



International Bible Training College (IBTI)

Impact the nations with your vocation

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Personnel Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Approved By:	Board of Trustees//Directors
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Policy Holder:	IBTC

1. Introduction

This Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is designed to outline the disciplinary process for voluntary workers and tutors at the International Bible Training College (IBTC). It serves as a framework to maintain discipline, address misconduct, and ensure fair treatment for all voluntary workers and tutors while considering the Christian character of the college and modelling of the Biblical values. The IBTC is committed to treating all team members fairly and equitably and to helping them to perform effectively. However, there will be occasions when it may be necessary to move to disciplinary procedures. This policy is adopted on a non-contractual basis and therefore does not make up part of the voluntary workers' agreement terms and conditions.

Due to the nature of the Disciplinary Policy, it may be necessary to read and follow it in conjunction with the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and transparent procedure for addressing disciplinary matters involving voluntary workers to promote a harmonious working environment at the IBTC. For the IBTC, it is essential to maintain a productive and respectful work atmosphere.

3. Application

This policy applies to all voluntary workers and tutors at the IBTC and the policy's procedure will be used in cases of breach of the IBTC rules or poor performance that have not been remedied by an informal warning.

The IBTC reserves the right to engage an independent third party to assist at any stage of the disciplinary procedure.

4. Confidentiality

All records related to disciplinary actions will be kept confidential, accessible only to those directly involved in the process.

5. Definitions

Voluntary Worker: An individual who provides services to the IBTC on an unpaid basis.

Disciplinary Action: Corrective measures taken in response to a breach of the IBTC Code of Good Practice or IBTC's policies.

Misconduct: Any act or behaviour contrary to the IBTC's values, policies, or standards of conduct.

Minor Misconduct: is defined as a minor breach of rules, for example:

- a) Poor time keeping.
- b) Minor safety violations.
- c) Failure to follow departmental policy/procedure e.g., failure to follow a reasonable instruction.
- d) Minor misuse of departmental assets such as phone/email.

Gross Misconduct

Gross misconduct is an act or acts of misconduct serious enough to justify dismissal. The following offences will be viewed by the IBTC as gross misconduct:

- a) deliberate or intentional use of assets or equipment without the appropriate authorisation beyond what can be seen as an honest mistake.
- b) insubordination e.g., refusal to carry out duties or compliance with reasonable instructions, except where voluntary worker's safety may reasonably be in jeopardy.
- c) intentional sexual harassment, harassment, bullying or violent, dangerous or intimidatory conduct.
- d) serious breach of rules, policies or procedures, especially those designed to ensure safe operation.
- e) divulging or misusing confidential information.
- f) theft or fraud.
- g) possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs, or intoxication by reason of alcohol or drugs, which could affect work performance in any way or have an impact on other voluntary workers.
- h) unauthorised or inappropriate use of email, internet and/or computer systems
- i) falsification of any IBTC records including reports, accounts, expenses, claims or self-certification forms.
- j) conduct detrimental to the Christian ethos of the IBTC.

This list of examples is not exhaustive or exclusive, and offences of a similar nature will be dealt with under this procedure. Gross misconduct will result in the initiation or escalation of the IBTC disciplinary procedure and may result in immediate dismissal without notice.

6. Principles

If disciplinary action should become necessary, each case will be treated consistently and fairly, and the disciplinary procedure will be observed at all steps according to the principles below:

- a) Fairness: All disciplinary actions will be carried out in a fair, unbiased, and impartial manner.
- b) Due Process: Voluntary workers will be provided with an opportunity to explain their actions and present their case.
- c) Progressive Discipline: Discipline will follow a progressive process, starting with informal discussions and escalating to formal actions if necessary.
- d) Confidentiality: Disciplinary matters will be handled with utmost confidentiality to protect the privacy and reputation of all parties involved.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the **IBTC Principal and the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors**.

The disciplinary procedures will be conducted impartially by the HR Manager and the IBTC Principal as designated persons. Under the direction of the IBTC Principal, the HR Manager will be responsible for the operational processes when dealing with disciplinary procedures.

