

THE ITM CODES OF CONDUCT, ETHICS, & PRACTICE

The Interactive Teaching Method (hereafter called the ITM) aims to promote the highest standards of professional practice for teaching the work of FM Alexander. This guide gives information on different aspects of practice for all ITM teachers and members of the Interactive Teaching Method Teachers' Association (hereafter called the ITMTA). ITMTA membership is open to Level 1 and Level 2 teachers and to ITM trainers. This document aims to help trainers, teachers, prospective employers and members of the general public to understand what constitutes 'good practice' in terms of ITM teaching practice and professional conduct.

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1. VALUES

- 1.1 The Codes of Conduct, Ethics and Practice (hereafter called the Codes) is based upon the foundational ITM values of integrity, impartiality and respect, and articulates our framework for best practice on all levels. Guidelines have been added to this framework drawn from and informed by previous experience, legal issues and reasoned common sense.
- 1.2 An ITM teacher, on graduating from the four-year ITM training cycle, is required to think and act in accordance with these values and standards instilled in them by their training experience and, consequently, to demonstrate appropriate standards of self-responsibility in their personal and professional behaviour.
- 1.3 As teachers of the work of FM Alexander, ITM teachers believe in the innate potentiality of every human being, and that everyone ought to have equal right and access to the opportunity to identify and realise their dreams. All ITM teachers are expected to familiarise themselves and, at all times, comply with the ITM Equal Opportunity Policy.

(Equal Opportunity Policy page 10)

2. PURPOSE OF THE CODES OF CONDUCT, ETHICS & PRACTICE

- 2.1 The ethical framework outlined in these Codes is based on the ITM's most fundamental value system. The purpose of the Codes is to provide a common frame of reference within which members of the ITMTA can manage their responsibilities to students and colleagues as well as to the overall ITM Organisation, the wider Alexander Technique profession (hereafter called the AT) and members of the general public.
- 2.2 The Codes are a written declaration of the ITM ideal for personal and professional conduct. In this document we aim to describe and provide an ethical framework for the best levels of personal and professional practice possible. Keeping in mind that as ITM teachers we are individually and organisationally committed to on-going personal development, growth and change, it is required that all ITM teachers will familiarise themselves with the values and principles outlined by the Codes, and strive to deepen their understanding and internalisation of its ideals and standards in their personal and professional development.
- 2.3 In declaring our values and ideals for best practice, the Codes are intended to provide information and protection for members of the ITMTA as well as for the other members of the ITM community and everyone who seeks and uses our services. These Codes also seek to ensure protection for the public reputation of the ITM and the overall AT profession.
- 2.4 By practising as an ITM teacher, teachers are deemed to be representatives of the ITM

and its community. Therefore, by practising, the teacher gives consent to be bound by these Codes, and in the event of a breach of the Codes, agrees to submit to any disciplinary procedures that may arise from any breach of the Codes up to and including the revocation of the teaching certificate.

(Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure page 14)

3. SCOPE OF THE CODES OF CONDUCT, ETHICS & PRACTICE

- 3.1 It is important to note that no Code of Conduct can anticipate or resolve unforeseen issues relating to ethics and practice. Circumstances may arise demanding a teacher's subjective and responsible appraisal. It is the teacher's responsibility to determine which parts of the Codes to apply to particular settings and circumstances, and to act with integrity within this framework.
- 3.2 When dealing with circumstances of conflicting responsibilities or if in doubt about how to proceed in a challenging situation, teachers are strongly advised to seek guidance before taking action.
- 3.3 Any action taken, which places the ITM or any of its teachers or students in danger of injury or disrepute, will result in disciplinary action. In cases that are considered extreme by the ITM Head of Training and his advisors, ignorance or naiveté on the part of the teacher involved will not be accepted as a defence.

(For the purposes of this document, the 'Head of Training' will be defined as the individual or group who has the power to make final decisions with respect to all training issues and the governance of the ITM organisation.)

4. FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- 4.1 Fundamental to the ITM paradigm is the commitment to the freedom to hold and express individual views, opinions and beliefs as well as to maintain respect and tolerance towards the expression of views, opinions and beliefs of others.
- 4.2 However, because a teacher is always a representative of the ITM and its community and the AT profession at large, we recognise that freedom of speech and opinion needs to be tempered by an understanding of the teacher's responsibility to the whole community. We expect that each teacher, in exercising their individual rights to freedom of speech and opinion, will act responsibly and exercise appropriate caution and sensitivity. In expressing an opinion, it is necessary to continue to have regard for the welfare and opinion of others in order to avoid articulating and/or acting upon any

idea or point of view that might cause distress to another or bring the ITM or any of its members into disrepute.

- 4.3 The ITM has a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, bullying, harassment or extremism, or any act that could incite or promote aggression, violence or harm. We have a duty to maintain safe and respectful conduct towards our students and colleagues, as well as towards the general public and the wider profession.
- 4.4 In cases of doubt, it is strongly recommended that an ITM teacher seek guidance prior to taking any questionable action. The ITMTA will endeavour to provide information and guidance on how to recognise and deal correctly with any issues pertaining to freedom of speech to its members. The ITM will provide information and guidance to certified teachers who are not members of the ITMTA.
- 4.5 In the extremely rare and unlikely event that a person's beliefs are so repugnant and contrary to the ideals of our organisations, we reserve the right to ask that individual to leave our organisations.
- 4.6 All of the above applies equally to all use of social media.

(Social Media Policy page 9)

5. RESPONSIBILITIES IN TEACHING PRACTICE

Teaching involves a deliberately undertaken contract with clearly agreed boundaries and commitment to privacy and confidentiality. Teaching requires explicit and informed agreement and consent between all parties. Responsibility towards self, students, colleagues, the ITM organisation and the wider AT profession is of foremost importance at all times.

5.1 COMPETENCE IN TEACHING

- 5.1.1 Teachers, having achieved a satisfactory level of competence before commencing their teaching practices, must take responsibility for maintaining their skills and knowledge and developing their practice by means of continuing professional education and self-development.
- 5.1.2 Teachers shall take all reasonable steps to monitor and work within the limits of their own competence. If a student's needs are beyond their knowledge and skills, or the scope of practice of the AT, the teacher must seek support from an appropriate source and know when to refer a student elsewhere. This is especially crucial if and when a student presents with additional issues such as challenging behaviour arising from mental or emotional ill-health; any sign of severe mental health issues, or any student who appears to be in danger of self-harm or suicide.
- 5.1.3 Teachers must actively monitor their own competence and functioning. In situations of

illness, personal or emotional difficulty, teachers have the responsibility to monitor and determine the point at which they are no longer competent to practice and take action accordingly.

5.1.4 Teachers must not teach when their functioning is impaired by alcohol or drugs.

5.2 CONTRACTS

5.2.1 Teachers are responsible for making clear to students the terms and conditions on which teaching is offered before teaching begins, such as availability, arrangements for the payment of any fees, cancellation of appointments and other significant matters.

5.2.2 Subsequent revision of these terms must be agreed in advance of any changes.

5.3 INFORMED AGREEMENT AND CONSENT

5.3.1 Entering into a teaching contract between teacher and student (as signified by the start of professional lessons) implies consent from the student.

5.3.2 In any case of working with a child or vulnerable adult, consent must be received from a parent or guardian.

(Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy page 11)

5.4 BOUNDARIES

5.4.1 A teaching relationship is no more than a formal and contracted relationship for the purposes of studying FM Alexander's work.

5.4.2 Consequently, teachers are responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries in their teaching relationships with their students.

5.5 PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

5.5.1 Teachers must offer the highest possible levels of confidentiality in order to respect the student's privacy and create the trust necessary for teaching.

