



2016/2017  
Ethics Code





## **ETHICS CODE IE**

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This guide is published by IE Publishing. María de Molina, 12 - bajo. 28006 – MADRID, Spain.

NOTE: all the information given here is liable to change at any point during the course as a result of IE's aim to continuously improve its activities.

# Introduction: The IE Community and its Commitment to Ethics and Integrity in the World of Business

IE is a place where managers and aspiring managers meet to learn how to build better businesses. A good business does not just create value for customers and owners, it also has managers who act ethically and with integrity and thereby provide value to society at large. Since its founding more than thirty years ago, this belief has been IE's guiding principle.

The IE Community is dedicated to the promotion of ethics and integrity in the world of business. Professional ethics and integrity therefore form the very core of this Community. Fairness, honesty, and respect for others are not just virtues; they are what each member of the IE Community can rightly expect from their peers.

Globalization and technological progress have made the world smaller. More easily than ever before, people from different countries and cultures can work and study together, enriching the experience of everyone. IE views diversity as a fundamental strength and driver of innovation. The IE Community therefore seeks to promote diversity in every possible way—diversity of opinions, backgrounds, nationalities, cultures, ethnicity, religious beliefs, professional and personal experiences, as well as equality of gender. We strive for an environment that celebrates and fosters diversity, in which Community members can freely express themselves without constraints imposed by dogma or dictum.

Globalization has also made us more aware of environmental degradation and the frailty of our planet. Promoting business that is environmentally sustainable and that operates in harmony with surrounding nature and communities has therefore become a core objective of IE.

As an academic institution, IE has three core pillars: Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Global Vision, and Social Responsibility. As a community of students, professors, management staff, and alumni, we are defined by a core set of values and goals:

- To promote business that enhances progress and well-being;
- To act fairly, honestly, and with respect for others;
- To create value through entrepreneurship and other business activities;
- To create and maintain an environment for the free exchange of ideas;
- To celebrate diversity and global understanding;
- To respect academic freedom in the classroom;
- To uphold academic honesty and integrity;
- To promote sustainable development and the preservation of natural resources;

- To recognize that people are the foremost asset of any community, including business and organizations.

All of our activities are influenced by these values. They feature prominently in the design of academic modules, assignments, extracurricular activities, and events.

## **IE Code of Ethical Conduct Explained: Reasoning behind the Code, Rights, and Responsibilities**

### **1. What is IE Code of Ethical Conduct and why is it important?**

The IE community has established standards of academic and community conduct because it believes that the reputation and quality of life within this community are inevitably determined by the actions of each of its members. Whatever one member says, does, or omits to do invariably also reflects upon how the public at large views this school and its graduates. An IE degree is consistently assessed not only by the academic reputation of the school but also by the reputation of those who carry its banner. Therefore, IE is dedicated to the continuous enhancement of the academic and community environment of this school.

### **2. What is the purpose of the Code of Ethical Conduct?**

The Code of Ethical Conduct defines the standards for academic and community conduct, rights and responsibilities of students as members of this community, procedures for handling allegations of misconduct and dishonesty, and sets forth the possible sanctions for failure to meet these standards.

As a member of the IE Community, students agree to act in a way that enables the community's values to flourish. This includes adhering to a basic set of academic and community rules, which are embodied in the IE Code of Ethical Conduct.

At the beginning of an academic program, all IE students have to sign a statement in which they acknowledge having received a copy of the IE Code of Ethical Conduct, express their respect for the values governing this Community, and pledge not to undermine these values or the Community through their actions.

### **3. How does this Code benefit us all?**

It is important to stress that the Code is not borne out of a distrust of students. Rather the opposite is true. IE believes that the Code merely codifies the values and standards that each student, as prescreened through the admissions process, should already possess. But because IE recognizes that not all individuals may believe in the need for a Code of proper conduct to guarantee academic and community standards, IE has nevertheless established this Code for the precise purpose of protecting those who do. Thus, students who do choose to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards are ensured an atmosphere of integrity and personal and academic honesty.

