

# Code of Conduct

## Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) Western Sydney University is committed to demonstrating high standards of personal and professional conduct. The Code of Conduct reflects the University values of excellence and quality, scholarly rigour and integrity, equity and inclusiveness, collegiality and participation, academic freedom, commitment and accountability.

(2) This policy applies, and provides guidance to, all staff members and affiliates of the University. The principles apply also to clients, colleagues and partners engaged in employment or partnerships with the University at our campuses, in online environments and social media, or in external locations within and outside Australia when representing the University.

(3) This Code of Conduct applies to students when they are also employed by the University. All students of the University are covered by the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

(4) This Code is a set of overarching principles to be followed rather than an exhaustive list of prescriptions. The Code cannot address all possible issues and scenarios which may be faced in the course of performing work, duties or functions for Western Sydney University.

(5) This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies that cover specific areas of personal and professional conduct, which includes:

- a. [Indigenous Australian Education Policy](#)
- b. [Indigenous Australian Employment Policy](#)
- c. [Acceptable Use of Digital Services Policy](#)
- d. [Health Safety and Wellbeing Procedures - Alcohol and Drug Control](#)
- e. [Asset Management Policy](#)
- f. [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- g. [Commercial Activities Guidelines](#)
- h. [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- i. [Corporate Credit Card Policy](#)
- j. [Delegations of Authority Policy](#)
- k. [Discrimination, Harassment, Vilification and Victimisation Prevention Policy](#)
- l. [Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy](#)
- m. [External Work Policy](#)
- n. [Gifts and Benefit Policy](#)
- o. [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- p. [Media, Social Media and Public Commentary Policy](#)
- q. [Modern Slavery Prevention Policy](#)
- r. [Personal and Discretionary Expenditures Policy](#)
- s. [Procurement Policy](#)
- t. [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)

- u. [Respect and Inclusion in Learning and Working Policy](#)
- v. [Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy](#)
- w. [Whistleblowing \(Reporting Corruption and Other Serious Wrongdoing\) Policy](#)

(6) This Code should also be read in conjunction with the [Academic](#) and [Professional](#) Staff Enterprise Agreements, the Western Sydney University [Charter of Academic Freedom](#), and the [Explanatory Note - Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers](#); the [Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and the [Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#).

(7) The University and its staff members, affiliates, clients and partners are accountable for their conduct and behaviour in relation to this Code.

## Section 2 - Key Definitions

(8) Academic freedom (as defined by the [Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers](#)) means:

- a. the freedom to teach, discuss, research and to disseminate and publish the results of an individual's research;
- b. the freedom to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express opinions and beliefs, and to contribute to public debate in relation to an individual's subjects of study and research;
- c. the freedom to express opinions in relation to the systems and institutions of higher education, including those at which an individual works;
- d. the freedom to participate in professional or representative bodies;
- e. the autonomy of the higher education provider in relation to the choice of academic programs and offerings, the ways in which they are taught and the choices of research activities and the ways in which they are conducted.

(9) Freedom of speech (as defined in Article 19 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)) means everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers in accordance with the law.

(10) Staff members means anyone employed by Western Sydney University. This includes academic staff, professional staff and senior staff on continuing, fixed term and casual contracts.

(11) Affiliates means a clinical title holder, an adjunct, conjoint and honorary appointee, a consultant or contractor to the University, an office holder in a University entity, a member of any University Board, Council or Committee and any other person appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf.

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(12) The Code of Conduct is aligned with the values articulated in the University's [Strategic Plan](#), as well as the principles expressed in the [Board of Trustees Ethical Framework](#). As the largest educational provider in the region, the University plays a key role in promoting positive social change, intellectual innovation, and economic development to the communities it serves. This is a role that carries significant responsibilities and challenges. This Code of Conduct reflects the values and principles of the University and supports the University's capacity to fulfil its mission.

## **Commitment to Region and Communities**

(13) Being mindful of the responsibility as an anchor institution of Western Sydney, the University is committed to its region and communities. The University is responsive and accessible to the communities that it serves and strives for scholarly outcomes of international standing that also have a regional impact and relevance. To uphold these values, staff and affiliates will:

- a. ensure that decisions are consistent with the mission, values and beliefs of the University;
- b. ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the greater public good and with particular regard for the region's needs and aspirations;
- c. exercise stewardship of resources to support the capacity of both current and future staff and students to pursue knowledge and lifelong learning;
- d. seek informed opinion from diverse sources;
- e. foster a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment based upon mutual respect and responsibility to all students, staff, and community partners; and
- f. sustain the University's social, physical and natural environments through responsible planning and management of resources and by encouraging all external partners to do likewise, and, more generally, to be mindful of our responsibilities to natural and social environments in all our activities.

## **Excellence and Quality**

(14) A commitment to excellence and quality is central to the University's mission. The University strives for excellence through scholarship, teaching, research, and service. Staff and affiliates demonstrate this commitment by:

- a. exemplifying the values and highest professional standards of the University;
- b. using current and accurate information, ideas, and evidence to support debate;
- c. discharging all responsibilities with integrity and in accordance with the University's policies and procedures; and
- d. upholding a culture of continuous monitoring, review and improvement of processes and practices.

## **Integrity**

(15) The University values integrity across its academic, teaching, professional, public and administrative duties. Staff and affiliates promote integrity in the workplace by:

- a. displaying academic integrity and ethical practice in learning, teaching and research;
- b. exercising honesty, transparency and timeliness in communication and actions;
- c. maintaining currency in their areas of work or scholarship, and in the professional, legal and ethical standards relevant to their areas of expertise;
- d. displaying ethical and professional conduct consistent with University policies and procedures;
- e. safeguarding confidentiality and privacy of personal or commercial information entrusted to the University;
- f. ensuring that all actions are free from conflict of interest, or disclosing interests where conflict may arise or reasonably be perceived by others to arise; and
- g. being mindful of personal presentation when discharging their roles and responsibilities within the University.

