

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Approving authority	Governing Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the standard of behaviour expected of Staff and contractors of Ozford Institute of Higher Education.
Responsible Officer	President and CEO
Next scheduled review	February 2031
Document Location	https://www.ozford.edu.au/policies-and-procedures/higher-education/
Associated documents	Academic Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure Human Resources Policy and Procedure (Manual) Occupational Health and Safety Policy Privacy Policy and Procedure Professional Staff Professional Development Policy and Procedure Records Management Policy and Procedure Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure Social Media Policy and Procedure (Staff) Student Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy and Procedure (Staff) Staff Code of Conduct Procedure

1. PRINCIPLES

Ozford Institute of Higher Education (hereafter referred to as the “Institute”) is committed to the highest standards of conduct in education, training and administration. To meet this commitment, the ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure*** covers all departments and aligns staff and contractor conduct with the organisational values, policies and procedures.

It clarifies the standards of behaviour that are expected of the Institute’s Staff and contractors in the performance of their duties and provides guidance in areas where Staff and contractors need to make personal and ethical decisions.

This ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy*** does not cover all situations; it sets out standards of behaviour expected and provides a broad framework that will help staff and contractors decide on an appropriate course of action when faced with an ethical issue.

2. SCOPE

The policy applies to all staff and contractors.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic or Professional Misconduct

Academic Misconduct as set out in the ***Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*** is where Staff and contractors:

- claim possession of qualifications that have not been awarded;
- give pass grades or above to student work that is known to be not authentic (copied, someone else's work, plagiarised, colluded with others, exam cheating) or not correct;
- accepts any form of gift or money or services for favourable grades or admission;
- provides information (questions and/or responses) about assessments or examinations to students or third parties that gives students unfair advantage, uses assessment examination material that is not original (i.e. has been used before);
- fails to check the authenticity of students submitted assessments prior to awarding a pass grade;
- fabricates or alters student assessment or examination results;
- claims publication or research or academic work history that is not true;
- fabricates or falsifies findings of own research; or
- publishes work that has been plagiarised or undertaken by someone else (including students) without acknowledgement.

Conflict of Interest:

Conflict of Interest is assessed in terms of the likelihood that Staff and contractors' members or contractor possessing a particular interest could be improperly influenced or might appear to be improperly influenced in the performance of their duties.

A conflict of interest arises in circumstances where an employee's private interests can influence or be seen to influence their work. A conflict of interest can involve pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests i.e., favours, personal relationships and associations. A conflict exists when a reasonably minded and informed person would form that view.

Contractor

Contractor means any person/organisation engaged in contractual service with the Institute or for its students.

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination and more than 'cultural awareness' and 'cultural sensitivity'. It empowers people and allows them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Culturally and linguistically diverse

Culturally and linguistically diverse is a broad and inclusive term for communities with diverse language, ethnic background, nationality, dress, traditions, food, societal structures, art and religion characteristics.

Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary Actions means measures taken by the Institute in relation to unsatisfactory performance, misconduct or serious misconduct and includes but is not limited to:

- formal counselling of staff by an appropriate supervisor or internal or external counsellor;
- giving staff a written warning (including where appropriate, a final warning);
- suspension with or without pay;
- withhold of an increment or payment of an invoice;
- removal from Office while remaining an employee of the Institution;
- termination of employment or contract agreement.

General misconduct

General misconduct is where Staff and contractors:

- act dishonestly;
- bully or harass other Staff and contractors;
- interfere with other Staff^P and contractors' work;
- prevent or disrupt learning;
- disobey/fail to comply with contractual or legal requirements;
- misuse, damage or steal Institute's property or the property of others;
- alter/deface the Institute documents or records;
- prejudice the good name of the Institute, or
- an action(s) that breaches the ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure***; or
- otherwise act in an improper manner.

Inclusive environment

An inclusive environment:

- value all students
- respect their rights
- challenge all forms of discrimination
- understand and respond to the needs and capabilities of all students
- adjust their approaches to ensure all students feel safe, welcome and can participate.