#### **4. What is expected of students in terms of academic standards?**

Students are expected to complete all examinations, tests, written assignments, oral presentations, and other work in accordance with the standards set forth in this Code. In particular, this means that students shall not engage in any form of “cheating”, plagiarism, or any kind of academic misconduct.

#### **5. How do I know if a particular practice is OK or not?**

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code of Ethical Conduct and are responsible for knowing the requirements for their particular course (regarding, for example, issues such as collaborative work, use of study aids, or what information can be used during take-home examinations). Where a student is unsure whether conduct could violate the standards of academic conduct as set forth in the Code, the student has an obligation to seek clarification first and foremost from the instructor and secondly, if necessary, from the program managers. As is the case with all rules everywhere, saying afterwards you did not know them is not an acceptable excuse.

#### **6. What is expected of students in terms of community standards?**

IE celebrates and fosters the diversity, freedom of expression, and professionalism of its students, faculty and staff. To create and maintain an environment in which these attributes may flourish, every member of this community has the obligation, even when asserting the right to free expression, to avoid all behavior that may be intentionally offensive to another on the basis of race, religion, nationality or origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or political beliefs. Furthermore, all students must not engage in any misconduct that affects another’s rights or property. Nor should any student misrepresent herself to third parties placing into question the integrity of the entire community.

#### **7. What are the limits in which the Ethics Code may be applied?**

The “academic rules” do not have a physical crossing line in terms of applying these rules. Students are also expected to respect the “community rules” wherever they may be, but they will not be subject to judgment by the rules of this Code when the actions occur “off campus”, unless such actions directly affect to IE community’s welfare or core values.

#### **8. What is the Ethics Committee?**

The Ethics Committee is a committee made up of IE professors and students that meet to give advice on issues of ethical conduct and analyze specific cases of potential violations of the Code of Ethical Conduct.

## **9. How does the process work?**

When a student, professor, or staff member witnesses a potential infraction of the Ethics Code, he or she must report the infraction to the program director. The program director will evaluate the issue, make an initial assessment of the alleged infraction, and determine whether the allegation falls within the scope of the Code. Depending on this first assessment, the program director can refer the matter to the Ethics Committee or, if the case is easily identified and there are precedents of sanctions applied to the similar cases the program director may apply the established sanction, by no means refusing a personal meeting with the student to discuss his or her behaviour and communicate the school's disapproval. If the Program Directors believe that the case warrants convening the Ethics Committee, the Chair of the Committee will be informed and will summon a meeting to discuss the case. (see chapter 8 of the Code Ethical Conduct).

## **10. What are my rights if I am accused of an infraction and the matter has been referred to the Ethics Committee?**

A student accused of an infraction will be innocent and must be treated as such until the decided sanction is announced as a disciplinary action.

If a student is accused of an academic or community infraction and the program director decides to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee, he or she will receive a written note from the Chair of the Committee detailing the alleged misconduct. The student should carefully read the allegations and decide how to respond.

## **11. I am pretty sure I won't violate IE's academic and community standards – how does the Code apply to me?**

All students share responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Ethical Conduct. In particular, as members of the IE Community, students have an obligation to work with other community members to foster and promote an environment consistent with the academic and community values contained in the Code.

There are lots of things each and every one of us can do. Most important is helping other students make sound ethical judgments that are consistent with the values that govern this community. We expect each member of this community to speak up and confront a fellow student who may –consciously or unconsciously– engage in unethical or inappropriate behaviour. We also hope you will help other students understand the rules spelled out in the Code and help them adhere to them by offering, for instance, help on how to properly cite sources in reports and papers and similar matters. Another way of contributing is volunteering to serve as an elected Ethics representative.

Since the responsibility of implementing the Code is borne by all members of the IE Community –including students– students may also wish to inform program managers about circumstances that they believe could enable or might already constitute an infraction of academic and community standards.