5.5.2 This need for confidentiality and privacy extends to social situations, for example, on ITM workshops and training courses.

5.5.3 In any training or mentoring circumstance for the purpose of professional development, great care must be taken to protect the identity of students.

5.5.4 Care must be taken, either in the classroom or in social situations, not to reveal private information from a classroom situation or to make statements that may cause a trainer, teacher, or teaching process to be misunderstood or seen in a negative light by

a member of the general public, a student, or a member of a training course.

5.5.5 In those cases where disclosure of information about a student cannot be avoided, such as in a teaching circumstance or teaching supervision or when working on a team or, in rare cases, disclosure due to legal obligation, extreme care and discretion must be taken so that only the minimal amount of necessary information is disclosed.

5.5.6 This need of care for confidentiality and privacy extends to social media. Care must be taken that any information shared online does not reveal private information that might cause harm to any ITM teacher or trainer, or cause the organisation itself to be brought into disrepute.

(Social Media Policy page 9)

5.6 RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS STUDENTS

5.6.1 All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the student's safety during teaching sessions. Teaching is a non-exploitative activity and teachers must take the same degree of care to work ethically whatever the setting or the financial basis of the teaching contract.

5.6.2 Teachers must take responsibility for teaching decisions in their work with students.

5.6.3 Prior to the outset of teaching, teachers have a responsibility to establish with students the existence of any other therapeutic or helping relationships in which the student is involved and to consider whether teaching is appropriate. Teachers should gain the student's permission before conferring in any way with other professional workers.

5.6.4 A teacher must not make any kind of medical diagnosis.

5.6.5 A teacher is expressly discouraged from bringing any other practice or discipline into an ITM lesson. In those cases where they choose to do this, they must explicitly inform the student of their intentions in advance and receive the student's consent before they begin.

5.6.6 Teachers must not exploit their students financially, sexually, emotionally, or in any other way.

5.7 RECORD KEEPING

5.7.1 Teachers must keep appropriate and accurate student records.

5.7.2 Computer-based records are subject to statutory regulations. It is the teacher's responsibility to be aware of any changes the government may introduce in the regulations concerning the student's right of access to his/her records.

5.8 INSURANCE

5.8.1 All UK teachers currently in practice must take out and maintain adequate professional liability insurance cover. Non-UK teachers are strongly recommended to do the same.

5.9 ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE

5.9.1 Teachers must consider and address their own prejudices as it relates to stereotyping and ensure that an anti-discriminatory approach is integral to their teaching practice.

5.10 USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY, AUDIO & VIDEO

5.10.1 Teachers may occasionally wish to film or record audio or video footage of a student for educational or marketing purposes. Permission to do so must be sought in advance.

5.10.2 Permission must be given for the use of photographs for publicity purposes and a student may not be named publicly without their knowledge and consent.

5.10.3 Storage of private photographs and information must be secure and password protected.

6. RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE PROFESSION

ITM Teachers are expected to treat their colleagues in the ITM as well as the wider AT profession with respect, impartiality and integrity at all times.

6.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

6.1.1 While openness to the existence of different points of view is fundamental to our work, care must be taken that the expression of a point of view, whether in private, in public or on social media, does not cause offence or put the ITM organisation, the ITM community or any of its members in danger of disrepute.

6.1.2 Teachers must not conduct themselves in their teaching or in social situations, whether in their own private practice, or on ITM workshops, in any way which might undermine public confidence in either their work as a teacher, in the work of other teachers or in the ITM or any of its organisations.

6.1.3 Teachers must take all reasonable steps to be aware of current law as it applies to their teaching practice.

6.1.4 In situations requiring the presentation of their work in public, for example, writing original material for publication or promotional purposes, or speaking at conferences,

ITM teachers are expected to be respectful of their colleagues by adhering to the rules concerning plagiarism.

