

## CODE OF CONDUCT

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**Related Documents:** University of Adelaide Collective Agreement  
The University of Adelaide Act 1971  
University Strategic Plan 2007 – 2011  
University of Adelaide Policies and Research Ethics  
Privacy Policy

**Implementation & Review:** Human Resources

**Superseded Documents:**

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact Human Resources on ext. 35666.

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This Code of Conduct is intended to guide University of Adelaide staff and titleholders to identify issues of ethical conduct that may arise in their employment or association with the University. It is designed to inform staff and titleholders in their dealings with colleagues, students, the University, and the national and international community. All University staff must be aware of and observe the University's Code of Conduct. Staff who are in breach of the code may be subject to the disciplinary procedures as described in the [University of Adelaide Collective Agreement](#), as appropriate and relevant.

The Code is written as a set of general principles rather than detailed prescriptions. The Code stands beside but does not exclude or replace the rights and obligations of staff under common law and reference must be made to [The University of Adelaide Act 1971](#) and University policies and procedures.

The University recognises that many of its academic and other professional staff are also bound by codes of conduct or ethics defined by learned or professional societies or groups. These are in addition to the legislative requirements to which all staff are bound. Academic staff in particular have multiple allegiances to:

- their discipline or profession at local, national and international levels;
- the academic profession;
- the community at large and
- the University.

It is recognised that these multiple allegiances may not always be in harmony. It is an obligation of a staff member to weigh the importance of these allegiances in each particular set of circumstances and notify an appropriate officer of the University where such conflict does or may arise to the detriment of the University.

The University is a complex organisation comprising a diversity of populations that have different relationships to one another and these may be relations of power and/or status. It is essential in such a community that all members recognise and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights, responsibilities and authority of other members of the community and those of the University itself.

The Code of Conduct is based on the five Values statements in the [University's Strategic Plan: 2007 - 2011](#). The five Values statements are listed below:

- The pursuit of excellence in all that we do.
- Fairness, integrity and responsibility.
- The rights and responsibilities of freedom of inquiry and expression.
- Service to the local, national and international communities.
- Innovation, creativity and breadth of vision.

The Code will enable staff to engage with the intent of the Values statements and behave in a manner that fosters collegiality and characterises effective working relationships in our diverse organisation.

### **The pursuit of excellence in all that we do.**

The University has multiple obligations in the pursuit of excellence in terms of educating large numbers of students to a high standard; carrying out a vigorous research agenda and creating and maintaining excellent administration and facilities to enhance the teaching, learning and research of the University.

The Code of Conduct requires that in the pursuit of excellence in all business, academic (including research), professional and personal relationships that all staff:

- behave with integrity, honesty and fairness;
- have a legal and moral obligation to carry out their job responsibilities in accordance with relevant contractual arrangements and with the technical and professional standards relevant to that work;
- owe a duty of care to the University.

### **Fairness, integrity and responsibility**

The Code of Conduct creates an obligation for staff to:

- comply with standards of equity and justice;
- behave with integrity;
- act in a responsible manner in dealing with every member of the University community;
- ensure that bias or prejudice on unlawful grounds do not influence or override their objectivity in academic, research, administrative, business or management matters.

Staff have an obligation to act appropriately when a conflict arises between their own self-interest and their duty to the University. Where such conflict does or may arise, the staff member:

- must not play a role in decision-making that might be associated with that issue wherever
- feasible;
- should disclose the issue to their supervisor at the University;
- must take care that their financial and other interests and actions do not conflict or be seen to conflict with the obligations and requirements of their University position;
- must not use the resources of the University for private gain or the gain of a third party and
- must refrain from engaging in any outside work that would compromise their integrity and responsibility to the University.

Staff must consider the impact of their decisions on the well-being of others. Consistent with the Privacy Policy and Management Plan, staff must respect individuals' rights to privacy and undertake to keep personal information in confidence, including information gained through case records from outside the University.

### **The rights and responsibilities of freedom of inquiry and expression**

The Code of Conduct enables the University to recognise and protect the concept and practice of academic freedom as essential to the proper conduct of teaching, research, scholarship and creative activity. While academic freedom is a right, it carries with it the responsibility of staff to use the freedom in a manner consistent with a responsible and honest search for, and dissemination of, knowledge and truth. Within the ambit of academic freedom lies the traditional role of academic staff in making informed comment on societal mores and practice and in challenging held beliefs, policies and structures. Where such comments are offered by academic staff as members of the University it is expected:

- that those commentaries will lie within their expertise and
- that they will observe the highest ethical and professional standards.

That expectation is not intended to restrict the right of any academic staff member in their capacity as private citizens to freely express their opinions. If a staff member is publicly commenting on an issue not within their professional expertise, the staff member must make it clear that the comment is being made in a private capacity. That expectation is also not intended to restrict the ability of members of the University community to support causes by orderly means including any means of peaceful assembly or advocacy that do not infringe upon the rights or freedoms of others.

### **Service to the local, national and international communities**

The effective functioning of the University community depends on the mutual respect required of individuals co-existing within a diverse community and with its broad clientele, together with the pursuit of an environment characterised by co-operation, collegiality, impartiality, equity, and financial responsibility.

The Code of Conduct obliges staff to:

- be conscious of the leadership role that they play in relation to community standards;
- take responsible stewardship of its resources and protect its reputation in the wider community;
- treat students, members of the public and other staff members with respect, impartiality,
- courtesy and sensitivity and
- maintain a co-operative and collaborative approach to working relationships with local, national and international communities.

### **Innovation, creativity and breadth of vision**

The University of Adelaide encourages the establishment of a workplace that is a source of creativity, innovation and new initiatives. The Code of Conduct encourages staff to engage in innovative pursuits and to demonstrate original and creative thinking in:

- problem solving and seeking out opportunities to provide solutions for the future;
- research;
- determining solutions to administrative matters;
- creating opportunities to encourage flexible, innovative and collaborative ideas and work practices and;
- identifying and being responsive to the changing needs of stakeholders.

Within the context of creativity, innovation and breadth of vision staff must also comply with reasonable direction from their supervisor and act in accordance with their rights and the obligations of staff under common law and University governance.