

CODE OF CONDUCT

Context

We are committed to making Jesus known, serving our members and fulfilling the charitable objectives of the Evangelical Alliance. This code of conduct stems from our Basis of Faith, the Evangelical Relationships Commitment and the Ethos and Practice of the Evangelical Alliance.

The Evangelical Alliance is committed to its staff, to their development both professionally and spiritually and has a 'duty of care' towards each member of the team. The Evangelical Alliance is committed to act in all circumstances with Christ-like compassion, grace and pastoral concern. Members of staff are encouraged to make every reasonable effort and intention to meet the standards of personal conduct and working practice set out in this code of conduct.

Scope

Some roles have an occupational requirement relating to religious belief. For example, roles which have significant leadership or representative responsibilities, or that are central to fulfilling the aims and purposes or developing and maintaining our Christian ethos, will have an occupational requirement for the postholder to be aligned with our beliefs (that is, to be an evangelical Christian).

This document is used at the recruitment and selection stage for new entrants and forms part of the application pack sent to those interested in applying for vacancies at the Evangelical Alliance. Applicants will be asked to confirm that they are happy to abide by the code of conduct, as part of the recruitment process.

This document also forms the basis of an understanding of behaviour and expectation of one another for all staff working at the Evangelical Alliance, whether or not an occupational requirement relating to religious belief applies.

Policy

As a result of our underlying shared beliefs and values, the following are examples of behaviours we would expect to see lived out within the staff team at the Evangelical Alliance:

- Willingness to give account of a living faith in Jesus Christ within settings and context appropriate to day to day responsibilities.*
- Regular commitment and participation in the life of a local church.*
- The treatment of one another with grace, respect, courtesy, politeness, forgiveness and self-control as well as justice, integrity and truth: living out the Evangelical Alliance's values both in behaviour and in tone of communication.
- Honesty and co-operation in our interactions, timekeeping and work practice.
- Respect for authority and diversity as people working together.
- Commitment to good stewardship of the Evangelical Alliance's finances and resources.

*It is recognised that there will be specific criteria in this policy, as asterisked above, which are only likely to be relevant to posts where the occupational requirement detailed above applies.

Should a difficult situation develop, the Evangelical Alliance is committed to ensuring that Christ-like compassion, grace and pastoral concern inform our decision-making.

Such issues may be as the result of an incapacity or an error of judgement rather than willful lifestyle

choice or pre-determined behavioural choice and the Evangelical Alliance undertakes to respond in a way that reflects our beliefs and values, encouraging restoration.

The Bible condones and condemns certain specific behaviours. In situations where these standards may have been contravened, the Evangelical Alliance would act within a context of Christ-like grace and compassion. In some circumstances, that may appropriately mean applying the disciplinary procedure.

The disciplinary procedure may not always be the most appropriate route for achieving restoration. In no way does its existence or application exempt the Evangelical Alliance from making every possible effort to act in accordance with its charitable objectives, beliefs and values, such as to guide the honest pursuit of truth, to encourage fulfilling biblical approaches to sex, to support stable family life and to model good working relationships that convey respect for people and property.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of key beliefs that we hold, as a consequence of our core belief in the authority of the Bible as set out in our Basis of Faith:

- marriage as a lifelong union between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others;
- marriage as the only place approved by God for sexual relations; and
- God creating male (man) and female (woman) as distinct, binary and immutable.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that we would not accept, as a consequence of our core belief in the authority of the Bible as set out in our Basis of Faith:

- the repeated use of blasphemy or sexual innuendoes; and
- involvement in the occult.

In particular, where the occupational requirement detailed above applies, engaging in or promoting or condoning such behaviours, or promoting or condoning beliefs that are in conflict with our Basis of Faith (for example through engagement in an organisation or activity outside work that is in conflict with it) may be irreconcilable with working with the Evangelical Alliance.

It is understood that while every member of staff, Christian and non-Christian, is vulnerable to and will engage in behaviour which contravenes that laid out in scripture, our desire as an organisation is to inspire, encourage and build one another up in the faith in order to honour, obey and glorify God in our work.

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APPENDIX A: THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE AND THE BIBLE

The Evangelical Alliance's Basis of Faith affirms "the divine inspiration of Holy Scripture and its consequent entire trustworthiness in all matters of faith and conduct." This statement is understood by the Evangelical Alliance in certain specific senses:

The term 'Holy Scripture' here is synonymous with 'the Bible' and indicates the 66 canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as listed in various historic Protestant confessions (eg the Belgic Confession (1561) and Westminster Confession (1647)). It does not include those books generally known as 'the Apocrypha'. The 'divine inspiration' of holy scripture indicates that it has its origin in God, and that it is uniquely God's word written. While this written word is given primarily as a witness to Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, and while God used human writers to inscribe it, these writers were moved by God's Holy Spirit in such a way that the Bible is to be regarded as "God-breathed" (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16). It is thus distinct from all other literature, bearing in its full scope the peerless authority of God Himself.

The divine source of holy scripture establishes its 'entire trustworthiness', ensuring that it is utterly truthful and reliable in all that it affirms, and is the reference point by which every other claim to truthfulness must be measured. No human opinion or decree can override scripture. Even creeds and confessions of faith, which attempt to articulate the theology of scripture, do not possess scripture's supreme authority. The Evangelical Alliance's own Basis of Faith is merely a summary of core biblical teaching; our corporate life and ministry is directed by scripture as a whole.

The supreme authority of scripture applies alike to 'faith and conduct' – that is, to ethics and lifestyle as well as to formal doctrine. Scripture must be the lens we use to evaluate our lives and the world. Indeed, scripture will be of little value to us if it does not govern how we live out our lives, not only as individuals but also in community, and in wider society. The Ethos and Practice of the Evangelical Alliance and Code of Conduct are intended to bear out these practical dimensions of biblical authority. They commit the Evangelical Alliance to uphold scriptural standards in respect of human attitudes, behaviour and relationships. In particular, they commit Evangelical Alliance staff, both individually and corporately, to authentic biblical patterns of Christian discipleship, fellowship and social concern.

While the Evangelical Alliance has historically recognised the rights and responsibilities of the individual believer in the ethical interpretation of scripture, it has characteristically sought to discern its own rules of conduct on a corporate basis, both with reference to pan-evangelical precedent, and through its various councils, boards, committees and commissions. A key instance of such corporate discernment was the adoption of the Evangelical Alliance's 'Practical Resolution' at its founding in 1846. In the form updated in 1996, these resolutions are commended to all staff. Other significant examples of corporate moral discernment are to be found in the reports produced by various commissions of the Evangelical Alliance – eg the Theological Advisory Group (formerly known as ACUTE and TAPPAC). Together, these sources offer a more detailed picture of the Evangelical Alliance's biblical-ethical worldview.

APPENDIX B: OTHER POLICIES RELATED TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Equal opportunities policy

Equal opportunities justifiability policy

Grievance policy

Basis of Faith and Evangelical Relationships Commitment

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