

HELTA Code of Conduct

Why do we need a code of conduct?

A Code of Conduct can help provide a constructive and pleasant atmosphere within HELTA by letting members know the standards of behaviour expected of them and those it can expect from others. It also provides structure to help avoid problems and misunderstandings and deal with them when they arise.

Terms of the Code of Conduct

This document sets out the code of conduct expected from all members of HELTA and is a condition of membership. It applies to all members, irrespective of their membership type, the role they fulfil, or the jurisdiction in which they live or work. This code also applies to non-members who participate in HELTA organised or supported events.

All members are expected to act in accordance with the principles outlined in this document. The code is based on key principles outlined below:

In compliance with Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, HELTA stands in opposition to discrimination against teachers on the basis of their national, ethnic or linguistic background, religion, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, in terms of hiring, promotion, recruitment for jobs, or employment conditions.

1) Respect

- HELTA is committed to maintaining and promoting a professional environment within which its members treat each other with courtesy and dignity. Members should respect the knowledge, insight, experience and expertise of fellow members, relevant third parties and members of the general public.
- With respect to the common, long-standing notion, unsupported by research, that a certain ethnicity, accent, or national background gives a person an advantage as a teacher of English, HELTA firmly believes that all teachers should be evaluated and valued solely on the basis of their teaching competence, teaching experience, formal education and linguistic expertise. Therefore, HELTA does not condone job announcements that list "native English," "native command of English," "native-like fluency," "standard accented English," or similar, as required or desirable qualities.
- Members should communicate effectively, avoiding language or behaviour which may come across as offensive, inappropriate or insensitive.
- HELTA encourages respectful discussion and debate. Members should listen to others, contribute positively and challenge sensitively.

2) Diversity

- HELTA will not tolerate discrimination and expects members to respect diversity and promote equal opportunities.
- As an international association all members need to show consideration for local cultures and customs.
- HELTA will not accept any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation – (please see below for definitions of these).

3) Privacy and confidentiality

* All members should respect individual and collective rights to privacy.

4) Collaboration

* HELTA encourages member collaboration to aid the transfer and sharing of knowledge, help disseminate learning and promote good practice.

HELTA identifies the terms “discrimination,” harassment,” “Bullying” and victimization” as follows:

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of age, disability, special educational needs, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race, nationality, ethnicity, country of origin, religion, belief, sex, sexual orientation. Discrimination can be direct to the person or by association (because they associate with a person discriminated against).

What is harassment?

Harassment is any unwanted conduct related to one of the abovementioned categories, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. It can include behavior that individuals find offensive, even if it is not directed at them personally.

What is victimisation?

Victimisation is when a person is treated badly because they have made, or supported a complaint of discrimination – unless it can be proven that the claim was made maliciously.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behavior that can be characterized as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, an abuse or misuse of power through means to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying does not need to be deliberate; it can be demonstrated without intention. Bullying can be physical, verbal or non-verbal, and be delivered face-to-face, via online media, written communications or visual images.

If an individual considers that a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, they should report their concerns to the HELTA Committee.

The HELTA Committee reserves the right to amend and update this Code of Conduct.

Policy last reviewed by the HELTA Committee (A.Grundtvig, H.Waldron, W.Mills, K.Kilshaw, A.Moore & S.Ploch) December 2017