

MAURITIUS INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

CODE OF ETHICS

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1 Code of Ethics

1.1 Purpose of Code of Ethics

The Mauritius Institute of Education recognizes the value of integrating ethics into our everyday workplace cultures at all levels. The Code of Ethics provides a guide of principles designed to help staff fulfill their roles honestly and with integrity.

The aim of this Code of Ethics (henceforth 'Code') is to establish a common understanding of the standards of behaviour expected from all employees of the Mauritius Institute of Education (henceforth 'Institute').

1.2 Vision and Mission of the Institute

1.2.1 Vision

To be a leader in professional development in the education sector and an innovative change maker for the 21st century.

1.2.2 Mission

The Mauritius Institution of Education is committed to advancing professional excellence, dedicated to high ethical conduct and making of an institution with excellence in teaching, research and curriculum development while advancing creativity and engagement as the finest public institution.

1.3 Our Principles and Core Values

The Institute adheres to a set of principles and core values that are the guiding principle for all its employees:

Integrity: MIE upholds the highest standards of integrity and honesty in the compliance of all its responsibilities so as to gain the respect and confidence of all the stakeholders.

Responsiveness: Customer satisfaction is a major concern for the Institute. It endeavours to provide an efficient, effective and quality service to all stakeholders. In so doing, it seeks to exceed expectation as a professional Institute in the field of education.

Fairness, equity and inclusiveness: MIE is committed to treat all its employees and client impartially and objectively and treat everyone in an equitable manner, while recognizing their individual needs.

Freedom, creativity and innovation: MIE is committed to the creation of an environment where individuals feel free to think, express themselves, innovate and develop a fresh outlook on issues.

Transparency and Accountability: MIE will make constant efforts to promote transparent and accountable administrative and academic practices based on internationally recognized practices.

1.4 Our Approach

The Code of Ethics (henceforth 'Code') does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive set of standards. However, it represents a broad framework that will help employees to adopt appropriate course of action when they are faced with any ethical issue.

This code is a value-based code of ethics which requires a degree of self-regulation, and where necessary includes elements of a compliance-based one. However, as an Institute of Education we favour a value-based ethical code which calls for a greater degree of self-regulation and enhanced moral responsibility within the Institute.

1.5 Our Commitment

We are committed to the highest ethical standards which should guide all of our actions and decisions. The Code ensures that, as staff, we will adhere to the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in our practice at the Institute.

The Code places an obligation on all employees to take responsibility for their own conduct and to create a conducive and healthy working environment where people feel comfortable, valued, respected and proud to belong to the Institute, both as employees and client.

The Code will ensure that leaders in all spheres of the Institute strive to lead by example and be excellent role models committed to promote a value-based and ethical service. They should also ensure that ethical behaviour cascades down the line and becomes a constant issue of a way of life/culture and practice within the Institute in line with the principles of good governance which adheres to the values of integrity, objectivity, impartiality and honesty constituting the very foundation of the Code.

1.5.1 Respect for diversity

We take pride in the diversity of our workforce and client. Any form of discrimination and harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We are committed to work effectively with people from all backgrounds; treat all colleagues and clients fairly and equally, with dignity and respect; avoid stereotypes and show no discrimination against any individual or group.

1.5.2 Professionalism of Employees

To achieve the above, employees shall demonstrate a high degree of professionalism and carry out their roles with dedication and commitment to the institution and its core values. They shall comply with and uphold the law, and project a good, right and positive image of the Institute.

Employees shall not act arbitrarily or to the detriment of any person, group or body and shall have due regard for the rights, duties and relevant interests of others. They are, in addition, required to respect the privacy of individuals.

Employees have the duty to always conduct themselves in a way that confidence and trust of the public in the integrity, impartiality and effectiveness of the Institute are preserved and enhanced.

Employees also have a duty to treat their colleagues and the public with courtesy and respect. They shall therefore:

- i. Not cause embarrassment to colleagues or members of the public by their dress, speech or behaviour.
- ii. Not consume alcoholic beverages while on duty.
- iii. Not engaged in gambling by any means in the premises.
- iv. Not smoke where it is illegal or where it is likely to cause inconvenience to others.
- v. Not cause distress to their colleagues, or otherwise contribute to disruption of the working environment and training atmosphere in the Institute.
- vi. Not discriminate against any person on ground of sex, marital status, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, political opinion, occupation, status, sexual orientation, religious and ethical beliefs.
- vii. Not harass, bully or otherwise intimidate colleagues or members of the public.
- viii. Respect the privacy of individuals.
- ix. Have due regards for the safety of the public and colleagues at the workplace.

