

Statement on Academic Freedom London Campus

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- 1) Our Academic Freedom Statement reaffirms our dedication to protecting the freedom of inquiry and expression for all members of our academic community. This policy ensures that both faculty and students can pursue knowledge and express ideas without fear of censorship or retaliation, aligning with OfS Condition E1 by promoting public interest governance and upholding academic integrity.
- 2) Section 202(2) of the Education Reform Act 1988 provides the legal basis for academic staff to exercise their right to academic freedom. It requires institutions:
 - a) to ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at their institutions;
 - b) to enable qualifying institutions to provide education, promote learning and engage in research efficiently and economically; and
 - c) to apply the principles of justice, fairness and legal compliance.

Additionally, under the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, the school has a statutory duty to protect lawful free speech within its premises, ensuring that students, staff, and visiting speakers are not unduly restricted in their expression.

- 3) ESCP Business School believes that academic freedom provides a foundation for faculty excellence. We strongly adhere to the common tenets of academic freedom and support faculty to engage in their research and teaching activities without fear of censorship or recrimination, provided that their activities remain within the limits of the law. We are committed to providing academic freedom to our faculty, students and other members of the School within the law; whereby they can inquire, challenge and test the received knowledge, present new, contentious and unpopular views without the fear of losing their jobs or rights.
- 4) While academic freedom is a fundamental right, it is not absolute. All academic discourse must comply with:
 - a) The Equality Act 2010, ensuring that speech does not constitute unlawful harassment or discrimination based on protected characteristics (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, age).
 - b) UK hate speech and public order laws, which prohibit speech that incites violence or hatred.
 - c) Professional codes of conduct, including mutual respect and academic integrity.

ESCP Business School upholds the principle that open debate and rigorous inquiry are essential to education. However, faculty and students must exercise these rights responsibly, ensuring that discussions remain lawful, respectful, and conducive to an inclusive academic environment.

5) Dispute Resolution Procedures

Where the school receives a concern about the exercise of academic freedom or where it has received a concern about a possible infringement or departure(s) from the values and procedures set out in this statement, it will consider which of its procedures are most appropriate to consider the concern, making such enquiries and seeking such information as it considers necessary. Such consideration may lead to further investigation in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedures (staff or student), or the School's grievance or student complaints procedures. The student who wants to raise a complaint must write to the UK Director of Student and Academic services and staff should contact HR.

6) Enforcement Protocols:

- a) Violations of others' academic freedom rights will be treated as serious misconduct under relevant staff and student disciplinary procedures.
- b) Sanctions for confirmed violations will be proportionate and may range from mandatory training to formal disciplinary action.
- c) The school will implement structural remedies where systemic issues are identified.
- d) Protection from retaliation will be explicitly guaranteed for those raising academic freedom concerns.
- e) Regular policy reviews will ensure enforcement mechanisms remain effective and aligned with evolving legal requirements and OfS conditions.

Appeals against such a decision may be submitted following the Appeals procedure (Staff and student). External review options, including referral to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), will be available after internal procedures are exhausted.