should show consideration to work colleagues so that where possible, phones are switched off during the working day and personal calls are kept to an absolute minimum.

Unless there is prior approval from Management, no staff member is allowed to call any premium numbers (e.g., Directory enquires) or international calls or use the internet facility on mobile phones.

Use of Personal Mobile Phone

Private use of mobile phones should only be used in exceptional circumstances. Excessive use of mobile phones is in breach of the conduct procedures and may result in disciplinary action.

REMOTE WORKING

INTRODUCTION

NPU recognises the right to request remote working as part of its everyday business practices. In working remotely/from home, the same working standards that apply to NPU premises regarding confidentiality, access to Company documents, and Health and Safety also apply to your remote workplace.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. All NPU business information is regarded as confidential and is subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protections Legislation. While working in the NPU offices and remotely, you must take steps to always protect company records against loss, unauthorised access, alteration, or destruction.
2. All care should be taken to secure all records and to prevent unauthorised disclosure of NPU or other business information. Customer or customer contact information is particularly sensitive as customers have a legal right to expect personal information held about them to be held in utmost confidence. On behalf of NPU, it is your legal obligation to ensure these rights are protected.
3. Precautions must be taken to ensure third parties, including members of your family, visitors or other persons visiting or residing in your home do not become aware of any confidential information. All documents and materials that are not in use should be locked away in a secure place. Similar precautions must be taken when transporting documents in the course of your work.

4. If you have any reason to believe confidential information is lost, altered, or has been accessed by any unauthorised person, you must report this to your Line Manager without delay.
5. Use of any IT equipment supplied by NPU is limited to yourself alone and to business applications. Peripheral equipment such as printer and modem may not be connected to any of NPU computers other than those issued to you by NPU. Personal information or documents should not be stored on equipment supplied by NPU.

REMOTE WORKING INFORMATION

While working remotely from NPU, the following information should be provided to your Line Manager.

1. your address
2. occupancy of the property by yourself and/or others
3. telephone communications with the property
4. Any other changes relevant to the use of your home as your work base.

You must inform management in any changes to the above information in a prompt manner.

ACCESS TO YOUR REMOTE WORKSPACE

NPU representatives have the right, on request, to visit and gain access to the area you use for your remote workplace to:

1. to conduct an audit of health and safety provisions
2. review, inspect, or remove any of our property, documents, records, or other information relating to our business and your work for us.

EMPLOYEES' RIGHT TO DISCONNECT

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the methods in which we work have been drastically changed by new and improved communication and information technologies. These allow NPU employees the flexibility to work

anywhere and at any time. Although digital platforms bring flexibility and freedom to employees, they can also create an absence of limits. It is vital that employees maintain a good work and home life balance, but NPU is aware that a pressure to be 'always-connected' can shrink the boundaries of balancing work life with home life.

Every NPU employee is entitled to switch off outside of their normal working hours and enjoy their free time away from work without being disturbed unless there is a reasonable basis to do so.

NPU will encourage and support our employees in balancing their working and personal lives and create a culture in which employees feel they can disconnect from work and work-related devices. We have adopted this policy considering the Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Right to Disconnect.

POLICY

NPU recognises that we have a duty to implement this policy and all employees are expected to comply with it and uphold the policy. Management will receive training in the application of this policy to ensure that they are aware of its contents and provisions.

The 'Right to Disconnect' refers to an employee's right to be able to disengage from work and refrain from engaging in work-related electronic communications, such as emails, telephone calls or other messages, outside normal working hours. NPU recognises that normal working hours will vary amongst employees depending on the nature of their role, work location and personal circumstances, etc.

WELLBEING

The health and wellbeing of our employees is of the utmost importance to NPU, and we encourage and support our employees to prioritise their own wellbeing. Disconnecting from work is vital for your wellbeing to

help you achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance. Achieving a healthy work-life balance has three main elements:

1. Ensuring employees are aware of their normal working hours
2. Ensuring employees do not to suffer any negative consequences for not engaging in work outside of their normal working hours
3. Ensuring that others are aware they have a duty to respect an employee's work-life balance.

We encourage employees working remotely to create some separation from the end of their working day and the beginning of their personal time e.g., by scheduling some post-work leisure activity. All employees are reminded to switch off from work, to monitor their working hours and to take breaks away from work devices.

All employees enjoy strong protection under the **Working Time Act 1997**, which was introduced in respect of maximum working hours, rest periods, holidays, and night work. Your entitlements in this respect are set out in your employment documentation. NPU will always ensure that its obligations are met in relation to this legislation.

All employees must be aware that they have a duty to take reasonable care of your health and safety in accordance with section 13 of the **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005**. Accordingly, you are required to notify the Company in writing if you did not or have not been able to avail of your rest breaks from work and setting out these reasons.

COMMUNICATIONS

All employees have the right to disconnect from work and work-related communications outside normal working hours. We recognise the need for a healthy work life/home life balance and that a constant digital/telephonic connection can impact on/or restrict this balance. In relation to all employees:

- Emails/social media communications should be checked or sent only during normal working hours, where possible
- Due to some employees with differing patterns of work in NPU, some communications may be sent at times which are inopportune for other employees e.g., weekends and evenings. There is no general expectation on you to reply to these outside your working hours. Therefore, all employees should give due consideration to the timing of their communication and potential for disturbance on colleagues. Recipients should understand that they will not be expected to respond until their working time commences, except in legitimate and reasonable situations where a prompt response may be required.

NPU employees should endeavour to only send communications outside agreed working hours in legitimate and reasonable situations. If there is a level of urgency to any communication outside of work hours, the sender should indicate this in this communication. These situations include, but are not limited to:

- in emergency or urgent situations
- to cover shifts at short notice
- contact to discuss availability for rosters
- where unforeseeable circumstances arise, etc.

Due to the nature of our business/the needs of our customers, some employees will be required to perform some out-of-hours working as part of their employment, to be agreed in advance with the Line Manager.

PROCEDURE

NPU understands the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance but recognises that this will impact employees differently. We will ensure that appropriate solutions are agreed upon and implemented for different teams performing varying functions.

NPU will ensure that procedures are in place to ensure an employee can exercise their right to disconnect and maintain a suitable work-life balance as far as practicable. This is maintained by:

- Providing training to all Administrators to ensure they comply with this duty of respect and in turn can set good examples for their teams
- Providing training to all employees on the proper use of any communication equipment provided
- Implementing a reporting structure for all employees where they feel that they are unable to disconnect or maintain a suitable work-life balance
- Ensuring that employees do not suffer any negative impacts because of any reporting
- Keeping this policy under review.

Where an employee feels they cannot disconnect from work, they must report this to their Line Manager as soon as possible. NPU's Grievance Procedure may be utilised if you are dissatisfied with your ability to disconnect from work in accordance with this policy.

CASH MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Cash handling procedures are important to protect NPU from fraud, theft, or embezzlement, and to protect staff from accusations of dishonesty.

The following guidelines must be adhered to by all employees who are responsible for handling cash and payments:

- When cash is received at NPU events including Session with the Pipers, Note & Narratives, Annual Tionól, Regional Tionól, Rowsome and Breathnach Commemorative Events and regular classes (and voluntary donations), the total amounts are reconciled and reported to the Administrator at the first opportunity.
- Receipts must be issued to customers/clients in respect of all purchases from NPU.

- We cannot give credit to customers under any circumstances
- All notes exceeding €50 should be checked for forgeries.
- Signatures on cheques, vouchers, etc., must be checked against the signature on cheque, and credit / debit cards.
- The expiry date on cheque, debit and credit/ debit cards should be checked to ensure that the card is valid.
- All reconciliation errors must be reported immediately to the Administrator or, in the case of the Administrator, to the CEO.

Petty Cash

Access to the petty cash float should be restricted to designated personnel and kept in a secure area. The float should be balanced at least monthly, and any major discrepancies should be reported to the Line Manager. Floats and any sale monies received are kept separate from the cash handler's personal money. When all these dockets are totalled at the end of the period and deducted from the opening petty cash float, the calculated value must agree with what is left in the petty cash float.

Cash Shortages

All employees who are responsible for handling cash and payments are required to always exercise full care and attention, to avoid mistakes and to avoid deductions being made from wages. In addition, failure to follow the above cash management procedures will be considered gross misconduct and dealt with accordingly under the disciplinary procedure.

Banking

Staff should not bring amounts over €500 to the bank. Two people must bring cash amounts over this value, or it should be split into separate lodgements.

Section 3 – Code of Behaviour

BUSINESS ETHICS AND PROTECTION

NPU Code of Behaviour forms part of the terms and conditions of employment of every employee. On appointment, each employee will be requested to read a copy of the Code of Behaviour.

NPU requires all staff to display a primary duty of care to NPU in respect of business ethics and to protect confidential business information to ensure our continued business success and growth. It is the policy of NPU to consistently conduct its business with honesty and integrity and in compliance with all legal and ethical standards, together with established company policies. Each employee is also required to conform to a high standard of ethics in relation to business activities with both customers and suppliers.

NPU is committed to policies and practices that provide equality of opportunity for all, protect the dignity of employees and promote respect for others at work. All employees are required to take personal and individual responsibility to comply with these policies and behave in a non-discriminatory way and not to participate in any acts of inappropriate behaviour, harassment, or bullying. All employees must have due regard for the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues and the organisation's workplace in general.

All employees are required to protect company confidential business information and not disclose it to other parties. You may not remove any documents or items belonging to NPU or which contain any confidential information from the organisation's premises at any time without proper advance authorisation.

Employees are not allowed to engage in or be connected with, any outside business or organisation which conflicts with the interests of this organisation. Employees must declare in writing any potential conflict of interest that might affect their impartiality in carrying out their duties. Subject to expressed written permission, employees may be entitled to

pursue other business activities/financial interests outside normal working hours.

Employees must not accept gifts or favours from customers or suppliers which could compromise them.

All persons employed by NPU have a duty to promptly report to their Line Manager any evidence of any improper conduct or practice of which they are or become aware. (Improper conduct means any illegal, fraudulent, dishonest, negligent or otherwise unethical action arising in connection with the organisation's business).

Any employee who discloses trade secrets or confidential business information whether while employed or after ceasing to be an employee, will be subject to disciplinary action (including possible dismissal) and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

The above includes, but is not limited to, the organisation's electronic communications infrastructure. At all times employees must behave with honesty and integrity and respect the rights and privacy of others in relation to electronic communication and information. It is the responsibility of each employee who utilises electronic communications to safeguard company information assets by understanding and complying with all policies in this area. NPU reserves the right to monitor all electronic communication and files.

Copyright in all writing, materials, processes, etc. created and produced by employees while employed by NPU are vested in the organisation. It is a condition of employment that employees assign all rights of copyright, both current and future, to NPU for the full period of the copyright, including extensions and renewals thereof.

Upon termination of employment, employees shall properly deliver up to all the organisation's manuals, Staff Handbook, letters, notes, notebooks, reports, and all other materials of a secret or confidential nature or under the control of employees. They always remain the property of the organisation.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct, other employee policies and procedures, and other company procedures will be regarded as a breach of discipline and will be dealt with in accordance with the organisation's disciplinary code.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

If you have information that suggests that there may be some wrongdoing or corruption in relation to some aspect of our business, you should make this known at a suitably senior level. NPU has developed this policy to encourage workers to come forward with concerns they may have. This policy does not replace our grievance procedure and depending on your concerns you may be referred to grievance policy or the dignity and respect at work policy. You can always raise a grievance through the organisation's Grievance Procedure, but you may feel that if you are "whistleblowing" i.e. *telling your employer of dangerous or illegal activity that you are aware of through your work* then you may feel that this makes your position difficult. We have therefore provided a procedure for you to report serious concerns directly to Senior Management so that they can be resolved confidentially and effectively.

Under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 NPU takes any reports of wrongdoing extremely seriously and will complete an investigation into the concerns. NPU will ensure that you are kept up to date in relation to the progress and the findings of the investigation. At all times, NPU will comply with the protection of the identity of the individual in as far as is possible and in line with the legislation. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 applies to all employees, contractors, agency staff, trainees, temporary employees, and former employees.

Employees who make a disclosure under the Protected Disclosure Act will not be penalised for doing so. Employees who make or have made a disclosure will not be threatened, victimised, or retaliated against in any way. Any employee found to be acting in an inappropriate manner as stated previously against an employee that has made a disclosure will be subject to disciplinary proceedings up to and including dismissal.

If it is found that an employee has made a vexatious or malicious disclosure then they may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The Protected Disclosures Act 2014 does not extend to a person who deliberately falsely reported a wrongdoing or if that person's motivation for the reporting of the wrongdoing is unlikely to meet the reasonable belief standard. They will not be protected under the Protected Disclosures Act 2014.

If you have information which leads you to reasonably believe that there has been a relevant wrongdoing you should raise the matter in writing or verbally if writing is not possible with someone at a suitably senior level. If you feel uncomfortable doing so or feel this would make your position difficult you can use email the Chairman of NPU and this remains highly confidential. If you prefer it can be raised with the CEO.

The legislation specifically states that a disclosure must refer to one or more relevant wrongdoings and are listed as follows:

- Offences that are or are likely to be committed
- Failing to comply with legal obligations
- Miscarriage of justice
- Health and safety risk, including risks to the public as well as other workers
- Damage to the environment
- The unauthorised use of public funds or resources
- Oppressive discriminatory or grossly negligent action or inaction by a public body

A protected disclosure about a relevant wrongdoing can be something that is happening now, has taken place in the past or is something that is about to happen.

The issues of concern in relation to our organisation are likely to include but are not exclusively:

- A criminal offence has been, is being, or is likely to be committed

- An action jeopardising the integrity of NPU is occurring or is likely to occur
- A person has failed, or is likely to fail, to comply with a legal obligation
- The health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be endangered
- The working environment has been, is being, or is likely to be damaged
- You have information tending to show any of the above has been, is being, or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

The format for making a disclosure should, as so far as is reasonably possible include a description of the relevant wrongdoing and provide as much information as possible to assist the investigator/s.

