



Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, PHYLOSOPHY, VISION AND CORE VALEUS OF INES-RUHENGERI

Historical Background

INES-Ruhengeri officially opened its doors on November, 17th 2003, under the name of “Université Internationale au Rwanda (UNIR)”; but the idea to its creation came in September, 2000 under the initiative of Ruhengeri Catholic Diocese.

His Excellency Paul KAGAME, President of the Republic of Rwanda laid the foundation stone for the launch of the construction of the Campus, on June 30th, 2003. INES obtained its degree awarding powers by the Ministerial order number 005/2010/MINEDUC of June 16th, 2010. Its first graduation ceremony was organized on June 30th 2010.

Philosophy of INES Ruhengeri

Three core complementary pillars constitute the philosophical backbone of INES endeavour: (1) building signs of hope, (2) contributing to unity and reconciliation and (3) contributing to the country’s sustainable development. These pillars are anchored with Christian ethical values and constructive critical thinking.

Vision of the University

The vision of INES is reflected in the following statement:

“Universality in each individual,

Knowing in order to Unite and better serve the world”.

INES is a private Institute for Higher Education orients its academic services towards applied sciences. In the vision of INES this means that all taught sciences are applied to the population daily problems, seeking to propose and answer to them.

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Mission of INES Ruhengeri

According to the statutes of INES, the mission is expressed as follows:

“To contribute through the interactive conjunction between civil society, private sector and public sector to the national and regional development, by providing specialized university education enhanced by research, in order to create competitive enterprises and well paid employment”

Motto: Scientia et lux

Scientia et lux (Knowledge and light).

Beside its general motto, *Scientia et Lux*, from the Academic year 2013/2014 until now, INES-Ruhengeri has chosen a secondary motto, serving not only as a galvanizer but also as a marketing and communication tool to the external public: *“Shifting from Paper to product”*. This additional precept denotes INES-Ruhengeri's renewed commitment and strong will to bridge the gap between theories generally taught in the classroom and the reality on the field of practice. In other words, in its educational activities, the emphasis has shifted from the degrees to the competences to be learnt to students in order for them to become true professionals. It mostly has its roots in the findings of a research organized in 2008 about the way higher learning institutions respond to the labour market's needs. The result was the existence of a big mismatch between academic graduates and the labour market's needs. From then, the founders of INES-Ruhengeri decided to look for the best university concept that could match with their ambitions. It is in that context that, from 2010, INES-Ruhengeri was embarked on the new orientation of University of Applied Sciences with the aim of fostering a practical university.

INES-RUHENGERI's target as an Institute of Applied Sciences

As an Institute of Applied Sciences INES teaching approach is expected to be profession oriented. This implies that:

- The teaching and learning strategies and methodologies are based on the concept of competence based learning;

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- The approach is student centered; students learn to develop professional behavior, which includes taking professional responsibility and initiatives as well as working independently.
- All programs have a labor market orientation; programs are reviewed from the perspective of professional graduate profiles, developed by INES and representatives of the labor market. The curricula include interactions with the reality of the professional field, such as Industrial attachments, field trips and projects. Through these students learn to find appropriate solutions for problems in the professional field.

Core Values of INES-Ruhengeri

To be coherent with its mission, vision and orientation, INES-Ruhengeri owned the following values:

Excellence;

Witness of life;

Supernatural vision;

Truthfulness;

Commitment;

Human Dignity;

Solidarity;

Collaboration;

Cleanliness;

Value of details.

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II. POLICY

Introduction

INES-Ruhengeri is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment where the whole community is able to study, work and live free from sexual violence and sexual harassment. INES takes any incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment very seriously and is committed to handling all reports sensitively, effectively and in a timely manner. INES will provide emotional support to students, staff and customers/stakeholders if they have been impacted by sexual violence or sexual harassment and information and advice on how to access help.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of INES including current students, employees, contractors, suppliers and visitors. Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not permitted in the INES community and everyone is expected to treat all members of the community with dignity and respect.

This policy provides support and advice in the event of sexual violence or sexual harassment in learning environments, working environments, accommodation, social activities and on and off campus when activities are linked to the INES community such as accommodation, work placements, trips and internships.

INES-Ruhengeri recognizes that individuals whose social and cultural characteristics intersect, e.g. gender, disability, religion and different ethnic groups, are potentially more vulnerable to sexual violence and sexual harassment and may require additional support.

INES-Ruhengeri prioritized 4 key aspects to address these issues:

- 1- Senior leadership
- 2- Institution-wide approach
- 3- Prevention
- 4- Response

INES-Ruhengeri Commitment

INES commits to ensuring the following:

- 1- Creating a culture free from sexual violence and sexual harassment where the whole community will behave with respect and dignity to each other, consent and understanding boundaries are the norm and individuals affected speak up and get help.
- 2- Taking all reasonable steps to meet the statutory obligations to eliminate and prevent sexual violence and sexual harassment, and address any inappropriate behaviors promptly to prevent issues from escalating.



