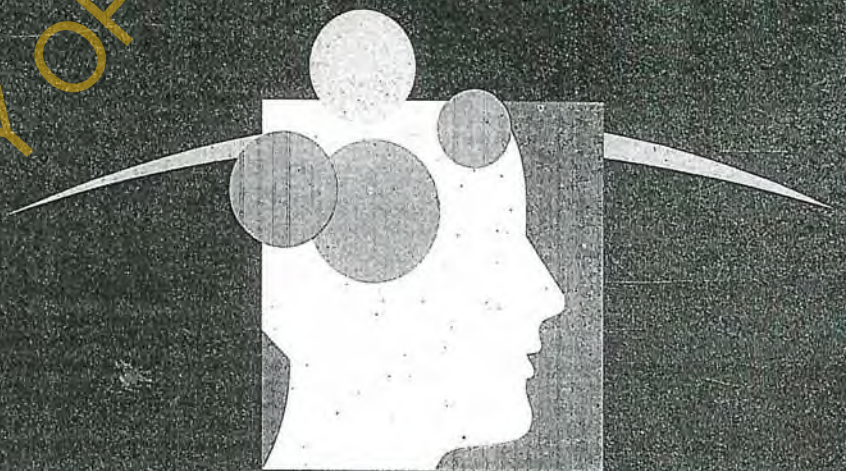




# A HANDBOOK ON TEACHING PRACTICE

FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN



Edited by  
Olusegun Kolawole  
Bashiru Lawal



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Edited by  
Oluwafemi Kolawole  
Iyemba Iyemba

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## Chapter Twelve

# SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Adelodun, Gboyega Adelowo, Ph.D

### Introduction

School discipline in this paper is a required set of actions by the teaching practice committee towards a student teacher (or groups of student teachers) after the student behaviour disrupts the ongoing educational activity or breaks a pre-established rule created by the school system. Discipline guides people's behaviour or sets limits to help them learn to take care of themselves, other people and the world around them (Skiba,2006). An obedient student teacher is in compliance with the school rules and codes of conduct. These rules may, for example, define the expected standards of clothing, time keeping, social conduct, and work ethic. The term discipline is also applied to the punishment that is the consequence of breaking rules. The aim of discipline is to set limits restricting certain behaviours or attitudes that are seen as harmful or going against school policies, educational norms, school traditions, etc.

Discipline is important to create a safe and fun learning environment (Wynne,2009). Discipline requires knowledge, skill, sensitivity and self-confidence. Like any art, it is something that one acquires through training and experience, it becomes easier with practice. Many people confuse discipline with classroom



management, discipline is one dimension of classroom management and classroom management is a general term. The aspect of school discipline an emphasis is being laid here is that of student teachers who are on teaching practice.

Fowowe (2015) described teaching practice as the thrust and hub of teacher education. He sees teaching practice as an inevitable journey every pre-service teacher must embark upon. He went ahead to discuss the codes of conduct expected of any responsible student teacher.

### **Codes of Conduct of Students on Teaching Practice**

- i) Student teachers are expected to stay in the school(s) to which they have been officially posted.
- ii) On no account should any student-teacher change his/her school of posting without due clearance from the Teaching Practice Committee.
- iii) Violation of (ii) above will attract appropriate sanction which could be repetition of the teaching practice exercise at the next available opportunity.
- iv) Student-teachers are expected to come to their schools of posting punctually (on or before 7.30am) regularly (Monday through Friday) except on public holidays.
- v) The attendance register provided by the school of posting must be duly signed. Student teachers should not absent themselves from school without permission.
- vi) Persistent lateness, early departure and absence from school of posting without the permission of the Head-teacher/Principal would result in suspension from the teaching practice exercise and repetition at the next available opportunity.

- vii) Cases of illness must be reported to the Head-teacher/Principal as soon as possible. If it is serious enough to warrant absence from school, a medical certificate or report must be obtained from a medical personnel in any government hospitals or the University clinic. Medical certificate or report obtained from private hospitals will not be accepted and such cases may be treated as absence without permission.
- viii) Shabby, flamboyant or indecent dressing to school would attract appropriate sanctions including suspension from the teaching practice and repetition at the next available opportunity.
- ix) Any reported act of rudeness, insubordination to and non-cooperation with head teacher/principal, cooperative/subject teacher and other staff of the school would attract suspension from the teaching practice exercise and repetition at the next available opportunity.
- x) Student teachers are expected to keep up to date records especially lesson notes, diaries, scheme of works, and attendance registers. Lesson note should be prepared in duplicate form for each lesson and for this purpose, the Faculty of Education has been magnanimous enough to prepare a booklet for teaching practice. This can be downloaded from the internet. The lesson notes prepared should be checked with the appropriate partnership teacher in the school of practice. Failure to present lesson notes attracts repetition of the year's teaching practice.