At all-times during an investigation the disclosure will be kept secure and in a form that does not endanger confidentiality of the person who made the disclosure however it may become necessary for the person to be revealed to assist the investigator/s. At all times NPU will ensure that the person/s is not subjected to penalisation or victimisation because of the disclosure.

Responding to a complaint

The person whom the complaint has been raised to will endeavour where possible to keep the workers informed of the progress of the investigation. They will ensure that the complaint is acknowledged, provide a summary of how NPU intends to deal with the complaint or in the instance that the concerns raised are not suitable to be investigated under this policy, provide the information on the relevant policies for the employee to pursue their concern.

Any disclosure is considered to be 'confidential information', and therefore should not be discussed with, or disclosed to, other employees or individuals who do not work for us. This does not infringe your rights to seek advice or representation throughout this process.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS, SOCIAL NETWORKING AND IT

The electronic communications infrastructure, including emails and internet, represent a significant investment by the organisation. At all times employees must behave with honesty and integrity and respect the rights and privacy of others in relation to electronic communication and information. It is the responsibility of each employee who utilises electronic communications to safeguard company information assets by understanding and complying with this policy, as well as other related policies. NPU reserves the right to monitor all electronic communication and files.

Electronic communications are for business use only. Employees are to utilise only those types of services for which they have been authorised. Employees will be given access to the intranet, internet and/or other electronic information as appropriate to their job needs. Much company information and record keeping are now kept electronically. All company records, such as customer communication, accounts, working hours records, expense claims, etc., must be accurately completed and kept up to date. Any abuse will be treated similarly to the falsification of paper records and will be dealt with under the disciplinary process.

Accessing or storing any form of electronic file, record or communication which could be deemed to harass or discriminate based on age, gender, race, religion, disability, civil status, family status, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community is totally forbidden and will be subject to the disciplinary process.

Employees may not publicly disclose via the internet, email or any form of electronic communication, inappropriate information regarding the organisation. The organisation's confidentiality policy applies to all electronic communication and data. Sending, transmitting, or otherwise disseminating proprietary data, trade secrets, or other confidential information of NPU is strictly prohibited outside of the organisation.

Software

All software is the property of the organisation. NPU strongly supports strict adherence to software vendors' licensing agreements. Any copying

of software in a manner that is not consistent with the vendors' license agreement is prohibited. Participation (including during off-hours) in pirated software bulletin boards and similar activities are prohibited. Only standard screen savers are permissible on company computers.

Virus Protection

NPU has virus protection software installed on all company hardware but there is still a high risk of viruses being received. All files entering NPU via the internet must be virus checked prior to their transfer for use to any company machine. This includes all email attachments. If you receive an external e-mail from an unknown source or a message which you feel is wrongly delivered, do not open it and contact IT immediately. All disks entering NPU must be virus checked prior to their use on any company machine. No exceptions are to be made to this policy and any abuse of this policy will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring

Employees should never consider electronic communications to be either private or secure. NPU has the right to record and monitor the activities of all users on company systems. It is our objective that such monitoring will not be required on an ongoing basis and will be used to review usage and audit practices. However, NPU retains the right to monitor (intercept and read) each individual's email, internet, network, and PC activity to ensure the protection of all employees and that there is no abuse of privilege. NPU may use software to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit emails. Every employee is to be aware that NPU security system is capable of recording every email and file transfer, internet site accessed, use of chat rooms and newsgroups, for every user. No employee should have an expectation of privacy in relation to electronic records or communications.

Internet

Internet use is strictly for business use during working hours. Access to any inappropriate, pornographic or obscene sites, or sites with the risk of such material, is prohibited at all times.

Care must be taken in the use of information accessed through the Internet. Most information is unregulated, and as such there is no

guarantee of accuracy. This is to protect company business systems, reduce the risk of viruses and ensure that large amounts of storage sites are not taken up with unnecessary files. Care must be taken when downloading files to ensure no inappropriate content is downloaded or content which is not relevant to the organisation

Email

Email access is given to employees to assist them in performance of their jobs and must be used at all times in a responsible, professional, ethical, and lawful way:

- The email system and the email it contains belong to NPU and are intended for business purposes. Employees must recognise that all emails sent from NPU email servers are sent in the organisation's name. Personal emails must be kept to a minimum and only accessed outside of working hours.
- Due to the permanent nature of emails and the legal implications, messages should be written and formatted appropriately. All external communications with customers, associates and suppliers must be considered for the relevance of content, accuracy, and potential to commit NPU to business transactions or exposure to liability.
- NPU GDPR/disclaimer footer must be attached to every external email communication. This should be set up on every email account to automatically appear on each email sent and must not be deleted.

Social Networking

In line with the above, employees should be aware that all activities on all social networking, and related sites, will be monitored on business machines at all times. Use of such sites for non-business reasons must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Any behaviour on such sites, whether for work or personal reasons, must always uphold the good NPU of the organisation. This policy includes use of such sites from personal PCs, phones etc. Where an employee is found to have posted or commented in a manner that brings NPU into disrepute, is offensive or disparaging to a person associated with NPU or

in any other way creates a concern for the organisation, such information may be used in a subsequent disciplinary process.

Where an account has been opened for business use, this account, and all its contents, remain the property of NPU at all times. The operator of the account must store all access details (e.g., user NPU and password) in a place known to the Administrator. Where the employee leaves the organisation, no further access to the account will be permitted. At no time, ever, can details from the account be used for personal or professional reasons unrelated to this organisation. To do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. If details from this account are used for the purpose of further employment with another organisation, the employer reserves the right to take legal action against the person using or accessing the data.

Abuse and Disciplinary Procedure

Any employee found to be abusing NPU electronic communication system, or not operating in line with this policy, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. This includes any attempt to circumvent system security, including firewalls, put in place to protect NPU Inappropriate use of email, internet and other electronic communications services includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending messages which could be taken as slurs or harassment on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, disability, civil status, family status, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community
- Email that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate
- Sending or posting threatening, offensive, malicious or libellous messages
- Forging or attempting to forge email messages
- Creating or sending chain letters through electronic mail
- Revealing internal company information to any sites, be it confidential or otherwise, or commenting on company matters at any time
- Reading, deleting, copying or modifying the email of others without their permission

- Violating your obligations regarding confidential, proprietary and trade secret information
- Accessing any web site which could be regarded as offensive, in bad taste or immoral (whether or not the content is legal)
- Supporting illegal activities, breaking into any computer, whether NPU or not, or encouraging any act of violence
- Using company equipment or systems for personal gain or purposes unrelated to the organisation's business
- Engaging in activities outside the bounds of ethical or proper behaviour
- Breaching any of NPU's other policies or guidelines

Any suspicion or evidence of abuse must be immediately reported by all employees.

Phones and other equipment

This policy in its entirety applies equally to equipment such as telephones, fax machines and other like electronic equipment.

Section 4 – Compensation and Benefits

PAYROLL

All employees are paid monthly in arrears, as detailed in your contract of employment.

Each employee will be issued with a pay slip that itemises:

- How earnings for the period were calculated
- Compulsory deductions such as PRSI, PAYE, LPT etc
- Voluntary deductions where applicable e.g., pensions, social club etc
- Cumulative earnings and deductions for the tax year to date

The organisation is diligent in its efforts to consistently ensure the accuracy of employee pay. Any overpayment or underpayment must be immediately brought to the attention of the Administrator. Deductions for overpayments will be made from subsequent salary payments once discovered, according to a pre-defined schedule.

Pay rates are set in a manner to be internally equitable, externally competitive, and financially feasible for the organisation. We adopt a policy that recognises and encourages individuals to achieve high performance.

PERSONAL RETIREMENT SAVINGS ACCOUNT (PRSA)

The Personal Retirement Savings Account in NPU is operated by Irish Life.

NPU will facilitate all employees who wish make pension arrangements. NPU will make the requested deductions from your pay and submit these to the PRSA provider. Each payslip will provide you with details of the deductions made.

TIME IN LIEU

Time in Lieu is designed to provide NPU with the resource flexibility to meet changing demands on the organisation.

Only employees whose contract of employment deems them eligible for time in lieu will receive this benefit.

This policy outlines how employees may receive time in lieu where excessive hours are worked on an on-going basis. It is the responsibility of the employee's Line Manager to monitor and discuss time worked and time in lieu with the employee concerned.

All time in lieu must have prior approval of, and be verified by, the relevant Line Manager.

Procedure

The Line Manager will discuss the work situation with the employee to ascertain that there is a real business need to work the additional hours.

Where there is a real business need, the Line Manager should allocate the appropriate number of hours to time in lieu to the employee.

Eligibility for Time in Lieu

An employee is only eligible for time in lieu where the employee works for more than 40 hours per week.

You may be requested to work additional hours where there are exceptional circumstances, or the organisation needs additional support.

Time off In Lieu must be approved by the Line Manager in advance in writing. NPU will try to facilitate the time back within one month.

LIFE AND FAMILY WORKPLACE COMMITMENT

NPU aims to be a family-friendly workplace and will consider a number of family-friendly practices to assist in achieving this goal. Family-friendly practices are designed to help employees combine employment with their family life, caring responsibilities and personal and social life outside the workplace. Our practices include those relating to statutory entitlements such as maternity leave, adoptive leave, *force majeure* leave as well as other, non-statutory measures, such as flexitime and part-time working arrangements when possible to implement.

PROVISION OF BICYCLES (BIKE TO WORK SCHEME)

NPU offers each employee the opportunity to avail of a Benefit-in-Kind Tax Exemption where an employee is provided with a bicycle or bicycle safety equipment by the organisation.

The criteria underpinning the scheme are as follows:

- There is a limit of €1,500 per employee on the cost of an electric bicycle/€1,250 for another bicycle
- The exemption can be availed of once in any 5-year period
- There is no minimum threshold for the number of days the bicycle should be used. However, the bicycle must be used mainly for qualifying journeys
- The exemption will cover pedal bicycles, tricycles, pedelecs (i.e., an electrically assisted bicycle). It will not cover motorbikes, scooters or mopeds

The following safety equipment is covered by the exemption:

- Cycle helmets (conforming to EU Standards)
- Bells and bulb horns
- Lights
- Mirrors and mudguards
- Cycle clips and dress guards
- Panniers, luggage carriers and straps to allow luggage to be safely carried
- Locks and chains for securing bicycle
- Pumps, puncture repair kits, cycle tool kits, tyre sealant
- Reflective clothing, white front reflectors, spoke reflectors

NPU will purchase the bicycle/safety equipment and a salary sacrifice arrangement will be put in place for the employee whereby the employee will forego part of their salary to cover the costs. The employee will not be liable for tax, PRSI or levies on the salary foregone. The salary sacrifice arrangement must be completed within 12 months of the provision of the bicycle/safety equipment.

Section 5 – Leave of Absence

FORCE MAJEURE LEAVE

NPU will grant short-term paid leave to cover employees in times of an emergency due to illness or accident to an immediate family member and where the presence of the employee is required.

This *force majeure* leave is available in the event of the illness or injury to a partner, husband, wife, a parent or grandparent, brother or sister or a person to whom the employee is parent, adoptive parent or is in *loco parentis*. This includes a person in a position of domestic dependency, including same-sex partners.

The maximum entitlement under *force majeure* leave is 3 days paid leave per year, subject to an overall maximum of 5 days paid leave in 3 years. Where an employee has to leave work during the day, regardless of the time of the day, it will be counted as a full day of *force majeure* leave and the employee must inform their Line Manager prior to departure.

In the event that the employee must be absent due to an illness or injury of a defined relative they must contact their Line Manager within 1 hour of normal start time on the first day of absence.

On returning to work the employee must immediately provide their Line Manager with a written report stating the dates of leave and a full explanation of why *force majeure* is being applied for. In order to be entitled to a period of *force majeure* leave the situation must be urgent, immediate and the employee's presence must be indispensable. The Line Manager will consider the application, in consultation with CEO and the employee will be notified in writing as to whether the period of *force majeure* leave is approved. Please note that advance notice of a situation will not constitute an entitlement to *force majeure* leave, for example, to attend a doctor's appointment.

Employees found abusing their entitlement to *force majeure* leave will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

JURY SERVICE

NPU facilitates employees to fulfil their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. Paid leave of absence is granted where an employee is called for jury service.

Employees must show the jury duty summons to their Line Manager as soon as it is received, so that arrangements can be made to accommodate for the absence. They must also produce a Certificate of Attendance for each day of absence from work. Certificates of Attendance can be procured from the Clerk of the Court covering the period of jury service. While serving, if excused for a part of the day (four hours or more) the employee must report for work. If the employee is released from jury service, they are expected to return to work immediately.

An employee may apply to the County Registrar to be excused from jury service and should provide reasonable evidence of the grounds for their exemption e.g., medical certificate, business purposes. In the event of exceptional business circumstances or immediate operational requirements, NPU may corroborate an employee's application to be excused.

NPU must be notified of any payments towards loss of earnings received in respect of jury service from the State. These will be deducted from the employee's earnings.

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND SICK LEAVE

It is a condition of employment with NPU that all employees satisfy their obligation under their contract of employment to attend work. Consistent regular attendance at work is required, and all employees will be held accountable for such.

Reporting of Absences

If employees are unable to report for work due to illness, they should personally notify the Line Manager by phone as soon as possible but no

later than 10.00am and indicate the reason for and likely duration of their absence. In situations where the Line Manager is not available, they should speak to the CEO. In the case of an on-going illness in excess of one week, the employee must telephone their Line Manager within one hour of their normal start time on the first day of each week in which they are absent, advising that the absence is continuing and their likely return date.

Requirement for Medical Certification

Each employee must produce a medical certificate for periods of sick leave of more than 2 days, stating the nature of the illness, and subsequent certificates are required to be sent at weekly intervals thereafter.

Return to Work

Employees have a responsibility to ensure their return to work at the earliest date possible commensurate with good health and safety. Before returning to work from a sick leave absence of three days or more, an employee may be required to provide a certificate of Fitness to Work from their medical practitioner, confirming that they can safely return to work.