Most importantly, students should work with professors and staff to continuously improve the academic and community environment and thereby strengthen the values underpinning this community. Where appropriate, students should suggest changes to rules and procedures – including the Code itself– to foster those values.

## **12. What do I do if I witness a potential infraction?**

As noted above, the implementation of the IE Code of Ethical Conduct is the obligation of all members of the IE Community, including students. We certainly do not want to have a “police state” environment in which students feel they should turn each other in. It is our firm belief that people are good and that everybody at IE has come here to work and study in an environment in which it is safe to conduct oneself according to the highest ethical standards. Problems arise when conduct by individuals negatively affects other members of the community. Because IE uses a curved grading system in which grades are allocated based on relative position vis-à-vis other students, for instance, unfair advantages to some through cheating or plagiarism do harm to others. In extreme cases, a student’s academic status in the program may be in jeopardy because of a grade received in part because cheating by others has distorted the allocation of grades.

When it comes to reporting a potential infraction, students should use their common sense. Particularly if they feel that the actions of one or more fellow students put the academic and/or community environment at IE in jeopardy or could significantly harm other community members, they should report the circumstances to the Academic Director. A reporting student may, but is under no obligation to, name the student or students involved in a potential infraction. Nevertheless, he or she should provide enough information –such as the course or context in which the matter in question occurred– to enable the Academic Director to take measures that ensure nobody is harmed and everybody’s rights are respected.

Remember that the idea behind reporting a potential infraction is not to “catch a crook” or to “play police” but rather to help the program management team work with other members of the IE community to bring about circumstances in which such infractions cannot occur. An example would be to provide information that helps a professor change the structure of a particular assignment to ensure everybody gets the grade they deserve.

## **13. If I witness something, do I have to testify in the proceedings?**

Students who report potential infractions do not have an obligation to testify if such a report does –after additional research by the Academic Director– lead the Academic Director to deal with the case or refer it to the Ethics Committee. The same applies to witnesses. If a student does not wish to testify in such a proceeding, the Academic Director needs to find sufficient evidence from other sources in order to sustain a charge without that student’s testimony. If there is not sufficient evidence without the student’s testimony and the student is unwilling to testify, the case will simply be closed.

## **14. What sanctions can be imposed for violations of the Code?**

The particular sanction imposed depends on the seriousness and nature of the infraction. Repeat infractions by the same student are considered more severely. For violations of academic standards, the sanctions range from resubmission of the assignment in question all the way to dismissal from IE in case of particularly serious and/or repeat offenses.

On the community standards side, sanctions for violations can range from a simple warning through an obligation to present a written apology to an injured party all the way to dismissal from IE.

Sanctions imposed in violation of IE’s academic and community standards become part of the student’s official IE record.

# IE Code of Ethical Conduct

## 1. PREAMBLE

All members of the IE Community, whether students, faculty, administrators or staff, have the obligation to uphold the high standards of academic integrity and professional responsibility which form the ethical pillars of IE. Through this IE Code of Ethical Conduct (the “Code”), the IE community affirms the importance of academic honesty, respect for other community members, and the expectation that students will conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of professionalism.

Within IE, the Code sets forth ethical standards in relation to academic and community matters, as well as rules governing the IE Ethics Committee, procedures for dealing with alleged infractions, and sanctions which may be imposed in these cases.

All students are expected to sign a statement of adherence to the Code. The Code applies to all IE students, whether or not they sign this statement of adherence, including visiting or exchange students from other institutions.

## 2. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The following academic standards apply to all individual or group academic work performed or submitted as part of an IE course, seminar or workshop, including but not limited to assignments, papers, projects, presentations, quizzes, tests or examinations (including take-home examinations), as well as contributions to online discussion forums in programs with an online learning component.

### 2.1. *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism, defined as the dishonest and unethical practice of presenting someone else’s ideas or words as if they were one’s own, is explicitly forbidden to all IE students. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Copying or using someone else’s exact words, without using quotation marks and properly acknowledging the source;
- Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas (restating them in different words) without properly acknowledging the source;
- Performing academic work in collaboration with someone else (when allowed by the instructor), without properly acknowledging the other person’s help or input.