Employees should discharge their duties with integrity and honesty. They should be dedicated, committed and demonstrate a high degree of professionalism to achieve excellence. We, therefore, call upon each and every employee of the Institute to view this set of behaviours not as a set of rules, but as an opportunity to renew their commitment as employees who care to bring their individual contribution for upholding the credibility of the Institution.

1.5.3 Confidentiality

Employees should maintain the highest degree of confidentiality in all their dealings with all stakeholders.

Employees should demonstrate respect for the confidential nature of educational and professional records. They should ensure that any disclosure shall be with proper authorisation and in accordance with the law, always safeguarding the interest of all those whose data and information they handle in the exercise of their professional obligations.

1.6 Professional knowledge and Practice

1.6.1 Academic Staff

Academic staff should maintain high standards of practice in relation to teaching and learning, classroom management, planning, monitoring, assessment, reporting, curriculum development and research activities.

They should continuously upgrade their professional knowledge, skills and competencies throughout their career.

They should be open and respond positively to constructive feedback regarding their professional practices.

1.6.2 Non Academic Staff

Non-teaching staff should keep pace with developments in the administrative machinery.

They should be open and respond positively to constructive feedback regarding their professional practices.

1.6.3 Adherence to Policies

It is the obligation of all employees to be aware of and follow all the policies that have been established by the Institute and comply with the procedures at the workplace.

It is the responsibility of each employee to read, understand and adhere to the policies. Management should ensure that administrative policies, standards, procedures, personnel and processes are in place and both the content and the spirit of the policy are adhered to.

Management should make all such information available to all staff through appropriate means, including its website.

With a commitment to serve its students, employees must avoid any situation that could be perceived as a hindrance.

Employees must neither commit any illegal act nor counsel another employee to do so. Employees who engage in any malpractice may be subject to disciplinary action.

Compliant to the law, the organisation will conduct its activities in accordance to all applicable laws and regulations.

1.6.4 Post-separation –ex-employee’s responsibility

When any employee quits employment from the Institute s/he should not use or take advantage of any confidential information obtained in the course of her/his official duties until it has become publicly available. Therefore, employees must not disclose any official information after leaving employment where it was their duty not to disclose same.

As a current employee, one must be careful in his/her dealings with former employees of the organisation and make sure that s/he does not give or appears to give favourable treatment or access to privileged information.

Any such case of attempt made by former employees to influence the organisation’s activities should be reported to the Head of the Institute.

1.7 Respect for the Law

Employees are expected to be faithful to the Republic of Mauritius, respect the Constitution and adhere to it in the conduct of their duties. They are expected to:

- i. comply with and respect all governing and applicable laws, rules and regulations
- ii. implement the policies and decisions of the Government of the day in an objective manner
- iii. refrain from unlawful and offensive behaviour against the Institute where its finances, partnerships or public image are concerned
- iv. endeavour to be familiar with and abide by all statutory and other instructions applicable to their conduct and duties
- v. uphold strong ethical and professional values when dealing with people and be respectful of their dignity and rights as contained in the Constitution

1.8 Discharge of duties in a responsible manner

Employees are responsible for promoting the institution’s vision, mission, core values and goals; and adhere to the highest principles of professional competence, integrity and honesty in the conduct of their duties.

They are expected to:

- i. strive to achieve the objectives of the institution cost-effectively in the public's interest
- ii. be creative in thought and in the execution of their duties, be innovative in problem solving
- iii. be punctual in the execution of their duties

- iv. execute their duties in a timely and effective manner
- v. act professionally and in a competent manner
- vi. avoid engaging in any transaction or action which is in conflict with or infringes on the execution of their official duties
- vii. reclude from any official action or decision-making process which may result in improper personal gain and adhere to the requirements of declaration of interest when and wherever applicable.
- viii. accept to avail for capacity building and self-development throughout their career
- ix. be honest and accountable in dealing with public funds
- x. promote sound, efficient, effective, transparent and accountable administration
- xi. report, in the course of their official duties, any fraud, corruption, nepotism, mal-practice and any other act which constitutes an offence, or which is prejudicial to the public interest.

