



The Inns of
Court College
of Advocacy

Student Online Forum Use Policy

Version 2.0

Scope

1. This Policy applies to all ICCA students using any ICCA Online Student Forum and should be read in conjunction with the ICCA Student Conduct Policy, the Acceptable IT Usage Policy for Students and the ICCA Policy on Bullying and Harassment for Students. [These policies are available here.](#)

Statement of Commitment

2. The ICCA is committed to providing an environment that protects the dignity of its students in their learning and participation on the Bar Course and in their interactions with others. This includes providing an online environment that is free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. All students using ICCA Online Forums are expected to treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times.

Prohibited Conduct

3. Students using any ICCA Online Forum must not engage in any conduct which causes distress or harm to any other group or individual using the Forum, or compromises the safety and security of any ICCA student or member of staff. Examples of conduct that is prohibited under this policy are:
 - 3.1 behaving in a way that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting to any individual, including making threats and using insulting words or behaviour relating to an individual's protected characteristics;
 - 3.2 using embarrassing, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, jokes or innuendo which intentionally or unintentionally communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual orientation, and religious slights and insults to any person or group;
 - 3.3 sexual misconduct (including threats of a sexual nature; inappropriately showing or distributing material of a sexual nature to another person and sexual harassment);
 - 3.4 using words or behaviour that demean or ridicule any individual or group of people using the Forum;
 - 3.5 creating, transmitting, or displaying material that deliberately and unlawfully discriminates, or encourages deliberate and unlawful discrimination, on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, and disability, political or religious beliefs
 - 3.6 creating, transmitting or displaying defamatory material
 - 3.7 creating, transmitting or displaying insulting, indecent or obscene material.
4. In addition, the ICCA has a statutory duty, under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, termed 'PREVENT'. The purpose of this duty is to aid the process of preventing people being drawn into terrorism. Users must not create, download, store or transmit material that

incites violence or to promote political, religious, philosophical or other beliefs including views which undermine the rule of law, individual liberty and democracy. This includes creating, transmitting, or displaying material that encourages terrorism and/or invites support for a proscribed terrorist organisation.

Reporting Misconduct

5. Any student who believes that another user of an ICCA Online Forum has engaged in conduct prohibited under the terms of this policy, or who is in any way distressed or concerned about the use of the Online Forum by others is encouraged immediately to report their concerns to their Personal Tutor or the Joint Directors of Online Learning. The ICCA will respect the confidentiality of any student raising a concern in this manner.

Procedure for Misconduct under this Policy

6. Conduct prohibited by this policy will be considered as non-academic misconduct. Any allegation that a student has engaged in such conduct will be dealt with under the Misconduct Procedure set out in the ICCA Student Conduct Policy. If the conduct in question constitutes a criminal offence the ICCA may also report the conduct to the police.
7. Any student suspected of being in breach of this policy may also have their access to all ICCA Online Forums suspended immediately and without notice at the discretion of the ICCA Joint Directors of Online Learning (DoLs), pending a full investigation under the ICCA's Misconduct Procedure. If the DoLs suspend a student's access to the Forums for this reason:
 - 7.1 The DoLs will immediately notify the student and the ICCA Bar Course Leader of the suspension and the reasons for the suspension.
 - 7.2 Within 5 working days of receiving this notification the ICCA Bar Course Leader (or nominee) will instigate a misconduct investigation into the alleged misconduct under the provisions of the ICCA's Misconduct Procedure. At the same time the Bar Course Leader will consider whether to reinstate the student's access to the Forums pending the conclusion of the misconduct investigation.
 - 7.3 If the Bar Course Leader (or nominee) decides not to reinstate the student's access to the Forums under 7.2, above, the student may appeal this decision to the ICCA Dean. The ICCA Dean will consider this appeal and notify the student of their decision within 5 working days of submission. The Dean's decision on this matter will be final.

Sanctions

8. Sanctions that may be imposed by the ICCA following an investigation under the terms of the ICCA's Misconduct Procedure are set out in the ICCA Student Conduct Policy and include suspension or exclusion from the ICCA Bar Course. If a charge of misconduct is established, the student will also be reported to their Inn of Court.