

**IGNOU REGIONAL CENTRE COCHIN (RC14)**

Kaloor, Cochin, Ernakulam District

22.11.23

**Professional ethics for employees at IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin**

Professional ethics are principles that govern the behavior of a person or group in a business environment. Like values, professional ethics provide rules on how a person should act towards other people and institutions in such an environment (<https://www.iaa.govt.nz/for-advisers/adviser-tools/ethics-toolkit/professional-ethics-and-codes-of-conduct/>, 2023).

Professional ethics with base of code of conduct for an employee while on rolls has been disseminated based on real happening occurrences in the transaction of IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin besides that already self-learnt.

Transfer of information Virtually by email has been resorted for inculcating Professional ethics in Academics, Administrators and other staff including Part-Time functionaries at LSC and learners. This virtual communication compensates for the Programmes earmarked for the purpose and is acceptable even in the new normal situation.

The behavior of an individual employee in the office environment of Regional Centre has been specified through advisory note, email and circulars. However, so far such information has not yet been uploaded in the Regional Centre Cochin website.

In addition, etiquette and ethics expected from a learner was also integrated based on the various student unrest experienced at Regional Centre Cochin. As part of Induction Meeting, Code of Conduct of how to have etiquette for attending online counselling, Code of Conduct for behaving at LSC/RC by a learner under the Head of life skill education like Exhibiting Honesty, ability to Take One day at a time, having Persistence, necessary of Expression of Interest to communicate the felt and special need, Steadfastness in action, ethics in Peer interaction during Induction Meeting. The Annual awareness programmes on Code of Conduct as part of the Induction Meeting for the learners was held virtually during pandemic situation and later after the pandemic using both face-to-face and virtual platform used to disseminate the information related to Code of Conduct during Induction Meeting. The virtual platform used was Google Meet with simultaneous Facebook live session. The recorded video became the digital resource in compliance to NEP 2020 and has been uploaded in the YouTube channel of IGNOU Regional Centre Cochin under the playlist "Induction Meeting".

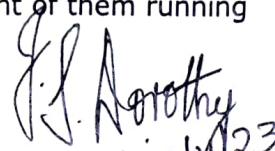
The following are the salient Professional ethics stressed upon in the functioning of the Regional Centre:

- 1. Running late for office:** Officials have been requested to inform the Disbursing Officer who is Incharge of maintaining attendance in the event of them running late.

  
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2. **Leaving early from office:** Officials have been requested to inform the Reporting Officer and Disbursing Officer who is Incharge of maintaining attendance in the event of them leaving early.
3. **Leaving in between office hours:** Officials have been requested to inform the Reporting Officer and Disbursing Officer who is Incharge of maintaining attendance in the event of them leaving the office premises during office hours.
4. **Staying after office hours:** Staying after office hours has the necessity of taking written permission and stating the work to be executed with the report furnished for completion of work on the next working day
5. **Coming on a holiday to office hours:** coming on a holiday to office hours has the necessity of taking written permission and stating the work to be executed with the report furnished for completion of work on the next working day.
6. **Parking of vehicle after office hours in the office premises:** Parking of vehicle after office hours in the office premises has the necessity of taking written permission and stating the purpose and the time of return after office hours/next working day to pick up the vehicle.
7. **Reacting verbally in office environment:** Reacting verbally in office environment has the necessity of giving the verbal expression as a written statement and ensuring that the verbal assault is not augmented by physical throwing of file, cups, or pre-text of throwing such items. Calling names, expressing opinion on challenging leadership are also requested to be given in writing.
8. **Expression of views seeking concurrence in office environment:** Consensus from all officials for executing an Official task is an essential component for sustenance of the Official task initiated. Hence, in office environment for sustenance of the Official task initiated, has the necessity of getting concurrence from all Officials. This is more apt when the task is to be executed while the official is on leave or when transferred or when superannuated.
9. **Objectivity of purpose while handling student queries/student unrest:** The objectivity of purpose while handling student queries/student unrest is always ensured so that facts are unanimously told in the interest of the Institution to the public. The necessity of taking the written compliant from the learner instead of listening verbally and stating the solutions to be executed within the framework of the University besides not taking the side of the student in accusing the Official responsible for executing the work as per work allocation is also stressed upon while handling student query/student unrest.
10. **Honesty in giving leave application:** While it is also preferred that the Officials proceed on leave taking prior permission by submitting the leave application listing the pending activity of the section and handing over to another Official for sustenance on work is encouraged, not all Officials adhere to the same. Hence, certain Officials move out of station coupled with leave by sending an email. The life skill of being honest in giving leave application upon arrival from leave is an expected code of conduct. This is because not all Officials sign in the attendance register and linking leave application by email with application in prescribed format.