On return to work after an absence, you must report directly to the line Manager at the start of that working day. The Line Manager will meet with each employee on their return to further understand the nature of the absence, its implications and update the employee on their job priorities.

NPU reserves the right to have staff members examined by its own Medical Advisor at the organisation's expense.

Illness during Annual Leave

When a period of medically certified illness occurs during an employee's annual leave, this period will not be deemed to be part of their annual leave. The Line Manager must be notified immediately, and production of a medical certificate is required.

NOTE:

A medical doctor's certificate will be required for any period of sick leave during an authorised absence from work.

Failure to Follow Sick Leave Procedures

Where an individual fails to comply with the sick leave procedures or has an unsatisfactory absence record, they will be invited to a meeting with their Line Manager. Where abuses of the sick leave policy have been committed, NPU reserves the right to initiate disciplinary proceedings, up to and including dismissal.

Sick Pay

Please refer to your individual contract of employment for details of eligibility for sick pay.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

NPU reserves the right to request that an employee attend the organisation's Medical Advisor in the event that there is a question over the employee's fitness to work at any stage throughout the employee's employment with the organisation.

With regard to personal appointments, wherever possible routine doctor, hospital, dentist, optician or other necessary medical appointments should be arranged outside working hours. If this is not possible every attempt should be made for the appointment to be at the beginning or end of your working day. Advance notification of such appointments should always be given, except in emergency situations. NPU have the right to ask for proof of attendance at such appointments.

BEREAVEMENT AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

NPU understands that the loss of loved ones needs to be managed in a sensitive and caring manner. In the event of time needed to be taken due to bereavement, then NPU will grant time off with pay for compassionate / bereavement leave at its discretion. Approval of such leave rests with the Line Manager. While each case will be treated separately, the following guidelines apply:

- in the case of a spouse/partner, parent, child, brother or sister, 5 days bereavement leave will be given
- in the case of other close relatives, namely, grandparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, uncle, aunt, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, nephew, niece, grandchild, up to two days bereavement leave will be given

NPU reserves the right to treat each case on an individual basis and additional days may be provided on a discretionary basis.

MATERNITY/PATERNITY/ADOPTIVE LEAVE

Entitlements are in accordance with statutory provisions. You should notify the Administrator at an early stage so that your entitlements and obligations can be explained to you. The CEO will also consider applications from staff members, taking the organisation's overall finances into consideration, for a top up payment from NPU to add to their State paid Maternity Allowance. To be considered, the staff member must meet certain criteria i.e., the staff member must have four years continuous employment with NPU and confirm they will return to work in NPU for a minimum of one full year after their Maternity Leave is up.

PARENTAL LEAVE

You may be entitled to parental leave, depending on the age of your child(ren) and your length of service. If you wish to take parental leave, you should notify the CEO so that any entitlement can be explained to you.

Urgent Family Leave/Force Majeure Leave

If you need to take time off work for urgent, emergency, or unforeseen family reasons, you may be entitled to a limited amount of paid leave in accordance with the current statutory provisions. The statutory entitlement to 'force majeure' leave may arise where your immediate presence with a near relative (your child, spouse or partner, sibling, parent, or grandparent) is required because of their injury or illness in unforeseen circumstances. It is your responsibility to apply for this leave as soon as possible following your return to work. Further details are available from the Line Manager.

CARER'S LEAVE

You may be entitled to carer's leave, depending on whether you meet certain Social Welfare criteria and your length of service with us. If you wish to take carer's leave, you should notify the Line Manager so that any entitlement can be explained to you.

EXAMINATION AND STUDY LEAVE

NPU always encourages our employees to up skill and get involved in continuous education. If you are actively studying or thinking of undergoing a course, please speak with your Line Manager who will be able to provide you with information in relation to study time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

If an employee requires time off from work for a period of up to 12 months, they can apply for leave of absence. If business conditions permit, leave of absence may be granted to an employee who has a good attendance record, timekeeping, and attitude and work performance. An employee must have completed 3 years continuous service prior to applying.

Leave of absence will be granted for a minimum period of 1 month up to a maximum of 12 months and during this period employees are not paid any salary. Employees can only avail of leave of absence once during their employment with NPU. Applications should be made to the CEO.

Approval for this type of unpaid leave is subject to business requirements and at the discretion of the organisation. Employees do not accrue holidays while on leave of absence and all outstanding holidays must be taken prior to the start of the leave.

Any confidentiality agreements in place during the employment are still applicable during the leave of absence. Employees will receive confirmation of the approval in the form of a letter, which they will be required to sign. Employees have the right to return to their original or a comparable job at the end of their period of leave.

SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY

We recognise that employees make a substantial commitment to the organisation. In return, NPU recognises the need for employees to take a period of refreshment for the opportunity to pursue other interests such as educational, charitable, or public service. To meet this need, NPU will consider the provision of a maximum period of 6 working weeks' *unpaid* sabbatical leave to employees, subject to certain qualifying criteria.

Scope

All permanent employees who have completed 3 years of continuous service and satisfy the qualifying criteria below.

Procedure

This benefit is available to all permanent employees who meet the qualifying criteria, as follows:

- The employee must have completed 3 years of continuous employment with the organisation.
- Employees on a disciplinary warning will not be eligible for sabbatical leave. This will be reviewed once the performance issue has been addressed.

Taking the Leave

- Once the criteria have been met, the employee may take 6 weeks' *unpaid* leave during the sabbatical period.
- The period will normally be taken as one fixed period of 6 weeks. However, where the sabbatical is being used for educational purposes, by agreement with NPU, the period can be aligned with academic requirements.
- Carryover of sabbatical leave is not permitted.
- To take sabbatical leave, an employee must make an application at least 2 months in advance, in writing to their Line Manager.
- Sabbatical leave may be linked to a period of annual leave, but the total sabbatical leave plus annual leave must not exceed 8 weeks

inclusive of any Annual Leave, Public Holidays or Company Days that may fall therein.

- All normal service linked benefits will continue to accrue during this period.

Section 6 - Dignity and Respect

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

NPU is committed to policies and practices that provide equality of opportunity for all, protect the dignity of employees and promote respect for others at work. All employees are required to take personal and individual responsibility to comply with these policies and behave in a non-discriminatory way.

NPU is committed to a policy of equal opportunities in employment. Training and promotion are open to all employees of the organisation. All employment decisions are based on the skills, knowledge, experience, and qualifications required to perform a job to appropriate standards, and the employee's suitability for the role.

Implied in all NPU contracts of employment is a commitment to equal pay for equal work.

NPU will not tolerate discrimination or any other inappropriate behaviour by one employee or group of employees against another or others for any reason. Discrimination is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favourable manner than another person is, has or would have been treated, on any of the nine grounds listed below. Discrimination can also be taken to have occurred where a person is treated less favourably by virtue of their association with a person who is a member of one of these nine groups. Discrimination also occurs where one of the grounds is imputed to a person and the person is treated less favourably as a result. Employment practices, treatment of an employee or decisions regarding an employee will not be influenced or affected by an employee's:

1. Civil status
2. Family status
3. Sexual orientation
4. Religious belief (or lack thereof)
5. Gender
6. Age (16+)
7. Disability

8. Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin; or
9. Membership of the Travelling Community

NPU is committed to promoting a positive and harmonious working environment where every employee is treated with respect and dignity, and in which no employee feels threatened or intimidated.

If an employee has any questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace, they should bring these issues to the attention of their Line Manager for resolution. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal.

Employees should refer to the organisation's Grievance Procedure if they believe they have been treated unfairly in the course of their employment. If an employee feels that they have been bullied or harassed, they should refer to the organisation's Dignity at Work Policy, and the Complaints Procedure set out within.

Any employee contravening this policy and unlawfully discriminating against another employee, or potential employee, will render themselves liable for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

DIGNITY AT WORK

Every employee / freelancer has the right to respect and Dignity at Work. Everyone in NPU, at all levels have read, discussed, and agreed to fully adopt the Code. A Declaration of Adoption has been presented and discussed at a Board of Directors meeting. It has been signed and returned to signthecode@safetocreate.ie

Each new employee, on every activity, project, or programme, will be given a copy of the code as part of their employment contract/letter of agreement.

NPU and each employee confirm our commitment to:

- Act in an ethical manner as a business and act with integrity and ethically as an employer
- Commit fully to safe and respectful workspaces with zero tolerance for damaging behaviour

- Abide by all Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Employment legislation and comply with all relevant regulations
- Create and implement best practice around codes of practice, policies and procedures for safe workspaces ensuring a clear reporting system, timely investigation which identifies acts of wrongdoing and offers support, action, resolutions, monitoring, and accountability
- Have policies and procedures in place to ensure a safe workplace including: a Dignity at Work protocol, as well as grievance, and disciplinary procedures (see Safe to Create Templates)
- Ensure work environments support the creative process and promote mutual respect from everyone involved
- Commit to the implementation of the code with all employees no matter what their employment status and attach the code to all contracts and letters of agreement
- Avail of Safe to Create free online training for employees irrespective of the nature of the employment on: Tackling Bullying and Harassment at Work, Addressing Unconscious Bias and Bystander Training
- Display the Code of Conduct and all anti-harassment policies prominently in all workspaces
- Promote the Code within and outside our communities establishing a relationship of mutual trust with business partners and stakeholders

Dignity at Work Training

NPU will ensure each employees, whether full time, part-time or freelance, will complete the safe to create training programmes developed specifically for the creative sector to address dignity at work issues, including Tackling Bullying and Harassment, Addressing Unconscious Bias and Bystander Training.

HARASSMENT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Harassment

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct, related to any of the following grounds:

- Family status
- Civil status
- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief (or lack thereof)
- Gender
- Age (16+) Disability
- Race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin; or
- Membership of the Travelling Community
- Disability

which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

For the purpose of the above definition, conduct includes acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. To constitute harassment, the behaviour can be a once-off event or persistent and repeated behaviour. The following are some specific examples of the forms such conduct might take:

- Verbal harassment - spoken words, shouting, ridicule, unfair or excessive criticism, jokes, comments or songs
- Physical harassment – pushing, shoving or any form of assault
- Written harassment – including production of faxes, text messages, emails or notices
- Intimidatory harassment – gestures, posturing or threatening poses
- Visual displays such as posters, emblems or badges
- Isolation or exclusion from social activities
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Unreasonably changing a person's job content or targets
- Pressure to behave in a manner that the employee thinks is inappropriate, for example being required to dress in a manner unsuited to a person's ethnic or religious background where there is no objective need to do so.

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

It is up to the employee to decide what behaviour is unwelcome irrespective of the attitude of others to the matter.

For the purposes of the above definition, conduct includes acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures, or other material. Sexual harassment may occur between men and women or between persons of the same gender. A single incident may constitute sexual harassment. The following are some specific examples of the forms such conduct might take:

- Non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature - looks, gestures, whistling, suggestive symbols, pictures, written materials, faxes, emails, or text messages
- Verbal conduct of a sexual nature - advances, propositions, suggestions, jokes, comments or innuendo and continued suggestions for social activity outside the workplace.
- Physical conduct of a sexual nature - groping, kissing, fondling, patting, pinching, unnecessary touching, assault or rape
- Gender based conduct - conduct that denigrates, ridicules or is intimidatory or physically abusive of an employee because of their sex such as derogatory or degrading abuse or insults which are gender-related

These examples are not exhaustive, and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with appropriately.

Bullying

Any form of bullying is prohibited by NPU. Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as it is not repeated, it is not considered to be bullying.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of types of bullying and offences of a similar nature are also prohibited and will be dealt with accordingly.

- Being treated less favourably than colleagues
- Verbal abuse, insults
- Humiliation
- Intimidation, aggression or threatening behaviour
- Isolation or exclusion with negative consequences
- Intrusion by pestering, spying and stalking
- Repeatedly manipulating a person's job content and/or targets
- Withholding work-related information
- Unfair and excessive criticism
- Undermining behaviour
- Excessive monitoring of work

Intention of Perpetrator

The intention of the perpetrator of bullying or harassment is irrelevant. The fact that the perpetrator has no intention of bullying or harassing the victim may not be a defence.

Performance Management

The reasonable and essential discipline arising from the good management of the performance of an employee at work does not

amount to bullying or harassment. Similarly, an action taken which can be justified as regards the safety, health and welfare of employees does not amount to bullying or harassment.

Complaints Procedure

All employees have a right to make a complaint if they feel they have been bullied and/or harassed, and they should follow the steps in the following procedure. All complaints will be taken seriously, and the procedure will be handled with fairness, sensitivity and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator. There is a two-tiered approach in the procedure – informal and formal – to address the issue of bullying or harassment in the workplace.

During any investigation into a complaint, the principles of natural justice must be adhered to. External assistance may be necessary to deal with complaints in some circumstances so as to ensure impartiality, objectivity and fairness in an investigation.

The Informal Procedure

Method of making an Informal Complaint

Any employee who believes that they are being bullied or harassed should, where possible, indicate directly to the person complained of that the behaviour in question is unacceptable.

If the employee believes that this approach is not suitable or has been unsuccessful, the employee may then make an informal complaint.

Informal complaints should be addressed to their Line Manager. If the employee's Line Manager is involved in the incident, the complaint should be submitted to the CEO.

An informal complaint may be verbal or written.

NPU will designate a person to handle the complaint. If the complaint was verbal, a written note of what is complained of will be taken by the designated person and a copy given to the complainant.

Procedure which will be followed

The designated person will establish the facts, the context of the complaint and the next course of action in dealing with the matter under the informal procedure. The designated person will also discuss other possible courses of action available to the complainant including mediation.

a) Where specific examples are given

If the complaint concerns bullying and/or harassment and includes specific examples of the behaviour complained of, the person complained against will be presented with the complaint and given a chance to respond.

After the response is received (or a reasonable period of time has elapsed without a response having been received), a method will be agreed to progress the issue to resolution so that both parties can return to a harmonious working environment without bullying or harassment being a factor.

