

## **Complaints Procedure**

We want to help you if you are not happy with any aspect of your experience at International House Dublin. If you have a complaint, please email [reception@ihdublin.com](mailto:reception@ihdublin.com) and ask to speak to the appropriate manager:

## **Your Language Course**

Examples of Legitimate complaints relating to your Language Course:

- You feel that you are in the wrong level
- You have received consistently incorrect information about language
- You have not had the opportunity to discuss your interests or language/ skills needs
- You have not been active enough in your lesson.
- Your lesson appears unplanned and chaotic
- You have focused on one aspect of language learning to the exclusion of everything else, for example you have only covered grammar lessons.
- Your teachers have consistently repeated material and appear not to be co-operating together.

## **Head of Education**

Carmel Hickey: [carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com](mailto:carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com)

Phone: 01 8773911

## **Director of Studies**

Lisa Bell: [lisa.bell@ihdublin.com](mailto:lisa.bell@ihdublin.com)

Phone: 01 8773920

Assistant Director of Studies

Amy Gilbert [amy@ihdublin.com](mailto:amy@ihdublin.com)

Phone: 01 8773930

## **Your accommodation**

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your accommodation which has been provided to you by the school, you can speak to our Accommodation Officer, **Cornelia Green**

### **Accommodation officer**

Examples of Legitimate complaints relating to your Accommodation:

#### **Host families**

- Your house is consistently unclean
- Your host family do not speak to you
- Your host family do not include you in family activities
- The food you receive is sub standard

#### **Apartments**

- The facilities are broken/ not usable
- Your room is unclean
- Your bed linen is unclean

Cornelia Green: [homestay@ihdublin.com](mailto:homestay@ihdublin.com)

Phone: 01 877 3929

### **Social Programme**

Examples of Legitimate complaints relating to your Social Programme:

- You do not receive information about the social programme on a daily basis
- The co-ordinators are not available to meet you at break time
- The tours are consistently badly organised
- Your input in the programme is not considered and not asked for.

### **Head of Education**

Carmel Hickey: [carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com](mailto:carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com)

Phone: 01 8773911

### **Procedure for complaints**

You can request to have a private meeting with the appropriate manager and your complaint will be recorded on a Client Service Action form by the manager. The manager will take notes and will read notes back to you to confirm the content of your complaint.

If possible, the manager will address the issue immediately.

If not, the manager will request another meeting with you the following day to discuss the situation and possible solutions.

It is the policy of International House Dublin that the vast majority of the complaints are dealt with within two working days of the complaint being made.

### **Grievance procedure**

As part of our commitment to the fairness, dignity and respect to all staff and students of International House Dublin, IH Dublin will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. The aim of this policy is to identify what bullying and harassment is and what Action IH Dublin will take if they need to deal with an offence of this nature.

### **Bullying**

This has been defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour. This can be direct or indirect and verbal or physical. The behaviour can be conducted by one or more people against one person or more than one person and can be considered as having a negative impact on their right to dignity at work or in their course of study. Note that the behaviour must be repeated to be considered as bullying: one isolated incident may have a negative impact on the dignity of the individual, but is not considered bullying.

### **Harassment**

This is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the following grounds:

- Gender
- Marital status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the travelling community

### **Sexual Harassment**

This is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of people at work or in their course of study. It includes unwelcome, non-verbal, verbal or physical conduct based on the gender of a recipient which is offensive to the recipient or which cause the recipient discomfort, humiliation or interferes with their job or studies.

### **Victimisation**

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another because he/ she has made a complaint to IH Dublin in relation to harassment or bullying behaviour.

This policy is applicable to all IH Dublin staff and students. This policy is also applicable to business contacts, contractors, suppliers or other business contacts of IH Dublin.

As part of IH Dublin's Code of Conduct, it is imperative that all staff, students and suppliers respects the dignity of all members of IH Dublin. Please remember to consider equality grounds such as a person's gender, marital status, race, religion, age, Sexual orientation, member ship of the travelling community and disability.

Bullying or harassment may take the following forms:

### **Non-verbal abuse**

Inappropriate looks or gestures, displaying emblems on clothing, exclusion, whistling, isolation at lunch breaks or social events are all considered as non-verbal abuse.

### **Physical abuse**

Hitting, bodily contact that is abusive in nature, shaking fists in an angry way, damaging a staff or students' possessions.

This list is not complete and just serves as a guideline to staff and students. Each case will be taken in isolation and dealt with in an appropriate way.

### **Informal procedure**

IH Dublin is aware of and recognises the effects that bullying and harassment can have on its staff and students. However, IH Dublin is of the view that an informal approach to solving matters can often be effective. In the first instance, an attempt should be made to address an allegation of bullying on an informal basis set out through the informal procedure described below.

If a student believes that he/she is being bullied, he/she should explain clearly to the alleged harasser or bully that he/ she finds their behaviour unacceptable.