- xi) Reported cases of immoral or indecent relationship with pupils will attract an immediate suspension from the teaching practice exercise. This will be followed by an investigation by the Teaching Practice Committee. Thereafter, the student-teacher will face the University Disciplinary Committee and if found guilty, the student teacher may be suspended or dismissed from the University.
- xii) Student-teachers are expected to participate in all curricula and co-curricular activities in their schools of posting. These include conduct of assemblies, participation in sporting activities etc.

Any other proven act of misconduct by the student-teachers will attract appropriate sanctions as may be prescribed by the Teaching Practice Committee.

Students on teaching practice should appear as well trained professional teachers at all times, especially while on duty. They should not appear like someone that is being forced to be a teacher.

#### **Appearance and Dress Code of Teacher –Trainees**

The student-teachers' demeanour is very important in portraying him/her as a bad professional. Demeanour has to do with whether the student-teacher is well composed, neat and simple or not. His/her personality is the totality of what makes him/her as an individual distinct from others around. The dressing should be modest enough and not like that of someone going to a disco or one going to a party. Bear & Burkholder (2001) noted that the appearance of student-teachers should not depict someone that is being forced to be a teacher.



- There should be obvious signs of regular bathing and proper hair care to reflect neatness and modesty.
- Teeth and the entire dentition should be well cared for.
- There should be no mini-skirts, as student-teacher skirts should not be too short as to make students drop mirrors on the floor in order to reveal the few upper parts of her thigh that remain unexposed.
- Female student teachers should not put on trousers except trouser suit and its top.
- Native dress which involves tying a wrapper should not be put on by female student teachers except on Friday.
- Male student-teachers should put on decent shirts and trousers corporate for the profession not those sewn for social outings. (suit and tie are excellently acceptable but jeans no matter how expensive should not be worn).
- Slippers (however costly the pair may be), should not be put on by student-teachers.
- Backless, sleeveless, show-your-navel etc, macaroni, spaghetti, indomie type of tops should not be put on by student-teachers; especially female.
- Shoes to be put on by professional teachers and student-teachers should not produce knocking sounds that distract attention and adversely affects the teaching-learning process.

- Make-ups by female students-teachers should be moderate and not the type that will make the student-teacher look like a comedian; and distracting the attention of the pupils/students.

### **Discipline of Student-Teacher**

According to American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force (2008), maintaining discipline among the student-teacher is an important dose for any purposeful education. Student-teachers need discipline in order to be well-adjusted professional teachers. They need discipline in order to appreciate what the ethics prescribe. The following are the professional misconducts that are not expected from student-teachers:

- i) Unauthorised transfer of students on teaching practice to another school.
- ii) Abusing a student verbally, physically, psychologically, emotionally or sexually.
- iii) Drunkenness by the student teachers during school hours.
- iv) Failure to keep statutory and appropriate records as expected. These records include: Scheme of work, Diary, Lesson note, Attendance register, etc.
- v) Disobedience and flagrant disregard to the constituted authority e.g. Head teacher, Principal, Officials from the Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) etc.
- vi) Perpetuating or engaging in illicit acts such as immodest dressing, stealing, fighting, laziness, loafing, etc.
- vii) Instigating students to riot and protest against the interest of the school.



- viii) Outright disregard for the co-operative teacher through gangsterism and the likes.
  - ix) Unguided utterances and leakage of information or divulging information of the school at the student teachers' disposal without the authority of the school to do so.
- All these infractions have consequences and no student teacher will be exonerated from them. Every infraction will be adequately sanctioned.

### **Conclusion**

As student teachers launch out for the highly rewarding exercise (Teaching Practice), they should always bear in mind that they are ambassadors of this great institution. They are therefore, challenged to put into practice the expertise, skills and pedagogy that they had earlier acquired most especially during micro teaching. We pray fervently that the seeds they will be sowing as they commence the teaching practice exercise will germinate when they least expect. Therefore, they should go out there to stir up the giant in the learners and make learners unstoppable for their future endeavours.

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