If the behaviour complained of does not concern bullying or harassment as defined, an alternative approach will be put in place and a rationale recorded.

b) Where no specific examples are given

If no specific examples are provided, there is no complaint to be answered under this policy, though other means of protecting and repairing workplace relationships may be considered by the designated person.

The designated person will keep a record of all stages of the process, the complaint, the first meeting, action agreed and signed records of the final meeting. The purpose of the records, which will not include detail of discussions, is to provide evidence that the complaint was dealt with in an appropriate manner.

All parties will maintain, insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the informal process. Breaches of confidentiality will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

Resolution

When resolution is found through the informal procedure, both parties will be given support or periodical reviews, as appropriate. These may include counselling or other appropriate interventions.

Where a complaint is found not to have been made in good faith, the complainant will be the subject of disciplinary action.

Resolving the Problem by Mediation

Mediation is an alternative method of resolving issues relating to bullying and harassment. Mediation involves the parties seeking to arrive at a solution through mutual agreement, rather than through an investigation and decision.

Mediation provides a confidential opportunity for the person who feels that they have been bullied or harassed, and the person accused of carrying out this inappropriate behaviour, to discuss the matter and to reach an agreement on their continuing working relationship.

Mediation is conducted in private, and is directly between the parties concerned, with the support of a mediator, who will act as an independent facilitator. Either party may withdraw from the process at any time by notifying the mediator, in writing, that they wish to do so.

If both parties agree to resolve the issue by mediation, NPU will arrange the mediation process. An appropriate person, acceptable to both parties, from within or outside NPU will be assigned as mediator.

If the mediation process results in an agreement acceptable to both parties, the mediator will draw up a written record of the terms of the settlement for signature by both parties. If the matter is resolved by mediation, no disciplinary action will be taken.

If mediation breaks down or fails to achieve its goal, the only other option is to have the matter resolved by investigation. A person involved in the

mediation process will not be involved in the investigation process. Resolving the matter by investigation may also be considered if the employee concerned feels that it is inappropriate to resolve the matter by mediation.

Formal Procedure

In cases where an employee believes that an informal resolution is not a suitable means of addressing their concern, or where the employee believes that their previous recourse to the informal complaints' procedure has been unsatisfactory, the employee may make a formal complaint of bullying and/or harassment. Choosing to bypass the informal process will not reflect negatively on the employee concerned.

In cases where an employee makes an informal complaint, but where NPU management believes, because of the gravity of the subject matter of the complaint or for some other reason, that the informal complaints procedure is inadequate to address the complaint, the complaint may be dealt with by using the formal complaints procedure.

Method of making a Formal Complaint

Formal complaints should be made in writing, signed and dated. The complaint should be confined to precise details of alleged incidents of bullying and/or harassment, including the dates of such incidents and the details of any witnesses.

Formal complaints should be addressed to their Line Manager. If the Line Manager is involved in the incident, the complaint should be submitted to the organisation's CEO.

On receipt of a formal complaint, an investigatory panel will be designated by the organisation. The investigator panel may consist of up to two persons. NPU may engage an external independent investigator if it is deemed appropriate in the circumstances. In exceptional circumstances, if either party has an objection to the investigatory panel, NPU may designate an alternative panel. An objection to the designated investigatory panel must be made in writing to the organisation's Administrator in a timely fashion and must clearly outline the grounds of the objection.

Complaints in Writing

Where a formal complaint is made but the complainant declines to submit a written statement, then a written record will be made of the complaint by the investigatory panel. The complainant will be asked to sign this record.

If the complainant refuses to sign this record, the complainant will be made aware that the ability of NPU to investigate the complaint on a formal basis may be compromised by any failure of the complainant to cooperate with the organisation's procedures. Efforts will be made to clarify this issue before any further steps are taken.

The complainant will be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process, the procedures and timeframe involved, and the possible outcomes. They will be assured of support as required throughout the process. They will be given a copy of this policy.

Procedure which will be followed

The investigation will be governed by the terms of reference which will include the following provisions:

- A provision to the effect that the investigation will be conducted in accordance with this policy
- An indicative timeframe for the completion of the investigation
- Provisions relating to the scope of the investigation, indicating that the investigator will consider whether the complaint falls within the definition of bullying or harassment at work and whether the complaint has been upheld

The person complained against will be notified, in writing that an allegation of bullying and/or harassment has been made against them. They will be advised of the aims and objectives of the formal process and procedures and timeframe involved and the possible outcomes. They will be assured of support, as required, throughout the process. A meeting will be organised at which they are given a copy of the complaint in full and any other relevant document, including this policy. They will be given time to consider the documentation and an opportunity to respond.

The investigator will meet with the complainant, the person complained against and any witnesses or relevant persons, on an individual basis, with a view to establishing the facts. The complainant, the person complained against, and any witnesses will be entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or person of their choosing at any meeting.

All interviews with parties and witnesses will be conducted sensitively and with due respect to the rights of all concerned. The investigation will be conducted on a confidential basis, insofar as that is possible.

Statements from all parties and witnesses will be recorded in writing. Copies of the statements will be agreed with and given to those who make statements to the investigatory panel.

During the Investigation

All parties will continue to work normally during the investigation, unless directed otherwise. Where necessary, parties to the complaint will be suspended with full pay to allow for a fair and thorough investigation. Such a suspension is **not** a disciplinary sanction, and this will be made clear to the relevant parties.

NPU's management will make every effort to ensure the protection of all involved in the investigation.

The parties to the complaint should not communicate regarding the complaint.

Any effort by any party to intimate or otherwise influence any complainant, respondent or witness during the course of an investigation will be regarded as a disciplinary matter of the upmost gravity.

Conclusion of Investigation

The objective of an investigation will be to ascertain whether or not, on the balance of probabilities:

- The behaviour complained of occurred and, if so
- Whether or not that behaviour amounted to bullying and/or harassment, as defined

It will be open for the designated investigators to determine whether bullying or harassment occurred.

The investigation will be completed as quickly as practicable, preferably within the indicated timeframe. The investigatory panel will submit a report to management which will include the conclusions. A HR representative will then examine it for thoroughness, objectivity and reasonableness. The complainant and the person complained against will be given a copy of the report as soon as practicable and will be given an opportunity to comment, within a prescribed period of time, before the organisation's management decides on any further course of action.

The organisation's management will decide the action which is to be taken arising from the report, in light of the investigatory panel's report and any comments made by the parties. The organisation's management will then, in writing, inform the complainant and the person complained against of the next steps which are to occur.

Action where the Complaint is Upheld

If the complaint is upheld, the matter will be treated as a serious disciplinary issue and NPU will follow the appropriate disciplinary procedures which may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If the perpetrator is not an employee, for example, if they are a client, other appropriate measures will be taken.

NPU may also take other appropriate action to support and protect the victim and/or to ensure that similar situations do not arise in the future.

Action where the Complaint is not Upheld

If the complaint is not upheld but the complainant is found to have acted in good faith, NPU may take appropriate measures to support both the

complainant and the person complained against. This will include taking appropriate measures to ensure that other parties to the investigation are made aware that the finding was not upheld.

Where a complaint is not upheld and is found not to have been made in good faith, the complainant will be the subject of disciplinary action. The same principle will apply for witnesses giving evidence in bad faith.

Preservation of Rights and Prevention of Victimisation

Making a complaint under this policy will not affect an employee's statutory rights. No-one will be victimised for making a complaint in good faith or for acting in good faith as a witness in an investigation.

Appeals

If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaints' procedure, they may lodge an appeal within 7 working days of receipt of notification of the outcome of the process.

The reason for the appeal should be outlined in writing to the organisation's management. The appeal will be heard by another person(s), of at least the same level of seniority as the original investigatory panel. The appeal will focus only on the aspect of the case cited by the appellant as being the subject of the appeal.

The grounds of the appeal and any outcome and methodology employed will be appended to the investigation file. Please note that the final report of the investigation itself will not be subject to amendment.

Resolution

Both parties will be given appropriate support and periodical reviews, insofar as is reasonable, after the formal process has been concluded.

External Investigation

In any situation where, by reason of the size of the organisation, seniority of a complainant or a person complained against, or for any other reason, it is not appropriate for a formal complaint, informal complaint or appeal to be investigated by an employee of the organisation, NPU reserves the right to appoint an appropriate external person to carry out the

investigation. Any such external person will carry out their functions in accordance with the provisions of this policy and NPU will give appropriate effect to the findings of such an external person.

This policy may be amended from time to time at the discretion of the organisation's management.

POSITIVE ACTION TOWARDS DISABILITY

This company is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity for all staff. NPU will strive for recruitment, employment, training and promotion practices that are free of barriers, both systemic and deliberate; and that do not directly or indirectly discriminate against people generally, and against people with disabilities in particular.

NPU believes that everyone should be more aware of the need to ensure that people with disabilities have the same choices and opportunities as all employees and that their skills, abilities, ambitions and aspirations are valued equally.

While we are committed to not discriminating against people with disabilities, we also support internal initiatives that remove some of the myths and concerns that surround disability and demonstrate the importance of employment for all.

This will be achieved through appropriate organisational policies and procedures, employee communication, participation and education.

Definition

Under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2008, "Disability" means:

- The total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions, including the loss of a part of a person's body
- The presence in the body of organisms causing, or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness
- The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body

- A condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction
- A condition, illness or disease which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or which results in disturbed behaviour

“Disability” includes a disability which exists at present, or which previously existed but no longer exists, or which may exist in the future or which is imputed to a person. The definition covers a wide range of disabilities and belies the assumptions and stereotypes that are generally held about disability. NPU recognises that:

- Some disabilities are obvious, and others are not so apparent
- The same disability can vary in its severity and will affect individuals differently
- Some people with disabilities may require special assistance or equipment in the workplace, other people may not need any such support

Accordingly, NPU will treat every person with a disability as an individual and will discuss openly with the particular person what assistance or supports, if any, they may need. NPU asks that any person with a disability who encounters difficulties or obstacles in carrying out their role will raise the issue with their supervisor or the Administrator at the earliest possible opportunity.

Commitment to Positive Action

NPU commits to:

- Work with employees to review work practices to ensure they do not unnecessarily exclude people with disabilities or mental health difficulties
- Provide training and take other relevant steps to encourage disability awareness amongst all employees, both with regard to their colleagues, interview candidates and the customer-base. Such training will support Line Managers in supervising, managing and training staff with a disability
- Perform a thorough audit of the business premises, including entries, exits and information-display, to include continuing

dialogue with landlord to continue to look at solutions to making the workplace more accessible and safer for everyone, including those with disabilities

- Ensure that recruitment advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications are based on requirements and tasks that are absolutely essential to the role, and do not discriminate directly or indirectly against a person with a disability. Non-essential qualifications or experience will be described as “desirable”, thereby leaving the position open to a wider pool of applicants including those with disabilities
- Provide or facilitate the presence of an interpreter at interview for hearing or speech impaired candidates
- Facilitate a friend or relative to accompany a disabled candidate to an interview
- Prepare existing employees in methods of assisting visually impaired candidates and other visually impaired visitors in NPU
- Where the suitability of a particular candidate with a disability is at issue, NPU will consider what accommodation could reasonably be implemented to facilitate the employment of the person with the disability
- Where NPU forms an initial opinion that a candidate is unable by virtue of a disability to be employed in a particular post, the candidate in question will be afforded an opportunity to respond to that opinion before a final decision is made
- Make all reasonable efforts with regard to facilities, equipment and other supports to meet the special requirements that any particular disability may give rise to and enable staff with disabilities to perform their role successfully
- Ensure that staff with disabilities have the same opportunities as other staff to develop full and rewarding careers with the organisation, and to acquire the range of skills and experience necessary for personal and future career development
- Positively encourage people with disabilities to apply for appropriate promotions within the organisation
- Ensure there is continuous access to our disabled facilities and that they are maintained to an acceptable standard
- Identify anyone with a disability who may need assistance in the event of evacuation; liaise with the Safety Officer with regard to

these arrangements. Ensure that any person with a disability is aware of the need to identify themselves to the Safety Officer in the event of their disability not being generally known in NPU and there being a need for assistance during an evacuation

- Use email, fax, or text at work for deaf or hard of hearing employees
- Take account of the special needs of clients, suppliers, recruitment candidates and any visitor to the workplace
- Making every effort to retain existing employees who acquire or develop a disability during their time with the organisation; this may involve re-training, transferring etc. Appropriate counselling if required/requested will be provided for such employees to assist them to make the transition to adapt to their new situation

Employees are invited to raise any ideas they may have with regard to making the workplace more disability-friendly with their Line Manager

Should any employee who has a disability feel that they have been discriminated against, or otherwise treated unfairly or less favourably than an employee without a disability, they should bring this to the attention of their Line Manager or use the appropriate company procedure (i.e., Dignity at Work policy and procedure or Grievance/Complaints procedure). All such complaints will be taken seriously, and action taken where appropriate.

Section 7 - Performance Management

Performance Standards

Regular meetings will be held with employees to review progress and plan the future development of the organisation. Individuals will be provided with details of the performance standards necessary in their job and feedback on their individual performance, as appropriate. NPU is committed to treating all staff fairly and equitably and to helping employees perform effectively.

The high standards of work, conduct and appearance of our employees maintain the organisation's reputation with the public. These policies are to ensure the organisation's standards, rules and regulations are upheld at all times by all employees. The disciplinary procedure defines the process by which failure to meet these standards will be handled.

We want to remind employees that at all times they should feel free to raise matters of concern to them with their Line Manager.

