



The International Association of Physics Students

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IAPS Code of Conduct

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Adopted by the Annual General Meeting, online, August 2020



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Article 1 Aims

1.1 It is the purpose of this document to outline proper conduct which will create a safe environment for all. This Code of Conduct (CoC) was ratified by the IAPS Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2020.

The IAPS Code of Conduct is built around the recognition that everything every member does during its membership and further career, will be, and should be, measured against the highest possible standards of ethical human conduct. The bar is set that high for practical as well as aspirational reasons: IAPS' commitment to the highest standards is a demonstration that all human beings on this planet can live, respect and help each other without judgment.

1.2 IAPS does not pursue any profitable, political or religious objectives, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, gender, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, political opinion, age, sexual orientation or disability.

(IAPS Charter Article 2.2)

1.3 The aims of the Association are:

1. To encourage physics students in their academic and professional work in an international context;
2. To promote peaceful relations among physics students around the world;
3. To introduce physics students to the international community, help them to build professional relations and foster a collaborative attitude amongst young physicists across the globe;
4. To organise international conferences and events run by physics students for physics students.

(IAPS Charter Article 3)

In order for this to be achieved, IAPS strives to provide equal treatment to all members and alumni.

1.4 All participants of activities and events related to IAPS will enjoy an environment without any form of discrimination, intentional harassment or retaliation.

Article 2 Jurisdiction

2.1 Jurisdiction shall apply over the following parties:

- A. All persons participating in any capacity at an IAPS event, major event, or in an IAPS sponsored activity organised by a member committee;
- B. All IAPS National Committees and Local Committees;



- C. All persons holding membership in a National or Local Committee of IAPS, holding the title of Individual Member or Honorary Member of IAPS;
- D. All persons involved in any IAPS structure of decision, management or voluntary work;
- E. All persons representing IAPS or its membership within the scope of IAPS;
- F. All individuals in IAPS Alumni participating in a designated IAPS Alumni activity or event.

Since you cannot participate in an IAPS event without reading IAPS CoC, all of the above shall be referred to in the rest of the document as “the reader”.

2.2 Jurisdiction applies to parties listed in article 2.1 in the following situations or spaces:

- A. Any IAPS event, major event, or IAPS sponsored activity organised by a member committee;
- B. Any meeting of an IAPS, management, sub-committee or voluntary work;
- C. Any instance at which IAPS, or its membership in matters pertaining to IAPS, is represented;
- D. Any communication channel owned by, managed by or used for the purposes of IAPS and its activity;
- E. Any other communication channel, where a situation results in breaking of students' rights as described in article 1.2 and the IAPS charter or damages to the IAPS brand.

Article 3 Violations

3.1 A violation of the Code of Conduct is any act that goes against the standards of IAPS, set out in Articles 4 and 5.

3.2 The failure to follow the Code will result in sanctions, in accordance with the established in the Charter or the Regulations.

IAPS has a duty of care to protect participants. As such people violating the CoC will be removed from an IAPS event in accordance with the Charter Article 19.8.

There are cases where violations of the Code of Conduct could take place from individuals who could have self-harming or violent behaviours, undeliberate but uncomfortable social advances towards others, or non-proceeding comments which could offend other members. It is difficult to know beforehand a member's personal situation, as IAPS does not ask for medical records or any reports related to behavioral conduct. In situations of mental illness or psychological disturbance, great precaution must be taken.

Article 4 Social Conduct

4.1 Integrity and Compromise

4.1.1 The reader is expected to follow the Social Conduct Guidelines described in this article, while exercising good judgment in their decisions and actions. This is a social contract which everyone agrees to follow for the benefit of all.



IAPS' reputation for its integrity and exemplary behaviour as an international association is an exercise of respect, acceptance and humility. There is no better demonstration that science is a unifying, humbling and character-building endeavour. This underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, while preserving our unique identities, which make us all human beings.

4.1.2 IAPS' values in themselves may not provide specific answers in all cases, but they should serve as the basis for the choices made for any unexpected situation.

4.2 Freedom of Expression

4.2.1 The reader has the full right to make use of freedom of speech in all cases, while respecting others' freedom of expression and the Code of Conduct in all their full integrity.

IAPS is committed to advancing freedom of expression for all members around the world, without retaliation of their local laws. Where someone's personal life and freedom of expression face government challenges, IAPS will seek to implement internationally recognized standards that respect those rights while doing its best to avoid any injustice which could negatively affect any member or the association itself.

4.3 Harassment

4.3.1 Harassment is any improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause alarm or distress to another person.

