



Éducation  
internationale





## WHY HAVE A CODE OF ETHICS?

**As with any organization, Éducation internationale faces ethical issues. However, due to the international scope of its interventions, it has to deal with very peculiar matters, especially because its activities sometimes involve vulnerable clients, and they can take place in a cultural diversity context.**

Therefore, Éducation internationale believes that it is important to have established guides and tools to ensure that the best decisions are taken, both in the interest of its beneficiaries and to maintain its reputation.

The Code of Ethics, along with other extant internal policies, regulations and directives, which Éducation internationale has adopted, is an additional means to clearly define ethical standards and expected code of conduct, promote such, ensure their compliance and correct any deficiencies, where necessary.

**Three great values guide Éducation internationale's activities towards achieving its mission:**

COOPERATION

EXCELLENCE

ETHICS

## WHO IS THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR?

### **The Code of Ethics applies to everyone carrying out activities for and on behalf of Éducation internationale:**

- Éducation internationale’s staff and interns (hereinafter called “staff”);
- Consultants, self-employed workers, people on secondment carrying out activities for and on behalf of Éducation internationale, participants and volunteers in international development programs (hereinafter called “interveners”);
- Administrators.

The Code of Ethics applies everywhere Éducation internationale’s activities take place, whether in Canada or abroad.

## HOW CAN I USE THE CODE OF ETHICS?

- The Code of Ethics highlights Éducation internationale’s great commitments in terms of ethics, as well as the code of conduct defining expected behaviours;
- It is expected to evolve with time, and it cannot cover all cases. It is a tool that, together with everyone’s best judgment, can guide our behaviours in order to respect the values and ethics established by Éducation internationale.

## WHAT ARE OUR ETHICAL STANDARDS?

1. To respect people and protect the most vulnerable
2. To respect the environment
3. To act with diligence and integrity
4. To be loyal
5. To communicate and manage information responsibly

# 01

## TO RESPECT PEOPLE AND PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

- To respect human rights;
- To respect the diversity of people;
- To maintain respectful working and business relationships, whether with colleagues, interveners, partners or beneficiaries;
- To adopt safe behaviours for oneself and the people around us;
- Not to commit sexual exploitation or assault;
- To prohibit any romantic or sexual relationship with people under the age of 18<sup>1</sup>;
- Not to engage in any romantic or sexual relationship with beneficiaries when power dynamics are uneven;
- Not to engage in any form of intimidation, harassment or violence;
- Not to use one's position of authority or influence to obtain favours of any kind.

**Éducation internationale applies zero-tolerance principle regarding respect for people and protection of the most vulnerable, particularly pertaining to sexual exploitation and assault.**

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<sup>1</sup> In Canada, exceptions concerning the prevailing age of consent according to the *Criminal Code*.

# 02

## TO RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT

- To promote practices aimed at reducing the impact of Éducation internationale's activities on the environment in which the Cooperative operates;
- To respect the established laws in countries where the Cooperative conducts business;
- To strive towards understanding and respecting cultural diversity and practices.

# 03

## TO ACT WITH DILIGENCE AND INTEGRITY

- To avoid any conflict of interest or anything similar to it;
- Not to give, solicit, incite or receive any benefit whatsoever from partners, collaborators, companies or authorities linked to Éducation internationale's activities that could influence its or their independence of judgment;
- Not to use information obtained in the context of employment or business relationships with Éducation internationale to one's personal advantage;
- To apply standards of integrity and impartiality in managing material and human resources;
- Not to take part in any partisan/judicial matter to express an opinion or a personal position in the context of Éducation internationale's activities or which may negatively affect its reputation;
- To be able to work efficiently, including not being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication.

# 04

## TO BE LOYAL

- To respect the values and to act favorably towards achieving Éducation internationale's mission;
- To comply with internal policies, rules and directives of Éducation internationale and to respect its employment or contract conditions;
- Not to use Éducation internationale's name to communicate a personal opinion, regardless of the circumstances or place;
- To use the property, resources and image/name of Éducation internationale responsibly;
- To adopt a personal and professional conduct that does not cause any damage to Éducation internationale;
- To preserve the reputation of Éducation internationale, its staff, interveners and partners when publishing in the media or on social networks.

# 05

## **TO COMMUNICATE AND MANAGE INFORMATION RESPONSIBLY**

- To use any information provided to or by Éducation internationale only for the purposes for which it was collected or produced;
- To protect personal and confidential information entrusted to Éducation internationale in accordance with relevant laws and internal rules.

