

4. Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Waterford Institute of Technology has a commitment to placing the student at the centre of its activities. Placing the student in such a position confers on the student certain rights but also certain responsibilities and obligations.

4.1.2 The Student Code of Conduct is intended to set and maintain acceptable standards of behaviour within the student community, to encourage individuals to accept their obligations to the community and to help to maintain the Institute's good name and standing.

4.2 Student Rights

4.2.1 The Institute declares that the learner is at the centre of the learning experience that the learner is best placed to shape and guide the development of the services and activities that inform and shape their experience at the Institute. The rights this confers on students are both academic and related to the administration and governance of the Institute.

4.2.2 The student has a right to:

- i. Be fully informed of his/her rights and responsibilities while attending a programme of study at the Institute;
- ii. Be fully informed about his programme of study, its duration, level, structure, and the content of its component modules, its overall learning outcomes and the outcomes of each module, typically through a programme handbook;
- iii. Be fully informed in a timely way about the methods of assessment and the criteria for that assessment for the programme and all the component parts of the programme on which he/she is registered, typically through a programme handbook;
- iv. Receive appropriate teaching and other guidance by way of preparation for those assessments;
- v. Receive appropriate, comprehensive and constructive feedback following those assessments consistent with the right to appropriate teaching above;
- vi. Be fully informed of the basis for determining his or her final award classification;

vii. Be informed of progression and/or employment opportunities, including professional accreditation where appropriate;

viii. Be consulted regarding the ongoing administration and governance of the programme and of the Institute;

ix. Be consulted, through representatives, regarding the ongoing regulation of the Institute's programmes;

x. Seek appropriate redress from the Institute through the appropriate channels where the above rights are not upheld.

4.2.3 The student also has some responsibilities, to herself/himself, to classmates and to the wider community. Larger responsibilities are referred to in the Code of Conduct below; the responsibilities the student has to himself/herself include:

i. Attending and participating in teaching activities as directed by the academic faculty in a manner that does not compromise the learning efforts of others;

ii. Informing him- or herself of the regulations governing his or her programme of study;

iii. Participating in the regulation and governance of the Institute through participating in the forums that elect student representatives;

iv. Engaging in active dialogue with the Institute's staff regarding his or her ongoing intellectual and professional development.

4.2.4 Student registration establishes the student's status at the Institute and confers the rights listed above. Consistent with this, lecturers may not restrict access to learning materials for modules or programmes on which the individual student is registered. While it is the responsibility of students to attend classes (as indicated above), it is not appropriate to penalise non-attendance by restricting access either to lectures or other teaching activities (except in cases where duty of care to the student or the other students necessitates it) or to teaching materials, such as are available on the relevant Moodle pages, for instance.

4.3 The Student Code of Conduct

4.3.1 The essence of misconduct under this Code is improper interference, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of the Institute, or those who work or study in the Institute; or action which otherwise damages the Institute or any member of its staff or any student or brings the Institute or any member of its staff or any student into disrepute. Breach of or non-compliance with any Institute regulation, policy, procedure or rule would also constitute misconduct.

4.3.2 Where any Institute regulation, policy, procedure or rule provides for a procedure for dealing with infringement of same, that other procedure will apply rather than the disciplinary procedures provided for in this Code of Conduct.

4.3.3 The Institute's jurisdiction under this Code is not limited to its own property.

General Approach to Allegations of Misconduct

4.3.4 A complaint of misconduct shall normally be made to the Head of Department concerned. If considered appropriate, the Head of Department may deal with the matter without invoking the Code of Conduct.

4.3.5 Where a complainant is dissatisfied with a decision, the complainant may refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee constituted as set out below.

4.3.6 All those involved in the disciplinary procedures are required to respect the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of information arising from it.

4.3.7 The Code of Conduct is intended to ensure a speedy and efficient resolution of issues.

Membership of the Disciplinary Committee

4.3.8 The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of a Chairperson nominated by the President of the Institute and such other members of the Institute as may from time to time be determined by the President. The Committee shall be appointed by the President and shall hold office for a period of two years.

4.3.9 The membership of the committee dealing with alleged breaches of the Code shall be constituted as follows:

- i. the Chairperson;
- ii. one academic Head of Department;
- iii. one member of support staff;
- iv. two members of academic staff;
- v. two officers of the Students' Union.

4.3.10 At all meetings of the Disciplinary Committee four members shall constitute a quorum. No member of the Disciplinary Committee who is involved in a complaint whether as complainant, witness or offended party will participate in the Disciplinary Committee dealing with the complaint. The committee shall form a decision and recommend an action to the Registrar