(Plagiarism Policy page 13)

6.2 ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

- 6.2.1 Advertising and public statements must be accurate.
- 6.2.2 Teachers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that all of their promotional material accurately reflects the nature of the service on offer, as well as the relevant information on teacher training, qualifications and experience of the teacher.
- 6.2.3 Teachers must not display an affiliation with an organisation in a manner that implies sponsorship or validation by that organisation when such is not the case.
- 6.2.4 Teachers should take care in their advertising material to respect the work of colleagues by adhering to the ITM Plagiarism Guidelines.

(Plagiarism Policy page 13)

- 6.2.5 For guidance regarding the use and storage of photography, audio and video, see 5.10 on page 7.

6.3 RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ITM COMMUNITY

- 6.3.1 Teachers must realise that as certified ITM teachers, they will always be perceived by the general public as representing the whole of the ITM community.
- 6.3.2 Material created for the purpose of engaging the general public, such as advertising or personal blogs, in addition to being accurate and in compliance with good practice, must not present the teacher as speaking on behalf of the ITM without prior consent, and should contain a general disclaimer that the views expressed are personal views only and not the views of the ITM or any of its organisations.
- 6.3.3 When in doubt about the nature of any publication, a teacher should seek advice of more senior members of the community, such as one of the active trainers or the Advertising Liaison, and be prepared to make appropriate alterations when asked to do so.
- 6.3.4 Failure to make alterations when asked to do so will lead to a formal complaint against the teacher.

7. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become a significant part of modern life. Social media provides a unique means of exchanging ideas with others on shared interests professionally and socially. Using a wide variety of platforms, web based and mobile based, it is now possible to participate in information sharing and interactive discussions on a variety of platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr, Snapchat, Google + and LinkedIn as well as blogs, forums, instant messaging and posting comments on websites such as YouTube.

7.1 ITM SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- 7.1.1 The ITM Social Media policy is intended to provide guidelines for the use of social media by ITM teachers, because all public postings will be considered to have the power to represent the ITM, no matter how indirectly this connection might be made.
- 7.1.2 The ITM requires its teachers to familiarise themselves with the social media policy in order to prevent inappropriate use that may impact negatively on any of its members or the organisation itself.
- 7.1.3 As a general guideline, ITM teachers are required to act with the same degree of consideration and respect towards others when using social media as in all other areas of our personal and professional lives. Any use of social media should comply with the guidelines set out by these Codes. Our values of integrity, impartiality and respect are as applicable with online communication as in all other areas.
- 7.1.4 It is of the utmost importance to take care not to cause offence or distress to any other ITM teacher or student. Any action taken that causes undue offence or distress to any member of the ITM community or puts either the ITM or the ITMTA in danger of disrepute will be considered unacceptable and subject to a disciplinary response.

7.2 ITM SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

- 7.2.1 Teachers must keep in mind when they are posting that they are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and should remember that what they publish may be readily available to the general public for a long time and, in some cases, may be distributed more generally without their knowledge or consent.
- 7.2.2 Respect must be shown for the right to privacy of others.
- 7.2.3 Care must be taken not to reveal any confidential information on social media.
- 7.2.4 Care must be taken not to post inappropriate pictures or videos. Permission should be obtained before posting pictures of other people, or another person's details, on social media.
- 7.2.5 Care should be taken to avoid language that may be deemed as offensive to others.
- 7.2.6 Care must be taken to avoid saying defamatory things about people or organisations.
- 7.2.7 Care must be taken not to say anything that is or could be construed as discriminatory.
- 7.2.8 Social media must not be used to verbally abuse or intimidate.

