

Policy on Social Hygiene

and the Prevention and Protection of the IBS community from Harmful Odorants

1. Introduction

- 1.1** IBS is committed to promoting, protecting, raising awareness of, and ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all its students, faculty, staff, guests, and contractors in line with its legal obligations for maintaining a healthy and safe environment in the institution (Act XCIII of 1993 on “occupational safety and health in Hungary” / “Health and Safety at Work Act” in Austria BGBl. No. 450/1994).

2. Policy Context

- 2.1** This specific policy is a component of IBS health, safety and wellbeing practices which focuses on harmful odorants and the hygienic steps adopted by IBS in this regard. As a result, this policy is centred on the following principles:
- a) improving awareness about the impact of various harmful odorants (defined below), resulting from poor hygiene or any other source, on the health, wellbeing, and productivity of members of the IBS community.
 - b) visibly promoting the ways in which IBS and its community members can ensure both institutional and social hygiene (defined below) to prevent the negative effects of odorants on the ability of any member or members of the IBS community to stay, work and study on campus to the best of their ability.
 - c) protecting all spaces on campus from harmful odorants.
 - d) ensuring that the presence of any harmful odorants is attentively, promptly, and where necessary sensitively addressed.

3. Legal Parameters

- 3.1** IBS strives to meet and exceed both best practices and legislation mandated by the states of Hungary and Austria (stated in 1.1) in regards health and safety practices.

4. Policy Scope:

- 4.1** This policy applies to the following members of the IBS community:
- All contracted members of faculty and staff
 - All students, including visiting students
 - All guests/visitors to IBS (parents, relatives, guest speakers etc.)
 - All contractors working at IBS

5. Key Definitions:

5.1 Institutional Hygiene

IBS defines Institutional hygiene as the conditions and practices (both preventative and corrective) that IBS undertakes as an institution to maintain health and wellbeing, and to prevent disease or discomfort in all its spaces of work, study and community activities - primarily through maintaining a high level of cleanliness / air quality and in the promotion of both personal hygiene and social hygiene.

5.2 Social Hygiene

IBS defines social hygiene as both the practices taken by individuals (staff, students, faculty) to maintain a conscious level of personal hygiene prior to and while on campus **and** the steps and responsibilities individuals must take to support the overall hygiene of the institution when on campus. **See below Annex 1: Guidelines on Hygienic Practices**

6. Odorants

6.1 Odorants are defined as the following:

- **Human Occupant Odours** (body odour)
- **Scents** (air fresheners, deodorants, and perfumes)
- **Second-hand smoke**
- **Bio-odorants** (such as mould or fungi) / **volatile building materials**

All the above can have a negative impact on the health, wellbeing, productivity, and sense of comfort of those affected.

6.2 Human Occupant Odours (body odour)

Exposure to poor body odour can have an adverse effect on a person's mood, wellbeing, comfort, and ability to concentrate to the point of rendering them unable to work, study or take assessments. Poor body odour can be caused by poor personal hygiene or can be a symptom of an underlying health condition. In all cases however, it is not an individual matter, as the odour can have an effect on others. Therefore, IBS expects from its community members voluntary cooperation towards creating an environment free of poor body odour based on hygiene practices outlined in Appendix 1 and in supporting materials displayed or handed out on campus.

6.3 Scents

Exposure to scents (such as deodorants, colognes, aftershaves, fragrances, perfumes, lotions, soaps, cosmetics, air freshers and deodorizers) which contain chemicals, can have an adverse effect (from mild to severe) on people with health issues such as asthma, allergies, and other respiratory conditions.

IBS is not a scent-free institution and does not enforce scent-free practices. Whilst it is a personal choice to wear fragrances, IBS expects acknowledgement that others may be impacted adversely by scented products, and counts on the voluntary cooperation of community members, guests, and contractors towards securing a scent-reduced environment.

6.3 Second-hand smoke

Smoking is forbidden in all IBS buildings and is only allowed at clearly marked designated spots outside. Although this is the case, passers-by may still be exposed to second-hand smoke, which

can, in severe cases, cause coronary heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer even in adults who do not smoke. Therefore, IBS expects, in addition to full compliance with on-campus smoking regulations, acknowledgement that others may be impacted adversely even by second-hand smoke, and voluntary cooperation by all members of the IBS community as well as guests and contractors towards an environment free of second-hand smoke.

6.4 Bio-odorants / volatile building materials

Exposure to mould, other bio-odorants or volatile building materials can adversely affect people's health with or without health conditions. In line with its commitment to providing a healthy and safe environment as well as its legal obligations stated in 1.1, IBS undertakes regular maintenance in its buildings to detect and remove all hazardous materials.