## COMMITMENT

Every individual affected by the Code of Ethics is required to read, understand and comply with it. They are also required to report any of its violation.

Éducation internationale is committed to provide timely training on various subjects related to the Code of Ethics, thereby allowing everyone affected to become aware of and understand the Code.

## INTERPRETATION

If there is any doubt as to the interpretation of the Code of Ethics, those affected are encouraged to contact their supervisor or the contact person at Éducation internationale.

When someone is faced with an ethical issue, the following questions can help in making a decision:

- Does this go against the values of Éducation internationale?
- Does this go against an internal policy, rule or directive?
- What would the public think about my choice?
- Can it negatively affect Éducation internationale's reputation?
- What are the possible alternatives and repercussions?

# REPORTING

Anyone within or outside of Éducation internationale, in Canada or abroad, who believes, in good faith, that a provision of the Code of Ethics has been or is about to be breached, can report a situation via the following communication channels:

**Disclosure email:** [disclosure@education-internationale.com](mailto:disclosure@education-internationale.com)

**Disclosure voicemail:** +1 (418) 651-4667, ext.128

**Postal address:** 3005, 4<sup>e</sup> Avenue, Québec, Québec, Canada, G1J3G6. Please mark as “Disclosure”.

## Éducation internationale is committed to:

- Act on the report as soon as possible;
- Preserve the dignity and the privacy of those concerned, namely the person who made the report, the person being reported, and the witnesses;
- Ensure that all the parties concerned are treated humanly, equally and objectively, and that adequate support is given to them;
- Protect the confidentiality of the intervention process, especially the pieces of information pertaining to the report;
- If necessary, conduct an investigation promptly and objectively, or entrust the responsibility to an external intervener. Those concerned will be duly informed of the conclusion of this process. If the investigation does not establish any unacceptable behaviour, all the material evidences will be kept for two years and destroyed thereafter;
- Take no retaliatory action against anyone who reports a violation of ethical standards or the code of conduct, as long as the report is made in good faith.

## **BREACH**

Failure to comply with the Code of Ethics may result in sanctions which could go as far as dismissal or result in termination of the business relationship.

Éducation internationale applies a zero-tolerance principle regarding respect for people and protection of the most vulnerable, particularly regarding sexual exploitation and assault.

When a breach is confirmed, Éducation internationale takes all reasonable measures to handle the situation, including the appropriate administrative or disciplinary measures, and the involvement of the competent authorities in the event of criminal behaviour.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

In terms of accountability, Éducation internationale is committed to publish an annual report on the number of alleged and confirmed cases of sexual exploitation and assault, as well as the measures taken in handling them.

# DEFINITIONS

## THE FOLLOWING DEFINITIONS ARE THOSE RETAINED FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

**Sexual assault**<sup>2</sup>: an act of a sexual nature, with or without physical contact, committed by an individual without the consent of the target person, or in certain cases, notably in those of children, involving affective manipulation or blackmail. It is an act aiming at subjecting somebody else to one's own impulses by abuse of power, use of force or constraint, or by implicit or explicit threat. Sexual assault violates fundamental rights, in particular a person's right to physical and psychological integrity and safety. This definition includes other terms such as "rape" or "sexual abuse".

**Conflict of interest**<sup>3</sup>: a person is in a conflict of interest when he or she exercises an official power, duty or function that provides an opportunity to further his or her private interests or those of his or her relatives or friends or to improperly further another person's private interests.

**Sexual exploitation**<sup>4</sup>: any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

**Harassment**<sup>5</sup>: a vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures that are hostile or unwanted, that affect the employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity, or that make the work environment harmful. A single serious incidence of such behaviour may constitute harassment if it has the same consequences and if it produces a lasting harmful effect on the employee.

**Intimidation**<sup>6</sup>: any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes.

**Beneficiary**: anyone who benefits, personally or through their organization, of the services provided by Éducation internationale.

**Violence**<sup>7</sup>: the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

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*Sources:*

<sup>2</sup> *Government Strategy to prevent and counteract sexual violence*

<sup>3</sup> *Conflict of Interest Act*

<sup>4</sup> *United Nations Secretary General's bulletin*

<sup>5</sup> *Act respecting labour standards*

<sup>6</sup> *Education Act*

<sup>7</sup> *World Health Organization*