- 7.2.9 Social media should not be used for accessing or sharing illegal content.
- 7.2.10 Any disparaging or untrue remarks which may bring the ITM, its associated members or students into disrepute will be considered in breach of this policy. Any communications that might be misinterpreted in a way that could damage the ITM's reputation, even indirectly, will constitute misconduct and lead to disciplinary action.
- 7.2.11 Any posting that can be reasonably interpreted as extremist, intolerant or inflammatory will be considered to be in breach of this policy.
- 7.2.12 The ITM retains the right to demand the instant removal of any postings that it believes to be in breach of this policy.
- 7.2.13 The ITM will review, on a case-by-case basis, any accusations of a breach of this policy using its reasonable discretion and due process to determine whether the conduct complained of could reasonably be considered to be a breach of this policy.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

- 8.1 In keeping with our values of integrity, impartiality and respect, the ITM and ITMTA strive to maintain an ethos of inclusion and participation for all. We fully repudiate any discriminatory idea or action taken against any individual or group of people with protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 8.2 As teachers of the work of FM Alexander, we believe everyone is as deserving of respect and the full realisation of their potential as everyone else.
- 8.3 As teachers of the work of FM Alexander, we believe we are all capable of unique and individual creativity. We celebrate diversity and differences. We strive with our work and our values to bridge any perceived barriers that arise between people.
- 8.4 We endeavour to take necessary steps to counter inappropriate or offensive behaviours. We will take steps to challenge and prevent any individual or group from engaging in discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other unlawful behaviour towards another person or group of people. Any behaviour on the part of an ITM teacher, which is found to be inappropriate, offensive, and/or against the law will be taken very seriously and dealt with in accordance with the ITM Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure. This policy applies to any inappropriate behaviour, whether through actions, spoken or written words, personal interactions, in public, in private, or on social media. (*Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure page 14* and *Social Media Policy page 9*)

9. CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The ITM and its teachers are committed to protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm and have put the following guidelines in place to establish and encourage good practice.

9.1 DEFINITIONS

9.1.1 Child:

In The Children Act 1989, a child is defined as a person up to the age of 18.

9.1.2 Vulnerable Adult:

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over “who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

“Who Decides,” Lord Chancellor’s Department (1997).

9.2 GUIDELINES TO GOOD PRACTICE WITH CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS

- 9.2.1 It is expected that all ITM teachers will value and respect children and vulnerable adults as they would any other student, and do everything possible to protect them from any harm when taking part in lessons, workshops or other activities at all times.
- 9.2.2 Teachers must be committed to listen to children and vulnerable adults, be sensitive towards their needs for encouragement and praise and provide this as and when appropriate.
- 9.2.3 Teachers should avoid unobserved situations when working with a child or vulnerable adult. In a situation where there is no other adult observer, teachers are advised to teach with an open door, or to gain written consent in advance from the parent or carer agreeing to the lesson conditions.
- 9.2.4 Teachers will involve children and vulnerable adults in decision making as and when appropriate.
- 9.2.5 Teachers will involve parents and carers wherever possible. It may sometimes be necessary to remind parents and carers of their responsibility for their child or charge in the teaching room.
- 9.2.6 Teachers will maintain safe boundaries and a professional relationship with the child or vulnerable adult. Any kind of intimacy will be considered inappropriate with a child or vulnerable adult.
- 9.2.7 Teachers will ensure that any form of manual support and/or contact is provided openly and appropriately within the lesson context and design. Children and vulnerable adults and their carers should always be consulted and asked for agreement and consent in these situations wherever necessary.
- 9.2.8 Teachers will ensure they remain informed with technical skills, qualifications and insurance issues in relation to working with children and vulnerable adults.

- 9.2.9 Teachers will recognise the developmental needs and abilities of children and vulnerable adults and never push them against their will.
- 9.2.10 Teachers will obtain written information from parents and carers about any medical condition that may affect conduct during lessons or workshops. Where necessary, teachers should gain consent in writing to take responsibility if the need arises for action in a medical emergency such as giving permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment.