1.9 Employees' Responsibilities

1.9.1 Responsibility towards the public

To ensure a high level of service is maintained, officers must observe high standards of honesty, impartiality and character to ascertain the proper conduct of business and a high level of service. They are expected to:

- i. serve the public in an unbiased and impartial manner
- ii. be polite, helpful and more customer-oriented in their dealings with the public reasonably accessible in their dealings with the public, at all times treating members of the public as customers who are entitled to receive high standards of service
- iii. have regard for the circumstances and concerns of the public in performing their official duties and in the making of decisions affecting them
- iv. Respond in a timely manner to any query from the public
- v. refrain from abusing their position in the institution to promote or prejudice the interest of any political party or interest group
- vi. respect and protect every person's dignity and her/his rights as stipulated in the constitution
- vii. recognise the public's right of access to information, excluding information that is specifically protected by law

1.9.2 Relationship among employees

The attitude of collegiality should emanate from top management and cascade down across the organisation. Staff members should bear moral responsibilities towards their colleagues, seniors and subordinates. They should respect and support each other, irrespective of their ranks/positions.

Management should ensure that a healthy, cooperative and conducive working environment prevails to the satisfaction of one and all. A professional relationship, which is also ethically sound, drives to effective team working, high morale, and eventually, efficiency and higher productivity.

1.9.3 Respect for the rights of others

Staff members should ascertain that, at all times, the rights of each employee are respected and preserved. They should avoid indulging in any such act which jeopardises the rights of an

employee, and they should not be judgmental or discriminate against anyone on such grounds as age, gender, colour, disability, socio-cultural and religious backgrounds or ethical beliefs.

1.9.4 Conflict of interests

Irrespective of any position staff members may occupy, if a situation in which personal and/or financial considerations have the potential to influence or compromise any professional conduct, they have the personal obligation to promptly disclose same, declare interest, and wherever required, withdraw themselves to avoid any sort of conflict of interests. Such a situation could be related to the recruitment of trainees and staff, any matter pertaining to examinations, involvement in any board meeting, investment in any particular academic/ non-academic project, assignment of a contract, or any other situation of the like. Management should ensure that officers declare interest as and when required as provided in law.

1.9.5 Transparency and Accountability

Employees are encouraged to commit themselves towards openness and transparency in all their activities, operations and decision-making processes. There should be lucidity in all their transactions, which at any time could be subject to public scrutiny.

Moreover, they should develop a sense of ownership and belongingness to whatever responsibility they are being assigned and be fully accountable for their decisions and outcomes. They are urged to strictly follow the standards of conduct established by the Institute and report the results of their acts in a transparent and accountable manner.

1.10 Positive Work Environment

The responsibility of establishing a healthy and positive work environment rests on both management and employees. On the one side, management should ascertain that employees are treated fairly, their individual differences are valued with due respect, and their performance at work is recognized. An all times ethical leadership strategy should model the standards of good conduct and set in the right track for people to act ethically at the workplace.

On the other side, employees should put aside their personal differences and act in good faith, with honesty and integrity to the benefit of the Institute. They should nurture a positive attitude at their workplace and avoid discriminatory practices, bullying and harassment. They should rather focus on improving their performances in a convivial manner. Positive interpersonal relationship amongst employees is imperative in creating an optimistic work environment, which could foster effective team-working and group problem-solving skills to better achieve the institutional goals and objectives.

1.11 Disclosure of information

Accessing to confidential information and other secret documents constitute a core element of activities at the Institute. Officers have the responsibility to ensure that confidentiality of information is maintained and not disclosed to third parties.

1.11.1 Use of privileged information

Not all information available to employees through our position can be made public, even when it is not specifically protected as 'confidential'. Inappropriate disclosure or use of privileged information can harm the efficiency and credibility of the Institute and damage its ability to achieve its objectives. Therefore, we must ensure that sensitive or confidential information is carefully protected in order to safeguard the interests of the Institute and our partners and

staff. Confidential information must never be disclosed or used improperly for personal or other private gain.

We must be aware that our obligation to protect confidential information remains after we separate from the Institute. The Officers may disclose official information only when they are required to do so by law or when they have the proper authority from the Director. In such cases, the information disclosed should be factual and not be altered in any way that could cause prejudice to the Institute or the parent Ministry.

1.12 Political Impartiality

The Institute should be committed to devote their effort to implement official policy decisions. Whatever be their political beliefs, MIE officers owe loyalty to the Government of the day. They should observe political neutrality in their day-to-day functions and avoid activities which are likely to impair, or seen to impair their political impartiality or that of the Institute.

1.13 Decision Making

Officers should take decisions in a collaborative, transparent and timely manner without regard to partisan, special interests and fear of criticisms. Decisions should be taken after thorough consideration of factual information.

Officers should carry out the implementation of MIE Council decisions efficiently and effectively while maintaining a high performance standard.

1.14 Gifts and other benefits

Officers should not use their official position for personal gain. They should not solicit or accept gifts or favours, rewards or benefits, which might compromise their integrity and that of the Institute.

