

Code of Conduct for Staff

Section 1 - Our Code of Conduct

(1) We know that our people make us a university like no other. It's your values, action and passion that makes the difference. Whatever role you play within our organisation – it's you that make us, us. That's why we have a Code of Conduct. We expect the highest standards of social and ethical conduct, and believe all our staff deserve a fair workplace, and treatment with the utmost dignity and respect.

(2) ACU's Mission is central to the University, and informs every area – integrating the dignity of the human person, the common good, and ethical and social justice considerations into our core activities of student learning and teaching, research and service.

(3) This Code promotes and encourages exemplary behaviour of our staff and affiliates in the workplace. It complements our policies, employment and industrial agreements, and relevant legislation.

(4) This Code outlines the behaviour we expect of all our staff and affiliates of the University, including religious, adjunct and honorary members of the University, volunteers, consultants and contractors. We expect our people to take ownership of their actions, and accept responsibility for any inappropriate/unethical behaviour or wrongdoing.

(5) Our managers should be modelling proper and principled behaviour in all that they do.

(6) We know that there may be times when you have a question, or experience an issue in the workplace. If there is anything you're unsure about, please run it by the appropriate person, which in most cases will be your nominated supervisor.

Section 2 - Mission

(7) "Within the Catholic intellectual tradition and acting in Truth and Love, Australian Catholic University is committed to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good."

Note: The Corporation of Australian Catholic University (ACU) approved the Mission Statement ("The ACU Mission") at its 23 May 2014 Annual General Meeting.

Section 3 - Values

(8) ACU is founded on a long history of commitment to truth, academic excellence and service, all within the Catholic intellectual tradition. These values are the principles behind all our actions, and guide us in living out our Mission and realising our vision:

Truth

(9) We are committed to the lifelong pursuit of knowledge, freely seeking truth through research, critical inquiry and active discovery. We share this pursuit through teaching, scholarship and engagement, contributing to the growth and

betterment of society.

Academic excellence

(10) Through our pursuit of excellence in teaching and research, we strive to produce the highest quality intellectual, educational and learning experiences through innovation and creativity.

Service

(11) We are a university of service. We seek to serve the wider community through research, education and engagement, especially by providing opportunities for those in need and by educating our students to be socially and morally responsible people.

(12) We pursue all our core values within the Catholic intellectual tradition. We are committed to serving the common good and upholding the sacredness in life. We respect and welcome all faith traditions and uphold the dignity of all people.

Section 4 - Principles

(13) At all times, ACU staff and affiliates will behave in a way that upholds the Mission both as individuals and as representatives of the University and be committed to the following principles and outcomes:

- a. Respect
- b. Honesty
- c. Courage
- d. Sustainability

Respect

(14) We are guided by a fundamental concern for justice and equity and for the dignity of all human beings. We are committed to creating an inclusive place of work and learning, including in our teaching, where we treat all people with courtesy and sensitivity.

(15) Respect is:

- a. valuing yourself and others with a high regard for individuality, diversity and intellectual freedom;
- b. being inclusive and treating people with courtesy and sensitivity; and
- c. showing consideration for the workplace and property of the University and others.

(16) As a member of the ACU community, I will:

- a. behave in ways that uphold the Mission, values, reputation and name of the University and respect its ethos and Catholic traditions;
- b. acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples culture and heritage and traditional custodianship of the lands on which we work;
- c. act equitably, fairly and reasonably and treat others with honesty, respect, courtesy and sensitivity / compassion and kindness;
- d. value and celebrate difference and diversity and the ideas, contributions, choices and approaches of others;
- e. behave and communicate in a manner that does not intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate, and which does not harass, sexually harass, unlawfully discriminate or bully;

- f. maintain a respectful, co-operative and collaborative approach to all working and work related relationships and take all reasonable steps to resolve issues at the lowest possible level (with my nominated supervisor or next most senior University officer) in a fair and timely manner;
- g. respect the confidentiality and privacy of students, other staff and affiliates, and members of the public;
- h. use all forms of social media platforms and online activities belonging to or connected with the University in a responsible and appropriate manner;
- i. exercise intellectual freedom in a manner consistent with ethical, professional and legal standards; and
- j. take all reasonable care for the health and safety of myself and of other persons in my place of work and who may be affected by my acts of omissions at work.

Honesty

(17) Honesty and integrity are fundamental principles of the University as an institution devoted to the pursuit of excellence in student learning and teaching, research and service, and to respecting the value and dignity of each person.

(18) Honesty is:

- a. being truthful and sincere;
- b. being transparent in rules, policies, procedures and guidelines and the day to day dealings with each other in the University community; and
- c. acting lawfully and with integrity.

(19) As a member of the ACU community, I will:

- a. be accountable in all work that I do and act with authenticity, sincerity and truthfulness, disclose all relevant information applying to me effectively performing my role at the University, and engage in genuine dialogue with other staff, students, affiliates and stakeholders through transparent, open and honest communication and consultation;
- b. exercise my best professional and ethical judgement, making decisions fairly, objectively and without bias, and acknowledge and attribute collaborators;
- c. comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements applying to the operation of the University and not engage in unlawful behaviour;
- d. perform duties diligently, ethically and conscientiously and in accordance with reasonable and lawful supervisory directions and comply with ACU policies and procedures as amended from time to time;
- e. exercise positional and supervisory power and responsibility properly, respecting the dignity, rights and entitlements of students and staff;
- f. take all reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (actual, potential or perceived) in the course of my employment, and immediately disclose, in writing, to the Member of the Executive responsible for the area in which I work if a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest arises;
- g. only participate in appropriate and approved Outside Work (paid or unpaid) which does not conflict with my normal work and/or the University's interests, business or otherwise;
- h. not solicit nor accept any gifts, benefits or favours for myself or for another person;
- i. use entitlements, equipment, facilities, resources and funds efficiently, carefully, professionally, ethically, lawfully, honestly and for their proper purpose, and only access or use information, including information on electronic systems and hard copy files, for an authorised purpose;
- j. avoid any conduct, including alcohol or substance abuse or misuse, which would adversely affect my work performance; and
- k. never represent my personal views as being those of ACU.

