

Policy on raising concerns of bullying, harassment, victimisation, discrimination or irregular/illegal actions

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

1.1 As stated in the **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Section 7.1)**, IBS takes very seriously incidents of bullying, harassment (sexual or other), abuse (sexual or other), intimidation, victimisation, discrimination or any other irregularities or illegal actions. This policy identifies IBS's position on these matters, the steps that IBS takes to protect, train and educate the school community on such matters and provides a framework for students and staff to understand the routes in which all parties can raise a concern, a report or a complaint about any matter that is impacting or has impacted them, and the steps in which a resolution can be sought.

1.2 Scope

This policy covers work and study-related activities including extra-curricular activities and events in all IBS buildings and off site, including abroad and online.

1.3 Training, Promotion and Awareness

To enable the fairness and effectiveness of this policy, IBS will ensure that its entire community is aware of the institutional definitions of the terms bullying, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and irregular/illegal actions (See Annex 1), through the means that it has available such as Moodle, guides, posters and also specific training where necessary.

New students and new staff and faculty will be made aware of this policy and the relevant definitions here and through their respective orientation and probationary periods.

Contractors and Guests will be directed to this policy and other aids as and when required.

1.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Staff, faculty, students and all other parties who either raise a concern, a report or a complaint about bullying, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and irregular/illegal actions, have the right to do so confidentially and without fear of victimisation. All staff involved in the processing of or a notification of such concerns, reports or complaints shall treat all information relating to the notification and the notifier / notifiers (complainant/complainants) as confidential and in accordance with the applicable legislation. This shall also include ensuring the required protection of the whistleblower's personal data and the conditions set out in the legal provisions on whistleblowing.

Confidentiality will normally be observed for both the person (or group) raising the issue and any person (or people) subject to the issue. In such contexts, confidentiality relates to the process and its outcomes, details of the case and related investigative inquiries. Only those who need to know details of the case will have access to information as legally appropriate, including the reporting and responding parties.

During any formal procedure (complaint), evidence or statements provided by the any parties involved (notifier/notifiers, subject/subjects and any witnesses) may form part of the documentation, which is to be shared, as appropriate, for the purposes of completing that formal procedure. Such information may also be used at a disciplinary hearing or employment tribunal and in the latter case could therefore become public.

In the case of anonymous concerns, reports or complaints being raised, the extent to which a procedure can progress may be limited.

In some circumstances, where there is a duty of care, IBS may disclose relevant information relating to a concern, report or complaint, including where it is required by law or about

something that could seriously affect the wellbeing of an individual or group, even if the person from whom they learned this information or who this information is about does not want it to be shared. IBS will make such decisions on a case-by-case basis and by balance of its obligations and recognition of individuals' rights in each particular case.

Any breaches of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the appropriate procedure or regulation.

1.5 **Untrue/False Allegations**

Allegations made in good faith believed to be true will be recognised and fully and fairly investigated even if they turn out to have been inaccurate. Any allegations which are proven to have been made frivolously or maliciously may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Victimisation and retaliation as a result of action being taken under this Policy is unacceptable and may also lead to disciplinary action.

2. **Applicable Procedures**

Any IBS student or member of staff who feels that they have been subjected to, or witnessed behaviour which constitutes physical, verbal or online bullying, harassment, intimidation or discrimination in regard to their age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation or physical appearance, or irregular/illegal actions has the right to make a complaint / raise a concern. Such a complaint or concern will be investigated as fairly, thoroughly and promptly as possible in accordance with the relevant procedure stated in the section below:

Complaint	Person against whom complaint / concern/report is made	Complaint / concern/report should be reported to	Applicable procedures / regulations	Applicable procedure in the case of a complaint / concern by an underage student or vulnerable adult	Investigating officer
Student	Student	Any member of the Wellbeing Team	Complaints Procedure / Student Disciplinary Procedure	Safeguarding Concern Procedure	Student Support Manager or Nominee
Student	Member of staff / contractor / visitor	Any member of the Wellbeing Team	Complaints Procedure Code of Ethics Disciplinary Procedures For IBS Employees	Safeguarding Concern Procedure	Student Support Manager & Chief HR Officer or Nominees
Member of staff / contractor / visitor	Student	Chief HR Officer	Student Disciplinary Procedure	-	Student Support Manager or Nominee
Member of staff / contractor / visitor	Member of staff / contractor / visitor	Chief HR Officer	Code of Ethics / Disciplinary Procedures For IBS Employees	-	Chief HR Officer or Nominee

Where the relevant procedure listed above provides for an informal resolution stage, individuals are encouraged to consider such a route in the first instance and if appropriate to the

circumstances. For further guidance about the routes for raising and resolving issues and concerns, please see Annex 2.

IBS reserves the right to, and will where necessary, initiate the relevant procedure irrespective of whether a concern, a report or complaint is made or not made by an individual or group of people.

3. Procedural Stages

Stage 1: Informal Resolution with parties concerned

Stage 2: Complaint for formal investigation and a Formal Complaint Decision by the Investigating Officer or their nominee

Stage 3: Appeal against the Formal Complaint Decision to the Rector

At the end of Stage 3, once IBS procedures have been completed, a Completion of Investigation letter will be issued which summarises the outcome of the complaint. Students may also request a Completion of Investigation letter at the end of Stage 2 if they choose not to escalate the matter to Stage 3.

For a detailed description of the procedural stages please refer to the Complaints Procedures.

4. Criminal Offences

4.1 Some bullying and harassment (physical, verbal or online) or other irregular/illegal actions constitute unlawful behaviour, including those related to a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, gender race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marriage/civil partnership, and may amount to other criminal offences such as those which fall under the Act on Criminal Law (Act C of 2012).

