

Code of Conduct

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Document URL	http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Code of Conduct.pdf
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Description	This Code of Conduct provides guidance on expected standards of behaviour and how staff are to conduct their duties and related activities.

Related documents

[Assets Policy](#)

[Authority to Sign Contracts and Agreements: Schedule of Delegations](#)

[Code of Practice for the Supervision of HDR Students](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Consultancy and Commercial Research Policy](#)

[Equal Opportunity Policy](#)

[Expenditure of University Funds Guidelines](#)

[Financial Delegations Schedule](#)

[Fraud Control Policy](#)

[Gifts and Benefits Policy](#)

[Griffith University Academic Staff Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Griffith University General Staff Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Griffith Health Intramural Professional Practice Policy](#)

[Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Commercialisation Activities](#)

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure](#)

[Information Security Policy](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Motor Vehicle Policy](#)

[Personal Relationships in the Workplace](#)

[Privacy Plan](#)

[Private Practice Guidelines to Conduct Clinical Practice within the Griffith Health Clinics](#)

[Private Practice Policy](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Policy](#)

[Public Sector Ethics Act 1994](#)

[Purchasing Policy](#)

[Records Management Policy](#)

[Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)

[Recruitment and Selection Procedures](#)

[Social Media Guidelines](#)

[Students with Disabilities Policy](#)

[University Campus Access and Use Policy](#)

1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct, which forms part of the terms of employment for staff, sets out the University's expectations with respect to staff professional and personal conduct. A key purpose of the Code is to promote integrity through ethical decision-making and behaviour. The Code refers to a range of policies which provide more detailed information on the University's expectations and requirements.

Given the complexity of the modern university, a Code such as this, even with its associated policies, cannot provide definitive answers to all the integrity issues which may confront staff from time to time. Staff are required to exercise reasonable judgement regarding their professional and personal conduct and when necessary consult their supervisor or relevant central offices if they are unsure about how to act or deal with a particular situation or issue.

Staff are required to comply with the Code and associated policies. Breaches of the Code or policies may result in disciplinary action.

2. Application and Scope

The Code applies to all circumstances where staff are performing work, duties or functions for the University, as well as related activities such as work-related functions, travel, conferences and any circumstances where they are attending as a University staff member. The Code also applies, as relevant, to members of the University Council and its Committees who are not staff of the University.

For the purposes of this Code, "staff" means continuing, fixed-term and casual staff, including senior management, executive, academic, general, visiting, honorary and adjunct, conjoint appointments and volunteers. Breaches of the Code will be dealt with in accordance with section 6, Compliance with the Code.

3. University Statement of Values and Commitments

The University's [Strategic Plan](#) sets out the following nine values and commitments to guide delivery of its mission:

- Rigorous standards of scholarship
- Positively influencing our communities through our teaching, research and scholarly activities
- Recognising our location in the Asia-Pacific and deepening our engagement with the region
- Bringing disciplines together to address the key issues of our time
- Promoting the respect of individual rights and ethical standards
- Participatory decision making and problem solving
- Contributing to a robust, equitable and environmentally sustainable society
- Recognising and valuing diversity
- Recognising the unique place of First Peoples in Australian history and culture, and enabling their continued contribution to the nation

4. General Expectations

In professional actions, and in dealing with other staff, students and the community, staff will be guided by the University's [Statement of Values and Commitments](#), the [University Strategic Plan](#), this Code, the University's policies and other documents contained within the [Policy Library](#).

The [Queensland Public Sector Ethics Act 1994](#) requires universities to have a Code of Conduct. The Act outlines four fundamental ethical principles which are considered essential to good public administration and should guide staff behaviour:

- integrity and impartiality;
- promoting the public good;
- commitment to the system of government;
- accountability and transparency.

4.1 Expectations

Staff are responsible for their own behaviour and are expected to conduct themselves in the following manner with regard to University activities:

- behave honestly, with integrity and in a way that upholds the values and reputation of the University;
- act in a cooperative, responsive and helpful manner;
- act with care and diligence;
- ensure fairness in decision making;
- treat everyone with respect and courtesy and without discrimination or harassment;
- use University property and money efficiently, carefully and honestly with due authorisation and without misappropriation;
- comply with the ethical standards and legal requirements of their profession;
- comply with all applicable laws;
- comply in a timely manner with any lawful or reasonable direction given by a person with the authority to give the direction.

The University expects its staff to remain informed about, act within the spirit of, and comply with University policies, directions and relevant legislation, as well as any regulatory requirements of their discipline or profession. Failure to act in accordance with these obligations will be dealt with in accordance with section 6 and can be a cause for investigation under the relevant misconduct provisions of the University Staff Enterprise Agreements. Breaches of, or non-compliance with these obligations should be reported to a relevant senior officer.