Courage

(20) We are committed to the highest standards of ethical behaviour and the proper and lawful management of the organisation and its staff. We recognise that staff and affiliates will from time to time face challenges and difficulties and promote a supportive workplace where staff and affiliates can raise matters without fear of retribution. Similarly, staff and affiliates are encouraged to be proactive, seek to continuously improve and suggest new innovative approaches, and should not be discouraged where suggestions are not practicable and cannot be progressed.

(21) Courage is:

- a. acting ethically and professionally in spite of known fears, risks and uncertainty;
- b. having the strength to raise potential unethical behaviours and disclose potential wrongdoings;
- c. being open to receiving information and taking all reasonable steps to appropriately respond; and
- d. facing challenges and issues and making difficult decisions.

(22) As a member of the ACU community, I will:

- a. ensure that I accurately convey the University's Mission, values and goals;
- b. comply with the ethical standards and legal obligations of my profession;
- c. report suspected unethical behaviour or wrongdoing by another staff member related to their ACU employment to an appropriate person / University officer / the Member of the Executive responsible for the area in which I work or in accordance with the [Protected Disclosures Policy](#) and [Protected Disclosures Procedure](#) for reportable conduct;
- d. admit and take responsibility for my mistakes or involvement in situations that result in unfavourable outcomes and work to rectify problems as quickly as possible;
- e. ensure that those who have admitted mistakes are treated with fairness and dignity;
- f. provide constructive and accurate comments and feedback to students, staff and other members of the University community;
- g. respectfully listen to and receive information and suggestions from others in a collaborative way;
- h. make well-considered justifiable decisions, especially where they may have an adverse effect on people; and
- i. where possible suggest improvements in my workplace or the broader community through research, reflection and innovation.

Sustainability

(23) We acknowledge the importance of responsible, ethical, sound practices and decision making for the long term success of the University and the protection of the environment more broadly. It is the behaviour and actions of our staff and affiliates that make ACU an outstanding organisation. Sustaining the University's goodwill and culture that is centred on its Mission is critical.

(24) Sustainability is:

- a. considering financial, environmental (natural and built), workforce and workplace impacts in all personal and organisational decision making for the long term benefit of the ACU community and organisation and environment more broadly.

(25) As a member of the ACU community, I will:

- a. use the resources of the University as efficiently and effectively as possible and expend University funds with proper consideration, care and authorisation to avoid waste;

- b. make reasonable efforts to actively engage in learning and in personal and professional development to continually improve my skills and knowledge relevant to my role and area of expertise and for personal growth;
- c. consider the possible impact of my decisions on others, the environment and on the operation and reputation of the University;
- d. actively participate and contribute to the workplace to foster productivity and equity in workload and a positive inclusive workplace culture;
- e. capture and share organisational knowledge with appropriate ACU colleagues to maximise operational effectiveness and minimise loss of corporate knowledge due to turnover;
- f. exercise due diligence in identifying and minimising organisational risk;
- g. identify and report all workplace health and safety risks or security incidents and take all reasonable care for the health and safety of myself and of other persons in my place of work and who may be affected by my acts or omissions at work;
- h. use appropriate technologies and pedagogies in the teaching of students in line with University policy; and
- i. adhere to proper records and information management practices and procedures, so that records are secure, complete, up-to-date and capable of providing organisational accountability.

Section 5 - Excellence, and other university frameworks

(26) Our university community is encouraged to pursue excellence in all areas of student learning and teaching, research and service. Excellence in both work, and in behaviour.

(27) This Code of Conduct is one of several documents that guides us toward this goal, and it should be read in conjunction with other university frameworks, policies, procedures and guidelines. These are available in the ACU Policy Library.

Section 6 - Breach of Code and related disclosures

(28) We deal with allegations of breaches fairly and appropriately. If you're aware of a possible breach of the Code, please tell your nominated supervisor, or the supervisor above. If it is not appropriate to resolve the matter locally and informally, you can submit a formal notification to People and Capability via the [University Complaints and Feedback Webpage](#).

(29) You can make a protected disclosure in accordance with the University's [Protected Disclosures Policy](#) and [Protected Disclosures Procedure](#). We investigate Reportable Conduct, and support and protect Disclosers in line with the [Protected Disclosures Policy](#).

(30) A breach in conduct will result in the University taking action relevant to the staff and affiliates' involvement with the University.

(31) Any personal threats, emergencies and serious incidences where the law has been broken should be reported to the police. This Code does not stop staff and affiliates taking an action external to the University's processes.

(32) A failure to comply with this Code will be viewed seriously and may lead to disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment or suspension from the University. An allegation of a breach of this Code which is made vexatiously, maliciously, frivolously, mischievously, and/ or without reasonable cause may constitute misconduct and a breach of this Code. Unlawful conduct will result in criminal proceedings, in accordance with the relevant legislation and related processes.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	19th December 2023
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Responsible Executive	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Bernardine Lynch ER and Safety Committees and Policy Officer <hr/> People and Capability