

# Code of Conduct

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## INTRODUCTION

At Charles Darwin University, we value fairness and promote respect, integrity, professionalism, accountability and equality of opportunity. Our Code of Conduct exemplifies these values. It provides guidance for staff members, students and all those with whom we engage to recognise and practise these values to shape our culture.

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

The authority behind this policy is the [Charles Darwin University Act 2003](#) part 3, section 15.

## COMPLIANCE

This is a compliance requirement under the [Charles Darwin University Act 2003](#) and the University's conditions of employment and enrolment.

## INTENT

Our Code of Conduct is aligned with the University Strategic Plan. Our unique location and our professional contribution across the Northern Territory define our opportunities and challenges in tertiary education delivery and in the applied research, we undertake. We hold the responsibility of meeting the needs of a diverse but small and widely dispersed population, with a high proportion of Indigenous Australians in the context of distinctive yet challenging physical environments.

The principles articulated in this Code of Conduct apply to all staff members and students, at all levels of the University. The principles apply to honorary appointees, volunteers, members of Council and others who may be engaged with or represent the interests of the University. The principles apply also to clients, colleagues and partners engaged in employment, study or partnerships with the University on campus, in University online environments and social media, or in external locations when representing the University.

### The Code of Conduct in Practice:

- The University is committed to providing staff members with access to education and training in relation to the requirements of the Code and related procedures;
- Where staff, students, clients or partners are uncertain about the Code's application or interpretation, they should consult with the relevant Head of School, Director or higher authority if appropriate;
- The Code should be read in conjunction with the current University Strategic Plan and Enterprise Agreement or other industrial instruments that may apply from time to time, and with University policies and procedures;
- The Code should be read in conjunction with the [Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and the [Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#); and
- The University and its staff members, students, clients and partners are accountable for their conduct and behaviour in relation to the University Code of Conduct.

## RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document

**Disability** means the total or partial loss of a part of a person's body or bodily or mental functions; the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body; a disorder or malfunction that affects a person's learning; a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or that results in disturbed behaviour. A disability may affect a person's mobility, ability to learn things, or ability to communicate easily. A disability may be visible or hidden, may be permanent or temporary and may have minimal or substantial impact on a person's abilities;

**Discrimination** means treatment in a manner that is less favourable because of a characteristic or circumstance that has no bearing on the individuals or group's capacity to perform the activity being evaluated;

**Intellectual freedom** (*as defined by 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;

**Natural Justice** means the basic principles considered central to fair decision making and which can be summarised as follows:

- The right to a fair hearing. This requires the decision maker to allow a person whose interests may be adversely affected by a decision to present his or her case;
- The rule against bias. This requires a decision maker to be unbiased in relation to the matter to be decided; and
- The rule of evidence. This requires that a decision be based on the evidence provided, and not on irrelevant issues.

**Staff member** means anyone employed by the University and includes all continuing, fixed-term, casual, adjunct or honorary staff or those holding University offices or who are a member of a University committee;

**Student** means a person prescribed as a student of the University in By-law 2 of the [Charles Darwin University \(Student of the University\) By-laws](#); and

**Social media** means any tool or service that facilitates comments and/or conversations over the internet and includes (but is not limited to) blogs, wikis, pod casting, RSS, social bookmarking, tagging, mash ups, virtual worlds (such as Second Life) and any social networks or networking sites including (but not limited to) Facebook, Linked In, MySpace, Twitter, Pinterest and Flickr.

## THE CODE

### Fairness

We value fairness characterised by openness and impartiality in the conduct of our study and work in decision-making and in supporting and attracting staff and students. Fairness is exercised in compliance

with legislation and regulations, and is also demonstrated through mutual respect, constructive interpersonal relationships and honest communication.

We will act with **fairness** in all our dealings through, for example:

- Transparency and natural justice in processes that affect others;
- Impartiality in decision making, including in relation to staff attraction and recruitment;
- Communication of the rationale for decisions to relevant staff, students, clients or partners;
- Sharing and providing information that is accurate, complete and timely;
- Equitable treatment of others in our dealings with staff, students, clients and partners at all levels;
- Supporting and accommodating the needs of others who may be living with a disability or other disadvantage; and
- Committing to a workplace and study environment that is free from bullying and harassment.

## Respect

We value respectful and polite conduct. We demonstrate consideration and regard for the rights, privacy and feelings of others, and for the differences across cultural backgrounds, beliefs and abilities.

We will act with respect for others through, for example:

- Courtesy in all forms of communication between staff, students, clients and partners – be it in person, in writing or through electronic or social media;
- Consideration and inclusion of the views of others;
- Valuing difference among our staff, students, clients and partners;
- Responsiveness and timeliness in dealing with the requests and requirements of others engaged in study, teaching, research and administration;
- Exercising care and probity in the use of equipment and financial resources;
- Sustaining the University's social, physical and natural environments through responsible planning and management of resources;
- Personal presentation that is appropriate and respectful of the expectations of others; and
- Respecting personal and professional privacy in our conversations.