Institute Environments

Physical environments are the physical places where an organisation operates or conducts activities, such as a building, facility or space and includes physical environments operated by third parties such as student advocates and homestay accommodation.

Online environments are any technological platforms which an organisation uses or controls, such as computers, phones, websites, intranet, email, social media and video conference facilities regardless of where such platforms may be accessed by students.

For the Staff Code of Conduct, Institute Environments means any environment where Institute business takes place. This includes any work travel and events on or off campus.

Serious misconduct

Serious misconduct includes but not limited to

- Acting dishonestly including any fraud in respect to the Institute, students or stakeholders;
- Knowingly making any false or misleading representation;
- Harassing or intimidating a student, a member of staff, a visitor to the Institute, or any other person, because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, political conviction, religious belief or for any other reason;
- Misuse of the facility in a manner which is illegal, or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others. This includes the misuse, in any way, of any computing or communications equipment or capacity to which staff have access at or away from the Institute premises while acting as Institute staff, in a manner which is illegal, or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others;
- Theft or an action to steal, destroy or damage a facility or property of the Institute or for which the Institute is responsible.
- Any form of violence against a student, staff member or stakeholder of the Institute that is substantiated;
- An abuse incident where the allegation is substantiated; or
- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drug in any Institute environment that poses a serious risk to health and safety.

Staff or Employee

Staff means a person engaged by an organisation as an employee, worker, contractor, labour hire worker, officer or office holder.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 By accepting employment and engagement with the Institute, all Staff and contractors have a responsibility to comply with legislation, the Institute's policies, procedures, the ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure***, perform their duties effectively, and act in a manner that promotes a productive and harmonious working environment.
- 4.2 This ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy*** sets out the behavioural standards expected of staff.
- 4.3 The Institute has **zero tolerance** for any form of abuse, assault, violence, bullying, harassment or discrimination. All such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at the Institute.

Training and Awareness

- 4.4 The Institute acknowledges that education and awareness are important and commits to actively informing and training staff in this ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy***.
- 4.5 The Staff Code of Conduct will be promoted to staff and made accessible.

Breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct

- 4.6 Any breach of the ***Staff Code of Conduct Policy*** will be seen as a serious matter and will be investigated in a timely manner.
- 4.7 The Institute will encourage all staff to seek advice and support when they feel they have been experienced or witnessed concerning behaviour.
- 4.8 Staff and contractors are expected to report their concerns about the inappropriate actions of any other employee to their manager or a member of the Executive Management Team.
- 4.9 Where an allegation of misconduct is made, an investigation of the matter will commence in accordance with the Institute's ***Human Resources Policy and Procedure***. Disciplinary action may be taken if the breach is substantiated.
- 4.10 The President and CEO or their delegated authority has the right to dismiss any staff member without notice for serious misconduct.

Staff Code of Conduct

Professional Conduct and Duty of Care

- 4.11 Staff and contractors are expected to engage in personal or professional conduct that upholds the reputation of the Institute; act ethically and responsibly and be accountable for their actions and decisions.
- 4.12 The Institute has **zero** tolerance for any form of abuse .
- 4.13 All Staff and contractors are expected to contribute to the creation of an inclusive workplace and a healthy workplace culture. All Staff and contractors are required to conduct their duties and act in a manner that promotes a culturally safe, positive, productive and harmonious learning environment, act ethically and responsibly, and be accountable for their actions and decisions.
- 4.14 Staff or Contractors who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for students. Modelling effective leadership and respect in their

interactions with other Staff, students can have a profoundly positive influence on their personal and social development.

- 4.15 In their professional role, Staff and contractors must maintain objectivity in their relationship with students. Staff and contractors must not develop a relationship with any student that is, or that can be misinterpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student. Staff and contractors must interact with students without displaying bias or preference and do not draw students into their personal agendas.
- 4.16 Everyone in the workplace has the responsibility to take all practical and reasonable steps - 'duty of care' - to ensure that they are protecting the health and safety of both themselves, their work colleagues, and the students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted.
- 4.17 Duty of care to students applies during all activities and functions conducted or arranged by the Institute where students are in the care of Staff. The risks associated with any activity need to be assessed and managed before the activity is undertaken.

