

Code of Ethics for Course Participants

[Version 2.2]

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1. Preamble

1.1 This Code of Ethics is founded upon the IfE's Mission which states:

'The Institute for Education promotes high quality education for educators and learners at all levels, and by collaborating with stakeholders, it fosters learning communities of the highest standard while instilling education with equity and social justice'.

1.2 In pursuing this mission, course participants of the Institute for Education (IfE) are guided by a shared commitment to behaviour and practices that conform to the highest ethical standards. The IfE has developed this Code of Ethics to record the ways in which all IfE stakeholders, through their personal relationships, activities and conduct, create and sustain a community that exemplifies the IfE's values.

2. Introduction

2.1 The IfE, as an educational institution and learning community, is based upon certain core values, including responsible citizenship, integrity, honour, accountability, mutual respect, leadership and service. These and other core values are fundamental to the IfE's community and the ethical standards of the IfE's and its members. These values form the basis of this Code of Ethics. It is the responsibility of each individual to protect and support the IfE, its community members and its mission as a learning community.

2.2 Ethics and integrity are the responsibility of each individual. Therefore, every course participant is responsible for ethical conduct consistent with this Code and IfE's [policies and procedures](#). The IfE's Code of Ethics is a statement of our belief in ethical, legal and professional behaviour in all dealings within and outside of the IfE.

2.3 The Code includes references to relevant IfE policies and procedures. These references are not exhaustive and may be updated from time to time. The Code is intended neither to increase nor reduce the scope or coverage of any IfE policy.

3. Individual accountability and responsibility

3.1 Members of the IfE community are expected to exercise responsibility appropriate to their position and delegated authority. They are responsible to the IfE's community for their actions and their decision not to act. Each individual is expected to act in accordance with this Code of Ethics in order to best serve the interests of the IfE.

3.2 Course participants should report violations of this Code to the respective course co-ordinator. Violations of the Code of Ethics may result in termination from the IfE or course participants' disciplinary action.

3.3 No course participant shall retaliate, in any manner, against an individual who reports a perceived conflict of interest matter pursuant to this policy. A course participant who makes such a report in bad faith shall be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Respect for the rights and dignity of others

4.1 The IfE is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and facilitation of an environment that fosters this goal. Central to that institutional commitment is the principle of treating others civilly and professionally. The IfE values the safety, privacy, property, personal rights and dignity of others. It endeavours to promote a community free from illegal or inappropriate conduct, including threats, violence, harassment, intimidation, coercion, and discrimination.

4.2 Throughout the course of their studies all IfE's course participants are requested to respect each other and act in accordance with the; [Course Participants' Conduct Policy and Procedures](#), [Course Participants' Grievance Policy and Procedures](#) and [Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures](#).

5. Conflicts of interest

5.1 All course participants have an obligation to avoid activities or situations which may result in a conflict of interest.

5.2 All course participants have an obligation to examine any situation in which they may have a conflict of interest and take steps to resolve the conflict. Course participants should consult with their respective course co-ordinator. Upon determination that a conflict of interest exists, appropriate action will be taken. No action will be taken without the opportunity for the involved stakeholders to be heard with regard to whether a conflict of interest exists and what action, if any, should be taken.

5.3 The potential for a conflict of interest extends across a wide range of activities in the IfE. Conflicts of interest which must be avoided by course participants include, but are not limited to:

- Personal relationships
- Outside activities
- Any directorship, partnership, agency or any shareholding;
- any interest in any activity or business in which or with which the IfE is engaged;
- Any interest in goods or services recommended or supplied to the IfE

6. Personal and professional behaviour of course participants

6.1 Course participants shall ensure that their attitude and behaviour is professional and which in the best of their ability does not discredit one's position or which reflects adversely on their profession or the reputation of the IfE. Course participants shall:

- Act with a professional attitude and behaviour at all times;
- Maintain a level of professionalism towards all stakeholders including and not limited to students, lecturers, administrative staff, management and contributors;
- Behave in an exemplary manner to preserve their position as role models;
- Refrain from taking advantage of professional relationships with stakeholders including and not limited to students, lecturers, administrative staff, management and contributors, for one's own personal benefit;
- Maintain professional boundaries both in terms of physical contact, inappropriate communication through any form of media including social media;
- Represent themselves, the IfE, and their professional position with honesty and integrity.

7. Honesty, integrity and good faith

7.1 Honesty, integrity and good faith are fundamental to ethical behaviour and course participants are required to conform to these ethical values in all their activities and interactions with fellow course participants and other stakeholders.

8. Ethical conduct in course participants' education and research

8.1 The IfE is committed to the highest standards in education and research, and to conducting these activities with integrity, objectivity and fairness and in compliance with all applicable laws.

8.2 It is expected that employees will be open and transparent in their relationship with course participants and conform to best safeguarding practice when engaged in educational activities.