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- 11. Ensuring continuity of section work:** Ensuring continuity of section work while proceeding on leave by listing the pending work in the section and getting another official signature in the leave application. At times, when the Official (Section Head) is present and the information is sought from Competent Authority, the work is executed on priority basis by involving the Section staff. At time, the Section Head do object for executing the task as per the demand using Section staff, the Section Head is counselled in the file noting itself and the importance of completion of work was stressed upon.
- 12. Ensuring inclusiveness in Office:** Ensuring inclusiveness in Office and in assigning work is checklist for all Officials on roll. It is also a skewed behavior of certain Officials citing their special status to deviate the official matters especially that not yet executed or initiated for execution. Hence, code of conduct for ensuring that the social status is not misused to accuse colleagues or seniors or at times the subordinates is also shared when there is unrest among employees.
- 13. Ensuring continuity of task executed from earlier Regional Director/Academics/Disbursing Officer time:** Ensuring the sentiment of honoring earlier decision taking by the outgoing Official in the interest of the institution has been indicated in various occasion where the new Official in a task challenge the earlier task executed by the outgoing Official instead of continuing the task from where left. Seniority in taking an Academic as Internal Local Purchase Committee member is also ensured so that the Senior Official (who is likely to officiate in the absence of Regional Director) have first-hand information on the decisions taken in salient events.
- 14. Adherence to the purpose of the meeting :** Meeting is called after sending a circular in a Register. It remains a challenge for the Officials to stick to agenda in a meeting. The necessity of having a discipline of taking written permission to express views instead of stating the individual views in the minutes of the meeting and not willing to give in writing the verbally expressed opinion has been stressed upon as a code of conduct for adhering to the purpose of the meeting.
- 15. Enrolling for a programme of study:** Enrolling for a programme of study of IGNOU or any other Institution after seeking written permission has been stressed upon as the necessity of having a record of taking written permission to enroll for a programme of study of IGNOU or any other Institution instead of stating verbally or informing verbally while /after writing the examinations or writing the cause of leave in the leave application- as successful completion of the programme of study has to be reflected in the Service Book of the individual.
- 16. Attending as Resource Person in other Institution:** There is no objection from the Regional Director or any of the colleagues at RC Cochin for any of the officials to render their expertise at any platform subject to receipt of request letter from the official invited with the proof of the invitation letter. With the new normal situations, where Resource Person virtually meet the beneficiaries, Academics are encouraged to render expertise through online mode also. Movement of any official for any academic task outside the parent Regional Centre needs the approval of the Director, RSD. The Officials are also requested to give their request letter upon receipt of invitation from other Institutions for forwarding to the competent Authority.

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In cases when the Academics have never informed the Regional Director about their involvement in any other activity during office hours and their involvement in work not related to RC Cochin, while accidentally noticed especially while calling them for RC Cochin related office meeting only the office meeting timings were changed to suit the individual academic to do other than RC Cochin work so that their expertise nurtured. Hence, so far there is no prior history of the Regional Director allowing unilaterally (*as the power of allowing to render the Academic expertise outside parent Regional Centre is with the Director, RSD*) or the Academics seeking the permission from the Regional Director to allow to do activity beyond RC Cochin work.

**17. Writing Examination:** Either self or close family members writing examination of IGNOU or any other Institution after seeking written permission has the necessity of having a record of taking written permission to write examinations instead of stating verbally or informing verbally after writing the examinations or writing the cause of leave in the leave application as successful completion of the programme of study has to be reflected in the Service Book of the individual.

**18. Movement into another Office in the Regional Centre Campus:** The Regional Centre Campus is unique in that it houses three offices namely, Regional Centre Cochin, Regional Evaluation Centre Cochin and IGNOU Study Centre 14000. Informal grape wine does exist between the employees across the Institution. At times, Movement into another Office in the Regional Centre Campus is not accepted among employees irrespective of their informal communication set-up. Hence, employees have been requested by the respective Head to not to venture into another Office without seeking the permission of the Heads involved.

**19. Movement for fulfilling Physiological needs:** Many a time, Informal grape wine that exist between the employees across the Sections prefer to go for a lunch/tea break during Office hours to fulfill their physiological need of hunger. Since, Informal grape wine nourish relationship between the employees, it is always requested that the movement of employees be in small groups instead of mass group so that the office work which involves movement of learner in real time situation is not affected.

**20. Dress Code:** In compliance to HQ communication from SED, Delhi dated 07.02.2020 Dress code for Convocation has been specified. The same Dress code Dress-wise has been specified as under for Republic Day, Independence Day, Foundation Day and while representing the University:

Male Employees/Students	Female Employees/Students
White/Off White or Cream coloured Bharathiya Paridhan (Indian Dress)	White/Off White or Cream coloured Bharathiya Paridhan (Indian Dress) Sari or Salwar Kurta or Salwar Kameez etc.

**21. Awareness about the movement of Officials:** Movement Orders are issued to ensure Official record about the movement of Officials from the station for an Official purpose. Hence, eventhough noting preludes the issue of the movement order to the Officials, track of issue of the movement order to the Officials is ensured as individual and collective responsibility. Notification is issued when the Regional Director is proceeding from the station so that the employees are aware of whom to contact in case of emergency and to execute the routine activities of the Office during this time.

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**22. The use of Email ID for representing Official matters:** The use of Regional Centre Email ID for representing Official matters is requested to all employees instead of using personal email id or email given by IGNOU to individual employee. This is because of upon superannuation of an employee, the personal email id or email given by IGNOU to individual employee becomes non-operational. Since, continuity of task, prior history of an email has the need to be tracked for executing today's official work, retrieving information upon superannuation or transfer of an employee becomes easy when the Institution is represented by the Regional Centre email ID. For movement of information among the employees in a Section, Section email id is being encouraged to be used. The email given by IGNOU to individual employee is used to disseminate the information received in the Regional Centre email id.

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