

## Staff Personal Relationships Policy

---

### Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Scope and purpose of the policy.....	1-2
3.	Personal relationships principles.....	3
4.	Existing or previous relationships.....	3
5.	Relationships with students or staff under the age of 18 or who are an "adult at risk" .....	4
6.	Inappropriate conduct by students and staff members.....	4
7.	Declaration of intimate or close personal relationships .....	4-5
8.	Breach of policy.....	5
9.	Review of policy.....	6
10.	Related policy/procedures .....	6
11.	Support.....	6
<b>Appendix 1.....</b>		<b>7</b>

---

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the introduction in October 2024 of the UK Employment Rights Bill and the impending changes to the Office for Students general ongoing conditions of registration (Condition E6. Harassment and sexual misconduct), the Executive team has recently reviewed and made some important changes to the policy first introduced in 2022.
- 1.2 The policy reflects Trinity Laban's commitment to providing a safe and positive experience for all staff and students.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the expectations and obligations of staff and students with respect to personal relationships between staff/colleagues and personal relationships between staff and students. Its purpose is to ensure appropriate processes are put in place to prevent abuses of power and allegations of actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 1.4 The policy now prohibits close personal or intimate relationships between staff and students.

### 2. Scope and purpose of the policy

- 2.1 The policy sets out the expectations and obligations of Trinity Laban employees and workers, and honorary staff (together "staff"), with respect to personal relationships between students and staff and between colleagues, regardless of sexual orientation and identity.
- 2.2 Trinity Laban academic, research and professional services staff, postgraduate teaching assistants, and student mentors are in a position of trust. It is important that they

# TRINITY LABAN

*demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well intentioned. They should always give due consideration as to what is an appropriate environment and what is appropriate conduct in relation to the activities they are undertaking.*

- 2.3 *There is potential for abuse or the perception of abuse in intimate relationships between individuals in inherently unequal positions where an individual is expected to discharge their teaching, supervisory or pastoral responsibility for the other, whether or not they are paid for their services (e.g. unpaid volunteers, honorary staff and emeriti). At Trinity Laban, such positions include, but are not limited to, a teacher or supervisor and their student(s), a manager and staff member they manage, mid-senior staff and junior staff in the same department, mentor and mentee, advisor and advisee or support managers, and students.*
- 2.4 *Due to the potential for conflict of interest, exploitation, favouritism or bias, such relationships may undermine the integrity of the supervision or evaluation provided, or may have adverse effects on the working and learning environment for those directly involved, as well as for the broader team and/or department culture.*
- 2.5 *Relationships in which one party is in a position to evaluate the work or influence the career of the other, may also provide grounds for complaint by third parties when that relationship gives undue access or advantage, restricts opportunities, or simply creates a perception of these problems.*
- 2.6 *Trinity Laban recognises that socialising on a friendship basis between both colleagues and staff and students is often a positive aspect of being an active member of the Trinity Laban community, however the nature of staff/student and staff/staff relationships imposes particular responsibilities and duties on our staff.*
- 2.7 *This policy is intended to ensure that appropriate safeguards and processes are in place to prevent abuses of power and sexual misconduct.*
- 2.8 *This policy seeks to protect all students and staff from allegations of actual or perceived conflicts of interest, and to limit circumstances where a position of power may be abused. In doing so it seeks to ensure positive and supportive working and educational environments where all are treated fairly.*
- 2.9 *This policy **prohibits** close or intimate relationships between any member of staff **and any student***
- 2.10 *This policy **prohibits** intimate relationships with staff or students who are under the age of 18 or who are an adult at risk.*
- 2.11 *Where a close personal or intimate relationship exists between members of staff where the relationship may give rise to real or perceived conflict of interest, breach of trust or confidentiality, **there must be a clear declaration of the relationship, see [section 3 and 4.](#)***

*This policy applies to close personal or intimate relationships which are formed after the implementation date of this policy (1<sup>st</sup> August 2025). Any existing or previous relationships are referred to in Section 4.*

# TRINITY LABAN

## 3. *Personal relationships principles*

3.1 *Where personal relationships occur between a line manager or supervisor and a team member; an actual or perceived conflict of interest may arise. This applies both to pre-existing relationships and those that begin and/or end whilst working together.*

3.2 *Trinity Laban's principles in relation to personal relationships are that members of staff must:*