## Integrity and Professionalism

We value integrity and professionalism in our activities and across academic, teaching and management functions. Professionalism is characterised by competency, skill, quality service delivery, and the expectation that staff will conduct their duties in a responsible and conscientious manner.

We will promote **integrity and professionalism** through:

- Ethical and professional conduct consistent with our policies and the requirements of accreditation agencies;
- Modelling academic integrity and ethical practice in learning, teaching and research;
- Trust, which is modelled by responsibility, consistency and maintaining confidentiality;
- Honesty and openness in communication and actions, ensuring that information is conveyed in a timely manner;
- Mindfulness of the reputation of the University when commenting publicly in formal settings (such as media interviews), as well as in informal settings (such as through the use of social media);
- Respect for the confidentiality of information held by the University

- Commitment to ensuring that all actions are free from any conflict of interest, and commitment to disclosing interests where conflict may arise or reasonably be perceived by others; and
- Adherence to University policies and procedures.

## Accountability

We value accountability and take responsibility for our actions within the scope of our work, study and community engagement. This includes an obligation to report, explain and be answerable to the consequences of our actions.

We will ensure that accountability is practised by:

- Maintaining the high standards and reputation of the University;
- Acting with care and diligence, and being accountable for official conduct and decisions;
- Acknowledging and taking responsibility for our actions;
- Using current and accurate information and evidence;
- Seeking to attain the highest possible standards in the performance of our duties and exercising our responsibilities;
- Adhering to codes of conduct and ethics of professional associations where applicable;
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge in our areas of work or scholarship, and in the professional, legal and ethical standards relevant to our areas of expertise;
- Ensuring that intellectual freedom is exercised through the responsible and honest search for knowledge and its dissemination; and
- Complying with the principles of health and safety at work and study, and reporting health and safety risks and incidents through appropriate channels.

## Equality of opportunity

We value equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. We recognise and support people from all ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, including Indigenous Australians and people living with disability.

We will ensure that **equality of opportunity** is achieved through:

- Inclusiveness and respect for differences between people;
- Actively promoting the value of diversity;
- Transparent decision making in recruitment and retention of staff, and the attraction and retention of students;
- Awareness and respect for all cultural backgrounds through developing cultural competence and acknowledgement of diversity across the University; and
- Commitment to a workplace and study environment that is free from all forms of discrimination based on race, age, gender, marital status, religious belief, political affiliation, disability or sexual preference.

## Values-based leadership

We value high standards of leadership. Senior Staff, as leaders and role models for other staff, students and the wider community, will adhere to the highest standards of property and truthfulness in scholarship, research and professional practice.

We are committed to **values-based leadership** through:

- Leading and modelling the standards and reputation of the University through exemplary personal conduct;
- Discharging our responsibilities with integrity in accordance with the highest standards of professional practice, aligned with the University's policies and procedures;
- Managing our people through appropriate use of authority in dealings with staff, students, clients and partners at all levels; and
- Ensuring that compliance with legislation and regulations is observed at all times, and that it is undertaken in the spirit of the law.

## **ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **Internal**

[Alcohol, Drugs and other Substances Policy](#)

[Charles Darwin University Union and Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Charles Darwin University \(Student Conduct\) By-laws](#)

[Charles Darwin University \(Student of the University\) By-laws](#)

[Conflicts of Interest Policy](#)

[Conflicts of Interests Procedures](#)

Procurement of Goods and Services Procedures

[Public Interest Disclosure Procedures](#)

[Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)

[University Strategic Plan 2015-2025](#)

### **External**

[Anti-Discrimination Commission for the Northern Territory](#)

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

[Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#)

[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[NT Work Safe](#)

[Office of the Commissioner for Public Interest Disclosures](#)

[Ombudsman for the Northern Territory](#)

## Document History and Version Control

<b>Last amendment:</b>	15 Dec 2017	<b>Next Review Due:</b>	Dec 2015
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Operations		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Director, People and Capability		

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description
1.00	7 Dec 2012	Council	Creation of original document and upload to CDU website.
1.01	20 Jun 2013	Governance	Conversion to Governance template
1.02	24 Feb 2014	Governance	Inclusion of 6th pillar – Values-based leadership (accidentally omitted at time of conversion to new template)
1.03	15 Dec 2017	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion to new Governance template due to new University branding</li> <li>• Updated definitions</li> <li>• Updated hyperlinks</li> <li>• Replaced Age Discrimination Commission with Anti-Discrimination Commission</li> <li>• Updated Sponsor (previously DVC) and Contact Officer (previously Director OLOC) to reflect current positional change</li> </ul>