The definition of plagiarism does not presuppose intentionality. When a student has doubts about whether they have properly cited or referenced another’s thoughts, words, or collaboration, the student should seek guidance from a professor or program manager.

One should take into account that, when turning in group work, each and every member of the group is responsible for the academic integrity of the work. If sections of a group report are plagiarized, for example, it is not acceptable to just argue that those sections were written by somebody else. If your name is on the report, you are responsible for its academic integrity.



## **2.2. Cheating and Academic Dishonesty**

Students shall refrain from all forms of cheating and academic dishonesty, defined as conduct intended to obtain an unfair academic advantage over one's classmates or colleagues. Examples of cheating and academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating in examinations, including copying from someone else's work, using or possessing unauthorized materials during an exam, unauthorized communication with any other person during an exam, and giving or receiving unauthorized assistance during an exam;
- Obtaining unauthorized access to examination questions or answers; giving or receiving advance knowledge of such questions or answers;
- Distributing or obtaining without authorization case solutions, solutions to problem sets, case teaching notes and other materials (in physical or electronic form) whose sharing could undermine the academic enterprise by giving some students an unfair advantage and/or by depriving students of the ability to learn on their own;
- Using resources or information without the authorization of the professor;
- Presenting any academic work obtained from, or based on material prepared by, another person or enterprise (including students in another section or former students);
- Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course, without prior authorization from the instructors of each course. (If a student wishes to hand-in the same project in different courses, he or she must get approval from both professors. If a student wishes to quote a small part of a previous deliverable, he or she may do so. Nonetheless, the correct citation rules must be applied to avoid plagiarism, even if it is your own);
- Intentional interference with others' work, including the concealment of publicly available books, papers or other information;
- Misrepresenting or forgery of data or academic records, including attendance records.

## **2.3. Forgery**

Students shall not forge, falsify or make improper use of any degree certificate or document attesting to academic achievement.

# **3. COMMUNITY STANDARDS**

IE students are expected to respect the following "community standards" in any context. However, actions during off campus activities, i.e., activities outside of the physical IE campus or virtual IE educational environment, will be only within the scope of this Code if they particularly affect IE community welfare. IE internal procedure may be suspended if there is a pending judicial action and until a final decision is taken by a judge.

## **3.1. Respect and Tolerance**

As members of a diverse academic community, students shall conduct themselves so as to maintain an environment of respect and tolerance for all individuals, and respect for the academic mission of IE. The following are examples of conduct which may constitute an infraction of this principle:

- Violence, threats of violence or verbal abuse as or against a member of the IE community or visitors;
- Disrupting or causing a disturbance in classes, examinations or the learning environment of IE.

### **3.2. Harassment**

Under no circumstances shall a student engage in the harassment of a fellow student, faculty member, administrator, staff, visitor or other member of the IE community. Harassment is unwanted behavior that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's educational, work, social, or living activities as a member of the IE community. Harassment can take the form of:

- Persistent or serious and intentional degradation, intimidation, or abuse of another person; use of sexually degrading language;
- Conduct of an offensive, demeaning, intimidating or hostile nature based on race, color, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability;
- Persistent or serious and unwanted telephone calls, e-mails, or content published on social media within the IE environment.

### **3.3. Respect for Property**

Students shall respect the property of others, as well as the buildings, furniture, equipment, educational materials, trademarks, and other intellectual property of IE.

### **3.4. Misrepresentation**

Students shall refrain from any misrepresentation which may cause detriment to the reputation and good name of IE or the members of its community.