This duty may be manifested in many ways including:

- the duty to supervise the students so that they comply with rules and practices designed for their own safety and that of other students;
- the duty to implement appropriate programmes and procedures to ensure the safety of students;
- the duty to ensure that college buildings, equipment and facilities are safe;
- the duty to warn students about dangerous situations or practices.

This list is not exhaustive, it is for the individual Staff and contractors to comply with objectively reasonable practice.

- 4.18 All Staff and contractors have a responsibility to comply with legislation, terms and conditions of their enrolment, Institute policies and procedures, and this **Staff Code of Conduct**.
- 4.19 The Institute is an alcohol and drug free establishment. Unlawful, inappropriate and irresponsible use of alcohol and other drugs can impair judgment, performance, health, relationships and safety. It can also result in injury or harm to individuals, damage to property and equipment, and adversely affect the rights, comfort and enjoyment of others. The consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs is strictly prohibited during work hours and while undertaking Institute work or academic activities.
- 4.20 Responsible and safe use of alcohol is permitted at work events in compliance with Australian alcohol legislation. Staff who are impaired by alcohol or drugs must not undertake Institute work or academic activities, nor represent the Institute with respect to work or academic activities.
- 4.21 All Staff and contractors are required to report instances of breach of this Code of Conduct, suspected corrupt conduct, maladministration or serious and substantial waste.

Respect for people

- 4.22 It is important for Staff and contractors to treat colleagues and students with respect.
- 4.23 Any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment, physical, verbal or online, in all Institute environments is strictly prohibited. Bullying or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening or derogatory language and physical abuse or intimidation towards other Staff or students is unacceptable.

Refer to the *Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure, Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure, Diversity and Equity Policy and Procedure* and *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure*.

- 4.24 Staff and contractors must not impose physical punishment on a student in the course of their professional duties.
- 4.25 Any form of assault/violence in any Institute environment is prohibited and considered a serious misconduct. The reference to assault/violence includes not only physical behaviour but oral, written, electronic, online, sexual and/or behaviour of a racial nature. Any such conduct between Staff and contractors and/or with Staff and contractors is not acceptable and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 4.26 The possession or threat of possession of knives, weapons or objects that can be used as a weapon at Institute is strictly prohibited and may constitute a criminal activity and will be reported to the Police.
- 4.27 Staff and contractors must not use information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phones, text or instant messaging and websites to engage in behaviour that could reasonably be considered to have a negative impact on another person, cause them harm, or make them feel unsafe.
- 4.28 No criticism of another employee or contractors should be made in a public forum or meeting.
- 4.29 Staff and contractors must not make unfounded complaints with malicious, frivolous or vexatious intent against another employee, clients, stakeholders or students.
- 4.30 Staff must not disclose internal discussions or email contents to external parties.

General misconduct

- 4.31 Staff and contractors should not:
- act dishonestly;
 - discriminate, bully or harass other Staff and contractors;
 - interfere with other Staff and contractors' work;
 - prevent or disrupt learning;
 - disobey/fail to comply with contractual or legal requirements;
 - misuse, damage or steal Institute's property or the property of others;
 - alter/deface the Institute documents or records;
 - prejudice the good name of the Institute, or
 - an action(s) that breaches the *Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure*.
 - otherwise act in an improper manner.

Academic misconduct

- 4.32 Staff and contractors as set out in the *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure* should not breach academic conduct requirements including:

- claim possession of qualifications that have not been awarded;
- give pass grades or above to student work that is known to be not authentic (copied, someone else's work, plagiarised, colluded with others, exam cheating) or not correct;
- accepts any form of gift or money or services for favourable grades or admission;
- provides information(questions and/or responses) about assessments or examinations to students or third parties that gives students unfair advantage, uses assessment examination material that is not original (i.e has been used before);
- fails to check the authenticity of students submitted assessments prior to awarding a pass grade, fabricates or alters student assessment or examination results;
- claims publication or research or academic work history that is not true;
- fabricates or falsifies findings of own research; or
- publishes work that has been plagiarised or undertaken by someone else (including students) without acknowledgement.

