

CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Introduction

Once appointed, members of the Greater Manchester Youth Combined Authority (YCA) must agree and sign this Code of Conduct and Expectations.

Principles

As a member of the YCA you have the responsibility to uphold the following principles:

- The YCA seeks to represent no party political view.
- The discussions of the YCA are to be solely issue based.
- The YCA will ensure that the young people of Greater Manchester are given a voice on any issue that affects them and as laid out in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as long as it does not affect the rights of others.
- The YCA will respect the issues as laid in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to ensure that every young person who participates in the work of the YCA has their rights respected and protected.
- Any young person aged 11 and up to 18 (or up to 25 with a disability/additional need), has the right to have their view heard and listened to by the YCA.
- As a member of the YCA, your duty is towards every young person in your youth council/organisation.

Responsibilities

During your term of office it is your responsibility to:

- Identify, discuss and debate issues of concern to young people. *You could do this by getting involved in YCA consultation activities, questionnaires, hold meetings and focus groups with young people, reply to letters and emails, take part in meetings and respond to plans and consultations.*
- Act on those issues and identify how to make a change at a local level, or resist unwanted change. You must also follow up decisions or actions. *You could do this by lobbying, meeting decision makers, organising consultations and campaigning.*
- Develop and increase the representation of young people to their benefit. *You could do this by supporting your school councils, local youth forums etc, and take opportunities to promote the need to involve young people at meetings and events you attend.*

Conduct

As a representative of the YCA we ask you to comply with these expectations of conduct when undertaking your duties:

- Your choices and decisions should be informed by what the young people you represent believe. This is in addition to your own research. They should be based on merit and be objective.
- At all times you should act and communicate in a way that does not damage the reputation of the YCA, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester's Mayor's Office, and your own local authority council or organisation. Communication includes letters, phone calls, face to face meetings and social media.
- In your role as a member of the YCA you should not represent any political party.
- You should only serve the public interest and should never use your role as a member of the YCA to inappropriately give an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- You should not place yourselves in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions to avoid the appearance of such behaviour.
- You should be accountable to the public for your actions and the manner in which they carry out your role as a member of the YCA. You should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny or disciplinary procedures appropriate to your role.
- You should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of race, age, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- You should uphold the law and, on all occasions act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you. Should any member be arrested, charged or convicted of any offence they must inform the relevant Officers supporting the YCA who will review the circumstances and take the appropriate actions.

Expectations

The following are expected of you during your term of office:

- It is important that you take your role seriously when you are representing your youth council or your organisation both in and outside YCA meetings.
- You must regularly attend all YCA meetings and (if appropriate) working group meetings. If you haven't attended three consecutive YCA meetings, or three YCA meetings in a six-month period, a decision may be taken to revoke your membership.
- You should participate in development days twice a year.
- You should participate in YFNW visits twice a year.

- You must notify your youth worker at least 48 hours in advance if you are unable to attend a meeting (unless it is an emergency).

- You must maintain regular contact with your youth worker, which includes answering and responding to emails, texts, phone, calls, letters and social media.
- You should check YCA related emails/social media posts at least once a week and respond to questions, consultations, meeting requests and anything else related to your role as a member of the YCA.
- It is your responsibility to report any difficulties with emails or communication to your youth worker so we can find a solution. You must report any changes to your contact details (address, phone, email etc.) or problems with receiving messages about YCA within 10 days to your worker and to the YCA Delivery Organisation – Youth Focus NW.
- It is your responsibility to report any changes in your medical needs, dietary or access requirements within 10 days to your worker and to the YCA Delivery Organisation – Youthfocus NW.

Support

In return for complying with the Code of Conduct and Expectations, you will receive from the GMCA, Youthfocus NW and your youth worker:

- Regular notice and information about meetings and events.
- Opportunities to attend regional and national events, meetings and activities. Everyone will be offered these opportunities, but your commitment and what you have done in your term of office will be taken into consideration before agreeing you can attend. Sometimes places may be limited, or the staff and transport costs of attending events too high, so you may not be able to attend every event or meeting that is on offer.
- Support from a worker to travel to and from local, regional and national meetings and events where your attendance has been agreed in advance with your worker.
- Appropriate refreshments and subsistence while taking your duties.
- Support with your own personal development and development of your role as a member of the YCA to help you do the best you can.
- Relevant and appropriate training and accreditation opportunities.

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and Expectations

Not complying with the principles, or expectations of conduct, or delivering your responsibilities on behalf of the young people you represent, as well as inappropriate behaviour, may result in the implementation of disciplinary procedures. Any sanctions or restrictions will be decided based on individual circumstances, but could ultimately mean dismissal from the YCA.