Health and Safety Policy, Procedure and Guidelines for Students

Policy Code: OHS002

Version: 1.1 Effective Date: 23/11/2013

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the policies and procedures that IHM will use to ensure a safe place of study for on campus students and ensure that IHM’s health and safety obligations to students are fulfilled.

Scope

This policy applies to all premises operated by IHM attended by students.

Responsibility

This policy will be implemented by the Quality Standards and Compliance Manager.

Principles

Maintaining a safe and healthy study environment

IHM has an obligation to students take all reasonable measures to provide a safe and healthy study environment.

Harassment and bullying

The following are considered to constitute harassment and/or bullying:

- Actions that cause distress, fear or damage to a person’s happiness or wellbeing or;
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- Speech or communication that causes distress, fear or damage to a person’s happiness or wellbeing;
- Failure to desist from any action or form of communication once a person has indicated that it is causing distress, fear or damage to their or another person’s happiness or wellbeing;
- Exclusion of a person from group activities or discussions.

Harassment and bullying can be done by anyone against anyone else, but for it to occur the bully must generally have the ability to exercise power over the bullied. Where someone is in a position that gives them more power than another person, they must pay particular attention to ensuring that they do not commit bullying or harassment and that they desist from any action or communication as soon as they become aware that it is causing distress, fear or damage to a person’s happiness or wellbeing. Examples of situations in which one party may have more power than another party include:

- A group or members of a group of people communicating with an individual;
- A staff member communicating with a student;
- A senior manager communicating with a less senior employee;
- A member of a dominant social group communicating with someone from a minority group.

Students who believe they are being bullied can:

a. Bring the matter to the attention of a staff member;
b. Ask the person committing the act of bullying or harassment to desist, if it is safe to do so and/or;
c. Seek personal help such as counselling.

Any person witnessing bullying or harassment or behaviour that is suspected of constituting bullying or harassment will:

a. Report the incident to a staff member;
b. Communicate with the victim of the behaviour, offer them support and ask whether the behaviour is affecting them adversely and;
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c. Communicate with the person committing the bullying or harassment, if it is safe to do so.

Any person who believes or suspects that they are committing bullying or harassment should:

a. Carefully consider any adverse effects their behaviour may be having on others;
b. Desist from any bullying or harassing behaviour, if able to do so and;
c. Seek assistance from a staff member or counselling service about how to modify the behaviour.

Note: only the victim of bullying can understand the effect it is having on them. The perpetrator or a third party cannot judge whether it is reasonable for the victim to feel bullied or harassed.

Identification and elimination of risks to health and safety

IHM employees and members of governing bodies all have a responsibility to identify and eliminate or mitigate risks to the health and safety of students. Students who identify a risk to health and safety should report it to a staff member as soon as possible in accordance with the Reporting of Health, Safety and Wellbeing Issues procedure that is set out below.

Procedures

Complaints and grievances

Complaints and Grievances will be reported and dealt with in accordance with the IHM Complaints and Grievances Policy.

Reporting of health, safety and wellbeing issues

If a student identifies an issue affecting health, safety and wellbeing they may:
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a. Discuss the matter with an IHM staff member, who will attempt to resolve the issue on an informal basis and/or else refer it to another staff member or committee or, if the matter is not urgent, add it to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Register;

b. Add the issue to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Register. Data from the register are reviewed by the Quality Assurance and Risk Management Committee at each scheduled meeting and used to make ongoing improvements;

c. Lodge a formal complaint about the issue in accordance with the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

Health, safety and wellbeing audit

All IHM operations will be audited every three years, coinciding with the triennial review. The audit will be conducted in accordance with the following procedure:

1. The Quality Assurance and Risk Management Committee meet to deliberate upon the terms of reference for the review;
2. Members of the committee interview each IHM employee with regard to risk in their areas of responsibility;
3. An OHS survey is administered electronically to all students and stakeholders;
4. The Quality Assurance and Risk Management Committee members meet to deliberate upon the data provided, along with long term statistics from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing register, and determine any changes to policy, procedures and infrastructure that may be required in order to mitigate the risks identified;
5. Funding requests for infrastructure changes are put forward to the finance and resource committee. Amended policies and procedures are put forward to the relevant committees and then to the Board of Governors.

Security arrangements

IHM will make security arrangements to ensure the safety of students and staff, the protection of infrastructure and the privacy of sensitive information.
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Beside each fixed line telephone, security and emergency procedures will be displayed.