In the rare situation where the HR Manager will not be able to fulfil their role for whatever reason (e.g. sickness) the IBTC Principal will appoint their nominee.

In case the Principal will not be able to oversee the disciplinary procedure, the IBTC Chair of the Board of Trustees/Directors will nominate a person in this role until the Principal is available.

Any conflict of interest with the designated persons must be declared (e.g., being the spouse of the person involved in a disciplinary process) and would involve them standing down from the disciplinary procedures. Under these circumstances the IBTC Principal would appoint a substitute to replace the designated person, so that the operational processes of the disciplinary procedure can continue and still be monitored and led by the Principal.

If the disciplinary procedure is against the IBTC Principal, then the Chair of the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors, the IBTC Board's nominated person or an IBTC Board appeal panel will lead the disciplinary procedure according to this policy.

Any formal meeting/appraisals arranged with a person under disciplinary procedure will usually be conducted by at least two responsible people.

8. General information about the disciplinary procedure

When a voluntary worker's performance fails to meet the expected standard, they will be provided with assistance to enhance their performance. Should work standards persistently decline, however and further action become imperative, the process will inherently commence with a pre-disciplinary informal discussion.

Similarly, in situations where a voluntary worker exhibits conduct that is potentially inappropriate, unacceptable and difficult to resolve, the appropriate course of action will be determined by the gravity of the situation: activating either a **pre-disciplinary informal procedure** or the **formal disciplinary procedure**.

Throughout the disciplinary process, if a voluntary worker demonstrates a genuine commitment for change they will be given the opportunity to improve throughout the stages of the disciplinary procedure.

A voluntary worker's rights will be upheld at all times, and they will have the right to:

- a) know the case against them and have a copy of the disciplinary documents held by the IBTC.
- b) reply
- c) be accompanied
- d) appeal

A graphical representation of IBTC policies and procedures is provided in Appendix 1 as a flowchart.

8.1. Pre-disciplinary informal procedure

8.1.1. Informal Resolution

Minor issues or concerns will be addressed through informal discussions between the voluntary worker and their line managers, or any other voluntary worker involved in the issue. If necessary, the IBTC HR manager could be involved mediating the process. This stage aims to resolve issues amicably and provide guidance to both sides involved.

8.1.2. Informal pre-disciplinary discussion

Where the Informal Resolution stage was unsuccessful and where appropriate, prior to using the formal aspects of the IBTC Disciplinary Procedure, a pre-disciplinary discussion will be held with the voluntary worker.

Minor misconduct will normally result in an informal pre-disciplinary discussion with a verbal warning being given by the immediate manager, HR Manager or the Principal. If that approach is not successful, the IBTC is likely to escalate it to the formal disciplinary procedure.

8.2. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

This procedure will be used in cases of gross misconduct and where previous attempts to resolve a minor misconduct issue have failed under the pre-disciplinary informal procedure. Normally, the Formal Disciplinary Procedure will follow the steps listed below, although it is acceptable to move directly to step three if a case is sufficiently serious.

From the first formal step of the disciplinary procedure, the line manager will normally be present and the voluntary worker have the option to have a work colleague (or another person

as relevant) present. At each step in the procedure a disciplinary meeting will be held where all the facts will be considered, and any mitigating circumstances discussed.

Where a written warning is issued under these steps, a copy will be placed on the voluntary worker's personnel file for the specified period. All warnings issued under this procedure will state clearly that the voluntary worker will be liable for further disciplinary action should their performance not improve or should there be a further breach of the IBTC rules.

In the event of no further misconduct occurring and the performance improving, the warning will be disregarded. The voluntary worker will also be advised of their right to appeal against the decision to take disciplinary action.

Step 1 - First Written Warning

A proper investigation is an integral part of the Formal Disciplinary Procedure and where an allegation of gross misconduct is involved, may require a voluntary worker to be suspended from their role at the IBTC whilst this is carried out which **should be confirmed in writing**. An investigation is there to ensure that issues are dealt with in a fair and reasonable manner and adequate protection is given to all voluntary workers. This is a fact-finding process and may necessitate the gathering of detailed information as well as the carrying out of formal interviews and taking of written statements.