Serious misconduct

4.33 Staff and contractors should not:

- Acting dishonestly including any fraud in respect to the Institute, students or stakeholders;
- Knowingly making any false or misleading representation;
- Harassing or intimidating a student, a member of staff, a visitor to the Institute, or any other person, because of race, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, disability, age, political conviction, religious belief or for any other reason;
- Misuse of the facility in a manner which is illegal or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others. This includes the misuse, in any way, of any computing or communications equipment or capacity to which staff have access at or away from the Institute premises while acting as Institute staff, in a manner which is illegal, or which is or will be detrimental to the rights or property of others;
- Theft or an action to steal, destroy or damage a facility or property of the Institute or for which the Institute is responsible.
- Any form of violence against a student, staff member or stakeholder of the Institute that is substantiated;
- A child abuse incident where the allegation is substantiated; or
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drug of dependence in any Institute environment that poses a serious risk to health and safety.

4.34 The Institute has **zero** tolerance for these behaviours and will take immediate disciplinary action.

Conflict of Interest

4.35 Staff and contractors must be objective and impartial and be seen to be so.

- 4.36 Staff and contractors must declare any suspected or actual conflict of interest.
- 4.37 Staff and contractors must not enter into a sexual relationship with a student. To do so raises serious questions of conflict of interests, trust, confidence, dependency, equality of treatment, and may be a criminal offence. Such relationships may also have a negative impact on the teaching and learning environment for other students and colleagues and may carry a serious reputational risk for the Institute.
- 4.4.3 Staff and contractors must report situations where a superior or colleague who has an identified conflict is, or may be perceived as, unduly influencing their decision.
- 4.38 Staff and contractors will work with their Managers or supervisors to develop appropriate management strategies to deal with any conflicts of interests and document their decisions and actions.

Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality

- 4.39 Staff and contractors have a responsibility to behave with integrity and impartiality. This includes responding appropriately to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality, including when travelling overseas on business.
- 4.40 Staff and contractors must not seek or accept gifts that could be reasonably perceived as influencing them, particularly from people or organisations about whom they are likely to make decisions involving:
- tender processes;
 - procurement;
 - enforcement;
 - licensing;
 - regulation;
 - recruitment processes; or
 - student enrolment.
- 4.41 Gifts of money may not be accepted in any circumstances.
- If staff or a contractor is unsure how to respond to an offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality, they should seek advice from their Manager or Supervisor.
 - If staff or contractor is offered a bribe, the incident must be reported to the relevant Manager or Supervisor immediately.

Use of signature and personal reference

- 4.42 Staff or contractors must not sign a document which they know is not true and correct.
- 4.43 Staff must not provide written professional references for any current or former Staff and contractors member on an Institute's letterhead nor use their title and position for this purpose without approval.
- 4.44 Managers and Supervisors may provide referee reports as part of an internal or external recruitment selection processes. If staff are asked to provide such a report, it is their responsibility to be honest

and objective, basing their feedback on evidence that can be verified. Staff must not make false or derogatory statements about an individual.

Appropriate use of electronic communication and social media sites

4.45 Staff or contractors are required to:

- Exercise good judgment when using electronic mail, following the principles of professional conduct
- Use appropriate language in electronic mail messages
- Be aware that if an issue addressed in an email becomes that subject of a legal dispute, then those emails would be discoverable: that is, the court and all parties to the dispute would be entitled to see them
- Not sending message that are harassing, defamatory, threatening, abusive or obscene.
- Remember transmission, storage, promotion or displacement of offensive, defamatory, or harassing material is strictly forbidden.
- Report any situations where you become aware of the inappropriate use of electronic communication and social media sites
- Never use the Institute's networks to view, upload, download or circulate any of the following materials:
 - sexually related or pornographic messages or material
 - violent or hate-related messages and material
 - racist or other offensive messages aimed at a particular group or individual
 - malicious, libellous or slanderous messages or material
 - subversive or other messages or material related to illegal activities.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meet the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks the policy will be;