Respect everyone's choice. Do not pressure anyone into doing anything they do not wish to do. If someone seems reluctant, let them be and if they state their uninterest do not press the matter. The person whose course of conduct is in question ought to know that it amounts to harassment of another if a reasonable person in possession of the same information would think the course of conduct amounted to harassment of the other.

4.3.2 Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. It includes, but is not limited to, discrimination as listed in article 1.2. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Making derogatory or demeaning comments;
- B. Sustained disruption of talks or other events;
- C. Spreading unsustained rumours which could negatively affect a members' image and honour;
- D. Commenting, shouting or displaying offensive signs, symbols and gestures which deliberately incite violence and hate;
- E. Deliberate intimidation, stalking or following;
- F. Harassing photography or recording.

4.3.3 Members asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately.



4.3.4 Threats, intimidation or any other form of retaliation against a participant who has made a complaint or provided information in support of a complaint is prohibited. IAPS will take any reasonable appropriate action needed to prevent and respond to potential retaliation, in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

4.4 Sexual Harassment

4.4.1 Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause alarm or distress to the recipient. Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications, and may occur between persons of the same or different genders. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Name-calling or using slurs with a sexual connotation or related to one's gender or sexual orientation;
- B. Deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing, photography or non-authorised recording of a sexual or distressing nature;
- C. Unwelcome physical contact, including pinching, patting, rubbing or purposefully brushing up against a person;
- D. Use of legal or illegal drugs and substances to induce a member into consciously unwilling sexual submission;
- E. Sending, sharing or displaying unwelcome sexually suggestive content in any format;
- F. Soliciting sexual favours in exchange for material transactions or professional opportunities;
- G. Attempted or actual sexual assault, including rape and other offences.

4.4.2 Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or other generally acceptable social sexual behaviour while it is accepted by both parties involved, who are able to give their conscious consent.

4.5 Violent Behaviour

4.5.1 Violent behaviour includes any act that deliberately inflicts physical or mental harm on another person, or causes fear of being injured or harmed. The injury can be of any severity and needs not be permanent.

4.5.2 Assault is any act by which a person intentionally or recklessly causes another person to suffer immediate unlawful violence. Assault cannot be committed by omission and shall not include acts of self-defense or defense of others.



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4.6 Controlled substances on events

4.6.1 The exchange, manipulation and recreational use of alcohol, marihuana and other drugs is prohibited in places where local event laws forbid this.

The members are reminded to check the laws of the host country regarding these substances.

4.6.2 Any recreational use of prescribed medications, of any kind, is strictly prohibited.

4.6.3 Any exchange of medications for monetary or other gain and their mass distribution is likewise prohibited.

4.6.4 Any deliberate storage in an unaware members' possessions, or unconsented extraction of any illicit drug or medication from members' possessions is strictly prohibited

4.7 Social Privacy

4.7.1 Personal information of any form shared between individuals or members shall not be redistributed over any medium without mutual, conscious and sober consent. Publishing such information, which includes conversations, messages, pictures or videos in any personally identifiable, or unidentifiable but subsequently traceable form, via social media, spoken word or any physical media is strictly prohibited. In all cases, the use and propagation of personally identifiable information will be regulated by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

4.7.2 Publishing pictures of a member in a public space, e.g. a group shot, also requires their consent unless there is no clear expectation of privacy, such as the person clearly not being the main subject of the image, and the picture does not cause them any alarm or distress.

Article 5 Professional conduct

5.1 The reader must treat others with dignity and respect in their professional work.

5.2 The reader shall act with integrity and shall not intentionally bring IAPS or individuals working on IAPS projects into disrepute.

Professional integrity in the formulation, conduct, and reporting of physics activities reflects not only on the reputations of individual physicists and their organizations, but also on the image and credibility of the physics and physics-related professions.

Students are reminded that an understanding of the ethical expectations of the physics community is an important part of a physics education.



An awareness of the ethical dilemmas that can occur in a professional career, and of the resources for understanding and resolving such problems, can help in avoiding ethical lapses or limit the damage that can arise from them.

5.3 Objectiveness and truthfulness

5.3.1 The reader must strive to be objective, unbiased and truthful in all aspects of their work.

5.3.2 The reader must properly acknowledge and correct any technical errors in their work at the earliest opportunity and shall not fabricate, falsify or misrepresent data or results.

It should be recognized that honest error is an integral part of the scientific enterprise. It is not unethical to be wrong, provided that errors are promptly acknowledged and corrected when they are detected. Further, it is the obligation of each author to provide prompt retractions or corrections of errors in published works.

