



HARASSMENT POLICY

Policy:	Harassment
Approved By:	Board of Trustees
Approval Date:	30.04.2019
Next review Date:	30.04.2020
Policy Holder:	IBTI

1. Introduction

The International Bible Training Institute (IBTI) recognizes that personal harassment, which may or may not be associated with discrimination, can occur.

The IBTI recognizes that all those seeking to enrol and all those involved in studying or working on its programmes have the right to employ the appeal procedures set out in this policy when they have, or feel they have, a reason for grievance.

The IBTI will ensure that all aspects of the appeals process will be dealt with and will be kept strictly confidential. Written records of grievances and their outcomes will be filed in a separate file and stored in the college safe for a period of two years.

Personal harassment takes many forms and people may not always realize that their behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour towards an individual by another person or persons. Examples of harassment include:

- a) Insensitive jokes and pranks
- b) Lewd or abusive comments about appearance
- c) Deliberate exclusion from conversations
- d) Displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
- e) Unwelcome touching
- f) Abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour

These examples are not exhaustive and formal action, according to the stages detailed below, will be taken against volunteers, staff members, assessors or students committing any form of personal harassment.

2. Policy

The IBTI deplors all forms of personal harassment and seeks to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all volunteers, staff members, assessors and students.

3. Location of the policy

The college will ensure that the policy is available to all students and staff and will also be on the IBTI website: www.ibti.org.uk.



4. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide an appeal process for applicants, students, staff and teaching faculty who have reason to believe they have been treated unfairly, unjustly or improperly in relation to any aspects of the IBTI programme, from application to graduation.

5. Complaining procedure about harassment

The college requires all those seeking to make an appeal for any grievance to follow whenever possible the three stage procedure indicated below.

However, if a complaint is considered to be very serious the complainant can go directly to stage two.

6. Stage One – Informal Complaint

IBTI recognises that personal, unfair treatment can take many forms and people involved may not always realise that their behaviour and actions give reason for complaints. IBTI therefore encourages the complainant to give, if possible the person/s allegedly involved in the grievance, the benefit of the doubt.

If the complainant is a victim of minor harassment they should make it clear to the perpetrator, on an informal basis, that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop.

If the situation has not been resolved in this way, the complainant should then talk to their line manager or any other member of the management team with whom they feel comfortable. In the case of students the complainant should talk to the students' welfare manager. That person will seek to assist in resolving the situation informally.

If the complainant and the other party do not reach a satisfactory resolution the complainant may progress the appeal to stage two within 5 days.

- **Stage Two – Formal Complaint**

If the appeal has not been resolved at stage one or the grievance is more serious or sensitive, the college gives the right to the complainant to bring the matter in writing to the attention of the IBTI Directors.

The IBTI Directors will ensure that a full investigation will be done by listening separately to the complainant and to the other party. Any probable witnesses will also be consulted before the Directors endeavour to come to a resolution acceptable to all. A resolution should be reached within **20 working days** of the appeal reaching stage two. The result of the appeal will be communicated to both parties in writing.

If either party is not satisfied with the result of the appeal, they may proceed to the next stage of the appeal process.

- **Stage Three – Formal Complaint to Board of Trustees**

If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties at stage two the matter must be brought, in writing, to the attention of the Board of Trustees, within **5 working days** of completion of stage two.

The letter could include:

- a) If applicable, the name(s) of the alleged person(s) who is deemed to be guilty of unfair, unjust or improper treatment;
- b) The nature of the alleged unacceptable treatment;
- c) The dates and times when the alleged incident(s) occurred;
- d) The names of any witnesses;
- e) Any action / decision already taken regarding the alleged incident(s).

On receipt of a formal complaint the Board of Trustees will take action to separate, if necessary, the complainant from the alleged person(s) deemed to be guilty of any serious irregularity to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place and until the matter has been resolved.

The trustees dealing with the complaint will carry out a thorough investigation. They will be expected to act in confidence. If the investigation concludes that the allegation is well founded, the guilty party will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action and the previous decisions reversed or adjusted as necessary.

The decision will be final and will be communicated to both parties in writing. **This will usually be within 20 days from receipt of the stage three appeals.** The decision of the Board of Trustees will be final.

If you bring a complaint of harassment you will not be victimized for having brought the complaint. However, **if the investigation concludes that the complaint is untrue and has been brought with malicious intent your studies or voluntary work will be terminated.**

7. Mechanisms for Feedback

Constructive comment for the continued improvement of this policy is welcomed and should be forwarded to the Data Protection Officer, Gordica Karanfilovska at policies.data@ibti.org.uk.