## **4. CORE VALUES AND OTHER CONDUCT**

Conduct not specifically included in the above sections may constitute an infraction of the Code, so long as it is determined by resolution of the Committee to be incompatible with the core values set forth in the Preamble, in particular the duties of academic honesty, respect for other community members, and professional conduct.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY TO PROMOTE AN ENVIRONMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE CODE**

As members of the IE community, students share responsibility for the implementation of the Code. In particular, students have an obligation to work with other community members to foster and promote an environment consistent with the academic and community values set forth in the Code. This responsibility may entail:

- Asking the Academic Director, the Committee, a professor, or a fellow student for advice and clarification when unsure about how the Code applies in a given situation;
- Helping other students understand and adhere by the rules set forth in the Code;
- Informing the Academic Director, the Committee, or a professor of circumstances that may constitute an infraction of academic or community standards;
- Suggesting improvements of IE rules and procedures pertaining to academic and community standards, including improvements of the Code;
- Serving as a student representative on the Committee.

## **6. RIGHTS OF A STUDENT SUSPECTED OF AN INFRACTION OF THIS CODE**

A student who has been suspected of misconduct must keep in mind the following rights he or she has throughout the process. Such rights are as follows:

- The right to receive notice of the infraction he or she has been suspected of in writing.
- The right to respond to any allegation in writing.
- The right to request to have a private meeting in person.
- The right to see all the relevant elements of proof, whether against or for the student's case.
- The right to request the testimony of witnesses or present other evidence that is relevant in the case.
- The right to defend the case in front of the Ethics Committee
- The right to appeal the decision of the case.

## **7. BEGINNING OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

When a student, professor, or staff member witnesses a potential infraction of the Ethics Code, he or she must report the infraction to the Academic Director, who shall evaluate the issue, make an initial assessment of the alleged infraction, and determine whether the allegation falls within the scope of the Code.

Depending on this first assessment, the Academic Director can:

- Decide that the case is not within the scope of this Code.
- Refer the matter to the Ethics Committee, if a) the case implies severe or institutional concerns for IE's reputation or b) the student prefers to defend the case in front of the Ethics Committee.
- Decide based on his or her own competence to assess the case if, in accordance with precedent, the maximum sanction in similar cases has been a grade of "C" in the course and the student does not prefer to defend the case in front of the Ethics Committee.

## **8. PROCEDURE BEFORE THE ACADEMIC DIRECTOR**

If the Academic Director considers he or she can deal with the case, he or she shall inform the student of the allegations made against him or her, and shall provide him or her with the opportunity to refer the case to the Ethics Committee.

If the student accepts that the Academic Director decides the case, he or she may respond to the charges in writing within a reasonable time period as determined by the Academic Director and may present evidence. At his or her discretion, the Academic Director may choose to gather additional evidence, including hearing in person from witnesses other than the student involved in the allegations. Written exchanges may occur via e-mail.

If the Academic Director decides that there has been an infraction of the standards set forth in this Code, he or she will impose a sanction according to the precedents, being limited to a maximum allowed sanction of a grade "C" in the course.

The Academic Director shall communicate the decision to the student, the Dean of Programs and the Chair of the Ethics Committee. Decisions will be filed by the Registrar's Office along with all supporting documents.

## **9. ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Ethics Committee is composed of appointed faculty members and elected students representatives. It is called into session as deemed necessary to hear cases referred by the Academic Director of the respective program

The Ethics Committee is presided by a Chair elected by the Dean among the faculty to serve for a period of four years. The appointment may be renewed for such further period or periods as the Dean may decide.

To form the Committee for a particular matter, the Dean of Programs shall call on (i) the Chair of The Committee, (ii) a suitable number of faculty members from among those named by the Dean of Faculty to serve on the Committee, (iii) a suitable number of student representatives from the corresponding section(s) or program(s), and (iv) a representative from the Student Office only in cases of alleged violation of community standards.

The Dean of Programs shall ensure a balanced number of faculty members and student representatives on the Committee. Whenever possible, faculty members and student representatives shall be chosen from those who are teaching or are enrolled in the program in question. In cases involving online/blended programs, personal conflict or programs with few students, the Dean of Programs may call on student representatives from another program or on alumni from prior editions of the program itself.

The Committee is considered to be formed when at least two (2) faculty members and two (2) student representatives are in attendance.