- 3- Providing a physical environment where all departments, facilities and spaces on campus are safe and welcoming.
- 4- Where sexual violence or sexual harassment does occur, everyone knows how to seek help and appropriate support will be provided.
- 5- Handling all allegations of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment seriously and sensitively and investigating them promptly while protecting the individual rights of those involved, including those against whom an allegation has been made.
- 6- Not tolerating any sexual violence or sexual harassment. These behaviors will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence and will be dealt with under INES Disciplinary Policy and Procedures for employees as appropriate
- 7- Making the whole INES community aware of this policy, which behaviors are not acceptable and how individuals are expected to behave.
- 8- Providing awareness sessions and training on what constitutes unacceptable and inappropriate behavior under this policy and how to access appropriate support.
- 9- Reviewing incidents annually by Student Services and / or Human Resources as appropriate to identify any trends that need to be addressed or investigated further.

Key Definitions related to sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence is any unwanted or uninvited sexual act or activity e.g. rape, stalking, forced marriage. There are many different types of sexual violence and these can be psychological and / or physical.

Sexual Harassment describes a range of words, behaviors and / or conduct of a sexual nature that are unwanted and uninvited. It is often intended to or has the effect of creating an intimidating, degrading, humiliating or offensive impact and is an abuse of personal or institutional power. It is often based on a person's gender rather than sexual desire.

Consent is providing express permission for something to happen or agreeing to do something with a full awareness and understanding of the facts and without coercion. The consent must be free. The consent is not valid if obtained or delivered in conditions prohibited by national laws such as lack of age of majority, consent under moral or physical threat, consent under fraud, etc.

Expectations

All members of INES community must seek consent when their behavior involves interacting with each other in a sexual manner in a social context. This involves agreement by choice and can be withdrawn at any time. It can never be assumed, implied or coerced. If consent is uncertain then any behavior should be stopped. No deviant behavior in this regards.



The code of conduct will provide for the guidance for employees on relationships and how to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest, misuse of authority, or allegations of inappropriate conduct is provided in the Relationships at Work Policy. The code of conduct of staff is limiting the use of consent in matters related to sex in relations between staff and students, and between employee and his/her supervisor to avoid the abuse of authority.

All members of INES community have a responsibility to take action if they observe sexual violence or sexual harassment as long it is safe to do so. It is important to avoid the bystander effect where the presence of others often discourages individuals from intervening. This can potentially normalize these behaviors and make inappropriate behavior more acceptable.

Legislation

This policy recognizes the requirements of the Rwandan regulations which provides protection for everyone from discrimination, and makes it unlawful to harass or discriminate against someone on the grounds of the nine protected characteristics of age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, marriage, disability, and gender. The legislation defines harassment as ‘unwanted conduct’ including that of a sexual nature, which has “the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”.

Experiences of sexual violence and sexual harassment may intersect with other forms of discrimination and harassment.

Individuals are also protected from harassment not only in relation to themselves as an individual, but also on the grounds that they are associated with someone else with a protected characteristic or that someone perceives wrongly that another person does or does not have a protected characteristic.

Nothing in this policy prevents anyone experiencing sexual violence or sexual harassment from exercising his or her legal rights. INES will engage with external investigations by the police and other enforcement bodies as appropriate and necessary.

Disclosure

No student or employee is under any obligation to disclose any incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment. However, anyone affected is encouraged to get help as soon as possible from either INES authorities or external agencies.



Getting support if you believe you have experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment

INES encourages you to act promptly and not to feel any sexual violence or sexual harassment is your fault, or that you have to wait until the situation is repeated or exacerbated. INES recognizes that any incident is unacceptable and might be distressing. It is important that you don't feel that you should have to tolerate such behavior and that you have the support of INES to decide if and how you want to take any further action. In addition, it will enable INES to make arrangements and to put support in place if required, including, where possible, measures to protect the personal safety of all involved at all times.

Where it is considered that there is a real threat to the personal safety of any person, this should be reported to Security Officer on 0734366128 or the police on 8855 or immediately.

If you believe you have been subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment, there are a number of options available to you to get help.

If you are a student:

1. Report the incident to Security on 0734366128;
2. Contact the Student Support and Welfare Team either face to face or via phone 0727125298;
3. Call the International Office on 0788494570;
4. Seek advice or discuss the matter with a personal tutor, chaplain or lecturer in your Department and / or anyone else with whom you feel comfortable;
5. Report it via the Report and Support Portal where you can disclose your personal details or make an anonymous report;
6. Call the police on 8855 or in the case of emergency.

