

Dignity & Respect Policy



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1. Equality statement

Equality, freedom and treating all persons with dignity and respect are fundamental human rights. The ICMT is committed to making these central in all its work.

A diverse student body and workforce benefit the ICMT's role as a high-quality education and employment provider in a modern and ever-changing society. The ICMT is firmly committed to the promotion of equality and will not unlawfully discriminate or tolerate discrimination (direct or indirect, harassment or victimisation) on the grounds of age, disability, ethnicity (including race, colour, caste and nationality), gender, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This includes discrimination by association or due to perception.

The ICMT is committed to promoting equality and diversity in applying its policies and procedures, including this one.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This Policy demonstrates the overriding commitment of the ICMT to ensuring dignity and respect. It is designed to support a staff member or student at a time of personal distress or concern and to enable them to make an informed decision on their next course of action.
- 2.2 The Policy covers behaviours which result in staff and students feeling they are not being treated with dignity and respect, including bullying and harassment.
- 2.3 The Policy applies to all staff and students at the ICMT.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The ICMT is committed to providing an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect, a place free from bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation and where no such actions are tolerated. It wishes to promote an environment where individuals have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

3.2 The ICMT recognises the liability that both the institution and individuals may face under criminal and civil law should acts and omissions which contravene legislation be left unchecked. The most relevant pieces of legislation are:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Equality Act 2010, which includes the public sector's duty to foster good relations.

Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, it is an offence to pursue a course of conduct that amounts to harassment of another person. Staff and students could therefore be personally liable in law if they harass anyone at the ICMT.

3.3 Freedom of expression within the law is central to the concept of the ICMT. To this end, the ICMT seeks to foster a culture which permits freedom of thought and expression within a framework of mutual respect.

3.4 The Policy and procedures set out below have been adopted to support the commitments and requirements set out above.

4. Responsibilities of staff and students

4.1 All employees and students must familiarise themselves with the policy and abide by its content.

4.2 Individuals have a personal responsibility not to be offensive to colleagues or to condone harassment by others. Harassment is misconduct, and any formal action necessary will be taken under the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure as stated previously.

5. General statement of policy

The ICMT recognises that its employees and students have a right to be treated (and have an obligation to treat others) with dignity and respect so that the institution is free from any form of harassment or bullying. The existence of any form of harassment can create a threatening and intimidating environment with adverse consequences for job and academic performance but, more importantly, for general health and wellbeing. This is completely

unacceptable and potentially unlawful, and actionable. The ICMT will therefore adopt a zero-tolerance approach to such action when proven.

The ICMT is determined to eradicate any such behaviour and will implement a series of measures against any employee or student found guilty of such behaviour falling within the scope of this Policy. However, making a formal complaint (grievance) falls outside of the remit of this Policy, and staff and students should refer to the appropriate related procedures outlined in Section 11 should they wish to pursue more formal action.

References to harassment and bullying in the context of this Policy include unwanted acts perpetrated through direct physical or verbal interaction, written communications or by electronic means (e.g. sending abusive emails or posting derogatory comments on 'social networking' websites such as Facebook, which are examples of behaviour termed as 'cyber-bullying'). It should be noted that inappropriate use of the ICMT's IT systems may constitute a breach of this Policy and the IT Acceptable Use Policy.

6. Unacceptable behaviour

6.1 Harassment

In the Equality Act 2010, harassment is identified as unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of:

Either

- Violating an individual's dignity

Or

- Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

These behaviours may evidence discrimination on the grounds of:

- a) Age or youth.
- b) Disability, impairment or long-term medical condition.
- c) Marital status.
- d) Nationality.
- e) Pregnancy and maternity.

- f) Race, ethnicity or colour.
- g) Real or suspected status with regards to AIDS/HIV.
- h) Religion or belief (including none).
- i) Sex or gender reassignment.
- j) Sexual orientation.
- k) Subordinate or contract status.
- l) Trans gender.
- m) Victimisation following an allegation of harassment

6.2 The ICMT regards the following as specific, but not exhaustive, examples of behaviour it deems contrary to its Dignity and Respect Policy:

- a) Physical contact, ranging from unnecessary and unwelcome touching to serious assault.
- b) Intimidating behaviour, either physical or non-physical.
- c) Verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander, letters, telephone, texts or email.
- d) Visual display of offensive material.
- e) Isolating an individual or not co-operating with others in work or group assignments.
- f) Pressure/coercion into participating in or relinquishing membership of political/religious groups.
- g) Intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking.
- h) Pressure to hide or disclose information relating to personal circumstances, for example, sexual orientation or disability.
- i) Abuse or misuse of power or authority which causes the recipient to feel undermined, humiliated, denigrated, embarrassed or injured.

7. Procedure for seeking support and resolution

7.1 If possible, the complainant should make the harasser aware that they find the behaviour or action inappropriate or unacceptable. Making the person aware of their actions may prevent any further occurrences.

7.2 Any member of staff who feels they have been subject to or witnessed behaviour deemed as inappropriate under this policy should contact their line manager. If the staff member feels uncomfortable speaking with their line manager, they should contact another senior member of staff.

- 7.3 Any student may contact any member of staff they feel comfortable speaking with.
- 7.4 If it has not been possible to resolve the matter informally (for example, where there has been a recurrence of behaviour), staff may invoke the grievance procedure. Students may make a complaint using the Student Complaints Procedure.