## **10. PROCEDURE BEFORE THE ETHICS COMMITTEE**

When a case is referred to the Ethics Committee, the Dean of Programs forms the Committee as set forth above, after which the Chair calls the meeting and conducts the procedure through the steps outlined below.

The Chair shall inform the student of the allegations made against him or her, and shall provide him or her with an opportunity to respond to the charges in writing within a reasonable time period as determined by the Chair and present evidence in his/her defense. Together with this written response, the student may also request to present his or her case in person to the Ethics Committee. The written exchange may occur via e-mail. The student's written response shall be made available to all Committee members prior to the meeting. At its discretion, the Ethics Committee may choose to gather additional evidence, including hearing in person from witnesses other than the student involved in the allegations.

In Committee meetings, deliberations shall be held in strict confidence and resolutions are adopted by simply majority vote of all its members in attendance.

After deliberation, the Committee decides whether there has been an infraction of the standards set forth in the Code and, where appropriate, recommends a sanction commensurate with the violation and in accordance with precedent, from among those listed in Section 12. The Chair shall draw up the minutes of the Committee meeting and circulate them for comment to all Committee members who attended the meeting.

Once minutes are approved, the Dean of Programs will be notified of the Committee's opinion and recommendations. The Dean of Programs may accept or modify the recommendations prior to impose the sanction and communicate it to the Academic Director. The Academic Director shall notify the student of the Committee's decision and recommendations, including any mention in the minutes of the aggravating and/or mitigating circumstances taken into account by the Committee, and the final decision if modified by the Dean of Programs.

Decisions shall be also communicated to the Registrar's Office along with Committee minutes and all supporting documents.

The recommendations of the Committee may be communicated to the IE Community by the Dean of Programs, or the Associate Deans of the respective programs, as they may consider appropriate.

## **11. APPEALS**

A student who has been found responsible for an infraction may appeal the decision to the Dean of the School, whose decision is final. The Dean may delegate this authority to the Dean of Academic Affairs or such other person as the Dean may deem appropriate.

Appeals may only be based on the following grounds:

- If the procedure has not followed the rules and principles set forth in the Code;
- If new evidence becomes available, which was not considered in the proceedings;
- If the sanction imposed is clearly disproportionate to the infraction committed, taking into account any aggravating and/or mitigating circumstances considered in the case.

Appeals must be presented in writing to the Dean of the School or designated person, stating the arguments and evidence in support of one or more of the grounds set forth above. It should be noted that an appeal is not a de novo reconsideration of the whole case, nor an examination of the Academic Director's or the Committee's authority to hear the matter. Instead, the appeal is limited to consideration of whether any of the aforementioned grounds are present in a degree sufficient to justify revising the decisions.

Appeals must be presented within seven (7) calendar days as from the date the decision is notified to the student. Appeals must be resolved by the Dean of the School or designated person within an additional period of seven (7) calendar days as from the date the appeal is presented.

The final decision and any supporting documents shall be filed at the Registrar's Office.

## **12. SANCTIONS**

One or more sanctions may be imposed in function of the severity and intentional nature of the pertinent infraction, any aggravating or mitigating circumstances present in the particular case and in accordance with precedent. Repeat infractions (whether of the same or different nature) by the same student are considered an aggravating circumstance.

### ***12.1. Sanctions for infraction of academic standards:***

- Admonishment;
- Written apology by the student to others affected by misconduct;
- Re-submission of the assignment;
- A failing grade in the assignment;
- A failing grade in the course;
- Temporary suspension from IE as a student for a determined period of time, after which the student may inform the Academic Director of his wish to join a new intake after his or her last fully completed term;
- Permanent expulsion from the Program;
- Permanent expulsion from IE;
- Any other sanction deemed appropriate by the Committee or Dean of the School.

### ***12.2. Sanctions for infraction of community standards:***

- Admonishment;
- Written apology by the student to others affected by misconduct;
- Restitution for loss or damage to property;
- Permanent expulsion from IE Business School;
- Any other sanction deemed appropriate by the Committee or Dean of the School.