If you are an employee:

- Report the incident to Security on 0734366128 or to Human Resource Officer (HR) on 0727125196;
- Seek advice or discuss the matter with your direct supervisor or a colleague, or anyone else with whom you feel comfortable; this may include employee representative;
- Report it via the Report and Support Portal where you can disclose your personal details or make an anonymous report;
- Call the police on 8855 in the case of emergency.

If you witness an incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment, you should also be encouraged to report it using the same channels listed above.

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Getting emotional support

It is important that anyone affected by sexual violence or sexual harassment should seek support as soon as possible. Students and employees can also seek support from external.

Reporting an incident for action to be taken

There will be occasions when you will want to report the incident. If you are a student and want to report an incident, you can report it through the report and support portal.

If you are an employee who wants to report an incident, you should raise your concern(s) through INES Discipline Committee or through the Office of the Legal Advisor.

All reports will be taken seriously and will be investigated within the time limits set out in the relevant policy with due consideration to all parties. You will be kept informed by the Office for Student Complaints, Conducts and Appeals or Human Resources as appropriate.

Reporting the incident to the police - there are some incidents of sexual violence or sexual harassment which are so serious that individuals will be liable to prosecution under the law and you may choose to use this channel. These include (but are not limited to) sexual assault, stalking and rape. If you experience such an assault on campus, INES encourages you to report it to Security immediately call: 0734366128. If off campus you should call 8855.

If a police investigation is commenced, INES will consider whether an internal investigation is required or if already underway whether the internal investigation should be paused whilst the police investigation is undertaken. Adjustments may be required during this time period to protect INES and the individual(s) involved. By way of example only:

1. For students this could include a change of accommodation, suspension of studies, separating the students involved in the learning environment etc and/or removal of a student from campus.
2. For employees, this could include temporary redeployment, amending work duties and/or relocation to a different work location and paid suspension from work.

Full consideration will be given to the facts and circumstances of each particular case when considering how and when investigations should be undertaken, any necessary adjustments and any disciplinary or other sanctions.



Supporting a student or employee who discloses an incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment

Disclosing an incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment can be very distressing and the way and to whom an individual chooses to do so will vary depending on a range of factors, including who they feel comfortable with and how sensitive they feel the issue is.

In addition, an employee, another student or a visitor may observe an incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment and be unsure how to intervene. If someone shares an incident of sexual violence and / or harassment that they have experienced, it is best to respond in the following way:

1. Reply in good faith on the basis that they are telling the truth;
2. Do not make any assumptions - there are many myths within society that lead to victim blaming and it is best to listen non-judgmentally;
3. Direct them to specialist services either on or off campus;
4. Do not act without their consent unless the individual or others are still at risk, or they need urgent medical attention.

Key to this meeting will be to reassure the individual that support is available and explain how they can report the incident. The individual should be encouraged to make notes of any incidents so that they can give examples, including any dates and times and details of any witnesses present. Taking photos or screenshots of offensive written or visual material can also be very helpful.

The member of staff should make notes following the meeting of what was discussed with any advice given and any follow up required and email them to the individual. They should keep a copy of the e-mail in a secure location in case it is needed in the future. In addition, they should report it to the Student Support and Welfare Team and / or HR as appropriate who should assess whether there is any action that needs to be taken as a matter of priority. They may also need to inform other relevant staff if appropriate.

Training

Training for INES employees on responding to disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment is highly recommended for all staff and a full day program is delivered by Student Services. It is of vital importance that all employees know how to respond to these difficult sensitive incidents.

Confidentiality

Information submitted will remain confidential as far as is consistent with other people's rights to know of any allegations made and / or evidence held against them. By reporting an incident, you are giving INES permission to inform other employees / organizations of the incident, investigate the incident and to discuss them with



appropriate people. It might also be necessary to provide details of the incident to any relevant department and to request any relevant information. The person being investigated is normally asked to respond. Where it is necessary to interview witnesses, the importance of confidentiality will be emphasized. It should be explained to everyone involved in the process that any breach of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary action. Where you are not comfortable disclosing details, you will be asked to declare this so that INES can advise to what extent they can investigate the incident.

You should be aware that there are also times when confidentiality will need to be broken under the terms of the Rwandan Law such as in the event of an identified risk to you or where there is a criminal investigation and you may be required to give evidence.

In addition, employees are expected to raise any reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment with the relevant authorities and / or other staff as appropriate and it is important that this is conveyed to the individual.

If the student or employee does wish INES to take action by submitting a complaint, they will need to disclose the identity of the individual they are complaining about.

Data recording

All sexual violence or sexual harassment incidents which are reported should be recorded, along with any relevant outcome. Any student incident should be forwarded to the Student Services and any employee incident recorded by HR. This data will be reviewed by Student Services and HR annually and any trends monitored and addressed.

Approved on 2nd August 2022



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