

Official Community Guidelines, Code of Conduct and FAQ

Clarification of Terms

- **Pal/Pen Pal:** either a student or a WoAA member participating in the WoAA Pals! program
- **WoAA Member:** an adult member of the Women of Aeronautics and Astronautics (WoAA)
- **WoAA Pal:** a high school student participating in the WoAA Pals! program

Community Guidelines

1. **Communication** - This is the most important part of the program. It is up to **YOU** to communicate at least once monthly with your pen pal. Failure to do so may result in your pen pal being reassigned.
2. **Professionalism** - Remember that this is a program to ask and answer questions about the aerospace industry and life beyond college, not a personal diary. Avoid topics such as sex, drugs, alcohol, politics, or anything that is not appropriate in a professional or work-related setting.
3. **Respect** - Your pen pal is likely to have different backgrounds, beliefs, experiences than you, so please respect these differences and do your best not to make your pen pal uncomfortable

Code of Conduct

Zero tolerance policies - you will be removed from the program if you fail to uphold these guidelines

1. **NEVER** use inappropriate language in your correspondence (no swear words, disrespectful phrases, racial slurs, etc.) or make any inappropriate comments about your pal
2. **NEVER** bring up sex, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substance use
3. **NEVER** bring up your stances on religion or politics (these are not work-appropriate topics, so they are not appropriate here either)
4. **DO NOT** make plans to meet your pen pal without a chaperone (parent/legal guardian for minors) in person while you are involved with the WoAA Pals! program.
 - a. In general, do not make plans to meet your pen pal. Exceptions to this include meeting if the WoAA pal is visiting the WoAA member's university as a prospective student, in which case the pals may meet with a chaperone present.

Discouraged behavior:

5. **AVOID** traumatic/triggering topics such as rape, abuse, etc.
 - a. You want to make this correspondence a positive experience for everyone!
6. **AVOID** sharing social media as a rule
 - a. If your platform is professional/work-appropriate, then it's fine to connect
 - b. Any social media containing anything inappropriate as described in the zero-tolerance policies, anything inappropriate for work, or anything inappropriate for minors cannot be shared.
 - c. What's ok: LinkedIn vs. what's not ok: Snapchat
7. **Try not to vent** about your non-academic/professional problems to your pen pal, especially those related to your relationship/family/friends
 - a. However, if WoAA members want to bring up how they learned from a personal situation as a response to something your high school Pal brings up, or the high school Pal needs academic or professional advice on something, that is okay! Use good judgement in these situations!

Diversity and Inclusion Discussions:

WoAA supports diversity and inclusion, particularly in the aerospace industry, and you can definitely discuss such topics with your WoAA Pal, as long as both pals are comfortable doing so.

- If you'd like to bring up your own experiences with racism, being LGBTQ+, a gender minority, etc. we suggest you:
 - Bring them up in a way that doesn't put your pen pal on the spot/feels like discrimination
 - Be as supportive of your pen pal as possible!
- If there are any topics you are not comfortable discussing, know that you are not required to, and politely let your pen pal know that you do not wish to discuss the subject further
- To encourage difficult conversations about these topics, we are making one of our monthly discussion themes a topic on diversity and inclusion.
- If your pen pal is being offensive or disrespectful, contact the WoAA Pals! program managers *immediately* at woapals@gmail.com.

NOTE:

IF you are **EVER** in any way made uncomfortable by something your pen pal says, do not hesitate to reach out to the WoAA Pals! program managers.

Anyone can be removed from the WoAA Pals! program at the discretion of the program's managers or students' teachers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How long should I wait for my pen pal to respond?

A: We'd like pen pals to respond to the introduction email within 5 days. Give your pen pal a 2-week grace period if things get busy, but feel free to reach out to make sure everything is ok!

Q: What should I do if my pen pal stops responding?

A: Fill out the form in the monthly newsletter, and we will reach out to your pen pal and assign you a new one if need be.

Q: What topics are not okay to discuss? What happens if one gets brought up?

A: Topics that are not allowed are anything that does not abide with our code of conduct (zero tolerance policies) listed above. If such a topic gets brought up, please inform your pen pal that the topic is inappropriate and get in contact with the program managers at woapals@gmail.com

Q: My pen pal brought up a topic that I'm not comfortable talking about. What do I do?

A: Politely communicate this to your pen pal, and if they repeatedly bring it up, please reach out to the program managers at woapals@gmail.com

Q: My pen pal wants to connect with me on social media. Is this allowed?

A: We ask that program members refrain from connecting with each other on social media unless it's a professional account that you would be okay with employers seeing.

Q: Help! My pen pal made/is making inappropriate comments (flirting/harassment). What should I do?

A: Immediately get in contact with the WoAA Pals! program managers at woapals@gmail.com. This is not at all tolerated, and your pen pal will be removed from the program.

Q: Help! My pen pal confided something that I feel warrants outside intervention! (such as suicide or abuse)

A: Please get in contact with the program managers at woapals@gmail.com immediately so that we can report it according to our program guidelines. We will also help you follow the school's guidelines as well.