5. Specific Expectations

Set out below are the key areas of expectation, obligation and responsibility for staff under the Code. Relevant policy and procedures are highlighted and linked for ease of reference.

5.1 A Safe Environment

The University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of its staff, students, contractors and visitors while undertaking work, study or research activities. All staff are responsible to ensure a [safe and healthy work environment](#).

Related documents and links:

[Health and Safety Policy](#)
[Health and Safety Accountabilities](#)
[Incident Reporting Procedures](#)
[Health and Safety Resources](#)
[Health and Wellbeing](#)

5.2 Fairness and Respect

All members of the University are entitled to be treated with respect and provided equal opportunities regardless of personal, social, sexual or cultural characteristics. They should also experience a work and study environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying or vilification. The University will investigate all complaints within its relevant policies and in accordance with anti-discrimination and other applicable laws. The University will not tolerate victimisation of complainants.

Staff members must use their official position properly and honestly. Improper use of a staff member's position includes actions which may result in detriment to the University or which result in real, potential or apparent advantage to a staff member, or any other person or organisation.

The nature of student/staff interactions and the role of supervisors and managers may place a staff member in a position of power over other staff and students. This imbalance of power creates the potential for undue influence of a student or more junior staff member, due to age or other factors such as the capacity to influence outcomes. In particular, the development of a personal or sexual relationship where a power imbalance exists creates the potential for abuse of position, for damage to the less empowered and potentially vulnerable individual, and for conflicts of interests. A staff member must not abuse or misuse a position of authority.

Related documents:

[Equal Opportunity Policy](#)
[Grievance Resolution Procedures](#)
[Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
[Recruitment and Selection Procedures](#)
[Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
[Workplace Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#)
[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
[Personal Relationships in the Workplace Policy](#)

5.3 Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is an essential element to the conduct of teaching and research in the University. It is recognised that academic staff will exercise academic freedom as they:

- pursue critical and open enquiry;
- research and publish;
- teach, assess and develop curricula within the policies of the Academic Committee;
- participate in public debates and express opinions about issues and ideas.

In exercising academic freedom, staff are expected:

- to adhere to accepted scholarly standards;
- to comply with University policies and the terms of their appointment;
- to treat other staff and students with courtesy and respect.

5.4 Research Integrity

The University is committed to maintaining an environment that fosters responsible research and a research culture that demonstrates honesty and integrity, respect for human research participants, animals and the environment, good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research, and responsible communication of research results.

The Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research applies to any person or organisation conducting research under the auspices of Griffith University.

Related documents:

[Code of Practice for the Supervision of HDR Students](#)
[Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

5.5 Intellectual Property

The University has clear policy on how intellectual property (IP) is to be managed. This policy details the framework and associated processes which the University, staff and students are required to follow when dealing with IP developed at the University and staff are required to comply with all such provisions.

Related documents:

[Consultancy and Commercial Research Policy](#)
[Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Commercialisation Activities](#)
[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

5.6 Confidential Information

Where the University holds confidential information staff must ensure that information is accessed only by those who have a legitimate need and lawful authorisation to do so. Staff must:

- respect the confidentiality and privacy of personal or commercial information entrusted to the University;
- disclose official information only in accordance with University policy or legal obligations;
- ensure that University information and files are kept secure;
- ensure that personal or confidential information is never used for individual gain or benefit, or that of a third party, nor to the detriment of the University, either while engaged or later.

Related documents:

[Information Security Policy](#)
[Privacy Plan](#)
[Records Management Policy](#)
[Vital Records Policy](#)

5.7 Public Comment

Staff have a right as citizens to participate in public debates on any matter. In doing so, staff are expected to act in a private capacity without referring to their University affiliation except where the matter in question falls within their professional expertise at the University. Professional expertise does not confer protection from action for defamation. Staff should be particularly conscious of the reach and impact of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Staff making public comments within their area of professional expertise and using their University affiliation should avoid giving the impression that they are representing any official view of the University. Public statements representing the official view of the University are authorised through the Office of Marketing and Communications.

Related documents:

[Social Media Guidelines](#)

5.8 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when a private interest conflicts with a staff member's duty as a University member. Such conflicts can influence decisions unfairly. Where a conflict of interest exists in reality or where others may perceive that it does, the University requires staff to declare it to a Head/Director, Chair of a committee, or other relevant person or body. As a general guideline staff must:

- comply with policies on conflict of interest, delegations and commercial activities;
- never use information obtained in the course of employment to gain advantage for themselves or anyone else;

- exclude themselves from any decision in which they have a personal interest. This may involve a personal benefit or vested interest or one that involves family, friends, former employees or business contacts. It may also involve prejudice against a particular person or outcome.

Full details of the policy and procedures are set out in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and the [Personal Relationships in the Workplace Policy](#).

