

GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

Clarifying Acceptable vs. Unacceptable Behavior

The Institute is committed to maintaining a respectful, inclusive environment where all members of our community feel safe and valued taking into account the cultural differences of the members of this community.

The Charter of the Institute, the Code of Conduct and the Implementation Guidelines of the Code of Conduct set out the expected behaviour of the members of the Institute's community.

This guide provides some clear examples to illustrate what constitutes acceptable behaviour and when a line has been crossed.

1. Romantic Interest & Interpersonal Boundaries

Between Students (with no supervisory role)

Acceptable:

- Asking someone out or expressing romantic interest respectfully
- Accepting a "no" gracefully and maintaining a normal, respectful relationship afterward
- Flirting when there are clear mutual signals of interest

Not Acceptable :

- Continuing to pursue someone after they've clearly declined or expressed discomfort
- Making repeated advances without receiving a clear signal of interest
- Using academic or professional pressure to pursue a romantic relationship
- Making sexual comments or jokes

Between Employees, between Employees and their Managers and between Employees and Students

Given the hierarchical or subordination relationship that can exist between employees or between an Employee and a Student, a high degree of diligence and discretion is expected from the Employees in their interactions with another Employee or a Student.

The Employee must remain professional and avoid creating ambiguity.

GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

Under no circumstances, an Employee should use their position to request or obtain any favour from another Employee or a Student outside of the work environment without their free and informed consent.

In addition, the Employees are subject to the Directive sur la prévention et la gestion des conflits d'intérêts of the Institute. In particular, any personal relationship that could constitute a conflict of interest must be reported to HR immediately.

✗ Not Acceptable:

- Continuing to pursue someone after they've clearly declined or expressed discomfort
 - Making repeated advances after being told "no"
 - Using academic or professional pressure to pursue a romantic relationship
 - Making sexual comments or jokes
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2. Shared Accommodation & Living Spaces

Shared Accommodation and Living Spaces must be used to ensure a peaceful and enjoyable stay or academic or work environment for the Employees and the Students. In particular, the Housing Regulations of the Institute set out the rights and obligations of the Residence Community Members of the Institute's Residences.

✓ Acceptable:

- Having different schedules, habits, and cleanliness standards
- Negotiating, discussing and agreeing how to resolve different schedules, habits, and cleanliness standards
- Discussing concerns directly and respectfully: *"I've noticed the dishes pile up sometimes. Could we agree on a dishwashing schedule?"*
- Proposal based on needs: *"I need quiet after 11pm for sleep. Could we agree on that as a quiet time?"*
- Seeking mediation early if direct conversation isn't working

✗ Not Acceptable:

- Passive-aggressive comments, notes or messages
- Shouting, insults, or aggressive confrontation, including both overt and covert aggression

GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

- Making discriminatory comments about someone's culture, habits, or lifestyle
- Deliberately doing things you know upset your roommate after they've asked you to stop
- Excluding someone from shared spaces or social activities, explicitly or covertly

Example Scenario: *M likes to have friends over frequently, while her/her/their roommate C prefers quiet evenings. M assumes C is fine with it since he/she/they hasn't said anything. C feels increasingly uncomfortable but doesn't speak up. After weeks of frustration, C sends an angry message calling M "inconsiderate and selfish."*

Better approach: *C should have expressed his/her/their needs early: "I really value quiet time in the evenings. Could we agree on specific days for guests?" If they can't agree, contacting the support team early prevents escalation.*

3. Group Work & Academic Collaboration

The stakeholders of a Group Work or an Academic Collaboration must collaborate in a spirit of goodwill based on objective and constructive discussions taking into account the different backgrounds and education of those involved.

They must comply with the principles of the scientific integrity included in the Directive on Academic Integrity (for Students) and the Geneva Graduate Institute Research Ethics Guidelines of the Institute, which prohibit inter alia using contributions without acknowledging their contributors.