7. Reporting the presence of harmful or offensive odorants on campus

Reporting the presence of some negative odorants on campus are easier than others. Nevertheless, IBS will address all such matters appropriately and where necessary sensitively

7.1 Reporting bio-odorants / volatile building materials

If the presence of bio-odorants such as mould or volatile building material is detected, it must be reported as soon as possible to IBS maintenance staff in Budapest and to the Campus Manager in Vienna. In all such instances IBS will act in line with the health and safety guidelines laid out by the governments of Hungary and Austria.

7.2 Reporting Human Occupant Odours / Scent Related Issues / Second-hand Smoke

The reporting of offensive body odour and scents can be an extremely sensitive and delicate matter. The processes below lay out how they can be reported in a professional and tactful manner.

7.2.1 Process for Faculty and Staff

Any member of faculty or staff adversely impacted by any of the above **by a fellow member of faculty or staff** can, if they feel comfortable doing so, discuss their issues directly with the other party in the first instance to seek a resolution. **See Annex 2: Guidance on how to have a conversation about negative odorants.** If they do not feel comfortable, (or if they do not reach a resolution), then they can report the matter to their Head of Centre or the Chief of Administration.

Any member of faculty or staff adversely impacted by any of the above **by a student or group of students** can, if they feel comfortable doing so, discuss their issues directly with the student or students. If they do not feel comfortable (or if they do not reach a resolution), then they can report the matter to the IBS Wellbeing Team.

7.2.2 Process for Students

Any student or group of students adversely impacted by any of the above by a fellow student or group of students can, if they feel comfortable doing so, discuss their issues directly with the other party or parties involved. If they do not feel comfortable (or if they do not reach a resolution), then they can confidentially discuss the matter with the IBS Wellbeing Team or with a subject tutor who must inform Wellbeing.

Any student or group of students adversely impacted by any of the above by a member of staff or faculty must then report the matter to Wellbeing directly who must inform either the Chief of Administration or the appropriate Head of Centre.

7.2.3 Guests/Contractors

Any guests or contractors adversely impacted by any of the above are advised to report the matter to their IBS liaison or contact.

8. Handling of reported Human Occupant Odours / Scent Related Issues / Second-hand smoke

The handling of reported matters is a sensitive issue. Nevertheless, IBS must ensure that the health, safety, and wellbeing of the whole community is always given priority.

8.1 Faculty and Staff

Once a matter of body odour/scent issue or second-hand smoke has been reported involving a member of faculty or staff, the appropriate party (Head of Centre / Chief of Administration) has the following responsibilities and options:

1. Keep the individual or individuals with the sensitivity informed of all developments.
2. Ensure that no individual or group is being bullied or ostracized because of this situation.
3. Arrange an initial private conversation with the reported person(s) to discuss the matter.
4. Explore a reassuring way forward based on the IBS guidance on personal hygiene, posters and other awareness raising materials and educative campaigns. In regards poor body odour, if the employee has a medical condition, seeing a medical professional should be suggested. In regards scent related issues or second-hand smoke, the negative health impacts on others should be emphasized.
5. In the unlikely event that the matter persists, formal warning may be issued as an option on grounds of breach of the contract of employment, especially if the employee deliberately fails to take action to address the issue.
6. Any action is subject to appeal and review.

8.2 Students

Once a matter of body odour/scent issue or second-hand smoke has been reported involving a student or group of students, Wellbeing has the following responsibilities and options:

1. Keep the individual or individuals with the sensitivity informed of all developments.
2. Ensure that no individual or group is being bullied or ostracized because of this situation.
3. Arrange an initial private conversation with the reported person(s) to discuss the matter.
4. Explore a reassuring way forward based on the IBS guidance on personal hygiene, posters and other awareness raising materials and educative campaigns. In regards poor body odour, if the student or students have a medical condition, seeing a medical professional should be suggested. In regards scent related issues or second-hand smoke, the negative health impacts on others should be emphasized.
5. In the unlikely event that the matter persists, formal procedures may have to be considered as an option on grounds of breach of the contract of education, especially if the student deliberately fails to take action to address the issue.
6. Any action is subject to appeal and review.

9. This Policy was adopted by the Senate in virtue of the resolution No. 1/2023 at the session held on 11 July 2023.

Annex 1: Guidelines on Hygienic Practices

These guidelines are intended to:

1. State how IBS faculty, staff and students can maintain a basic level of personal hygiene to enhance their overall health and wellbeing.
2. Recommend social hygienic practices that can ensure maintaining the health, wellbeing, and comfort of others as well as IBS buildings.

Section 1: Personal Hygiene Practices

Bathing/Showering

Daily bathing or showering and cleaning helps to remove sweat, dirt, and bacteria from the body, reducing the chances of illness and unpleasant body odours

Hand Washing

Regular hand washing is essential to prevent the spread of germs and viruses. Washing hands with soap and water before and after using toilets, before meals, after coughing, sneezing, or touching one's face are important hand hygiene practices.

