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Introduction

The International Health Research Institute ('we, our, us, IHRI, the Institute') values fairness and promotes respect, integrity, professionalism, accountability and equality of opportunity. Our Staff Code of Conduct exemplifies these values and guides staff in recognising and practising them to shape our culture.

PURPOSE

The Staff Code of Conduct articulates and supports the expectation of IHRI that all staff will adhere to the highest standards in their conduct and behaviour concerning their work practices and the Institute.

All Institute staff are expected to perform their work to the minimum standards and obligations outlined in this code and carry out their duties in an ethical, efficient, and fair manner.

OBJECTIVES

Staff are expected to conform their personal and professional behaviour to the standards reasonably expected of persons in such positions. This includes a commitment to:

- Professional standards and conduct in teaching, research, administration, and community involvement
- Ethical principles and values are defined in the Institute's statements of vision, mission, and values.
- The promotion of staff and student rights within the Institute.
- Promotion of the Institute's interests and enhancing its reputation.
- Ensuring that the academic needs of students are met, and
- Creating an environment that supports success through learning and knowledge.

The Code

All IHRI staff are required to comply with relevant Maltese and European legislation, as well as the Institute's policies and procedures.



Fairness

We value fairness, characterised by openness and impartiality, in the conduct of our study and work, as well as in decision-making and in supporting and attracting staff and students. Fairness is exercised in compliance with legislation and regulations and demonstrated through mutual respect, constructive interpersonal relationships, and honest communication.

We will act with fairness in all our dealings, through, for example:

- Transparency and natural justice in processes that affect others.
- Impartiality in decision-making, including concerning staff attraction and recruitment.
- Communicate the rationale to relevant staff, students, clients, or partners.
- Sharing and providing information that is accurate, complete, and timely.
- Equitable treatment of others in our dealings with staff, students, clients, and partners at all levels.
- Supporting and accommodating the needs of others who may be living with a disability or other disadvantage and
- Committing to a workplace and study environment free from bullying and harassment.

Respect

We value respectful and polite conduct. We demonstrate consideration and respect for the rights, privacy, and feelings of others, as well as the differences across cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and abilities.

We will act with respect for others through, for example:

- Courtesy in all communication between staff, students, clients, and partners – in person, in writing or through electronic or social media.
- Consideration and inclusion of the views of others.
- Valuing differences among our staff, students, clients, and partners.
- Observance and promotion of the rights of staff and students.
- Responsiveness and timeliness in dealing with the requests and requirements of others engaged in study, teaching, research, and administration.
- Exercising care and probity in using IHRI property and resources, including equipment, financial resources, trademarks, copyrights, and other property.
- Personal presentation that is appropriate and respectful of the expectations of others.
- Maintaining physical and emotional distance between staff and students.
- Avoiding intimate personal relationships with students when engaging in an academic manner (such as teaching or supervision) and
- Respecting personal and professional privacy in our conversations.

Integrity and Professionalism

We value integrity and professionalism in all our activities, including academic, consultancy, and management functions. Professionalism is characterised by competency, skill, quality service delivery, and the expectation that staff will conduct their duties responsibly and conscientiously.

We will promote integrity and professionalism through



- Ethical and professional conduct consistent with our policies and the requirements of accreditation agencies.
- Modelling academic integrity and ethical practice in learning, teaching, and research.
- Trust is modelled by responsibility, consistency, and confidentiality.
- Honest and open communication and actions, ensuring information is conveyed promptly.
- Mindfulness of the reputation of the Institute when commenting publicly in both formal and informal settings.
- Respect for the confidentiality of information held by the Institute.
- Commitment to ensuring that all actions are free from conflict of interest and disclosing interests where conflict may arise or reasonably be perceived by others.
- Full-time staff seeking approval to engage in outside employment or volunteer activities from the appropriate approving authority.
- Should an intimate personal relationship develop between a staff member and a student, this constitutes a conflict of interest for the relevant senior manager.
- Avoiding exploitative, coercive, unnecessary, and unwelcome behaviour toward others, especially students and others with whom you are academically engaged; and
- Awareness of relevant legislation and adherence to IHRI policies and procedures.

Accountability

We value accountability and take responsibility for our actions within the scope of our work, study, and community engagement. This includes an obligation to report, explain, and answer for the consequences of our actions.

We will ensure that accountability is practised by:

- Maintaining the high standards and reputation of IHRI
- Acting with care and diligence and being accountable for official conduct and decisions.
- Acknowledging and taking responsibility for our actions.
- Using current and accurate information and evidence.
- Seeking to attain the highest possible standards in performing our duties and exercising our responsibilities.
- Adhering to codes of conduct and ethics of professional associations where applicable.
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge in our work or scholarship and the professional, legal, and ethical standards relevant to our areas of expertise.
- Ensuring that intellectual freedom is exercised through the responsible and honest search for knowledge and its dissemination and
- Comply with health and safety principles at work and study, and report health and safety risks and incidents through appropriate channels.

Equality of Opportunity

We value equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. We recognise and support people from all ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds.

We will ensure that equality of opportunity is achieved through the following:

- Inclusiveness and respect for differences between people.
- Actively promoting the value of diversity.



- Transparent decision-making in the recruitment and retention of staff and the attraction and retention of students.
- Awareness and respect for all cultural backgrounds through developing cultural competence and acknowledgement of diversity across IHRI and
- Commitment to a workplace and study environment free from discrimination based on race, age, gender, marital status, religious belief, political affiliation, disability, or sexual preference.

Values-based leadership

We value high standards of leadership. Senior Staff will adhere to the highest standards of propriety and truthfulness in scholarship, research, and professional practice, serving as leaders and role models for other staff, students, and the wider community.

We are committed to values-based leadership through:

- Leading and modelling the standards and reputation of IHRI through exemplary personal conduct.
- Discharging our responsibilities with integrity, following the highest standards of professional practice, aligned with the Institute's policies and procedures.
- Managing our people through appropriate use of authority in dealings with staff, students, clients, and partners at all levels and
- Ensure compliance with legislation and regulations is constantly observed and undertaken in the spirit of the law.

Breach of Code of Conduct

A substantiated breach of any part of this code of conduct will result in disciplinary action. The appropriate procedure will depend on the severity of the breach.

A staff member may appeal any disciplinary procedure or outcome instituted under this procedure.