PROCEDURE TO ADDRESS SUITABILITY DURING PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The normal disciplinary procedure does not apply to employees during probation. However, regular meetings will be held with new employees to review progress to determine their suitability to continue to work in NPU and pass their probationary period. The probationary period may be extended to facilitate further opportunity for new employees to demonstrate their suitability. However, should this not be the case the contract of employment will terminate either during, or at the end of, the probationary period. Individuals will be provided with details of the performance standards necessary in their job and feedback on their individual performance, as appropriate. NPU is committed to treating all staff fairly and equitably and to helping employees perform effectively. NPU requires high standards of work, conduct, performance and appearance of our employees and that the organisation's standards, rules and regulations are upheld at all times by all employees. The procedure to address issues during the probationary period defines the

process by which failure to meet these standards will result in the termination of employment.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

NPU is committed to treating all staff fairly and equitably and to helping employees to perform effectively. However, there will be occasions when it may be necessary to invoke disciplinary procedures that are designed to protect the interests of both NPU and its employees.

When work falls below an acceptable standard, help will be given to the employee to improve. If standards of work continue to fall and there is a necessity for action, it will automatically begin with a pre-disciplinary informal discussion. Similarly, when an employee's behaviour is inappropriate and unacceptable, and this is officially deemed misconduct, it will mean the initiation of a pre-disciplinary informal discussion or the disciplinary procedure, depending on the severity.

If disciplinary action should become necessary then each case will be treated consistently and fairly, and the disciplinary procedure will be strictly observed at all steps. The employee will be given the opportunity to provide their version of events and any extenuating circumstances will be considered. An employee's natural rights will be upheld at all times, and employees will have the right to:

- Know the case against them
- Reply
- Due consideration
- Representation
- Appeal

All Line Managers are required to use their best efforts to:

- Provide feedback at early steps to encourage and support employees to improve
- Ensure that all cases are thoroughly investigated
- Avoid any discrimination
- Prepare carefully and be consistent

- Keep adequate records
- Adhere to this procedure

Breaches of rules and regulations will mean the initiation of Step 1 of the formal disciplinary procedure although it is acceptable to move directly to Steps 2, 3, 4 or 5 where NPU views an incident sufficiently serious.

The Disciplinary Procedure

Investigation

Prior to taking the decision to invoke the disciplinary procedure, NPU will ensure that the situation has been thoroughly investigated. This is a fact-finding process and may necessitate the gathering of detailed information as well as the carrying out of formal interviews, taking of written statements, etc.

Equally, the employee has the right to gather information in their defence, so they can present details if the decision is taken to invoke the disciplinary procedure.

Once the investigation has been completed, the Administrator will inform the employee of the findings and the outcome. Where the decision is taken to invoke the disciplinary procedure, the employee will be informed of the case against them, so they can respond in an informed manner at a disciplinary hearing.

Where the decision is taken not to take disciplinary action, the employee may be counselled, and details of the issue placed on the employee's personnel file for record keeping purposes.

Suspension

Proper investigation is an integral part of the process and on occasion may require employees to be suspended on full pay whilst it is carried out. Suspension on pay is not considered to be an action taken under the disciplinary procedure. It is there to ensure that issues are dealt with in a fair and reasonable manner, and adequate protection is given to all employees. NPU reserves the right to suspend you with full pay pending

completion of the investigation or, if appropriate, the disciplinary procedure.

Informal Pre-Disciplinary Counselling Discussion

Where appropriate, prior to using the formal aspects of the organisation's disciplinary procedure, a pre-disciplinary counselling discussion may be held with the employee.

Minor misconduct, poor performance or minor breaches of rules will normally result in informal counselling or advice being given by their Line Manager or another member of management. If this approach is not successful, NPU may escalate it to the formal disciplinary procedure.

Steps in the Formal Disciplinary Procedure

The aim of our disciplinary procedure is to ensure adherence to the organisation's rules, policies and procedures and to aid employees whose performance, attitude or conduct falls below company standards. An employee's natural rights will be upheld at all times, and employees will have the right to:

- Know the case against them
- Reply
- Due consideration
- Representation
- Appeal

Issues will normally be discussed before any decision concerning disciplinary action or dismissal is taken. The general principles of natural justice and fair procedures will be upheld at all times.

From the first formal step of the disciplinary procedure there will be the presence of the employee's Line Manager, where possible, in conjunction with another member of the management team. Employees are advised and have the option to have a company colleague present.

You may be suspended on full pay at any time or re-assigned or relocated to another business unit or work location in the course of the disciplinary

procedure to facilitate a full investigation. The disciplinary procedure will only apply to an employee who has completed their probationary period.

The procedure outlined below may be abridged or varied by NPU at its discretion or as circumstances may dictate.

The steps in the disciplinary procedure are as follows:

Step 1: Verbal Warning

At the meeting an action plan including a scheduled time for improvement and date for reappraisal will be set. A record of the verbal warning will be given to the employee and a copy will remain active on the personnel file for **6 months**. If the conduct or performance is satisfactory after this period, the verbal warning will be removed and will be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes. **If there is a further allegation relating to conduct or performance within the 6-month period or if conduct or performance is not improved during this time, the next step of the procedure will be implemented.** This can happen before the end of the verbal warning period.

Step 2: First Written Warning

At the meeting an action plan including a scheduled time for improvement and date for reappraisal will be set. A record of the first written warning will be given to the employee and a copy will remain active on the personnel file for **9 months**. If the conduct or performance is satisfactory after this period, the first written warning will be removed and will be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes. **If there is a further allegation relating to conduct or performance within the 9-month period or if conduct or performance is not improved during this time, the next step of the procedure will be implemented.** This can happen before the end of the first written warning period.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the offence, a first written warning may be given where no previous verbal warning has been given.

Step 3: Final Written Warning

At the meeting, the final written warning, a copy of which will be given to the employee, will state clearly that the next step will be termination of

employment if conduct and/or performance do not improve. A record of the final written warning will be given to the employee and a copy will remain active on the personnel file for **12 months. If the conduct or performance is satisfactory after this period, the final written warning will be removed and will be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes. If there is a further allegation relating to conduct or performance within the 12-month period or if conduct or performance is not improved during this time, the next step of the procedure will be implemented. This can happen before the end of the final written warning period.**

In more serious cases, where no verbal or written warning has previously been given, a final written warning may be issued.

Step 4: Action Short of Dismissal

In exceptional circumstances, dependent on the individual case, NPU may exercise its discretion to issue a sanction short of dismissal. This action may include suspension without pay, demotion or deferment or loss of increment. This is action short of dismissal.

Step 5: Dismissal

There are two alternative courses of action available at this step in the procedure, depending on the circumstances:

- A. An employee will be procedurally dismissed if they have failed to improve during the previous steps. Appropriate notice or payment in lieu of notice will be made.
- B. In an instance of gross misconduct an employee will be dismissed without going through the previous steps of the procedure. In these circumstances a full investigation will be conducted, and a disciplinary meeting will be held which will follow the normal process and uphold an employee's natural rights. Due to the serious nature of the situation, such as the offences outlined under Gross Misconduct, the option of dismissal warrants serious consideration, and the process is likely to result in dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Appeals

You may appeal against any warning. Any appeal should be made in writing addressed to the person whose decision you are appealing. The appeal should set out the grounds you are appealing. The appeal will be conducted, where possible, by someone of appropriate seniority who has not been involved in the matter under appeal. Any appeal should arrive at NPU no later than **5** working days after notification of the decision.

You will be informed of the findings of the appeal hearing, which will either confirm the disciplinary action already advised, alter it to more appropriate action, or reverse it, thereby cancelling the disciplinary action.

The decision is final, and no further appeal may be made.

If you are appealing a decision to dismiss, the appeal will not affect the dismissal and a P45 will still be issued to you and all salary payments and benefits will cease. However, if the outcome of the appeal is to reverse the decision to dismiss you, you will be treated, insofar as possible, as if you were never dismissed and any back salary and benefits will be restored to you.

Offences

a) Misconduct

NPU will normally consider the following list of offences as misconduct and an appropriate reason for initiating disciplinary action:

- Failure to follow the procedures in respect of absence due to sickness or injury
- Minor breach of the written statement of terms and conditions of employment
- Minor damage to company property
- Minor breach of company rules
- Minor failure to observe company policies or procedures
- Regular unreasonable and/or unexplained absences

- Lateness
- Poor job performance

These examples are not exhaustive or exclusive, and offences of a similar nature will be dealt with under this procedure.

b) Gross Misconduct

The following offences are examples of gross misconduct:

- Unauthorised use of the organisation's assets and equipment
- Insubordination e.g., refusal to carry out duties or obey reasonable instructions, except where employee safety may reasonably be in jeopardy
- Sexual harassment, harassment, bullying
- Serious breach of rules, policies or procedures, especially those designed to ensure safe operation
- Divulging or misusing confidential information
- Theft or unauthorised possession of any property or facilities of NPU or of any employee of the organisation
- Consumption of alcohol or drugs, or intoxication by reason of alcohol or drugs, which could affect work performance in any way or have an impact on other employees
- Having illegal drugs in the possession, custody or control of the employee while at work or on the organisation's premises
- Defrauding or attempting to defraud the organisation, its clients, suppliers or fellow employees
- Unauthorised or inappropriate use of email, internet and/or computer systems
- Falsification of any company records including reports, accounts, expenses claims or self-certification forms
- Serious damage to company property
- Violent, abusive, dangerous, threatening or intimidatory conduct
- Gambling or money lending while at work or on the premises
- Bringing unauthorised person(s) onto company premises
- Conviction of any criminal offence which may render the employee unsuitable for employment
- Serious abuse of timekeeping and attendance procedures

This list of examples is not exhaustive or exclusive, and offences of a similar nature will be dealt with under this procedure. Gross misconduct will result in the initiation or escalation of the organisation's disciplinary procedure and may result in immediate dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

NPU wishes to provide every opportunity for an employee to express themselves without fear of jeopardising their position. It is in everybody's interest to establish a clear procedure for the resolution of any issues that may arise in the workplace. Full recognition is given to the significance of personal grievances. All grievances will be dealt with in a confidential manner and no employee will be penalised for raising a grievance in good faith.

It is the responsibility of the CEO within NPU to deal with all grievances both effectively and efficiently so that employees feel their problems have been addressed, and to note and notify the Chairperson on the issues which emerge, as appropriate.

NPU will endeavour to ensure that, where possible, grievances are heard within five working days of being received and that decisions are communicated within five working days of being heard.

All meetings and outcomes will be documented, and a copy given to you. A copy will be placed on your personnel file.

Definition of a Grievance

A grievance is any event, condition, rule or practice, which you believe violates your civil or employment rights, treats you unfairly or causes you any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job. A grievance may also deal with an attitude, a statement, or an opinion held by a co-worker.

Grievance Procedure

In order to ensure that fair and reasonable employment practices are operated across the board, the following procedure has been designed to resolve any issues that may arise in the workplace.

Informal Process

If you have a problem or grievance relating to any aspect of your employment with the organisation, you should first discuss it on an informal basis with your Line Manager. If your grievance is of a kind that you feel unable to raise it with your Line Manager, you should raise the matter with a more senior staff member who will endeavour to deal with your grievance(s) as soon as is reasonably practicable. However, if it cannot be dealt with informally, the formal process described below will be followed.

Formal Process

At any stage in the formal process, a company colleague may accompany you.

Step 1

Raise the grievance with your Line Manager, explaining that you wish to use the formal grievance procedure. The Line Manager will arrange a meeting with you to discuss the matter and will listen to your concerns. If the grievance is of a kind where you feel unable to raise it with your Line Manager, you should discuss the problem with another Line Manager /Senior Staff member at the same level. In many cases, the matter will be resolved at this initial meeting.

Step 2

If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction under Step 1, you are encouraged to raise the matter with the next level of management (i.e., CEO), by providing a written statement outlining the nature of the grievance. The reviewer will consider the information presented and you will be given an opportunity to discuss the issue. Following the meeting, the reviewer will come to a decision or make a recommendation, possibly

after consulting with appropriate members of management. The decision will then be communicated to you in writing.

At **Step 2** you will be given a hearing within five working days of the request and a final written response within a further five working days, where possible.

Step 3

If you are not satisfied with the decision or recommendations made at Step 2, you may then proceed to Step 3 by notifying, in writing, the next level of management who has not previously been involved in this process.

This should be done within five working days of receiving the decision or recommendations from Step 2.

Your request should set out the details of the problem and provide any other relevant information, including the reason(s) why you are dissatisfied with the previous outcome.

The reviewer will meet with you to discuss the issue and will consider all the available information. The reviewer will subsequently communicate their decision or recommendations to you. The decision of this reviewer is final.

At Step 3 you will be given a hearing within five working days of the request and a final written response within a further five working days, where possible.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

NPU operates a performance management process in order to promote high performance standards by employees, ensure achievement of business goals, develop employee skills and promote clear two-way discussion between Line Managers and employees.

Performance meetings provide the basis for an in-depth discussion between employees and the Line Manager regarding the employee's performance of their duties, their development needs, and future career

direction. Continual dialogue and feedback will take place as part of regular on-going communication to reflect the need for continuous performance management.

It is our policy to ensure all employees have a clear understanding of their role and performance expectations, are set challenging goals and receive frequent specific feedback and recognition on how their performance, as an individual and team member, matches expectations. It is also important that both the Line Manager and employee reflect on development needs, what learning support will be of benefit to you, and put action plans into place.

Performance standards are tied to key result areas of the job and therefore will be significant, results oriented, measurable and economical. They should always reflect recurring operational, problem solving, and creative aspects of the job. Where an employee is not performing to the required standard, feedback, coaching and support will be provided to improve performance levels. If the required standard is not being achieved within the agreed time frame, a Line Manager can initiate the disciplinary procedure.

While happening on an ongoing basis, the performance of employees will be more formally reviewed during and at the end of the probationary period and thereafter at least once annually. Employees can expect that all performance reviews will be conducted in a fair and timely manner.

It is important that both parties prepare prior to a review meeting. The Line Manager should ask the employee to think about their work performance since the previous review meeting, what current problems are, where help is required, and how this help can be provided. Such a formal review needs to be carried out at least every year and details kept on file.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Stimulated by our desire to continually improve NPU effectiveness together with individual performance, NPU is committed to the on-going training and development of all its employees. We believe a well thought

out training and development programme is one of the most exciting and convenient tools for attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining excellent employees.