Oral Hygiene

Maintaining good oral hygiene is crucial for healthy teeth, avoiding bad breath and minimizing the spread of bacteria. Brushing teeth at least twice a day (or after every meal), using mouthwash, and flossing regularly are highly encouraged. Mint-flavoured products such as chewing gum or sugar-free mints may be applied as temporary solutions for breath freshening.

Deodorant / Antiperspirant

The use of scentless or scent reduced deodorant or antiperspirant is recommended to minimize body odour. Applying deodorant or antiperspirant after (i.e., not as a substitute for) the daily shower or bath is desirable, especially during warmer months or when engaging in physical activities.

Clean Clothes

Clean and fresh-smelling clothes help to maintain a pleasant environment. Clothes ideally are washed regularly to prevent odours caused by sweat, dirt, or other factors such as restaurants with poor ventilation or public places with smoke. Underwear should be replaced daily; other clothing items should be washed frequently.

Footwear

Wearing clean and appropriate footwear and changing socks regularly help prevent unpleasant foot odour. Open-toed shoes, such as sandals or flip-flops, are ideally worn with clean and dry feet.

Section 2: Social Hygiene Practices in Shared Spaces

Classrooms and Student Lounge

Faculty, staff, and students must always maintain cleanliness within IBS classrooms and the Student Lounge. Eating strong-smelling food or snacks in these areas should be avoided, as it can contribute to unpleasant odours. In the case of accidental spills or messes, individuals should do their best to clean up after themselves promptly. If this requires special cleaning equipment, they should request help from Maintenance in Room C114.

Toilets

Keeping IBS toilets clean is an important part of hygiene. Flushing toilets, using toilet paper, disposing of sanitary products appropriately using the designated collection bins, and washing hands thoroughly after use are expected. All individuals are responsible for keeping toilets clean and reporting any maintenance issues to Maintenance in Room C114 or to the Vienna Campus Manager.

Kitchens

Faculty and staff should primarily consume their meals in the faculty and staff kitchen (rather than in classrooms, offices, or communal teachers' offices). Keeping the community kitchens clean is crucial for maintaining a healthy and safe environment. Washing up dishes after use, sanitizing surfaces, promptly cleaning up spills and storing food properly with labels stating the owner and expiry date are essential practices.

Centre for Student Services, Finance Office, and Library

Keeping the common spaces of the Centre for Student Services, the Finance Office, and the Library clean for the staff and students who use them is an important hygienic responsibility.

Campus Park

The rules of use of Graphisoft Park, which are signposted at the entrances, must be followed. Smoking should be restricted to designated smoking locations. Litter containers should be used to dispose of all waste, including cigarette ends and chewing gum.

Raising Awareness and Concern

Raising concern about harmful odorants of any kind or any hygiene related matter is an essential and important responsibility all members of the IBS community must undertake, ensuring the IBS environment is clean and safe for all.

Annex 2: Guidelines on how to have a conversation about negative odorants

Guidance for faculty or staff affected by poor body odour, scents, or second-hand smoke

- Approach the individual(s) responsible privately and let them know how you react to any of the above and be specific about the types of physical reactions you may have.
- Talk to the individual in a cordial and respectful manner. Ask for their understanding and cooperation. Many people are unaware of the potential health effects of chemicals in scents. Many people may not be aware that they have body odour or carry second-hand smoke and how uncomfortable and unhealthy it may be for others around them.
- If you do not feel comfortable undertaking such a conversation, inform your Head of Centre or Chief of Administration of your sensitivities or difficulties with any of the above. Ask them to assist in finding a solution to your situation. As an employee, you may ask your line manager to discuss this matter with the individual involved or with the group of employees.

Guidelines for Heads of Centres, Chief of Administration and Wellbeing

If a member of faculty, staff, student, or group of students approaches you about being adversely affected by odorants:

- Listen to the person with respect and civility.
- Ask the individual(s) to describe the factors that make the matter a problem for them, its impact on them and the actions they would like taken to improve the situation.
- Investigate the issue and use good judgment and consideration to provide a fair, uniform, and timely resolution.

If a member of faculty, staff, student, or a group of students in your work area is responsible for harmful odorants:

- Arrange a private confidential and informal conversation with them.
- Discuss the issue in an open manner without disclosing where or who raised the matter.
- Inform them of the health and wellbeing concerns that have arisen.
- Explore whether the issue has a medical background.
- Refer to this policy, and any other guidelines on hygiene.

Guidance for anyone approached about body odour, scents, or second-hand smoke

- If an individual or your line manager informs you that you carry any of the above odorants, you may feel confused, hurt, annoyed, defensive, or even insulted. If possible, listen to the person with respect and civility and do not discount the issue as ridiculous and unreasonable.
- Discuss the issue openly. Feel free to ask any questions related to body odour, scents, and second-hand smoke, and their impacts on other community members.
- Empathize with the individual approaching you and work with cooperation and understanding towards a satisfactory resolution.