5.3.3 The reader should record the source material and shall ensure that those who have made a significant contribution to any piece of work are appropriately acknowledged. The reader must never plagiarise nor claim the credit or benefit for the work of others.

Plagiarism constitutes unethical scientific behavior and is never acceptable. Proper acknowledgement of the work of others used in a research project must always be given.

5.3.4 The reader must exhibit honesty, integrity and transparency when applying for grants, financial funding or project approval.

5.3.5 The reader shall not claim expertise or skill in any area of knowledge or professional practice in which they have insufficient competence, qualifications or experience.

5.3.6 The reader called upon to give an opinion in their professional capacity shall, to the best of their ability, give an opinion that is objective and based upon the best available knowledge and information, and shall state clearly any limitations or qualifications to such opinion.

Individuals involved with IAPS should promote the study, application and understanding of physics by promoting the work of physicists at appropriate opportunities in their professional lives and in any volunteering capacity.

5.3.7 In case of a potential professional or personal conflict of interest that may impair their ability to make an objective judgment, the reader shall disclose such interests, where relevant, to the relevant parties.

5.3.8 The reader must be mindful of their obligation to exemplify professional behaviour in relation to any content that they publish in the public domain, including without limitation articles, blogs and on all forms of social media.

5.3.9 No one shall use titles which are not true. Members can state that they are a member of IAPS and are professionally registered, but shall not use the IAPS logo or the coat of arms in a business capacity or that implies that they are acting on behalf of, or with the authority of, IAPS, except when conducting IAPS business.



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When in doubt, you can always check with the current Executive Committee (EC).

5.4 Intellectual property infringement

5.4.1 Participants are prohibited from recording or photographing, for the purpose of distribution, another participant's presentation or intellectual property (in whole or in part) without the express written permission of the presenting participant.

Sharing content of another participant's presentation or intellectual property (via social media or otherwise) may affect or jeopardize intellectual property rights.

5.4.2 IAPS may authorise individuals to take pictures or videos during an IAPS event, provided that written permission has been given by the participants. Those authorized to photograph IAPS events, including talks and poster sessions, for the purposes of chronicling or reporting, should aim to capture the events and excitement of the conference and not capture individual's research in a readable or specific form.

Article 6 Reporting

6.1 Report is any account of a situation regarding which someone may feel there has been improper conduct. A report can be made by anyone.

6.2 Anyone wishing to report or discuss a violation can contact any of the following IAPS officials:

- A. Designated individuals serving on the current IAPS Executive Committee;
- B. Designated event officials, such as anti-harassment personnel;

IAPS Executive Committee or the Organising Committee of an event are responsible for letting the members or the participants of the event know who the designated officials are.

6.3 In the case of minor offences, it is suggested to contact anti-harassment personnel for guidance in order to resolve the situation informally. If a mutual understanding cannot be reached, it is recommended to submit a report to the proper IAPS officials, the procedures for which are described below.

6. 4 Reports to IAPS officials

6.4.1 Reports to IAPS officials should be made in writing to the proper IAPS officials to an official email address. Any other form of complaint or between any other individuals will not be considered as a report to IAPS.

Anyone wishing to submit an official report who feels like they need help may consult any of the IAPS officials for Code of Conduct violations for guidelines.

6.4.2 A group of individuals wishing to file a report together may do so.

6.4.3 For a report to be considered, it must contain:



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- A. The name of the individual, their contact information and their role within IAPS (i.e. member/alumni/other)
- B. The name of the accused and their role within IAPS (member/alumni/other)
- C. Description of the violation and Code of Conduct article
- D. List of possible witnesses or their absence
- E. If applicable, statements from other individuals supporting the report of violation

This may seem like a lot, but all this information is important for a fair judgement.

6.4.4 Reports cannot be made for actions taken over a year prior to the date of filing.

For serious offences, IAPS still encourages approaching the relevant authorities whose statute of limitations may still be in effect.

6.4.5 Reports cannot be made for violations which happened prior to their introduction into the Code of Conduct.

6.4.6 Any reports made before a GM must be presented at the GM by the proper IAPS officials in their original form. The individual has the right to request any personal details to be redacted. This must be respected when presenting the report to the GM and archiving.

6.4.7 In the case of a criminal offence a report should also be made to the local legal authorities in addition to the IAPS report.

IAPS is not able to pass sentences the legal authorities can, only sanctions related to IAPSmembership and events. If needed, IAPS officials for Code of Conduct violations can help with reporting the crime to the proper authorities.