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by Governing Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every five years from the date of approval (if not earlier);
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requirements(s) and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy is welcomed by the listed Responsible officers of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Australian National University, Policy: Code of Conduct ([ANU Policy Library - Policy - Code of conduct](#))
- Federation University, Staff Code of Conduct, 2023 ([Staff Code of Conduct \(federation.edu.au\)](#))
- Melbourne University, Child Safety Policy, 2022 ([Child Safety Policy \(unimelb.edu.au\)](#))
- Monash University, Child Safe Standards Framework, 2022 ([Child-Safe-Standards-Framework-2022-14.06.22.pdf \(monash.edu\)](#))
- Commission for Children and Young People, Information and website resources ([CCYP | Resources and support for the Child Safe Standards](#))
- Victorian Department of Education, Protect information and website resources ([PROTECT | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#))
- Australian Government, Alcohol laws in Australia ([Alcohol laws in Australia | Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing](#))
- University of Queensland, Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy ([Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy / Document / Policy and Procedure Library](#))
- The Ozford College Child Safe Policies and Procedures (see Ozford website)

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	March 2016	Initial issue	GB
2.0	June 2018	Internal review	GB
3.0	July 2023	Internal Review	GB
3.1	September 2023	Internal review – minor formatting changes and add external referencing	EMT
4.0	February 2026	Internal Review – edits for consistency with HR Policy and clarity	GB
4.1	February 2026	Internal Review to remove under 18 student obligations	EMT

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
		after change in policy	
Related legislation/ regulation/standard		<p>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019</p> <p>The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 Standards</p> <p>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</p> <p>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</p> <p>Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)</p> <p>Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)</p> <p>Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)</p> <p>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</p> <p>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</p> <p>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</p> <p>Sexual Offence Crimes Act 1958 (Cth)</p> <p>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)</p> <p>Victoria</p> <p>Accident Compensation (Occupational Health and Safety) Act 1996 (Vic)</p> <p>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</p> <p>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (General) Regulations 2017</p> <p>Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Vic)</p> <p>Compliance Code Psychological Health (Vic)</p> <p>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</p> <p>Disability Act 2006 (Vic)</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)</p> <p>Gender Equality Act 2020</p> <p>Health Records Act 2001 (Vic),</p> <p>Long Service Leave Act 2018 (Vic)</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 (Vic)Occupational Health and Safety</p>	

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
		<p>Act 2004 (Vic)</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025 (Vic)</p> <p>Payroll Tax Act 2007 (Vic)</p> <p>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic),</p> <p>Public Holidays Act 1993 (Vic)</p> <p>Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)</p> <p>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)</p> <p>Spent Convictions Act 2021 (Vic)</p> <p>Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Regulations 2024 (Vic)</p> <p>Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 (Vic)</p> <p>Queensland</p> <p>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)</p> <p>Crime and Corruption Act 2001 (Qld)</p> <p>Disability Services Act 2006 (Qld)</p> <p>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2023 (Qld)</p> <p>Domestic and Family Violence Protection Rules 2014 (Qld)</p> <p>Education (Work Experience) Act 1996 (Qld)</p> <p>Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Provisions Act 2009 (Qld)</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Queensland Act 2019 (Qld)</p> <p>Holidays Act 1983 (Qld)</p> <p>Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)</p> <p>Human Rights Regulation 2020 (Qld)</p> <p>Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)</p> <p>Information Privacy Regulation 2025 (Qld)</p> <p>Payroll Tax Act 1971 (Qld)</p> <p>Payroll Tax Regulation 2019 (Qld)</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)</p> <p>Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (Qld)</p> <p>Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 (Qld)</p>	

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Institute of Higher Education

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
		Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2025 (Qld)	

Notes:

GB = Governing Board

EMT = Executive Management team