- *not solely line-manage, or be line-managed solely by anyone with whom they have a personal relationship as defined in the scope and purpose of this policy.*
- *ensure that they are not involved in any decision-making processes relating to the conduct, employment or performance management of those with whom they have a personal relationship*
- *ensure that they are not involved in any practices within Trinity Laban which could be viewed as canvassing for a person with whom they have a personal relationship, for example through recruitment or promotion processes or via committees who influence decision making where that person or their work is discussed.*

3.3 *Examples of decision-making processes to which these principles may apply are listed below. The list is not exhaustive, and staff must exercise care in the discharge of any decision making where a conflict of interest may arise: -*

- **Career:** *recruitment and selection; promotion or re-grading; recognition or reward decisions*
- **Conduct:** *capability or disciplinary issues; handling of complaints against or by the individual*
- **Conditions:** *requests relating to working conditions, contractual terms or benefits, for example requests for part-time/flexible/hybrid working or contract extensions*
- **Workload:** *allocation of workload, or workload resources such as equipment, funding, technical support or space*
- **Financial:** *approval of any financial payment, for example pay claims, timesheets, expenses claims or the allocation of external funding*

## 4. *Existing or previous relationships*

4.1 *This section applies to relationships, which are in existence at the time this policy is published and to relationships which have occurred in the past.*

4.2 *Members of staff must, **within one month** of this policy being published (i.e. by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025), declare any existing and/or previous close personal or intimate relationships with another staff member or student where there remains a potential conflict, in confidence to their Head of Department or Head of People & Organisational Development.*

# TRINITY LABAN

## **5. Relationships with students or staff under the age of 18 or who are an "adult at risk"**

- 5.1 Members of staff **must never be in, or enter into**, a close personal or intimate relationship with a student or staff member under the age of 18, or an adult known or suspected to be at risk, for whom they have any responsibility for, or involvement in, that person's academic studies and/or personal welfare.
- 5.2 Staff must not engage in sexual behaviour with someone with whom they are in a position of trust. Whilst a young person can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, the Sexual Offences Act (2003) makes it a criminal offence for a person to engage in sexual activity of any kind with a person under the age of 18, where the adult is in a position of trust.
- 5.3 Anyone suspecting a member of staff of acting inappropriately towards a student or staff member under the age of 18 or an adult at risk should refer to the [Safeguarding Policy](#) and contact the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer [j.peel@trinitylaban.ac.uk](mailto:j.peel@trinitylaban.ac.uk), who may contact the local authority designated officer and/or the police.

## **6. Inappropriate conduct by students and staff members**

- 6.1 Unprofessional or inappropriate conduct towards a student or staff member is never acceptable. Such behaviours may breach the [Dignity at Work and Protection from Sexual Harassment Policy](#), the [Staff Disciplinary Policy](#), and other Trinity Laban policies and procedures.
- 6.2 A student or staff member should seek advice immediately if they feel they have been subject to unprofessional or inappropriate conduct from a student or colleague, by speaking to their personal tutor or line manager, the Head of Department, or a member of Student Services or the Head of People & OD to ensure appropriate support is provided.

## **7. Declaration of intimate or close personal relationships**

- 7.1 All declarations are to be made as soon as possible and by always within one month.
- 7.2 As the declaration contains sensitive personal data it will be stored securely and managed in compliance with data protection legislation. Such declarations will be treated respectfully, sensitively and confidentially, and the wishes of both parties respected as far as is possible. This includes same-sex relationships where the parties may not be "out" publicly.
- 7.3 Staff who are unsure whether they have a close personal or intimate relationship with another member of staff, should seek confidential advice from their line manager, Head of Department or the Head of People & OD. Staff are strongly encouraged to seek confidential advice if the other party expressly does not wish the relationship to be reported.
- 7.4 Students who are unsure whether they have a close personal or intimate relationship with a staff member should seek advice from the Student Services team.

# TRINITY LABAN

7.5 Staff must complete the [Personal Relationship Declaration Form at Appendix 1](#). This form should be completed even if the relationship was previously declared on a job or course application form.

- **Step 1** – Staff should submit the form to the Head of People & OD ([p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk](mailto:p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk)); who may need to discuss the details with the staff member or with the Line Manager or Head of Department.
- **Step 2** – The Head of People & OD will review the form and where appropriate and/or necessary, will consult the parties and the Line Manager/ Head of Department on what actions, if any, are required to remove any potential conflict. The actions will be documented on the form and copies provided to the relevant parties. The Head of People & OD will store the form securely on the member(s) of staff central personal file;
- **Step 3** – Any unresolved matter may be referred to the relevant Ass't Director/Deputy Director depending on the circumstances.