✓ Acceptable:

- Expressing concerns about workload distribution: *"I feel like I'm doing most of the research. Can we divide tasks more clearly?"*
- Asking for clarification about roles and responsibilities
- Seeking instructor or support team help if the group dynamic isn't working
- Acknowledging that people have different working styles, needs, abilities, and habits, and finding ways to accommodate them

✗ Not Acceptable:

- Excluding group members from meetings or communications
- Making derogatory comments about someone's contributions, background, or abilities, openly or in their absence

GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

- Refusing to work with someone based on their race, gender, nationality, religion, or other protected personal characteristics
- Taking credit for others' work
- deliberately undermining team members
- Not contributing your fair share without valid reason and advance communication

Example scenario: *In a group of four, three members schedule meetings without informing the fourth member, J who was absent a few times. When confronted, they say "We assumed you wouldn't contribute anyway." This is **unacceptable** exclusion and could be considered as moral harassment, if repeated.*

Better approach: *If there are concerns about J's participation, the group should first speak with him/her directly: "We've noticed you've missed some deadlines. Is everything okay? How can we work together better?" If issues persist, they should involve the instructor or support team rather than excluding him/her.*

4. Communication & Conflict Resolution

Given the cultural diversity and sensitivities within the members of the Institute's community, the best way to express one's point of view and defuse conflict is through communication.

In addition, the persons and services identified below can be contacted if necessary.

✓ Acceptable:

- Expressing that someone's words or actions hurt you: *"When you made that joke, it made me feel uncomfortable"*
- Acknowledging that you may have unintentionally caused harm: *"I didn't realize that bothered you. I'm sorry. I'll be more mindful"*
- Asking for time to cool down before discussing a heated issue
- Seeking support from the misconduct management team or person of trust when you're unsure how to proceed

✗ Not Acceptable:

- Dismissing someone's feelings: *"You're too sensitive"*
- Spreading rumors or gossip (digitally or in person) about a person

GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

- Retaliating against someone who raised a concern
- Refusing to acknowledge impact even if intent wasn't harmful

Example Scenario: *During a class discussion, **A** makes a generalization about a cultural group. **P**, who belongs to that group, feels hurt and tells **A** privately afterward: "That comment felt stereotypical and hurt my feelings." **A** responds: "I'm really sorry—I didn't mean it that way, but I understand why it was hurtful. Thank you for telling me." This is **acceptable** and demonstrates learning. If **A** had responded: "You're overreacting, it was just an observation," this would be **dismissive**.*

When & How to Seek Support

If you are a student and looking for internal support, contact the Advice & Support Team (conduct@graduateinstitute.ch), if:

If you are a staff member or a student, the External Person of Trust (aurelie.defrancesco@personne-de-confiance.com) is also available, if:

- You've experienced behaviours that makes you uncomfortable and don't know how to address them
- You've tried to resolve a situation directly but it hasn't improved
- You're worried about retaliation if you speak up
- You feel isolated, excluded, or that the situation is affecting your mental health
- You've unintentionally caused harm and want guidance on making it right
- You simply need someone to listen without judgment

The support we can offer you:

- **Confidential support and empathic listening** – your information is kept private
- **Conflict resolution facilitation** – we can bring parties together in a safe, structured space where both sides are heard and respected (only with your consent)
- **Mediation services** – we can arrange professional external mediation with the person of trust who is a certified mediator, if needed
- **Solution-focused guidance** – we help you explore options without imposing decisions



GUIDELINES MISCONDUCT MANAGEMENT

Important Notes:

- **All situations are treated confidentially**
 - **You control the process** – we only proceed with actions you consent to
 - **Early intervention works best** – small issues are easier to resolve before they escalate
 - **Our role in facilitated discussions** – we ensure respectful dialogue but don't intervene in the conversation itself; the solutions come from you
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Remember:

We all come from different backgrounds with different communication styles, boundaries, and expectations. **What matters most is:**

- Expressing your needs clearly and respectfully
- Listening when others express their boundaries
- Being willing to learn and adapt
- Seeking help early rather than letting issues fester

You're not alone. We're here to support everyone in our community—whether you feel you've been wronged, have concerns about your own behaviour, or simply need guidance navigating a difficult situation.

Your Advice & Support Team