Officers should not accept gifts or benefits other than their lawful remuneration at the Institute. Officers should not allow themselves to be in a position of obligation to return a favour to any person or body.

In case a token of appreciation is offered to any officer, s/he should report it to Management in writing. Even after receiving approval, we should always be mindful not to create an impression that a benefit could improperly influence our professional actions or decisions.

1.15 Outside Employment

Officers should not engage in any outside employment, for remuneration or otherwise, unless prior approval has been sought and obtained from the accounting officer.

Employers should not engage in activities which may conflict or interfere with the performance of their official duties.

Employers are subject to the provision of the terms of employment in their employment letter which restricts outside employment, except where permission has been sought and duly obtained.

Any infringement of the provision of the clause governing outside employment may result in disciplinary actions.

1.16 Use of the Institution's Resources

All employees of the Institute has the responsibility to ensure that all institutional resources are protected and used in the provision of services by the Institute and not for the personal benefit of employees or for use while rendering services to outside institutions, unless officially delegated for that purpose. The Institution's resources include all services and facilities paid through public funds. Employees should therefore:

- i. Be efficient and economical
- ii. Be honest and accountable.
- iii. Avoid using resources for personal use.

1.17 Use of Alcohol and Drugs

The Institute is committed to maintaining an alcohol-free and drug-free workplace and prohibits the possession, purchase, sale, manufacture, distribution or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, or being under the influence of those substances while at work. Any suspected violation of the drug-free workplace policy should be reported to management. Management may take appropriate action to deal with members suspected to be under the influence or non-permitted substance/s.

1.18 Green Practices

The Institution will adhere to green practices and ensure that it abides to the principles of sustainable development. It will occasionally review its policies and practices so as to ensure such adherence. Such practices include efficient an effective use of paper, electricity, amenities such as air conditioning and water resources among others.

1.19 Non-Discrimination and Victimisation

The MIE is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing opportunities without regard for race, gender, religion, colour, national origin, age or physical disabilities. We respect all employees and encourage all of them to maximize their professional growth and job satisfaction while contributing to the Institution's success.

The Institution has absolutely no tolerance for harassment or other unlawful behaviour in the workplace. All employees should be able to work in a satisfying environment free from discrimination, and free of any form of harassment, whether based on race, colour, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or other protected status. Any offensive physical, written or spoken conduct, including conduct of a sexual nature, is prohibited. This includes unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct. Any employee who believes he or she is being subjected to any form of harassment or discrimination should immediately report the matter to their respective heads or if necessary to management.

1.20 Raising concerns

The Institution operates under an internal reporting system whereby employees report concerns related to any activity which may violate laws, regulations or principles of the code of ethics.

It is our duty as employees of the Institute to promptly raise concerns about any potential violations of our standards of conduct. Staff members should use different channels available for raising their concerns: the Heads of School/ Centre/ Department/ Section or Unit. Employees should cooperate in investigations at the request of authorized officials and have a right to be protected from retaliation for reporting, in good faith, integrity concerns.

1.21 Inquiring Malpractices

On receipt of the complaint, the designated officer should start investigation without any delay. The Institution may also appoint one or more senior employees, who are respected for their fairness, independence and integrity, to inquire and report on any malpractice.

1.22 Non-Compliance with the Code

This Code of Ethics, the underlying Institution policies and the mechanism for seeking advice, are all designed to enable members of the staff to make decisions that are guided by integrity and in compliance with law.

Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, including, without limitation, termination of employment. Disciplinary action will be considered in the event an employee:

- i. participates in direct or concealed actions that violate the Code of Ethics or underlying policies;
- ii. fails to prevent or promptly report violations, or actively condones disregard for the Code;
- iii. retaliates in any manner against an employee who, in good faith, reports a violation of the Code; and
- iv. is uncooperative or untruthful in connection with an investigation of any suspected violation of the Code.

2 References:

The preparation of this document has been inspired from diverse sources, reports and codes.

Code of Ethics <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/code-of-ethics.asp#ixzz54Q3NPqRq>

Code of Ethics <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/code-of-ethics.asp#ixzz54Q6z0ihG>

Mauritius Revenue Authority – Code of Ethics

Working together Putting ethics to work- UN Office of Human resource Management

http://www.un.org/en/ethics/pdf/WorkinTogetherGuide_en.pdf

Code of Ethics for Public Officers, Mauritius

<http://ambmauritius.mu/live/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Code-of-Ethics-for-Public-Officers.pdf>

Code of ethics of the MRA, Mauritius

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://www.mra.mu/download/CodeOfEthics161214.pdf>