7.6 In placing measures to manage any conflict of interest, the Head of Dep't/ Artistic Director/Deputy Director may consider the following:

- any known vulnerability of the student or staff member;
- the student's or colleague's personal circumstances at the time;
- whether there is a supervision or teaching arrangement in place at the time;
- the circumstances of the student when the close personal relationship commenced or was initiated (for example, if the personal relationship existed prior to the staff/student relationship);
- any special family, kinship and elder relationships;
- the nature of the two individuals' contact in study, research or employment;
- the potential for the staff member to influence the academic progress and outcomes or career progression of the student or colleague; and
- the extent of the power imbalance between the two individuals.

7.7 Both the staff member and student or colleague will be notified of any conflict of interest management measures put in place.

## 8. Breach of policy

8.1 An intimate relationship between a staff member and student as outlined in this policy will constitute a breach of this policy. Such instances will be investigated under the relevant disciplinary procedures.

8.2 Failure to disclose a close personal or intimate relationship with a student, or with a colleague where there is a real or perceived conflict of interest, breach of trust or confidentiality, will be referred to an investigation under the relevant disciplinary procedure.

# TRINITY LABAN

## 9. *Review of policy*

- 9.1 *This policy is not contractual and may be varied from time to time following consultation with Trinity Laban's recognised trade unions.*
- 9.2 *This policy will be reviewed every two years.*

## 10. *Related policy/procedures*

- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Dignity at Work and Protection from Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Student Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)

## 11 *Support*

*There is support available for staff who need guidance with this policy, or to address matters where they may feel that this policy has not been adhered to:*

- *Your line manager*
- *Student Services*
- *People & OD Team*
- *Trade Union Representatives*

---

***First Publication Date:*** January 2022

***Review Date(s):*** June 2025  
January 2023

***Next review Date:*** June 2027

***Reviewed by:*** Executive;  
Tackling Sexual Harassment Working Group

# TRINITY LABAN

## Appendix 1

### Personal Relationships Declaration Form

#### SECTION A: TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF

*This form should be completed in accordance with the [Personal Relationships Policy](#) (above).*

*Staff: Please complete this form and send it securely to the Head of People and OD ([p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk](mailto:p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk)). Both parties must complete their own form.*

<b><i>Your Details:</i></b>	
Name:	
Line Manager Name:	
Position, Faculty and Dept (if staff)	
Programme and Faculty	
<b><i>Other party's details:</i></b>	
Name	
Are they a student or a member of staff?	
Position, Faculty/ Dept(if staff)	
Programme and Faculty (If Student):	
<b><i>Nature of Relationship:</i></b> (Please state whether the relationship is of a close personal nature (for example a close friend or relative, or an intimate/romantic relationship).	
Relationship of close personal nature (if relevant) for example cousin, mother, friend etc.	
When did the intimate/romantic relationship start (if relevant) (approximate month/year):	



# TRINITY LABAN

*I understand the following:*

- 1. It will/may be necessary for permanent or temporary adjustments to be made to any supervisory arrangements or other conditions, to remove any real or perceived conflict of interest arising from the relationship.*
- 2. This information will be stored securely and managed in compliance with data protection legislation.*
- 3. I have read and understood the **Staff Personal Relationships at Work Policy**:*

*I have read and understood Trinity Laban's policies on **Dignity at Work** and **Safeguarding**.*

*Signed (electronic signature):*

*Print Name:*

*Date:*

*Staff to submit to the Head of People & OD ([p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk](mailto:p.thompson@trinitylaban.ac.uk)) who will discuss the form with your line manager and/or Head of Department and with you if necessary.*



# TRINITY LABAN

TO BE COMPLETED BY HEAD OF PEOPLE & OD IN CONJUNCTION WITH LINE MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE FOR STAFF DECLARATIONS.

<i>Has this relationship been declared within one month</i>	<i>Y/N</i>
<i>If no, why not?</i>	
<i>Is action or a conflict of interest management plan required?</i>	<i>Y/N</i>
<i>Reasons for recommended plan</i>	
<i>Details of action / plan</i>	

*Signature:*

*Print Name:*

*Job title:*

*Date:*

*Head of POD to upload/file this form securely to the employee's personal file.*

*Head of Department to store this form securely.*