Online Safety Policy

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Approved by Board on	2 February 2024	Scheduled review date	February 2029

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia (NIODA)'s position on adult online safety and to identify and document the resources available, and the actions and procedures to be taken in the event of online abuse.

2. Scope & Application

This code of conduct applies to all staff, candidates, students, members of the boards and committees in respect of all actions and activities within NIODA. This policy applies to any NIODA related online context such as classes, meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, research, consulting assignments, work functions, social and business events.

3. Policy Statement

Online behaviour can be socially, psychologically and even physically damaging. Many forms of online abuse are also illegal under federal or state law.

NIODA does not tolerate abusive online behaviour under any circumstances and is fully committed to creating an environment for all those engaged with NIODA that is free from online abuse.

It is the obligation and responsibility of every member of the NIODA community to ensure that NIODA is free from online abuse.

4. Definitions

"Cyber abuse" interchangeable with online abuse

"Online abuse" is behaviour that uses technology to threaten, intimidate, harass, humiliate, monitor or impersonate someone — with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically.

This kind of abuse may occur between strangers, but may also occur alongside other types of abuse in domestic and family violence contexts. Technology is not the problem. The perpetrator/ abuser's behaviour is problematic.

It can take place on social media, through online chat and messaging services, text, messages, emails, on message boards and in online forums that allow people to publicly comment.

Examples of abuse include:

- sharing intimate or sexual photos or videos online without consent

- targeted and persistent personal attacks aimed at ridiculing, insulting, damaging or humiliating a person

- posting seriously offensive material

- posing someone's personal information on social media or elsewhere online along with offensive and/or sexual comments

- threatening violence or eliciting others to do the same

5. Responsibilities

All members of the NIODA community are responsible for ensuring a safe teaching, learning and working environment that is free from online abuse.

It is the responsibility of the CEO to instigate this policy in order to ensure that:

- all members of the NIODA community understand and are committed to their rights and entitlements to attend work and study without fear of abusive online behaviour

- all members of the NIODA community understand what constitutes acts of online abuse

- all members of the NIODA community are made aware of their obligations in relation to providing an environment free from online abuse

- any complaints of online abuse are treated seriously and confidentially

- immediate and appropriate action is taken in the event of online abuse being reported

- guidance and education about eliminating online abuse is provided to the NIODA community, where requested and/or appropriate.

NIODA staff, board and committee members are responsible for reporting any concerns about the possibility of breaches in the execution of this policy.

6. Resources

Student/candidate Counsellors are readily available for online meetings.

The Student Advisor and Candidate Advisors supply referrals to students and candidates if they seek alternative counsellor support.

The eSafety Commissioner has prepared a Toolkit for Universities, a suite of resources focused on giving academics the core tools needed to identify, prevent and respond to online abuse of their students. They also provide advice on how academics can protect themselves online https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/toolkit-universities/academics. Anyone feeling unsafe can report what is happening to the eSafety Commissioner https://www.esafety.gov.au/report/what-you-can-report-to-esafety

Online crimes can be reported to the police on the ReportCyber website: https://www.cyber.gov.au/report-and-recover/report

The Commission does not have any formal powers, however, they do provide a significant number of resources www.esafety.gov.au/key-topics/adult-cyber-abuse. The Commission provides information targeted to different populations including women, seniors and First Nations peoples https://www.esafety.gov.au/. In extreme cases the Commission may contact a social media company on a complainant's behalf.

Some forms of online abuse are illegal under the laws of different Australian jurisdictions. Victoria Police can be contacted through the local police station or the non-urgent phone line 13 14 44. Seeking legal advice may be the best way to address the abuse being experienced.

7. Actions and Procedures

Prompt action should be taken by staff, candidates, students, board and committee members, and other members of the NIODA community who experience online abuse.

What to do if online abuse is being experienced:

- Resist the urge to respond. Often hurtful things are said simply to get a response, respond, beyond a request to stop, can cause escalation.

- Save the evidence before blocking or deleting. It is important to document the abuse.

- Report the person to the service or platform the material was posted on and block them. If they appear under a different name, report and block them again. Change passwords and contact details if necessary.

- Refer the person experiencing abuse to the resources above.

8. Grievances

Grievances and complaints related to online safety should be taken up as per the NIODA Grievance Policy. The Grievance Policy is published on the NIODA website www.nioda.org.au/policies

9. Related documents

Bullying policy

Sexual Misconduct policy

Grievance Policy