Stand-alone campus buildings will be remotely monitored by a security company by video link. Facilities that are within a larger building or complex will be equipped with security alarm systems to detect after hours intrusions.

Sensitive data will be stored using off site servers housed in AS/NZS 7799 certified servers. This service may be provided by a third party with whom an appropriate contract has been established.

Regulations

Smoking

No smoking shall be permitted on any premises operated by IHM. Any student or other person engaged in on campus activities wishing to smoke any substance including tobacco will first move off the land belonging to, leased or otherwise operated by IHM. IHM is dedicated to the promotion of health, so it is considered important that IHM staff do not engage in activities that jeopardise health or that are an example of poor health practice.

Alcohol

While engaged in work at IHM, students will not consume any alcohol other than alcohol that is supplied as part of student or events functions and served in accordance with Responsible Service of Alcohol legislation. Where alcohol is consumed as part of a function or event, students will not drink to excess and will behave in a manner that does not jeopardise the reputation of IHM.

Illicit drugs

IHM students will not bring any substance that is illegal under Australian law to IHM premises or to IHM functions or events. Nor shall any IHM student attend classes, IHM related functions or events under the influence of any illegal substance.
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Where a person who is not an IHM student attends an IHM related function and is found to have brought with them an illegal substance, that person will be asked to leave the premises and will be considered to be trespassing if they fail to do so.

First Aid

If you are injured while you are on campus, speak to a staff member. The staff member will help you locate a trained first aid officer who will:

a. Attend to your injury and;

b. Keep a record of your injury using an incident report form.

Guidelines

Emergency or critical incident

If you are involved in or witness a critical incident, bring it to the attention of an IHM employee immediately. If the incident is an emergency, report it to emergency services by dialling 000. Further procedures and policies for critical incidents and emergencies are set out in the Critical Incident Response Policy and Procedure.

Reporting and addressing of safety issues and hazards

Any IHM employee who becomes aware of a hazard that may threaten the health and safety of themselves or others who attend the place of study will:

1. Take action, wherever possible, to remedy or reduce the risk. This includes affixing appropriate signage so as to deter others from placing themselves in danger;

2. Add the risk to the IHM Risk Register;

3. If the hazard poses an immediate risk, notify appropriate staff or services to have it addressed.
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IHM students will not attempt to lift or carry objects of sufficient weight to endanger their safety and wellbeing. Where an object of such weight is to be moved in the course of a student’s study, that student will:

a) Ask another person for assistance so that the weight can be shared;
b) Use a mechanical lifting device such as a trolley or;
c) Will leave the object where it is until a safe arrangement can be made for it to be moved.

If an object is considered light enough to be moved safely by an employee or group of two or more employees, appropriate lifting technique will be used so as to ensure minimum strain is placed on sensitive areas such as the spine. IHM staff will not ask a student to lift an object in a manner that could cause risk of injury.

Personal Safety Guidelines

In the event that a student’s personal safety is threatened it is recommended that they:

1. Go to a busy place or attract the attention of other people in the area.
2. Contact the police (000).

When travelling to and from the place of study, it is recommended that students:
- Be alert and walk purposefully, noting that confidence deters attackers;
- Avoid poorly lit or isolated areas;
- Use pedestrian routes that are well trafficked and well lit;
- Where possible walk with a friend, form a group or stay with a crowd and;
- Report any suspicious behaviour to the Police.

Upon request, an IHM staff member will call a taxi for a student or help them identify their nearest form of public transport.

If a student receives an abusive or threatening call by telephone or any other communication device, it is recommended that they:
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1. Hang up and;
2. Report the incident to an IHM staff member and, if it includes a credible threat of violence, to the police.

   If a student is approached by an aggressive or potentially violent person, it is recommended that they:
   1. Try to remain calm;
   2. Alert an IHM staff member or someone nearby;
   3. Be assertive, but polite to the aggressive person;
   4. Attempt to de-escalate the situation;
   5. Report the incident to the police, if safe to do so.

If a student witnesses a confrontation involving staff or other students and believes that intervention is required; it is recommended that they report the incident to the police immediately.

Armed hold-up or intruder/s

1. Try to remain calm;
2. Cooperate with the intruder/s;
3. Observe as much as possible, but do NOT stare at the intruder/s;
4. Report the incident to the police - as soon as it is safe to do so.

Supplementary Information

Related policies/procedures: Not applicable
Benchmarking: Not applicable
Supporting research and analysis: Australian Human Rights Commission
Related documents: Health and Safety Policy, Procedure and Guidelines for Students
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Related legislation:
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

Guidelines: Not applicable

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