9.3 WORDS OF CAUTION

- 9.3.1 Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child or vulnerable adult.
- 9.3.2 It is not good practice to take children or vulnerable adults alone in a car, however short the journey. In a situation where this is unavoidable, it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of the responsible parent or carer.
- 9.3.3 Teachers must not meet with children outside organised professional activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of their parents or carers.
- 9.3.4 Teachers must never engage in rough, physical or potentially sexual or provocative games, including horseplay, or allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touch.
- 9.3.5 It is good practice to eliminate the use of inappropriate language with children and vulnerable adults. It is also good practice to challenge the use of inappropriate language by any student.
- 9.3.6 Teachers must not make sexually suggestive comments to or around a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- 9.3.7 Teachers must not allow allegations of inappropriate behaviour made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged or unrecorded. Allegations of this nature must be acted upon as quickly as possible.
- 9.3.8 Teachers must not do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that the child or vulnerable adult can do for him or herself.

9.4 WHEN TO REPORT AN INCIDENT

- 9.4.1 Any of the following incidents must be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Vulnerable Student Registrant. You should also ensure that the relevant parent and/or carer is informed.
- 9.4.1.1 If a student is accidentally hurt by you or in any manner.
- 9.4.1.2 If a student seems distressed in any manner that you consider unusual for them.
- 9.4.1.3 If a student appears to be sexually aroused during a lesson or workshop, whether by your actions or some other reason.
- 9.4.1.4 If a student misunderstands or misinterprets, in a significant manner, something that has happened during a lesson or workshop.

9.5 GUIDANCE FOR USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS, AUDIO OR VIDEO

- 9.5.1 ITM teachers may occasionally wish to film or record audio or video footage of a child or vulnerable adult for educational purposes. In these cases, written permission must be obtained in advance from parents and/or carers, and where possible, from the children or vulnerable adults themselves, before any photographs or recordings are taken.
- 9.5.2 None of this material may be used for publicity purposes without prior permission from both parents or carers and the ITM.

9.6 POLICE CHECKS

- 9.6.1 ITM teachers are advised to check and ensure that they comply with their national Child Protection legislation and policies.
- 9.6.2 Although it may not be possible for a self-employed teacher to apply for a police check in the UK, it is advisable for UK teachers to be aware of the appropriate regulations and policies.

10. ITM PLAGIARISM POLICY

All ITM teachers, when composing any original work, for example, website text, articles, or public presentations, and who want to use material previously composed and released by a colleague, must show respect for the original work of their colleagues and others when necessary by complying with these rules regarding plagiarism.

10.1 WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism occurs when a person makes use of or passes off as their own, the work or ideas of another person.

10.2 GUIDELINES TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

- 10.2.1 We are trained to have a unified vision of Alexander's work and our approach to teaching. Our training also promotes and encourages the importance of retaining our individuality when teaching the work. This can make it a challenge to present our work and the concepts and principles that underpin that work in a way that passes the test of consistency while retaining one's own individual voice. This is a challenge for all ITM teachers.
- 10.2.2 All ITM teachers must understand that just as there are no short cuts to learning the work of FM Alexander and how to teach it, there are no short cuts that can be taken to learning how to write about the work.
- 10.2.3 When writing promotional material, ITM teachers must show respect for the work of others by ensuring that they do not commit plagiarism in their public writing. In order to comply, please follow these guidelines:

- 10.2.3.1 ITM teachers may not copy or use material that has already been created by another person without seeking permission and giving credit to the source.
- 10.2.3.2 ITM teachers must not assume that any public ITM promotional material is available for free and easy use, including material on websites and promotional material belonging to any of the ITM organisations in the UK, Ireland and Germany. A case in point would be both the acronym ITM and the ITM logo. Prior permission from the Advertising Liaison would be necessary before using either.
- 10.2.3.3 If you copy and paste, beware! Never do so without citing the source.
- 10.2.3.4 A point to consider when marketing our work is that frequently repeated material can have the opposite effect to the one we desire by causing the general public to tune out messages, slogans, or formats by using material that has become too familiar.
- 10.2.3.5 ITM teachers must seek guidance from the Advertising Liaison if in any doubt whether something is in breach of this policy.