Related documents:

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
[Personal Relationships in the Workplace Policy](#)
[Recruitment and Selection Policy](#)
[Recruitment and Selection Procedures](#)

5.9 Outside Employment

In valuing the expertise of its people, the University recognises that staff may engage in paid or unpaid outside employment or private practice but expects that their doing so will not adversely impact on their ability to fulfil their obligation to the University, nor impede its work health and safety commitments. Full-time staff may not undertake other paid employment without express prior approval of the University. Subject to individual staff contracts, the University requires that people will not, unless expressly approved, use the University's name, reputation, or resources in association with any outside work or private practice. Relevant University approval processes must be followed.

Related documents:

[Consultancy and Commercial Research Policy](#)
[Griffith Health Intramural Professional Practice Policy](#)
[Guide to the Responsible Conduct of Commercialisation Activities](#)
[Private Practice Guidelines to Conduct Clinical Practice within the Griffith Health Clinics](#)
[Private Practice Policy](#)

5.10 Gifts or Benefits

Gifts or benefits that may appear to influence any aspect of work must be neither solicited nor accepted. Such gifts or benefits might include hospitality, travel, money, property, discounted service or goods (consideration) or a service. In general, staff:

- may not accept gifts of money in any circumstances;
- may accept unsolicited gifts or benefits of a nominal value attached to social and cultural events, promotional activities or visits if the acceptance poses no compromise. Gifts above nominal value are gifts to the University.

The Gifts and Benefits Policy sets out relevant details and procedures.

Related documents:

[Gifts and Benefits Policy](#)

5.11 University Funds

All staff are accountable for the efficient and effective use of funds and must act only within delegated authority and [University policies and procedures](#). Staff must:

- be prepared to justify all expenditure;
- seek clarification about transactions where there is uncertainty over delegation, authority, policy or procedure;
- maintain proper documentation and records of all financial transactions;
- report instances of misuse or misappropriation of University funds;
- never use University funds or credit cards for personal purposes or benefit.

Related documents:

[Expenditure of University Funds Guidelines](#)

[Purchasing Policy](#)

[Financial Delegations Schedule](#)

[University Credit Card Policy](#)

[Authority to Sign Contracts and Agreements: Schedule of Delegations](#)

[Fraud Control Policy](#)

5.12 Facilities and Equipment

University facilities and equipment are provided for staff to use for approved purposes, and never for private purposes without express permission. For reasons of practicality, reasonable personal use of University communications facilities, photocopiers, internet access, and desktop computers is acceptable if that use is minimal, complies with University policies, and does not interfere with normal work. However staff are not authorised to use University facilities or equipment for private commercial, personal interest, or party political purposes other than as expressly approved within relevant policy and employment agreements.

When using University facilities, including equipment or vehicles, staff are responsible for such facilities and for maintaining safety and adhering to University policies and legislative requirements such as [Work Health and Safety](#), as well as for any damage or loss. All University facilities, equipment or vehicles must be used efficiently and carefully and any misuse or misappropriation reported.

Related documents:

[Assets Policy](#)

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Motor Vehicle Policy](#)

[Information Technology Resources Code of Practice](#)

5.13 Alcohol and Drugs

The University is an educational and social community whose students, staff and guests interact in a wide variety of activities. It is acknowledged that alcohol may be consumed at some activities involving the University or occurring on University grounds. The University prohibits service of alcohol to minors in accordance with the law. The University does not allow the consumption of illegal drugs.

Staff must not attend work or perform their duties or functions if they are under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or medication likely to cause danger for themselves or others. Being affected by alcohol or drugs at work can seriously compromise the health, safety and welfare of the University community and may expose the University and the individual involved to legal liability.

Related documents:

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[University Campus Access and Use Policy](#)

5.14 Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle blowing)

The University is intent on the detection and elimination of fraud and corrupt conduct and on protecting people who make disclosures. The University expects staff to act honestly and to report any possible corruption, maladministration or waste of the University's resources. Staff can report concerns by making a protected disclosure. Such reports will be properly and confidentially investigated in accordance with the policy.

Related documents:

[Fraud Control Policy](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Policy](#)

6. Compliance with the Code

All staff are required to comply with this Code. Any alleged breaches of this Code will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable University policy or procedure, enterprise agreement, industrial

instrument or contract. In the case of an alleged breach of this Code that is not covered by a University policy document, enterprise agreement, industrial instrument or contract, the University will apply the principles of natural justice when investigating such a complaint. If an allegation is found to be proven, in serious cases staff may have their employment and/or affiliation terminated.

Related documents:

[Griffith University Academic Staff Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Griffith University General Staff Enterprise Agreement](#)

7. Limit on Confidentiality

Any confidentiality regarding conduct arising under this Code is limited by the University's obligations under law to disclose certain conduct to relevant authorities. For example, the University has an obligation to report alleged corrupt conduct to the Crime and Corruption Commission and there are also mandatory external reporting requirements for certain professions. Alleged breaches of criminal law will be reported to the Police.