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Policy: **Controversial Materials**

Code: **08LR05**

Reviewed/ Revised: **15/02/2022**

Date of Next Review: **February 2024**

Policy Owner: **Dean**

Target audience: **Senior Librarians, Faculty**

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### **PURPOSE:**

Occasionally, a student, staff or Faculty member, or a student's parent may have an objection to an item, or a part therein, in the library collection or in the information materials presented in class or in the readings assigned by a lecturer.

In principle, The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management (EAHM) believes that intellectual freedom must be preserved to enable the pursuit of knowledge. Within universities and their libraries, protection of intellectual freedom means providing access to a wide range of information resources offering different viewpoints and beliefs.

We recognize however that in a multi-cultural environment such as that found in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), intellectual freedom may be less important to our students and/or their parents than the protection of cultural values.

This policy provides guidelines for handling complaints should they arise. Its aim is to strike a reasonable balance between the intellectual exploration that promotes learning, and cultural sensitivities.

### **SCOPE:**

The policy covers library resources in all formats, including purchased or subscribed electronic materials. It also covers prescribed textbooks, videos shown in class, and any other information materials to which the students have access as members of EAHM community. However, resources freely available on the Internet are not covered in this policy.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

N/A

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The policy of EAHM is to expose our students to the widest possible range of high quality information resources in support of their studies and personal development.

Information resources will **not** be selected for the library collection or for classroom use with an eye to avoiding complaints or censoring certain topics, opinions or images. However, if complaints are received, we will investigate them fully and will take appropriate action to reach a compromise that is acceptable to all.

### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

The Dean is responsible for ensuring that the policy is up-to-date and reviewed according to the agreed schedule.

All Library staff and all Faculty members are responsible for reporting complaints promptly, and for implementing decisions made.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY:**

When a complaint is received about an item in the Library collection

- The complainant will be asked to complete an "Information Resources Query" form, which will be forwarded to the Dean for action.
- The item in question will be removed from the open shelves immediately, pending a decision.
- The Dean may contact the person for more details or explanation if necessary. An agreement may be reached through informal discussion at this stage. However, if the complainant is a parent or anyone else from outside EAHM, then there should be a full review committee process.
- The Dean will convene an ad hoc committee within two working days to review the complaint. The committee will usually consist of the, Dean and two Faculty members.
- The Dean will notify the complainant of the committee's decision and the reasons for it, within 7 days of the complaint being filed.
- The Dean will ensure that action is taken if so recommended.
- A file of all "Information Resources Query" forms and decisions will be kept in the library for reference.

Action taken in the case of a complaint may include the following:

- The item stays on the open shelves and remains freely available to all.
- The item is placed behind the circulation desk, remains in the catalogue and is available for loan to anyone who asks.
- The item is placed behind the circulation desk, remains in the catalogue but loans are restricted to Faculty only, with exceptional short-term loans to students at the library's discretion.
- The item is removed from the collection completely.

When a complaint is received about a resource circulated or displayed in a classroom setting, or posted on the intranet as reading material for a course, or about a prescribed textbook for a course,

- The lecturer or whoever receives the complaint will ask the complainant to complete an "Information Resources Query" form, which will be forwarded to the Dean for action. A copy will be sent to the lecturer in question, if the form was not submitted through him or her.
- The Dean may contact the person for more details or explanation if necessary. An agreement may be reached through informal discussion at this stage. However, if the complainant is a parent or anyone else from outside EAHM, then there should be a full review committee process.
- The Dean will convene an ad hoc committee within two working days to review the complaint. The committee will usually consist of the Dean, Library Director and one Faculty member.
- The Dean will notify the complainant of the committee's decision and the reasons for it, within 7 days of the complaint being filed.
- The Dean will ensure that action is taken if so recommended
- A file of all the Information Resource Query forms from this type of complaint will also be kept in the library for reference.

Action taken in the case of a complaint about course material may include the following:

- The item stays on the course reading list, or in the classroom presentation, with no change.
- The item is removed from the course reading list, or from the classroom presentation (e.g. a video shown in class).
- The item is removed from the course reading list or a video is not shown in class, but is made available in the library Reserve collection for any student who wishes to read it or view it.

The ad hoc committee may have other ideas as well.

**ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:**

Information Resources Query form

**MENTIONS:**

N/A

**DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:**

This document should be reviewed by **February 2024.**

**POLICY APPROVALS RECORD**

Policy Name:	<b>Controversial Materials</b>	
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