

Learner Charter

The Institute of Public Administration is committed to the highest standards of service delivery in education. The Institute undertakes to pursue excellence in the manner in which it engages with all members of the learning community and is dedicated to the enhancement of the learning experience for students. The Learner Charter encapsulates the basis upon which the Institute's academic community works and interacts with the learner to uphold its commitment to academic excellence.

The Learner Charter is designed to create and support a progressive academic environment to enrich the student learning experience. The Charter underpins, and is supported by, the IPA's policies, procedures and regulations that frame the formal learning environment. It is expected that all parties in the Institute's academic community will be familiar with these policies, procedures and regulations.

The Charter emphasises the need for collaboration and cooperation between students and staff. It gives an overview of the responsibilities of each group. The Institute's objective is to build an open, friendly, supportive, and student centric environment that promotes best practice through a shared dedication to learning and through shared values such as mutual respect, equality and inclusivity. The Charter is specific in its reference to IPA commitment to respecting human rights and equality in the delivery of service.

The learner and the Institute under the Charter are seen to have a mutually dependent and mutually beneficial relationship that requires certain expectations to be met on both sides. These expectations are outlined for both Institute and learners thus:

What you the learner can expect from the Institute:

- 1.** An excellent academic education that, in keeping with changing market requirements and your professional profile, is relevant, practice-led and research-informed.
- 2.** A proactive staff and student learning and teaching environment that is properly resourced, planned, appropriate, clear in its outcomes, and student-centred.
- 3.** A learning environment that makes best use of technological advances where possible and has regard to pedagogical and assessment related developments.

4. A learning environment that is quality assured to maintain high standards and promotes a regime of continuous improvement.
5. A learning environment that promotes equality and values diversity. One which is open, inclusive, ethical, safe and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, membership of the Traveller Community or race including colour, nationality, or ethnicity, and where the human rights of all who avail of the services provided are protected.
6. Academic support and guidance that starts upon your acceptance onto a course and continues to graduation.
7. Clear guidelines on what is expected of you in class, over the course of a module/programme, and during assessment.
8. To be provided with accurate and up-to-date information, and timely notice, in relation to classes, events, assessments, exams, policies and procedures and any changes that would affect your studies.
9. Teaching, library, administrative office and facilities staff who recognise you as an equal member of the learning community and treat you with courtesy, dignity and respect.
10. An efficient and helpful service from the administrative offices which undertakes to keep your student profile, curriculum details and assessment records accurate and up-to-date.
11. A timely, understanding and well-considered response from teaching or administrative staff to any queries or requests that you may have, given your status as professionals engaged in part-time studies.
12. A library that provides access to relevant and up-to-date books, journals and e-resources to support the education and training programmes at the Institute.
13. The opportunity to discuss with teaching staff any issues or problems that may arise in the delivery of a course, including teaching or course assessments.
14. The opportunity for you to provide formal feedback on your learning experiences.

15. An unbiased, effective and student-centred procedure to handle formal complaints and assessment disputes without the need for acrimonious disagreement, protracted disputes or litigation.
16. Access to an independent and student-centred process for handling appeals relating to assessment, complaints and student discipline.
17. A commitment to protect the integrity of the assessment process and qualifications awarded on foot of a course of studies.
18. An undertaking that any communication with the Institute is treated confidentially and with sensitivity.
19. An undertaking not to share your personal or academic information with any third party without your prior consent.
20. Clean, accessible and safe premises that comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, and, where possible, access for people with disabilities, and others with specific needs.

What the Institute expects from you the Learner:

1. Familiarise yourself with and comply with the Institute's policies, procedures, rules and regulations.
2. Respect the authority of the Institute, whether in the classroom, exam hall, library or in general dealings with Institute staff in the administration office, or reception area.
3. Commit to your chosen programme of study and participate fully in the academic course including classes, tutorials, seminars, continuous assessment and exams.
4. Prepare for classes and engage with the teaching staff.
5. Submit all your course work and assessments on time using the mechanisms provided.
6. Exercise integrity and honesty when submitting coursework: ensure the work is your own and not the work of someone else. Make declarations to this effect as required.
7. Be proactive in connecting with the Institute, seeking out information relevant to your course of study. Use the Institute's written and web-based information systems to fully understand course requirements and your responsibilities.

8. Engage with IPA teaching and administrative staff in a constructive manner, with courtesy and respect, and respond in a timely way to communications.
9. Complete all admission/registration procedures on time and in full and comply with requests made by the administrative office during your course of studies.
10. Observe library regulations, comply with copyright regulations on the use of hard copy and electronic resources, and treat all clients, staff and resources with respect.
11. Bring to the attention of IPA staff any issue you have with course content and delivery, on the basis that problems are best resolved in a timely manner and at a local level.
12. Provide feedback on the teaching experience, materials and facilities as requested in surveys.
13. Do not make a false or malicious complaint or allegation against another student or member of staff.
14. Do not engage in inappropriate behaviour, that is, behaviour that affects the physical or emotional wellbeing, safety, rights or dignity of a community member or behaviour that interferes with the learning environment; eg. incidents of violence, harassment, disruption.
15. Treat other members of the learning community, whether in the classroom, library or administrative office, with respect and honesty, paying due consideration to equality and inclusivity for all.
16. Disclose all relevant information and any issues or problems that may affect your ability to engage with your course of studies.
17. Use the mechanisms provided by the Institute to appeal decisions, make complaints or seek information. Provide full and accurate information for adjudication, and respect the integrity and confidentiality of these processes.
18. Respect the services and facilities provided by the Institute.
19. Conform to the Internet Usage Policy and do not download offensive or pornographic material on Institute equipment, or send or circulate e-mails or attachments that are pornographic, obscene, contain abusive or defamatory messages or cause offence.
20. Keep your contact details up to date.

The expectations expressed here for both the Institute and learners are not intended to be an exhaustive list; rather they are a fair representation of recognised needs and aspirations. The Learner Charter does not impose a legal obligation on the Institute, its employees or students. As stated earlier, the Charter should be read in tandem with the Institute's policies, procedures, rules and regulations found within the student handbook and on the Institute's website. In implementing policies, procedures and regulations, the Institute will always strive to deal with students and other members of the learning community in a manner that reflects the Institute's ethos, fosters goodwill and builds the Institute's reputation as a first class provider of educational services.