The IBTC will ensure that an investigation is carried out prior to issuing the First Written Warning.

If there is willingness from both parties involved in the issue to resolve the issue amicably at this stage, there will be no need to proceed to Step 2.

A **First Written Warning** will be applied where the matters of concern are substantiated following the investigation. A copy of the **First Written Warning** will be given to the voluntary worker and a copy will be retained on their personnel file for six months and then removed unless there is repetition of misconduct within this time period.

The **First Written Warning** should include:

- The reason for the warning.
- Details of the expected changes.
- The timeline allowed for improvements.
- The fact that it is the first stage of the formal disciplinary procedure.
- That they have the right of appeal against the decision.

Step 2 - Second Written Warning

Where the misconduct continues after the issuing of the **First Written Warning** and the matters of concern are substantiated, a **Second Written Warning** will be given to the voluntary worker and a copy will be retained on their personnel file for twelve months and then removed unless there is repetition of misconduct within this time period. If there is willingness from both

parties involved in the issue to resolve the issue amicably at this stage, there will be no need to proceed to Step 3.

The **Second Written Warning** will consist of:

- A statement of the offence, including details of the complaint.
- Details of the specific improvements or expected changes required.
- The timeline allowed for improvement.
- Notification that a dismissal may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change.
- The right of appeal against this decision.

Step 3 - Dismissal

After the Second Written Warning if misconduct persists and the worker has failed to improve during the previous two steps, the voluntary worker will be dismissed from their position and issued with a **Dismissal Letter**. The decision to dismiss is the last resort in cases where the Principal feels that no other disciplinary measures will suffice under the circumstances of the particular case.

If a gross misconduct allegation is serious enough, the IBTC may enter the Formal Disciplinary Procedure directly at step three and dismissal may occur at the first offence. The voluntary worker will be informed in the **Dismissal Letter** with an explanation of the grounds for dismissal.

After dismissal the IBTC voluntary worker could not continue to live on the IBTC premises. Therefore, the time frame for leaving the IBTC premises should be respected as follows:

- a) Short-term voluntary workers should leave within 2 weeks from the date of the issued **Dismissal Letter** or after the end of the appeal process.
- b) Long-term voluntary workers should leave within 2 months from the date of the issued **Dismissal Letter** or after the end of the appeal process.

If the above time frame poses a risk to other people or college assets, there may be restrictions on the times indicated above and the voluntary worker may be asked to move to a more appropriate part of the campus where the risk is minimised.

The **Dismissal Letter** will consist of:

- Notice of the dismissal in writing.
- Reasons for the dismissal.
- The date on which the voluntary work will end.
- The voluntary worker's right of appeal.

8.3. Appeal Process

After receiving either the First or Second Written Warning, the voluntary worker has the right to appeal against this by submitting an appeal in writing to the IBTC Principal. If the IBTC Principal

is unable to fulfil their role in this capacity or is under disciplinary action themselves, their appeal should be submitted to the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors.

In the case of the voluntary worker being issued with a Dismissal Letter and therefore dismissed, they can appeal directly to the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors in writing.

The appeal should be submitted within seven working days of any written warnings issued at any stage of disciplinary action.

Depending on the situation, a panel formed by the HR Manager and/or the Principal and/or the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors will review the appeal and respond within twenty working days. The person under discipline will be invited to attend an appeal hearing after which a decision will be made on whether the disciplinary sanction is to be upheld or overturned. The decision of the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors will be final.

8.4. Appeals timeframe:

- a) The appeal should be submitted within 7 working days of any written warnings issued at any stage of disciplinary action.
- b) The HR Manager, Principal or the IBTC Board of Trustees/Directors will review the appeal and respond within 20 working days.

9. Mechanisms for feedback

Constructive feedback for the continued improvement of this policy is welcomed and should be forwarded to our Data Protection Officer at policies.data@ibt.org.uk.



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APPENDIX 1:

IBTC Disciplinary Policy and Procedure Flowchart