10.3 PLAGIARISM MISCONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

- 10.3.1 If you suspect you may have constructed your website in breach of any of the guidelines, however innocently, we ask that you make necessary changes immediately.
- 10.3.2 ITM teachers who are found to have breached the Plagiarism Policy will be asked to remove the offending material or make necessary changes.
- 10.3.3 ITM teachers who do not comply with a request to make necessary changes, may be found to be in breach of the Codes and subject to disciplinary procedures.

11. COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Initial stage

Students, teachers, or members of the general public who wish to make a formal complaint, are advised to do so in writing as soon as possible.

Complaints should be sent to the ITM Executive Committee by email or by post.

Email: executivecommittee@itmta.org

Post: ITM, 48 Mendip Rd Windmill Hill, Bristol BS3 4NY

The Committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 10 working days and will investigate the matter within 30 days of receipt. If and when a matter is likely to take longer than 30 days, the involved parties will be informed as the investigation progresses.

Early attempts at resolution

The ITM Executive Committee will seek to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. Before initiating disciplinary proceedings, the Committee's first consideration will be to seek resolution of the matter through informal discussions in the hope that no further formal action is required. When a meeting is deemed necessary at this early stage, the teacher(s) and/or person(s) concerned will be invited to meet with the Head of Training as well as members of the Executive Committee if appropriate.

Suspensions

In cases where early attempts at resolution are not successful, or when the alleged complaint is of a sufficiently serious nature requiring further investigation, both the ITM and the ITMTA reserve the right to impose a temporary suspension upon the teacher for a period of time.

Initial suspension periods may last up to six months. The period of suspension will allow for a full investigation and any further actions necessary to resolve the matter. Prior to the imposing of a suspension, a written communication will be sent to the teacher involved in which the allegations and supporting evidence will be clearly stated. This communication will also include a copy of the ITM Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

In some more complicated circumstances, the period of suspension may be extended at the discretion of the Head of Training and the Executive Committee.

All investigations will be fair and balanced and carried out in the most impartial manner possible. All investigation processes will include a meeting with the teacher involved early on in the process. At the end of all suspension periods, a meeting will take place between the involved teacher and the Head of Training to discuss the resolution of the suspension.

In circumstances which cannot be resolved through mediation, or when an offence has occurred that cannot be reversed or mitigated, the Head of Training and the ITM Executive Committee, in consultation with appropriate members of the ITM and the ITMTA, reserve the right to impose further sanctions and penalties up to and including the revocation of the teaching certificate.

Revocation of the teaching certificate and appeals

In the event of a final decision to dismiss a teacher, the teacher will be given two written warnings (first and final) before the final decision to revoke the teacher's certificate is carried out.

The teacher has the opportunity to appeal the revocation of a teaching certificate within five working days of the revocation. Appeals, and the grounds upon which appeals are made, will be considered by the Head of Training. In special circumstances, the Head of Training may freely consult with advisors external to the ITM even if they have not participated in the

previous elements of the Complaints and Disciplinary processes before making a decision about the appeal.

Disciplinary Hearings

It is anticipated that disciplinary hearings will only be required in very serious cases.

In the event of the need for a disciplinary hearing, the teacher will be informed in writing of the time and place of the hearing; whether or not the teacher is facing possible revocation of their teaching certificate; and any other relevant information pertaining to the issue.

Disciplinary hearings will be conducted by the Head of Training and the Executive Committee.

The teacher may choose to be accompanied by an individual of their choosing. At the hearing, the teacher will be given the opportunity to make representations, ask questions and produce their own evidence in reply.

The Executive Committee may choose to adjourn the hearing for further consideration of the matter before making a final decision. Once the Committee has reached a decision, the meeting will be reconvened and the decision explained to the teacher. The decision will also be given in writing after the hearing.

In any rare case of gross and obviously inappropriate misconduct, the ITM and the ITMTA reserves the right to dismiss a teacher without any prior warning.

ITM/ITMTA

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