## **Equity and Inclusiveness**

(16) The University is committed to creating a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment based upon mutual respect. It welcomes and supports people of all genders and all cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds. Staff and affiliates will ensure equality of opportunity by:

- a. supporting a culture of inclusiveness and respect for difference;
- b. promoting the value of diversity at every level of the University;
- c. ensuring that decision making is reasoned, transparent, documented and conducted without bias, including decisions in relation to recruitment of staff;
- d. being proactive in learning about and respecting the cultural backgrounds of staff and students; and
- e. committing to a workplace and scholarly environment that is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination.

## **Collegiality and Participation**

(17) The University values collegiality and participation in decision making, recognising that the University is enriched by diverse contributions from staff and students. Staff and affiliates will foster collegiality and participation by:

- a. demonstrating consideration and regard for the rights and responsibilities of others and for differences across cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and abilities; and
- b. being civil and respectful in all communications whether that be with staff, students or external partners, acknowledging, at the same time, that the exchange of ideas can involve robust debate.

## **Recognition and Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Their Diverse Knowledge Systems**

(18) The University is committed to learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, knowledge and history. The University seeks to strengthen its engagement and relationship with First Nation peoples in all aspects of our activities. Staff and affiliates will do this by:

- a. consulting with and including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision making; and
- b. ensuring that decision making acknowledges and respects the knowledge and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## **Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech**

(19) The University upholds free intellectual inquiry in relation to learning, teaching and research. Academic Senate has adopted a [Charter of Academic Freedom](#) that affirms the University's responsibility to free and open inquiry in all areas of scholarship. This includes the freedom to carry out research and disseminate and publish the results thereof, the freedom to express freely an opinion about the University and Higher Education systems in which staff and affiliates work, the freedom from institutional censorship, and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies. These freedoms are subject to the requirements of clause (20), below.

(20) Staff and affiliates will uphold academic freedom and freedom of speech by:

- a. encouraging open, principled, robust and informed discussions;
- b. ensuring that freedom of speech is exercised in accordance with the law (refer to Freedom of Speech Policy); and
- c. ensuring that, when making lawful public comment on any issue in their personal capacity, staff and affiliates avoid representing personal viewpoints as those of the University.

## **Ethics and Accountability**

(21) The University values ethical decision making and accountability and expects that staff and affiliates will take responsibility for their actions within the scope of their work, study and community engagement, consistent with the [Board of Trustees Ethical Framework](#).

(22) Ethics and accountability entail an obligation to report on, explain and be responsible for one's actions and their consequences. Staff and affiliates:

- a. act with care, diligence and honesty;
- b. are accountable for official conduct and decisions;
- c. exercise care and probity in the use of equipment and financial resources;
- d. avoid and report on any possible corruption or misuse of University funds;
- e. acknowledge and take responsibility for their actions;
- f. comply with the principles of health and safety at work and study, and report health and safety risks and incidents through appropriate channels; and
- g. ensure that compliance with legislation, regulations and policy is observed at all times, and that it is undertaken in the spirit of the law.

## Section 4 - Procedures

(23) The University will promote the Code of Conduct to staff and affiliates as an important document that exemplifies its values.

(24) The University will provide staff and affiliates with access to education and training in relation to the requirements of this Code and related procedures.

### Roles and Responsibilities of Staff and Supervisors

(25) All staff must comply with the principles and requirements outlined in this Code of Conduct.

(26) Supervisors and managers will:

- a. exemplify in their own conduct the requirements of this Code;
- b. create an environment where the requirements of this Code are reflected in their day-to-day managerial duties;
- c. encourage staff to maintain high standards of conduct in the workplace; and
- d. receive and act upon reports of breaches of this Code in accordance with relevant University policies and other applicable laws.

(27) Advice on ethical issues can be obtained from a range of sources within the University, depending on the context. These include the:

- a. University Secretary;
- b. Office of General Counsel;
- c. Office of Audit and Risk Assessment;
- d. Equity, Safety and Wellbeing;
- e. Office of People
- f. Research Services – for research ethics and intellectual property matters.

## Section 5 - Guidelines

(28) The Associated Information page contains a listing of the key documents, policies and legislation that regulate the University's operations. The University is also subject to the Federal and State legislation and regulations dealing with registration for particular professions.

(29) The listing includes links to the key policies that relate to the issues covered in this Code of Conduct. The list is current at the time of publication but is subject to change. Existing policies are amended and new policies are added regularly. Reference should always be made to the [Policy DDS](#) website in order to access the most recent policy information.

(30) The listing of State and Federal legislation refers to the most frequently cited legislation in the University context, but should not be taken as a comprehensive listing of all relevant statutes. State and Commonwealth legislation can be readily accessed via a number of Australian web sites including those of the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII) and the NSW Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
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<b>Unit Head</b>	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services 45701415
<b>Author</b>	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services 45701415
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services 45701415

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Program"** - A program of study consisting of at least four subjects or 40 credit points leading to an award of the University (Foundation Studies Program, Undergraduate Preparation Program, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Undergraduate Certificate, Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate, Postgraduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Postgraduate Diploma and Masters by Coursework Degree) which when successfully completed is conferred on the graduand by the Board of Trustees.