- 8.3 It is also expected that course participants will pursue their research with rigour and intellectual honesty; refrain from research misconduct; protect the welfare of human and animal research subjects and obtain appropriate approval and consents for studies involving such subjects; be accountable for research, consultancy and other like funds; and comply with grant and contract requirements and IfE [policies and procedures](#) particularly the [Research Ethics Policy and Procedures](#).

9. Health and safety

- 9.1 The IfE is committed to protecting the health and safety of its course participants and visitors and ensuring the security of the IfE premises and facilities.
- 9.2 Course participants and visitors must observe, and facilitate the adherence to the relevant law, regulations, standards and policies and the observance of sound practices relating to matters of health and safety, including professional development rooms and workplace safety, and the operation of IfE facilities and equipment. Individuals should report promptly any threat or risk to health or safety, whether it be their own or others', and should take reasonable steps to promote physical security.

10. Environmental sustainability and appropriate use of IfE resources

- 10.1 The IfE seeks to minimise its environmental impact and to utilise resources in an efficient and sustainable manner and is committed to establishing a culture where environmental sustainability is constantly improved.
- 10.2 The IfE encourages environmental awareness among its stakeholders in order to ensure that everyone has a role in minimising adverse effects on the environment.

11. Information privacy, confidentiality and security

- 11.1 Personal data that is processed by the IfE in accordance to the [General Data Protection Regulation](#) (GDPR), the [Data Protection Act](#) (Chapter 586 of the Laws of Malta), legal notices emanating under this Act and the IfE [Data Protection Policy](#). This applies to data that is held in both manual and electronic formats. Personal data refers to information

that directly or indirectly identifies a natural person through physical, physiological, mental, economic, cultural or social factors. Sensitive personal data is that personal data that reveals race/ ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, membership of a trade union, health or sex life.

12. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations

- 12.1 Higher education institutions are subject to many of the same laws and regulations as other businesses. There are also additional requirements unique to higher education. All course participants are expected to become familiar with the laws and regulations.
- 12.2 A number but not all legal requirements are detailed in the IfE [policies and procedures](#). Failure to comply may have serious adverse consequences both for individuals and for the IfE in terms of reputation, finances, and the health and safety of the IfE's community. The IfE's business is to be conducted in conformance with legal requirements. Course participants who have queries regarding the interpretation of legal requirements should contact the senior management team of the IfE.

13. Compliance with the IfE's policies and procedures

- 13.1 The IfE [policies and procedures](#) are designed to inform course participants, amongst others, about responsibilities, to set minimum standards, and to give the IfE's community notice of expectations.
- 13.2 Members of the IfE community are expected to transact all IfE business in compliance with [policies and procedures](#) and have an obligation to become familiar with those that affect their areas of responsibilities. Course participants are expected to seek clarification from the Head Quality Assurance on a policy or procedure that they find to be unclear, outdated, or in conflict with the mission of the IfE.

14. Sanctions

- 14.1 Sanctions may be applied in line with the [Course Participants' Conduct Policy and Procedures](#) if course participants are involved in breaches of this Code of Ethics. The sanctions applied shall depend on the seriousness and nature of the breaches and may entail formal disciplinary and, or criminal action as applicable. Whenever appropriate, counselling by a member of senior staff may also be given.

15. Relevant documents

- [Course Participants' Conduct Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Course Participants' Grievance Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Data Protection Act](#) (CAP 586)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Disability Act](#) (CAP. 413)
- [Equality Act](#) (CAP. 456)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) \(EU\) 2016/679](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#) of the IfE
- [Policy for Quality Assurance and Enhancement](#)
- [Research Ethics Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures.](#)

16. Version history

Originator	Version	Date	Changes Done
QA Department	1.0	29/05/2017	Initial Release
HR Department	1.1	21/04/2020	Included Social Media Article
QA Department	1.2	12/01/2021	Updated Mission Statement
QA Department	1.3	26/01/2021	Updated Personal and Professional Behaviour of employees and persons on a contract for service
Admissions Department	1.4	02/02/2022	Included Personal and professional behaviour of course participants
Admissions Department	2.0	02/03/2022	<p>Delineation of Code of Ethics relevant to Course Participants from Code of Ethics for IfE Staff.</p> <p>Removal of articles which specifically related to members of staff or persons on a contract for service, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acceptance of gifts or benefits</i> • <i>Personal and professional behaviour of employees and persons on a contract for/ of service</i> • <i>Social Media</i> • <i>Protection and proper use of IfE assets</i> • <i>Record keeping and reporting</i> • <i>Internal quality assurance</i> • <i>Political participation and comment of employees</i> <p>Introduced Article 4.2 Updated relevant documents articles</p>

QA Dept.	2.1	24/04/2024	Updated links
QA Dept.	2.2	25/01/2025	Updated in line with re-branding guidelines