

Dress Code Statement

The Council wishes to give a good impression and project a positive professional image to all users of its services, whether residents, customers or colleagues. The appearance of employees is a key element in this.

Slough Borough Council recognises that like most organisations, all employees act as representatives of the organisation and should therefore be dressed accordingly. How employees dress and present themselves plays an important part in conveying the professional image that Slough Borough Council portrays to its customers and general public. For this reason employees are asked to be aware of how they present themselves and to adhere to the dress code standards at all times when representing Slough Borough Council.

1. Scope

This Code applies to all employees and workers of the Council.

In some service areas uniforms are provided and these should be worn in accordance with agreed local dress code standards

2. Key Principles

The appearance of our employees can affect the way customers and residents view the Council. While understanding of the differences individuals display is necessary, consideration must be given to the impact appearance has on others. Clothes, footwear, hair, make-up, jewellery, piercing, tattoos and personal hygiene all contribute to how the Council and its employees are viewed.

Employees should dress appropriately and look professional at all times related to their duties they undertake in their role and be mindful of their overall appearance.

Consideration of health and safety factors must be taken into account and personal protective clothing and equipment must be worn when required. This includes exposure to weather (e.g. sun protection).

Employees required to wear a uniform have a responsibility to keep it clean, smart and in good repair, and ensure they comply with the local dress code standards set for the service area.

High standards of personal hygiene are required and inadequate standards will be addressed through this code.

Clothes may be worn for cultural or religious reasons, providing they comply with this code. The Equality Act 2010 requires that reasonable adjustments need to be made for disabled employees. This is to ensure that they are not indirectly discriminated against by a particular general requirement. An example of this could be:

An employer has a policy which states that certain types of footwear are unacceptable. This may disadvantage a member of staff who has conditions relating to their feet and may not be able to wear "standard" footwear.

All employees are required to wear identity/name badges at all times whilst at work.

Any breach of this code by council employees may result in disciplinary action being taken. Breaches of this code by agency workers and contractors may result in termination of their services for the Council.

3. Procedure

If an employee is in breach of this code the manager must:

- draw this code to the attention of the employee
- inform them how they have breached the code
- consider the employees' responses
- advise them of the standards required
- and that further breaches may be subject to disciplinary action

This should be confirmed in writing to the employee.

In cases where breaches may compromise health and safety, or are inappropriate to front line services, employees will be required to carry out suitable alternative duties for the remainder of their working day. In all these cases HR advice must be sought.

In some instances it may be more sensitive and appropriate for a manager of the same gender as the employee to be asked to deal with breaches of this code.

4. Management Guidance

Managers have a responsibility for ensuring that employees are made aware of this code and that it is adhered to at all times. Appropriate and smart appearance must be taken into account when considering the specific factors, circumstances and environment of the job. These factors may include;

- Respect for colleagues (avoid causing embarrassment or intimidation)
- Meeting clients and the nature of the client group
- Representing the Council in a public facing role
- Health and Safety, including personal protective clothing and equipment

Employees have a corporate duty to comply with this code and to project a professional image encouraging public trust and confidence and to contribute to the corporate image. They should be mindful of the effect their appearance (clothes, make-up, jewellery, piercing, tattoos) has on others and should, for example avoid:

- clothes that may cause embarrassment through being revealing or over exposing parts of the body e.g. strapless tops, shorts
- cloths that could be seen as provocative e.g. transparent tops
- an appearance that may appear intimidating

Whilst there may be differing views of the meaning of “appropriate and smart” the following provides a guide to what is not acceptable.

This list is an indication and is not exhaustive.

- sports clothes and footwear (other than in appropriate areas e.g. leisure services)
- slogans / inappropriate images. Small designer logos are acceptable
- beach type clothing and footwear e.g. flipflops
- evening / night club wear e.g. strapless tops
- torn or dirty clothing (taking into account the nature of the role)
- any badges/ logos of a political nature

It may on occasion be appropriate to wear more casual clothing during office moves / specific tasks as authorised by the Manager.

Whilst it is recognised that environment will influence appearance (i.e. during hot weather) employees must maintain appropriate standards in line with this code.

5. Review Process

This code will be reviewed within the next 12 months of approval.