

IBS Dignity and Respect Policy

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

- 1.1 As stated in the **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Section 7.1)**, International Business School (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 Core Principles

IBS is a vibrant higher education institution in which it is a privilege to work and study. This is underpinned in the creation, continuation and aspiration to be a place built on respect, freedom and accountability. And in this context, the following core principles exist:

- **Respect and Dignity:** IBS expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect at all times and maintain a culture that recognises dignified interactions in classrooms, on campus and in virtual and e-spaces.
- **Equity, Awareness Raising and Prevention:** IBS is committed to equality and diversity, and provides consistent education, training and guidance for all members of its community to enable knowledge and understanding of what bullying, harassment, victimisation, sexual misconduct and irregular actions are to prevent such behaviours taking place within the community.
- **Responsive and Responsible Action:** All concerns, reports and complaints are taken seriously and attentively and are responded to by trained staff through transparent and fair processes with adherence to confidentiality and all legal requirements.
- **Impartiality, Support and Due Process:** Staff involved in handling cases are properly trained and act with impartiality and discretion at all times, ensuring any parties involved are supported sensitively, confidentially and adequately whilst also ensuring that due process is observed fully.
- **Continuous Learning and Review:** IBS is committed to reviewing and learning from each case in order to improve its practices and its steps towards prevention and upholding its community values.

1.3 Legislative Context and other relevant IBS Policies

IBS legal obligations apply to areas where discrimination bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, abuse, intimidation, victimisation, discrimination or any other irregularities or illegal actions, is unlawful

- Hungarian laws (the Fundamental Law of Hungary)
- European Convention on Human Rights
- Act on National Higher Education (Act CCIV of 2011)
- the Criminal Code of Hungary (Act C of 2012)

Additionally, this policy sits within an umbrella of IBS policies, and bears special connections to:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Policy on the responsible use of electronic devices, email and social media
- Policy to Prevent Radicalisation and Extremism: Code of Practice to Support Students and Staff
- Religious Policy
- Social Hygiene Policy

1.4 Social Context

IBS recognises that whilst anyone can experience bullying, harassment, victimisation, women and members of the LGBTQ+ community are more likely to be affected by sexual assault, harassment or misconduct. Additionally, IBS also recognises that sexual abuse or harassment may intersect with other forms of harassment and discrimination, and it addresses these matters concurrently and within and across other policies

1.5 Scope

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

1.6 Expected Behaviours and Responsibilities

As members of a civil community and as per section 6 of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the staff Code of Conduct and student Contract of Education, it is expected that all parties play their part in creating an environment which is safe, respectful and hopefully enjoyable for all, so everyone can study and work with respect and dignity. Additionally, when contributing to a culture of accountability, mutual respect, and inclusivity, speaking up when necessary is part of that commitment.

More specifically and when responding to a disclosure, report, concern or complaint, staff and students are expected to act with care and thoughtfulness. They should listen attentively, take matters seriously, be patient and open-minded, and respect individual choices. While encouragement to seek advice and support is appropriate, no-one should feel pressured in that process to do so.

1.7 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 MyIBS, 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.

1.8 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Staff, faculty, students and all other parties who either raise a concern, a report or a complaint about bullying, harassment, sexual 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.

1.9 Non-Disclosure Agreements

IBS prohibits the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) in cases of harassment and/or sexual misconduct and will never ask students or staff to sign one. If anyone is being pressured to sign, or has signed, an NDA by an external party, they can speak to Wellbeing who can seek legal advice on their behalf.

1.10 Untrue/False Allegations and Complicit Behaviour

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.

Complicit behaviour which includes the supporting, encouraging and enabling bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation and irregular/illegal actions will lead to disciplinary action or IBS informing the police.

1.11 Off-Campus Incidents Involving External Parties

In cases where bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation, discrimination and irregular/illegal actions, harassment or sexual misconduct may have occurred away from IBS premises, by person(s) not connected to IBS, relevant support will be offered to the victim through IBS Wellbeing.

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 and the relevant timeline please refer to the *IBS Complaints Procedures* document.

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 by virtue of its resolution No. 10/2025. at the session held on 28 November 2025.

Annex 1: Glossary of Terms and Definitions

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 but 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.

Exposure to controversial or sensitive topics (freedom of speech)

We recognise that during academic tuition and discussion, there may be certain topics that some may find offensive. While some topics could indeed be controversial and/or sensitive in nature, they are justified as long as they are pedagogically relevant, form part of the course content and are intended to inform healthy academic debates. Exposure to sensitive and/or controversial topics as part of the academic activity is therefore *not* a form of harassment or sexual misconduct.

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,

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

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.

Radicalisation

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

Sexual Harassment / Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment is any attempted or actual unwanted physical or verbal abuse of a sexual nature that makes someone feel upset, scared, offended, or humiliated, or is meant to make them feel that way. Verbal abuse may take the form of oral, written or digital communication, including but not limited to inappropriate use of social media, cyberstalking or sending unwanted explicit material. Sexual harassment may also be linked with bullying, victimisation, peer pressure, peer influence, discrimination and can be carried out and received both individually and collectively.

Sexual misconduct is any action of a sexual nature that is unwanted and is perceived by the recipient as a violation of their dignity and/or an act of intimidation. In assessing whether conduct amounts to harassment, the perception of the recipient will be taken into account along with the circumstances of the case and whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have had that effect. Even a single isolated incident can be considered as sexual misconduct or harassment.

Sexual misconduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual acts without consent (sexual assault/rape)
- Unwanted sexual touching or comments
- Indecent exposure (in-person or online, such as sending unsolicited explicit images)
- Repeated unwanted following or stalking (including cyberstalking)
- Sharing intimate images without consent (including 'sextortion')
- Degrading or inappropriate actions (such as 'upskirting').

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, MyIBS 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, MyIBS 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, MyIBS 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, MyIBS 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>