

# Planting Academy Code of Conduct for Students and Planters

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## Background

- a. The Planting Academy (also known as the LCPA) is a collaborative endeavour involving the working together of Acts 29, AMiE, Co-Mission, City to City (the London Project), Crosslands, FIEC, London City Mission, the London Gospel Partnership and Union School of Theology.
- b. The shared desire is for many well-trained, well-rounded, robust, godly, Jesus-loving, gospel-preaching church planters to be raised up, well-equipped to plant healthy biblical churches in this city – churches that will take root and endure and grow and bring many thousands from darkness into the marvellous light of Christ to the glory of God.
- c. From a legal point of view, the Planting Academy is a ministry of Co-Mission Initiative Trust (CMIT), a limited company registered in England and Wales (no. 08848067) and a registered charity (no. 1157383) with offices at Dundonald Church, 577 Kingston Road, London SW20 8SA.

## Key Expectations

Planting Academy training operates on the following foundations:

- a. We relate to one another, especially in conversation and in discussion, with graciousness, humility, love, gentleness and respect. We seek to listen more than we speak and to value the contributions of others. When we speak we do

not boast, belittle or battle but rather aim to build one another up by sharing honestly and speaking the truth in love.

- b. We show particular respect for programme trainers, guest speakers and older brothers.
- c. We show great sensitivity towards the mission situation of the church in whose building we meet (Hope Church Vauxhall). We are conscious that we are visible to the community and will be associated with Hope Church by those who see us coming to Planting Academy training. So we are very careful, particularly in the way that we enter and leave the premises and in the way we walk around the estate, to give no cause for offence and to relate to one another and to all we meet in a way that reflects well on the reputation of the church and the name of Christ.
- d. We commit to attending as many of the training sessions and study days as possible (for the course(s) to which we have enrolled). We commit to arrive in good time for a prompt start and stay through to the end of the meeting. Where we know an absence is unavoidable or we will have to slip out early we are courteous to send our apologies, letting the lead trainer or administrator know at least 24 hours before the session.
- e. We commit to paying promptly (before the beginning of each term) for training sessions. We understand that if we have not paid we will not be able to attend.
- f. Above all we seek to honour the Sovereign Lord God with an atmosphere of thanksgiving and prayerful dependence. We desire glory to go to him rather than to man. We do not take the Lord's name in vain. We meet together with a joy in Christ and laugh often but we also have a right seriousness in that we are dealing with serious matters of eternal destiny and the glory of Christ.

## Unacceptable behaviour

While we do not expect to face any of the following, they are listed below for clarity and as the basis on which disciplinary action may be taken:

- a. Directly challenging or undermining the authority of the Bible or [Evangelical Alliance statement of faith](#).
- b. Any form (verbal or non-verbal) of bullying, harassment, threatening, exclusion, aggression or violence.
- c. Theft or intentional damage to property (belonging to LCM, Hope Church or the Planting Academy).
- d. Behaving (or dressing) in an indecent or offensive manner – both within training sessions and while in the area surrounding Hope Church.
- e. Using crude, offensive or blasphemous language (including casual use of 'O my God' or 'Jesus Christ').
- f. Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in Planting Academy training sessions or in the surrounding area.

- g. Misuse of Wi-Fi internet provision or webinar meetings – including searching for or displaying pornography or terrorism related material, virus dissemination or sending of fraudulent messages.
- h. Obstructing and/or refusing to submit to the trainers and teachers in their lawful leading of the training sessions.
- i. Persistently missing sessions or arriving late or leaving early from sessions without a respectful request for permission at least 24 hours before (except in cases of emergency).
- j. Attending training sessions without paying (except with explicit permission).
- k. Persistent failure to communicate or to respond to emails.
- l. Sharing of confidential information learned during training sessions (either from trainers or from other planters) or spreading of slander regarding the training organisation or members of the Planting Academy (via social media or otherwise).
- m. Being under church discipline or convicted of a criminal offence at any time during the year of training with the Planting Academy.

## Disciplinary, complaints and conflict resolution procedure

### General principles:

- Any concern should be made know either to the lead trainer of the course on which you are enrolled or to the Acting Principal of the Planting Academy as appropriate.
- Where it is not possible to appeal to or raise a grievance with either the trainer or Planting Academy (Acting) Principal, the issue may be raised with trustees of the Co-mission Initiative Trust.
- The leadership aims to respond to all issues confidentially (as far as possible), fairly, promptly and in a sensitive way, acting in the best interests of all concerned and the reputation of Christ.
- Activity (and allegations) of a criminal nature will be reported to the police and other authorities as required.
- It may be necessary or wise, particular in serious cases, to involve the local church and/or other church leaders.
- No-one will be disadvantaged by raising a complaint, dispute or grievance.
- Situations will be dealt with in a manner proportionate to their seriousness. It is expected that minor personal conflicts and mild offences will be dealt with informally. More significant conflicts, offences and concerns will require a meeting of those concerned with either the lead trainer or Planting Academy (acting) principal (or both in the case of a serious offence or issue).
- Those invited to such a meeting have the right to be accompanied by a friend.

- In the case of breaches of the Key Expectations or Unacceptable Behaviour, the pattern of escalation is 1) verbal warning, 2) written warning, 3) dismissal. However, with very serious cases the escalation may go straight to dismissal.
- While not attempting to be a local church, we are guided by Scriptural principles regarding conflict and grievance – e.g. Matt. 18:15-20; Luke 6:41-42; Col. 3:8-17; 1 Tim. 5:19-25. The need to protect the vulnerable and victims takes priority.

#### Dismissal:

- We will seek to avoid this sanction if at all possible.
- Someone may be dismissed from the Planting Academy for:
  - Serious rejection of or persistent minor failure to uphold the spirit of the [Key Expectations](#).
  - Serious offences or persistence in less serious offences in the list of [Unacceptable Behaviour](#).
- While all attempts will be made to be fair, reasonable, proportionate, evidence-based and gracious, ultimately the Planting Academy reserves the right to dismiss anyone from the course at any time for any lawful reason.
- In the case of dismissal, the Planting Academy and CMIT are not under obligation to refund any money received for future training sessions.

## Crosslands and Union

The above expectations and procedures are not intended in any way to override the expectations and procedures of Crosslands Training and Union School of Theology. In cases where students are enrolled on Crosslands Training or Union School of Theology courses, the code of conduct, policies and procedures of those institutions should be the first resort. The Planting Academy procedures and expectations above are intended only to supplement and address cases that do not fall within the remit of Crosslands and Union.