NPU will provide employees with equal opportunity and exposure to training and development so far as such training and development relates to the business needs.

Discussion on training and development requirements take place at performance review meetings. Training needs will be agreed with your Line Manager and actions identified. Consider whether training should be internal or external and what materials, coaching will help.

Throughout the year NPU will devise, implement and conduct programmes, both in-house and external, designed to contribute to the achievement of the above aims and objectives.

Employees will be required to attend relevant courses/seminars as part of their training and development and in order to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to remain effective in their roles. Attendance on certain programmes will be mandatory, for example health and safety, in order to ensure that the fullest range of functions and skills is attained and utilised across the organisation.

If you recognise an opportunity in your area for specific training, please contact your Line Manager.

Dignity at Work Training

NPU will ensure each employee, whether full time, part-time or freelance, will complete the safe to create training programmes developed specifically for the creative sector to address dignity at work issues, including Tackling Bullying and Harassment, Addressing Unconscious Bias and Bystander Training.

Induction Training Policy

The purpose of the induction programme is to allow all new, redeployed, or promoted employees to be given the necessary information about their job and the organisation, to assist their integration into their new role in the organisation, to enhance their motivation, and to achieve improved productivity.

All new employees will receive a short induction course. This includes being given information on their new role, the department they have joined, facilities available to employees, company policies and procedures, conditions and agreements relating to their employment, and a copy of this handbook, and other relevant information.

An assigned employee will introduce new employees to employees and Line Managers/CEO and conduct them through the premises in order to allow them to familiarise themselves with all company facilities.

Health and safety procedures, including emergency procedures such as Fire, Evacuation and Accident reporting will also be explained and demonstrated at regular, prescribed intervals thereafter.

The following is an indicative list of items to be covered during induction:

- Fire extinguishers identified
- Assembly Points visited
- First Aid boxes identified
- Washroom and toilets pointed out
- Location of notice boards identified
- Introduced to colleagues
- Details of Safety Statement explained
- Dignity and respect at work policies
- Employee Policies discussed and acknowledgement form signed

On-going Development

NPU also provides access to a range of development programmes which help employees to build their skills and acquire the core knowledge and skills they need to carry out their roles effectively. These include:

- Product and technical training
- IT training
- Personal skills development
- Management and leadership development

Further information will be given to you as necessary by the Administrator.

Section 8 - Health & Safety Policy

SAFETY STATEMENT

It is company policy to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and to meet our duties to customers, contractors and visitors. NPU acknowledges its role in protecting the safety, health and welfare of all people employed in NPU and affected by the workplace. We are committed to implementing safe work systems and methods to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all.

NPU understands its legal obligations and its commitment to comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, and any other legislation such as the General Applications Regulations 1993 or as required under EU Law.

NPU recognises that its obligations are to provide the following:

- A safe place of work
- Safe systems of work
- Appropriate information and training to ensure safety
- Preparation and revision of emergency plans
- Prevention of risk to health from any activity
- Hygiene facilities as appropriate

The success of this policy will depend on the co-operation of all employees. It is therefore important that you acquaint yourself with all areas of the Safety Statement. You should ensure that you understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety within NPU and within your individual department. You should also be aware that you have an obligation to take care of your own safety and that of others who might be affected by your actions.

IDENTIFICATION OF HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

NPU will appoint competent person(s), either from within or outside the organisation, to carry out a risk assessment and identify hazards in all areas of the workplace. Assessments will be carried out as and when required; such assessment will consider any changes arising from

adjustments in work practices or the introduction of new equipment. Co-operation will be expected and forthcoming from all staff. A written copy of the assessment will be kept on file.

A workplace includes a vehicle used in the course of employment, and, as such, any company vehicles will be included in the risk assessment and safety statement.

Should anyone consider that a hazard or important issue has not been dealt with or dealt with appropriately, then they should bring the issue/hazard to the attention of the Administrator. The Administrator must also ensure that all complaints reported, and any unsafe behaviour, practices or equipment is immediately dealt with.

Where possible all risks will be eliminated. Where it is not possible, then the risks will be limited or controlled at an acceptable level. Control and protection procedures will include safe systems of work, personal protective clothing and equipment and any other control necessary.

EMPLOYER'S COMMITMENT

To secure the safety, health and welfare of employees, NPU will commit to the following:

- Carry out risk assessments, identify hazards and prepare a safety statement, taking account of the general principle of prevention
- Management will be fully familiar with the organisation's safety statement and ensure all employees are informed of its contents and any subsequent revisions
- Employees will be informed of hazards and risks identified, the protective and preventative safety measures, and the NPUs of designated employees representing health and safety processes
- Organise methods and systems for managing and conducting work activities to ensure, as far as possible, the health and safety of employees
- Ensure that there are safe means of access and egress to the place of work, and endeavour to ensure that the equipment and facility is safe and without risk to health

- Prevent, as far as possible, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the health and safety of the employees at risk
- No employee will be dismissed or penalised for complying with or exercising their rights under the health and safety statutory provisions
- A Safety Officer. This individual will review all safety issues and accidents/dangerous occurrences in order to ensure compliance with the safety statement and relevant legislation
- Provide written information and instructions regarding fire safety on the premises to ensure that employees are aware of the actions to be taken in the case of an emergency
- Ensure that properly maintained fire protection equipment is available and that fire exit routes are kept clear
- Provide and maintain first aid boxes on the premises
- Ensure that all employees receive adequate safety training and instruction appropriate to the task performed
- Will consider and support any representation about health and safety from any employee
- Dedicate the resources necessary to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its employees and visitors to the premises.
- Co-operate and communicate with other employers who share the place of work in relation to health and safety compliance.
- Relevant health and safety information will be provided to another employer if that employer has any employees based at this company's places of work
- Report accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA)

The Safety Statement will be reviewed by management and the Safety Committee and will be changed as appropriate.

Compliance with the safety statement is the ultimate responsibility of management, who will be supported in this by audits carried out by the Safety Committee and evaluation of accident reports and statistics.

CO-OPERATION OF EMPLOYEES

The co-operation of employees in matters relating to Safety, Health and Welfare is of paramount importance in order to have an effective Health and Safety policy. Each employee has a duty to:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions while at work
- Co-operate with NPU and any other person to such extent as will NPU or the other person to comply with any of the relevant statutory provisions
- Ensure that they are not under the influence of an intoxicant so as to endanger their own health and safety or that of any other person, and submit to any appropriate and reasonable tests for intoxicants as required by NPU
- Undergo an assessment by a medical practitioner to establish the employee's fitness to perform work activities. If an employee becomes aware that they are suffering from any illness or physical or mental impairment which, in the course of carrying out work activities, could expose the employee or other employees to a health and safety risk, the employee should immediately notify the management, or a medical practitioner nominated by the management (who must then inform the employer). Action will then be taken by the management to ensure compliance with the safety legislation
- Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour that is likely to endanger their safety or that of any other person
- Attend such training as may be required to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation
- Adhere to safe lifting methods and use any personal protective equipment, including appliances, equipment or other means or things provided to secure safety, health and welfare at work, in such a manner so as to provide the protection intended
- Report to NPU or the Administrator without unreasonable delay, any defects in equipment, place of work or system of work, or any other contravention of the statutory provisions which might endanger safety, health and welfare of which you become aware

- Not interfere with or misuse any appliance or protective clothing or convenience provided for securing safety, health and welfare
- Be aware of the person responsible for safety, health and welfare on the premises
- NPU has provided and will continue to maintain work areas and facilities which are safe, clean and healthy. All employees, however, have a duty through proper use of work areas and facilities, including toilets, kitchen etc to keep the workplace in a safe, clean and healthy condition for the continued benefit of themselves and their fellow employees
- Employees must inform the Administrator immediately of any injury no matter how minor. An accident report must be completed jointly by the employee and the Administrator and returned/filed within 24 hours. Employees are also obliged to inform their Administrator of any hazard or incident (whether it be a machine or dangerous behaviour on the part of an individual(s)) which may affect their own health and safety or that of any other person. The Administrator must follow up on that information with a view to preventing any similar incidents in the future
- If employees are in any doubt about any actions to be taken in relation to safety, they must consult the Administrator immediately as failure or delay in doing so could result in injury to themselves or others
- Where an employee wilfully or knowingly disregards their duty in relation to an individual's health and safety, they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES

All employees are actively encouraged to participate in the safety process on matters relating to safety, health and welfare at work. NPU will appoint a Safety Officer to support initiatives on health and safety across NPU. This does not take away any employee's or Administrator's responsibility in this area. Employees have access to anyone in NPU for addressing issues. The senior management of the organisation, however, has overall responsibility for compliance with health and safety requirements.

The names of relevant designated health and safety representatives (Safety Officer / Fire Officer / Fire Marshal(s) / First Aid Officers(s)) will be placed on noticeboards to ensure employees are aware of who to contact with regard to health and safety.

Safety Officer/Committee

NPU provides a consultation mechanism, in the shape of the Safety Officer, to communicate with employees concerning health and safety at work to ensure they are fully informed and involved in the organisation's safety procedures.

Appropriate safety training will be provided to all Safety Committee members to enable them to conduct their duties, as appropriate.

The Safety Officer will have the authority to:

- Request advice on matters of accident prevention and fire safety
- Carry out regular audits using the audit forms provided
- Represent the workplace when meeting with officers from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA)

The Safety Officer will:

- Be aware of their duties and responsibilities required by legislation and will endeavour to ensure correct use of work area and equipment
- Inspect the place of work after giving reasonable notice to the management or immediately in the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence or imminent danger
- Investigate complaints relating to health and safety after giving reasonable notice to management
- Endeavour to ensure that all repair and maintenance work is completed to standards meeting legal requirements and that all defects are attended to promptly
- Ensure that all accident report forms are completed and followed up as appropriate

- Accompany the HSA on all inspections of premises and ensure that their recommendations are carried out
- Provide information on health and safety matters and make representations to the management on such matters
- Ensure that the Safety Statement is read and understood by all employees and appropriate third parties
- Act as an advisor and carry out spot checks on all departments from time to time
- Update hazard identification and risk reduction statements are required

Informing Employees on Health and Safety

On commencing employment, as part of their induction process, all employees will receive training to ensure that they understand the safety precautions and the emergency procedures to be followed.

All employees directly involved in manual handling tasks will receive such training at induction. All employees directly involved in specialised tasks or the use of hazardous materials, equipment or work processes will receive relevant training at induction.

Training in first aid will be given to a selected number of employees.

Training in fire prevention and procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, will be given to all employees on their first day.

All formalised training courses attended by employees will be tracked and retained for 30 years.

Informing Visitors on Health and Safety

To ensure the safety of visitors to the premises all visitors must sign in and out at reception, with no exceptions. Responsibility for the safety of the visitor and ensuring that the visitor is aware of the organisation's health and safety policies, including their fire policy, rests with the visitor's host.

Visitors are to be requested to observe the fire policy at all times and to conduct themselves in a safe manner. Visitors should be accompanied

while on the premises. While this is not always possible, employees should follow this guideline as closely as is reasonably practicable.

FIRE PREVENTION AND EVACUATION

The following rules help to minimise the risk of fire:

- All electrical appliances should be switched off when not in use
- Electrical leads should be renewed at the first sign of wear in the outer covering
- Electrical points should not be overloaded
- All doors should be kept closed
- The use of portable heaters is discouraged

All staff will be familiarised with the fire instructions and the evacuation procedures. All corridors, stairs and all other routes of fire exits should be kept completely clear of obstructions along with the exits themselves.

Evacuation Procedures

All employees must be fully knowledgeable about the following procedures as they may save your life or somebody else's in the event of an emergency.

General guidelines

- If a fire is identified the alarm should be activated and evacuation should start immediately.
- No one should tackle a fire unless trained in fire prevention.
- Team member responsible for clearing each should not enter a room without placing their hand on the door – if they feel heat they are not to enter even if they believe there is someone inside
- Disabled persons should be given the appropriate assistance but should not slow down or hinder the evacuation. Staff exit the building and report to the most senior staff member present. The senior staff member will report to the fire services directly telling them where the person is located.

- If members of the public refuse to evacuate time should not be wasted arguing with them staff should continue to evacuate all others and themselves and inform the fire brigade as to the location of the remaining individual.
- All doors should be closed as the building is being evacuated EVACUATED.

Never Attempt to Tackle a Fire That Puts You at Risk

Make sure you know:

- What the fire alarm sounds like
- The nearest Break Glass alarm unit
- The Fire Safety Officer
- The appointed route and location of the assembly area
- Layout of the building
- The nearest fire extinguisher - read the instructions and learn the colour coding
- Your assembly points

The Assembly Point for 15 Henrietta Street is outside No.2 Henrietta Street.

The Assembly Point for Pipecraft is outside opposite the building.

If you don't know the answers to any of the above, then you should find out immediately in the interest of your own and other people's safety.

Fire Officer / Marshal PIPECRAFT

The Fire Officer will have responsibility for the co-ordination of any emergency evacuation.

The Fire Officer will consult with and inform Fire Marshal(s) and employees on evacuation procedures in the organisation. Fire Officers will also be source of information regarding health and safety.

It will be the Fire Officer's responsibility with the Safety Officer to devise, execute and regularly practice evacuation procedures by way of fire drills and to ensure that all employees receive regular training in this area.

The Fire Officer will also carry out daily fire inspections of the premises and regular inspections of the fire protection systems.

The Fire Officer will liaise with the emergency services and will give instructions for re-entering the building. The Fire Officer will have a deputy to act in their absence.

A Fire Marshal is an employee who is responsible for:

- Evacuation of other employees in the areas for which they are responsible in any emergency
- Consultation with the Fire Officer concerning all emergency issues
- Communicating any changes in evacuation procedures to employees

Fire Marshals will also ensure that in the area for which they are responsible, equipment, articles, substances or work methods that could lead to a fire or other emergency, are always stored correctly and never left unattended.