4.2 In cases of alleged assault or behaviour that is unlawful or considered a criminal offence, IBS will report them to the police.

This Policy was adopted by the Senate in virtue of the resolution No. 13/2024 at the session held on 28 October 2024.

Annex 1: Glossary of Terms

Abuse

Abuse can take many forms and includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional/psychological (including online) abuse including cyber-bullying
- Financial/Material abuse
- Neglect/acts of omission
- Discrimination
- Domestic Abuse
- Modern slavery
- Radicalisation

Bullying/Cyberbullying

Bullying (and cyberbullying) is defined as any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, directed toward a person that is intended to cause or that a reasonable person would know is likely to cause, and that actually causes, physical harm or substantial emotional distress and may thereby adversely affect the ability of another person to participate in or benefit from the IBS' educational programmes or activities. Bullying can be carried out and received both individually and collectively.

Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person or persons are treated less favourably (intentionally or unintentionally) on the grounds of one of their characteristics including and not limited to age, disability gender reassignment, race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religious belief etc. Indirect discrimination is when policies or practices have an adverse impact on certain groups of people more than on others, in a way that cannot be justified. Discrimination can be carried out and received both individually, collectively and by the institution itself.

Extremism

Extremism is active behaviour whereby people who not only hold extremist¹ views actively target those who are vulnerable, including the young, by seeking to sow division between communities, and persuade others that groups of people belonging to a different gender/race/culture/religion/ethnicity are inferior.

Harassment

Harassment constitutes any behaviour that is unwelcome, unwanted and which may create the effect (intentional or unintentional) of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment which interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment or induces stress, anxiety, fear or sickness on the part of the harassed person. Harassment may be linked with discrimination and can be carried out and received both individually and collectively.

Peer Pressure and Peer Influence

Peer Pressure is the persuading, encouraging, or imploring of another person (or group) of the same age (peer group) to engage in certain types of behaviour or the preventing of doing something else, whether an individual wants to do it or not. This can pressure be direct, indirect, spoken or unspoken, negative and positive. Peer Pressure can be carried out and received both individually and collectively. Peer influence is the changing of ones' behaviour to meet the perceived expectations of others in order to be accepted or fit in.

¹As defined in "Policy to Prevent Radicalisation and Extremism: Code of Practice to Support Students and Staff"

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is understood as “a process of developing extremist ideologies and beliefs”

Significant Harm

Significant harm refers to the threshold that both justifies referral to the appropriate external agency/body and to the level of concern for a member of staff to flag an internal matter of concern. The relevant factors in deciding whether harm is significant include the severity of ill-treatment, the degree and extent of harm or danger and the duration and frequency of abuse and/or neglect.

Victimisation

Victimisation is defined as treating a person less favourably than another on grounds including and not limited to age, disability, gender (reassignment), race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, religious belief etc. or because they have complained about discrimination or harassment or helped a person to do so. Victimisation may take place face to face, by writing or in written or electronic communications. Victimisation can be carried out and received both individually, collectively and by the institution itself.

Whistleblower / Whistleblowing

A whistleblower is defined as a person who reveals an activity which is illegal, irregular, or immoral by a member of a community or organisation. Whistleblowing is defined as the act of reporting suspicion of such misconduct including alleged irregular, illegal, or immoral activities, or reporting the failure to act by an organization in regards those activities.

Annex 2: Routes for Raising Issues

For Students

Status	Example	What Student Can/May Expect
A Concern	Student(s) tells a member of faculty or staff member about something but does not provide details that allow an investigation to be conducted.	<p>Signposting to this policy, Complaints Procedures, Moodle guides.</p> <p>Referral to IBS Wellbeing</p> <p>Signposting to external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant</p>
A Report	Student(s) send IBS staff a post made on Instagram by another IBS student but do not state what action they are expecting.	<p>Signposting to this policy, Complaints Procedures, Moodle guides and further appropriate guidance</p> <p>Referral to IBS Wellbeing</p> <p>Liaison on academic or practical adjustments</p> <p>IBS initiates its own investigation (e.g. Student Disciplinary Procedure)</p> <p>IBS contacts external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant</p>
A Complaint	Student(s) submit an account of an incident (forward a post on Instagram) and confirm that they want IBS to take protective action and investigate.	<p>Initiation of the Student Complaints procedure and signposting to relevant support if available.</p> <p>IBS considers immediate protective/temporary actions.</p> <p>IBS contacts external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant</p>

For Faculty and Staff

Status	Example	What Faculty or Staff Can/May Expect
A Concern	A member of staff tells another colleague about an alleged incident of inappropriate behaviour but does not provide details that allow an investigation to be conducted.	<p>Signposting to this policy, Moodle or Intranet guides and further appropriate guidance</p> <p>Referral to Line Manager (if appropriate)</p> <p>Signposting to external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant</p>
A Report	A member of staff reports to IBS with details of the incident but does not state what action they are expecting.	<p>Signposting to this policy, Moodle or Intranet guides and/or further appropriate guidance</p> <p>Liaison on any practical adjustments to make the colleague feel as safe and as supported as possible</p> <p>IBS initiates its own investigation (e.g. Code of Ethics)</p> <p>IBS contacts external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant</p>
A Complaint	A member of staff submits a written account of the Incident (email to Line Manager or Chief HR Officer) and confirms that they want IBS to investigate	<p>Initiation of the relevant procedure and signposting to relevant support if available</p> <p>IBS considers immediate protective/temporary actions.</p> <p>IBS contacts external agencies (e.g. Police) if relevant.</p>