If the student feels that this may be too difficult, s/he may then seek the advice or assistance of the student welfare officer **Ms Cornelia Green** ( [reception@ihdublin.com](mailto:reception@ihdublin.com)) If it is inappropriate for the Student Welfare Officer to be involved, the issue should be raised with the Head of Education, Ms Carmel Hickey ( [carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com](mailto:carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com))

If the staff member feels that this may be too difficult, s/he may then seek the advice or assistance of the Head of Education, Carmel Hickey ( [carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com](mailto:carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com)) If it is inappropriate for the Head of Education to be involved, the issue should be raised with the Director of International House Dublin, Mr Pdraig Hourigan.

The student or staff member may also discuss this issue with a contact person. The contact person may be a classmate or colleague or other person representing the students or staff. The student or staff member may request the assistance of the contact person in discussing the issue with the alleged harasser or bully. Any discussion with the alleged harasser or bully must be confidential, non-confrontational and see to resolve the matter in an informal, calm manner.

If the student or staff member decides that it would not be appropriate to approach the alleged harasser or bully either personally or through a contact person, they should then proceed to the formal procedure.

If the student or staff member has attempted to discuss the matter with the alleged bully or harasser and is not happy with the results, they should then proceed to the formal procedure.

### **Formal Procedure**

In the situation where the informal complaint has failed and the harassment is repeated, the student or staff member should proceed to the formal procedure. International House Dublin takes this situation very seriously and confirms the following in this regard:

- Where possible, all complaints will be investigated and appropriate action taken within 5 working days of the complaint being made
- The situation will be treated with the greatest confidentiality
- The situation will be investigated discreetly and sensitively by a competent person
- The investigator will examine the situation carefully and objectively with a view to deciding the best course of action.

### **Procedure**

- An initial complaint should be made in writing to the Student Welfare Officer ([reception@ihdublin.com](mailto:reception@ihdublin.com)) or Head of Education ( [carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com](mailto:carmel.hickey@ihdublin.com)) or if it is inappropriate for the these people to be involved the matter should be raised with the Director of International House Dublin Mr Pdraig Hourigan ([Padraig@ihdublin.com](mailto:Padraig@ihdublin.com).)
- Precise details of the alleged incidents of bullying or harassment and the names of any witnesses there may have been to those incidents should be included in the written complaint;
- The alleged harasser or bully will be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying and/or harassment has been made against him/her and he/she will be given a copy of the complainant's written statement;
- The alleged harasser or bully will also be told that he/she will be given a fair opportunity to respond to each and every allegation made against him/her;
- All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence possible to comply with the requirements of a fair investigation;
- Only individuals necessary to the investigation will be involved from the initial stages;
- A designated member of management or, if appropriate, a third party will be assigned to carry out an initial investigation into the complaint;
- If the complaint relates to harassment on grounds of age, race, religion, family status, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or membership of the traveller community or relates to sexual harassment, a team of at least two people will be appointed to investigate the complaint where possible;
- Where possible the investigator or investigation team will try to agree terms of reference and a time frame with the complainant and alleged harasser or bully in advance of the investigation;
- Interviews will be held with both the complainant and any witnesses to establish a thorough understanding of the facts of the alleged complaint, and a record of the meetings will be held;

- The complainant and the alleged harasser or bully may be accompanied to investigative meetings by any of the contact persons referred to above;
- All material received will be treated with the highest level of sensitivity;
- Where necessary parties to the procedure may in some cases be sent home with pay to enable parties to investigate the complaint;
- It may be necessary to interview other persons and if so the importance of confidentiality will be stressed to them. Any statements from witnesses will be circulated to both the person making the complaint and the alleged harasser or bully for their comments before any conclusion is reached in the investigation;
- When the investigation has been completed, the investigator or investigation team will present a written report to management;
- Both the complainant and the alleged harasser or bully will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation and will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before any action is decided upon by IH Dublin;
- If IH Dublin decides that the complaint is well founded, management will meet with the alleged harasser or bully to establish what action is to be taken
- Action can and may include counselling, monitoring, mediation and/or disciplinary action;
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with IH Dublin's Disciplinary Procedure;
- Where a complaint is upheld against a non-staff, the investigation report may recommend appropriate sanctions against the non-staff or his/her colleague which could extend where appropriate in the circumstances to exclusion of that individual from IH Dublin's premises, suspension or termination of service, suspension or termination of a supply service or other contract;
- In cases where it is discovered that the complainant made a false accusation of bullying and/or harassment, IH Dublin may undertake counselling, monitoring, mediation and/or disciplinary action including dismissal (see malicious complaints below);
- Any party to the investigation who is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation is entitled to appeal;
- Any appeal should be made in writing and directed to the Director of IH Dublin , Mr Padraig Hourigan, within 10 working days of the conclusion of the investigation;
- The Board of Directors may nominate a third party to work with them on the appeal and will aim to notify the appellant of IH Dublin's decision within a further 10 working days.

**Malicious complaints**

Malicious complaints (complaints which have no basis and are intended to impugn the integrity of another staff) are considered a very serious matter and will be treated under the disciplinary procedure and may lead to dismissal. A complaint that is not upheld by the formal investigation is not necessarily considered to be malicious without fear of ridicule or reprisal.