Fire Marshals will also be a source of information should an employee have any question concerning emergency procedures.

Fire Marshals will have deputies to act in their absence.

Fire Marshal Procedure

On hearing the alarm, encourage all employees in your surrounding area to move quickly and calmly to the nearest exit.

Check your surrounding areas for remaining employees and then leave the building immediately.

All Fire Marshals must be trained in the use of fire extinguishers. Do not tackle a fire that is not in your control. Employee safety is of paramount importance.

Fire Marshals, once outside the building, should report to the Fire Officer and await further instruction.

ACCIDENTS, HAZARDS, AND RISKS

The most common forms of accidents in our organisation are slips, trips and falls. Employees should always be careful to look out for potential hazards, which include spillages, loose wires or obstructions on the floor etc.

In the case of any of the above, or any other potential hazards being noticed by an employee, you must report it immediately.

The Administrator is responsible for taking action to eliminate or reduce the exposure. All injuries and accidents at work must be reported to your Administrator and the relevant documentation completed.

(i) Accidents and First Aid

All employees should be aware of the location of the First Aid box. If an injury occurs to yourself or to another employee you should be aware of whom to go to, to get First Aid, and you should also report the incident. If the employee is unable to go to the First Aid Officer, then a colleague should locate a member of the first aid-team and bring them to the scene.

All members of the First Aid team will be trained by a recognised body. The names of the First Aid Officers will be placed on the notice board. Minor accidents will be treated by the First Aid Officer. Major accidents will be sent for further treatment on the advice of the First Aid Officer.

A witness to an injury should not attempt to move any employee unless it is to remove them from immediate danger.

All employees are required to complete a written account of any incident or accident they have witnessed or experienced on the accident report form and return it to the Safety Officer for signing and filing.

The Safety Officer will, when necessary, fill out the correct forms to notify the HSA of accidents and dangerous occurrences. The Safety Officer will keep a copy of all these forms and also the written accounts of the accidents and incidents for 10 years.

(ii) Electrical Hazards and Risks

Common electrical faults or hazards to watch out for include the following:

- Loose connections
- Defective installation
- Unearthed equipment
- Overloaded circuits
- Trailing leads
- Worn or damaged appliances
- Damaged cables
- Broken switches
- Damp or wet electrical appliances
- Incorrect light bulb used in lighting appliance

Never open or interfere with electrics in a machine. The proper course of action where a breakdown occurs is to report the matter so that a competent electrician can deal with it. All electrical faults should be reported to your Administrator and vigilance is required in relation to communal equipment such as photocopiers, faxes and computers. Defective equipment should be disconnected until it has been properly repaired by a competent professional. While a defective machine is awaiting such repair it should have a warning sign attached to it, and staff in the immediate vicinity told that the machine is out of bounds and should not be used.

(iii) Manual Lifting

It is essential that all new employees who will be required to lift goods attend Manual Handling Training as part of their induction process. Lifting correctly is one of the many activities we need to do properly if we are to avoid back problems later in life.

There are eight steps to safe lifting:

1. Assess the area and size up the load – ask for assistance if necessary
2. Keep feet parted to ensure you have a broad stable base
3. Bend your knees to reach or lower the load
4. Grip the object with the palms of the hands and support underneath and at the side, as far as possible
5. Lift using leg muscle, keeping the back straight (but not necessarily erect)
6. Keep the load close to the body (the heaviest part of an unevenly weighted object should be closest to the body and/or the ground)
7. Keep elbows and chin tucked in
8. Use body momentum.

These rules apply whether the object is heavy or light

(iv) Furniture, Cabinets and Presses

The use of filing cabinets/cabinets/cupboards should be considered carefully to ensure that drawers are not fully loaded, and the heavier load should preferably be put in the lower drawers. In addition, one drawer at a time should be in use and when use of this has been completed it should then be closed. Care should always be taken of metal objects on furniture especially objects with sharp edges.

HEALTH THREAT POLICY

Procedure in the event of a threat to health in the workplace

Policy Scope

This policy is designed to cover all employees of NPU if an outbreak of a contagious illness occurs in the workplace. It is in place to ensure the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all staff and contains practical advice to follow.

Application of Policy

This policy will be activated where NPU regards a situation as sufficiently serious to warrant same. As each potential situation is unique, you will be issued with specific instructions by your Line Manager, or other

relevant person, which you are requested to adhere to. As this policy forms part of your terms and conditions of employment, a serious breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Reporting a Concern

In line with the organisation's general health and safety policies, if you become aware of any issue that may affect the health of you or your colleagues, please report this matter to your Line Manager, or other relevant person, as soon as possible. This includes circumstances where you have concerns about a third party/client. All information will be treated in confidence where possible and acted upon appropriately.

On-going Working Conditions

In the majority of cases, normal working conditions will be maintained, with some minor adjustments. All employees are asked to observe particular health precautions such as the use of hand sanitizers and using tissues when sneezing or coughing. In each case, employees will be provided with practical guidance to maintain good workplace health and you are asked to comply with same.

Feeling Unwell

If you begin to feel unwell, please contact your nominated medical professional and follow their advice. If necessary, NPU will make arrangements for you to work from home, where possible.

If you feel unwell to the point that you are unable to carry out your work, you are asked to follow the organisation's sick leave policy and contact your Line Manager, or other relevant person, as soon as possible. You will be entitled to apply for a payment from Social Welfare once your absence exceeds three days.

Persons at Greater Risk

If you have been advised by your doctor that you may be at greater risk due to an underlying condition, please inform your Line Manager as soon as possible to allow us to plan accordingly. All information supplied will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

All NPU employees must follow any guidelines issued from the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the World Health Organisation or other relevant bodies, on infection control whilst at work, and should do the same in their daily lives.

If You Develop Symptoms

If you begin to display symptoms of an infectious condition, you must follow Government/Relevant Body guidance to find out what to do next, which may involve internet and phone services. You must also notify your Line Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Periods Of Self-Isolation

During an infectious condition outbreak, the Government may advise people to self-isolate if they have recently returned from certain countries even if they have no symptoms, which means staying at home and not having contact with other people. If this applies to you, you must not attend work during the isolation period.

You must inform Administrator of travel to such countries before your intended return to work if you have not done so before travel. Your Line Manager will keep in contact with you during this period. We may consider whether you can work from home during this period, or whether we can agree a period of paid annual leave with you. Where no other agreement is made NPU will look other avenues such as:

- Sickness Absence – which will be treated as sick leave in line with our normal sickness absence and pay procedures
- Authorised unpaid leave.

Some countries may require self-isolation on return only where you display symptoms of an infectious condition. If you do have symptoms on your return, you should not attend work and should follow any Medical/Government/Relevant Body guidance on what to do next and you must also follow NPU normal sickness reporting procedures. In this situation, you will be treated as being on sickness absence.

If you return from a country which does not require automatic self-isolation, and you are not displaying symptoms, you should be prepared to attend work as normal. However, if there is a reason why you think you may have been exposed to an infectious condition, you must let your Line Manager know before you return to work and have taken the appropriate medical advice.

Sending Employees Home/Requiring Employees Not To Attend Work

If NPU Management are concerned that you may have been exposed to an infectious condition, even if you are not displaying symptoms, we may take the decision to send you home/require you not to attend work. For example, this may occur if you inform us that you have been in close contact with someone else who has, or may have, the infectious condition. This is treated as a period of suspension for medical reasons. It is not considered a disciplinary sanction; the period of suspension will be in recognition of the possibility that your continued presence in the workplace poses a risk of spreading the virus to your colleagues or other third parties with whom you may interact. You will receive full pay during this time off. Alternatively, we may agree a period of paid annual leave with you.

If, during this period of suspension, you develop symptoms, you should follow Medical/Government/Relevant Body guidance on what to do next, which may include using internet or telephone services, and follow our normal sickness reporting procedures. You will then be treated as being on a period of sickness absence.

Employees Who Contract An Infectious Condition

If you contract an infectious condition, you should seek and follow medical advice on the length of your sickness absence. You are required to produce a medical certificate for illnesses lasting three or more calendar days. However, we appreciate that you are not likely to be able to obtain a medical certificate in usual timescales. You should provide a certificate as soon as is reasonably practicable. During your absence, NPU normal sickness absences and payment rules will apply.

Attendance At Work

All employees are expected to attend work as normal unless:

- you have followed our usual reporting procedures in relation to sickness absence
- are in self-isolation following Medical/Government/Relevant Body guidance
- not attending work under our specific instruction.

Business Travel

Where employees are required to undertake business travel, NPU recognises that employees may be reluctant to travel on business to places of the world where there have been cases of infection. NPU will consider every business trip that is planned for the near future and identify if alternatives to making the trip can be considered, where possible. This may include postponing the trip or holding meetings via other means such as Zoom.

If travel is deemed necessary, we will

- with involvement of employees being asked to travel, we will conduct a full risk assessment into the risks associated with the trip
- take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise any risk to staff members.

Employee Travel Plans

NPU accepts that during an infectious condition outbreak, some of its employees will have plans to travel soon including pre-booked and paid for holidays. NPU ask that employees consider, for their health reasons, whether travelling to areas identified as having been severely affected by the infectious condition is the best thing to do. If a decision is made to travel, we ask that employees let their Line Manager know of the countries to be visited so that their return can be managed appropriately.

NPU ask all employees to keep themselves up to date with Government/Relevant Body guidance on the countries which require self-isolation upon return, and bear in mind that this guidance could change daily.

If you would like to cancel any pre-booked annual leave, you should discuss this with their Line Manager.

SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE

NPU is committed to providing a healthy work environment for its employees. Second-hand smoke is a known carcinogenic health hazard and therefore, it will be treated in the same manner as any other health hazard. Smoking is prohibited across NPU in all enclosed areas, ***and only allowed in company designated smoking areas.*** Smoking is strictly prohibited in company vehicles.

While the Administrator is responsible for ensuring strict compliance with this policy, all employees share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy. The disciplinary procedure will be used should any employee choose not to adhere to this policy. Vaping and e-cigarettes are covered by this policy.

ALCHOL AND DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE

NPU requires that all employees should report for work in a fit and healthy manner.

NPU prohibits the unlawful use, possession, distribution or manufacture of any controlled substance on company property or during work time or on company business. Arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance is strictly prohibited.

Should there be a question over an employee's fitness for work, due to suspected intoxication because of drink or drugs, the following should take place,

- the employee should be observed and talked to by at least 2 members of the management team
- the evidence of intoxication should be discussed with the employee
- the employee should be suspended with pay and sent home
- the employee can be asked to attend a medical practitioner to be tested for intoxicants
- the employee should be asked to return for a meeting the following day, possibly a disciplinary meeting, where there is

evidence of, and possibly where the employee admits, intoxication

Careful consideration will be given as to the personal circumstances leading up this type of behaviour. In the event that there are no mitigating circumstances then the disciplinary procedure may be used, up to and including dismissal.

Employees generally will be encouraged to seek help or assistance from the organisation's support service. If an employee is provided with support and they do not accept it, or their performance does not improve, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked.

A controlled substance means any drug not legally obtainable. Legally prescribed and over-the-counter drugs become controlled substances when they have not been prescribed for medical treatment by an accredited physician, or they are not used for the purpose for which they were intended, or when excessive doses are taken.

DRUGS AND ALCHOL TESTING POLICY

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 while at work, an employee is required to ensure that they are not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that they are in such a state as to endanger their safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.

An "Intoxicant" can include alcohol and drugs and any combination of drugs and/or alcohol, whether legal or illegal, whether prescribed or not.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 states that if reasonably required by their employer, an employee must submit to any appropriate, reasonable and proportionate test for intoxicants by, or under the supervision of, a registered medical practitioner. NPU therefore upholds its legal right to conduct a testing for intoxicants in the following situations:

- during the pre-employment medical check, as part of the conditional offer of employment

- where NPU is of the opinion that the employee appears to be under the influence while at work; this may involve an employee's Administrator/supervisor or a member of the HR team observing the employee's physical appearance as indicating intoxication such as: unsteady on feet, slurred speech, out of character behaviour, blood shot eyes or shaky hands

Where a situation occurs whereby an employee has been observed and may be considered to be under the influence while at work, their Line Manager will ask them to leave their work area and they will be informed that there is a question over their fitness for work and that a test will be conducted. The employee will be prohibited from carrying on work duties, using machinery or equipment or driving their vehicle or any organisation vehicle.

The testing will either take place privately on the work premises or at the tester's premises. If the testing is taking place at the tester's premises, NPU will arrange transport for the employee.

It is organisation policy that the employee is required to sign a consent form which allows the tester to disclose the results of the test to the organisation. The employee is also required to produce photographic identification at the time of testing, for example a driver's licence. Should an employee refuse to adhere to the organisations request to intoxicant testing the employee will be sent home. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in NPU invoking the disciplinary procedure.

The following tests may be conducted:

1. Alcohol: urine sample, breathalyser, blood sample or salivary swab
2. Drugs: blood, urine or hair sample

This list is provided for illustrative purposes only and is not exhaustive.

Once the test has been conducted the employee may be suspended, with pay, until the full laboratory analysis is returned. This is not considered disciplinary action. The employee is prohibited from attending the workplace during this time. Once the test results have been received the

employee will be asked to attend a meeting with their Line Manager. The outcome will be dependent on the test results but may involve referral to the organisation's employee assistance programme, counselling, initiation of the disciplinary procedure or a performance improvement plan or alternative action.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

NPU is committed to providing a positive environment in which employees do not feel over-stressed. We recognise that stress is not always a negative occurrence and indeed a moderate level of stress can be seen as a positive factor. It is only when the stress under which employees are placed becomes excessive that there should be cause for concern.

In order to implement a positive environment and minimise the negative impact of stress, NPU commits to the following:

1. Making employees aware of the Safety Statement, which highlights NPU commitment to protect the health and safety of all employees
2. Inform all employees of the organisation's grievance and dignity at work policies that provide employees with the opportunity to raise issues, explore the underlying causes and have them resolved
3. Regularly re-assessing job descriptions and employee needs, and taking action where employees highlight causes of stress in relation to work practices or conditions. Of particular concern is social support, job planning, reliability of work systems, working patterns and breaks. Employees will have the opportunity to input into the decisions about changes relating to these
4. Providing information on stress and ways of coping with stress relating not only to work but also to stress, which could be developed outside of work

Section 9 – General Company Information

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Company Philosophy

NPU believes that open, effective communication is essential to producing an efficient and motivating work environment of mutual understanding and confidence.

The most important means of communication for NPU are the informal one-to-one discussions described in the policy below.

NPU endeavours to keep all employees informed of all relevant Company issues but encourages employees to ask questions at any time if clarification or information is needed.

Staff/Team Meetings

Staff/Team Meetings are held on a regular basis and are a channel for employees to contribute their ideas and suggestions and to gather information on specific developments within NPU. If you have anything you would like to be discussed at these meetings, please submit them to your Line Manager in advance.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

For quick and satisfactory resolution of general problems, the Open-Door Policy allows reasonable access to senior staff, without fear that such action will penalise the employee.

Employees who have discussed a problem with their Line Manager and have not had it resolved to their satisfaction, should use NPU's Grievance Procedure if they wish to take it further. The Grievance Procedure is included in the Staff Handbook.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

NPU does not accept any responsibility for any personal property belonging to an employee, which is left on the premises. Employees are strongly advised not to bring large sums of money or valuable articles to the workplace. Where lockers are provided, employees are required to use them for all personal belongings.

Any employee found interfering with another employee's belongings would be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

COMPANY PROPERTY

Each employee is required to respect all company equipment used in the course of their employment, for example computers, materials, vehicles, equipment, printers. Misuse of such equipment is considered a serious offence and would be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

DATA PROTECTION AND PERSONNEL INFORMATION

All employees are entitled to access their personnel file where information on them is kept, in hard and soft copy format, to support their employment and career with NPU.

Upon joining the organisation, personal information will be requested from you in order that we may effectively administer your employment contract. We require, for example, your PPS number to process your tax deductions, bank details for payment purposes, your date of birth for pension purposes, and your home and next of kin contact details in case of emergency.

In the event of an emergency, NPU needs to ensure that accurate employee details are on file for ease of reference. To assist NPU to achieve this, it is important that all employees inform their Line Manager of any relevant changes, such as change of address or contact telephone numbers.

NPU is committed to:

- Keeping all personal information confidential, safe and secure

- Making sure the information is accurate, up-to-date and as complete as possible
- Destroying irrelevant information as necessary

All personal information regarding your employment may be held on computer and in your personnel file. Copies of any memos or emails relating to changes in your terms and conditions of employment may also be stored electronically or on your personnel file.

Information will not be disclosed to any external third party without your consent, except where necessary to comply with statutory requirements or where an organisation is acting on our behalf, for example a payroll administration supplier. Internally the information may be made available to your Line Manager, members of the senior management team and the Board as circumstances dictate. You may, at any time, request access to the information held about you, such requests should go to your Line Manager and access will be provided within 4 weeks.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

NPU consider it important to maintain a clean working environment, and to ensure that the cleanliness and tidiness of the premises is kept to a high standard for the purpose of hygiene, safety and customer satisfaction. All employees are required to contribute to maintaining a clean and healthy working environment, thereby showing courtesy to fellow employees and visitors.

All employees are responsible to ensure that all areas that they use are kept clean and tidy to the highest standards possible. These areas include your Desk/workstation, reception area, printing and photocopying area, any communal areas you use, etc. All personal belongings i.e., handbags, etc. should be stored away in your desk area / or the designated area.

Please ensure that your work area is left clear at the end of your workday, with all equipment and documentation put away.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

NPU understands the impact that running an organisation can have on the environment. This policy aims to reduce any potentially negative

impact that NPU may have on the environment and maintain sustainable practices in the organisation as much as is reasonably possible. All employees are asked to feed into the environmental practices of NPU.

To reduce consumption NPU aims to reduce environmental impact and ask all employees to:

LIGHTING

Switch off lights if the office is unoccupied or when natural light is showing. Wherever possible, use energy efficient light bulbs.

TEMPERATURE

Switch heaters on if the office is cold and occupied. Only use electric fans if the room temperature cannot be lowered by natural ventilation such as opening windows and closing blinds.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Switch off electrical equipment when not in use.

PAPER AND CARD

Use paper and card on both sides and to make double-sided computer prints and photocopies and use the draft printing option wherever possible.

NPU aims to minimise waste and increase recycling within the organisation by asking all employees to take the following actions:

STATIONERY

Reduce stationery use wherever possible and to remove reusable items or parts before disposing of any waste. NPU will purchase environmentally friendly stationery, where possible.

RECYCLING

Use recyclable goods in preference to disposable alternatives and to recycle paper, metal, glass, plastics, organics, and any other goods, if there are feasible collections or disposal points.

HOW TO DEAL WITH NUISANCE OR ABUSIVE CALLERS

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure that is required in the event you receive a nuisance or abusive call.

What is an abusive or nuisance call?

From time to time, you may receive a call that is not friendly. The caller may be rude or use offensive language or it may be a prank, unsolicited call.

Procedure for dealing with an abusive or nuisance call

If you receive an abusive or nuisance call, you need to follow the steps listed below:

- Stay calm
- If it is a customer, try to diagnose the problem explaining that you “would like to help”
- If it is a customer advise them that you would like to help but explain that you “are not prepared to listen to this” or that you “will terminate the call if they continue to use that language”
- If it is an unsolicited call, please politely ask the caller to refrain from calling in future
- If the person persists you are permitted to terminate the call and advise them of same and the reasons you are doing this
- After the call is finished, please record the full details of the call, including time, name, phone number etc
- Please inform management of the call as soon as possible.

CCTV SURVEILLANCE POLICY

The purpose of the CCTV policy is to regulate the use of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and its associated technology in the monitoring of the external environs of premises of the organisation.

The policy is also intended to highlight the use of CCTV and to promote awareness amongst users of the building (such as staff, contractors,

visitors, etc) of the installation of a CCTV system in the external environs of the premises 24 hours a day. This CCTV does not record and can only be monitored live.

There is a CCTV installed externally on the premises for the principal purposes of enhancing security of the building, its staff and its associated equipment and improving health and safety standards.

The primary aim of CCTV monitoring of NPU premises is to deter crime and vandalism and to assist in the protection and safety of employees and property. Monitoring for security purposes will be conducted in a professional, ethical and legal manner and with strict adherence to the Data Protection Acts 1988-2003. NPU will periodically provide written material describing the purpose and location of CCTV monitoring and guidelines for its use. The location of CCTV cameras will also be indicated.

NPU will not use CCTV facilities to actively monitor employee conduct in the performance of day-to-day duties.

CUSTOMER CHARTER

NPU serves a wide range of publics, including general visitors, artists, arts professionals, production companies, students and corporate groups. We also work with a number of other entities, such as The Arts Council, Culture Ireland, Dublin City Council, other Government departments and agencies.

Further details on the work of NPU are available on request.

Everyone at NPU is committed to serving all of our visitors and clients in accordance with the highest standards of quality customer service. This Customer Charter and the associated Customer Action Plan have been put in place in order to improve customer service, by setting out and measuring customer service levels.

Across our full range of activities, we undertake to:

- Ensure that our building safe, clean and accessible

- Offer services of value that meet the needs and expectations of all parts of the communities we serve
- Interact with all our visitors and customers courteously and informatively in a consistent and impartial manner
- Provide prompt, accurate and detailed information on our programmes, services and facilities to visitors and customers
- Provide immediate response to telephone enquiries and for more substantive queries respond within five working days
- Always give a name, phone number and email address to assist customers in your dealings with the Centre
- Provide an accessible and fair complaints and redress system wherein complaints are given high priority and responded to within one working day
- Work to continually improve our service to the sector and the public

Performance against the service standards set out in this Customer Charter will be continuously monitored and updated as needed. In order to assist us in complying with these undertakings, we welcome your comments as to how we might build on these commitments in the future

Comments and complaints can be made to:

info@pipers.ie

Section 10 – Termination of Employment

Right to Search

NPU reserves the right to search your person, vehicle and property while on, or while departing from, the premises of the organisation. A search of your person would only be undertaken as a last resort and with good reason. In all situations, including at work, your person can only be searched if you agree to it.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

All employees, who have successfully completed their probationary period, are required to give notice as per their contract of employment of their intention to terminate their employment, in writing, to the Line Manager. During probation, employees are required to give 1 weeks' notice of resignation, in writing, to their Line Manager.

In the event of termination by the organisation, you will be entitled to receive the appropriate notice as set out in the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act, 1973-2001.

Employees who are leaving and who are unable to take their accrued annual leave, will be paid in lieu for those days in their final pay cheque. Employees who have taken more annual leave than they have accrued at the termination date will have their final pay adjusted to recover the excess annual leave taken. NPU also reserves the right to deduct any monies owed to it by the employee from the final pay cheque.

NPU may, at its sole discretion, give payment in lieu of any required notice period.

NPU reserves the right to terminate the employment of an employee immediately with NPU and without notice in cases of gross misconduct.

All employees must ensure they return all company property prior to leaving the organisation. This includes the following and is not exhaustive:

- Mobile phone
- IT Equipment
- Any documentation issued to the employee including Staff Handbook, manuals
- Keys, passwords and other materials
- Vehicle

Upon separation, all employees remain covered by their on-going obligations under the confidentiality clauses of their contract of employment.

The employee must ensure that, before their termination date, they do a handover with their replacement, or another employee, and ensure that another employee is sufficiently trained to carry on the work previously carried out by the departing employee. This may include documenting work or tasks or training the replacement employee.

On resignation, employees must supply, in writing, a resignation letter to the organisation. Your P45 etc will be sent to the address you have supplied to us.

When you resign from NPU you may be asked to complete an exit interview form. This information helps us to identify areas where we can improve employee relations and/or the arrangement of work and will be treated confidentially.

RETIREMENT POLICY

Introduction

This policy details the procedure to be followed when staff are approaching normal retirement age.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff and comes into effect whenever a staff member reaches the age of 67 years. The date of retirement will either be the day on which the employee turns 67 years. The date of retirement will be the day on which the employee turns 67.

Policy

This policy deals specifically with arrangements for compulsory retirement. The procedure outlined below will ensure that NPU supports Colleagues at this time of significant change.

Procedure

Management will endeavour to inform the employee in writing of their impending retirement date with the organisation. This is usually done at least 1 month in advance of the employee reaching the retirement age of 67 years.

Management will liaise with Payroll and Pension providers to finalise pension, and any final salary payments due.

NPU reserves the right to change the terms of this policy from time to time and to introduce a replacement procedure as may be required.

NPU will act in a non-discriminatory and procedurally correct manner in applying practices to terminate employment by retirement.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

At the end of your employment, an exit interview will be conducted with you. The purpose is not only to handle administrative details, but also to find out why the employee is leaving and what NPU could do to improve the working environment for remaining and future employees.

REDUNANCY POLICY**Purpose and Principles**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the organisation's approach in the event of a redundancy situation and to commit NPU to ensure that selection for redundancy is carried out in a fair manner.

This policy is designed to deal with cases where an employee's role ceases to exist for reasons unrelated to the person, such as a downturn in business or a change in work practices, and the employee(s) are not replaced.

Where possible, NPU will offer employees redeployment, early retirement or voluntary redundancies before selection begins. However, this may not always be appropriate and NPU reserves the right to determine the method of selection at all times.

Where it is necessary to implement a redundancy plan, each case will be treated in a fair and objective manner. Six important principles should be stressed:

1. The criteria for selection for redundancy will be documented in advance and will be fair, consistent and objective
2. Each redundancy situation will be treated on its own merits and will not be bound by any selection method used previously in NPU such as 'last in, first out'. Selection criteria will be determined by the need to retain key skills, experience, knowledge and flexibility
3. When selecting for redundancy, NPU will not act in any way that could be seen as Discriminatory based on the nine grounds of non-discrimination
4. Where a voluntary redundancy situation exists, NPU reserves the right to refuse any application and select from applications on fair and objective criteria. It also reserves the right to proceed with a compulsory redundancy programme where the required number or mix of skills is not achieved through the Voluntary Programme
5. In each case, the possibility of suitable alternative employment will be investigated. If such employment can be found, this will be offered to the employee before the redundancy takes effect
6. An affected employee, who is on protected leave (e.g., Maternity Leave or Parental Leave) at the time of the decision, will remain an employee of NPU until their leave is complete.

Collective Redundancy

Should a redundancy situation amount to collective redundancy, NPU will enter into negotiations with employee representatives (where applicable) to discuss the selection procedure and investigate the possibility of avoiding or reducing the number of redundancies.

Notice

All employees will receive notice of the redundancy (or payment in lieu of notice) at least 2 weeks before the date of termination or greater where legislation or contract requires.

Payment

Employees with 104 weeks' service or more will be entitled to a statutory redundancy payment of 2 weeks' pay per year of service, plus one bonus week. All weekly amounts are subject to a statutory ceiling.

Employees with less than 104 weeks' service are not legally entitled to a statutory lump sum redundancy payment but will be paid all monies legally owed to them by NPU including outstanding salary, annual leave, notice period, pension rebate and public holiday entitlement.

On the date of dismissal employees will receive a redundancy certificate and any payment to which they are entitled. The employee will also be furnished with their final salary payslip at this time.

This Staff Handbook is not an exhaustive statement of employer or employee responsibilities and obligations. Policies are written to establish expectations, guidelines and standards for employees' health and safety.

For further information regarding Company Policies please refer to <https://pipers.ie/governance>

Appendix 1

CONFIRMATION FROM STAFF

I confirm that I have read and understand the contents of the Na Píobairí Uilleann Staff Handbook.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

**PLEASE RETURN THE SIGNED CONFIRMATION TO YOUR LINE
MANAGER**