

FREEDOM OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

Academic primacy, and academic freedom with responsibility are enshrined in A.C.O.A.E. RTO's statement of Values. This policy describes and defines A.C.O.A.E. RTO's commitment to freedom of intellectual inquiry.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all academic staff, adjunct, honorary and visiting appointees at A.C.O.A.E. RTO. This document should be read in conjunction with other related policies (see Related Documents).

3. PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY

The following principles form the foundation for this policy and inform its design and implementation:

Academic staff members and senior management at the College are experts in their professions, capable of making valuable contributions to public debate. The College acknowledges, accepts, and values the right to freedom of intellectual inquiry as central to its contributions in teaching, research and scholarship, and is committed to promoting and protecting this freedom.

In acknowledging, accepting, and valuing the right to freedom of intellectual inquiry the College does not endorse the views expressed by its academic staff. All views expressed by academic staff will be taken to be the views of the individual who expresses them, even when an affiliation with the College is indicated. Views on behalf of the College can only be expressed by its executives if specifically authorised to do so.

Freedom of intellectual inquiry will not be permitted as a defence for acting unlawfully, disrespectfully, or for the exercise of poor judgement. In their exercise of freedom of intellectual inquiry, academic staff will also always observe the Staff Code of Conduct and act in accordance with the Mission, Values, and Values of the College.

4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The right to freedom of intellectual inquiry bears with it a measure of responsibility on the College and its staff.

4.1 THE COLLEGE

The College is responsible for supporting the right of its academic staff to engage in intellectual inquiry and foster critical debate and conversation. The College will support this right by providing and facilitating a positive environment that promotes, among others:

- robust and collegial debate;
- the testing and sharing new ideas, theories and topics of interest;
- academic integrity and honesty; (refer

Academic Integrity Policy)

- a diversity of opinion and the right to publicly express that opinion without fear of favourable, unfair or prejudicial treatment; and
- the exercise of professional judgment when engaging in teaching.

The College has the right and the obligation to take disciplinary action as necessary against staff and students whose behaviour(s) violate the rights of freedom of intellectual inquiry of others, or who otherwise behave in a manner contrary to this policy or related policies (refer Academic Integrity Policy,

4.2 ACADEMIC STAFF

Academic staff should expect that their right to hold and express values of their own choosing will be respected even when those values are being questioned. Freedom of intellectual inquiry carries the associated responsibility to exercise professional care and competence. In exercising their right to freedom of intellectual inquiry, academic staff will:

- observe the Staff Code of Conduct;
- act in a lawful and ethical manner;
- ensure that all discourse of academic freedom of expression is undertaken reasonably, in good faith, and in accordance with all research ethics considerations as appropriate;
- recognise and acknowledge that they are not speaking on behalf of A.C.O.A.E. RTO;
- offer opinion and commentary on matters of which they have an acknowledged level of expertise;
- disclose any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. personal and/or professional relationships, and external funding sources);
- accept the critical scrutiny of others; and
- not to impinge on the ability of others to freely engage in academic debate.

With and among the student body in particular, all academic staff will:

- promoting freedom of intellectual inquiry, critical thinking and creative reasoning; and
- encourage, facilitate and support positive, analytical discourse.

5. DOCUMENT CHANGE CONTROL

Version	Change Description	Date	Author
1.0	New policy	2nd April, 2018	College Manager

Document ID	Freedom of Intellectual Inquiry Policy
Related Documents	Staff Code of Conduct
Date	2nd April, 2018
Date of Next Review	1st July 2019
Authorised by	Executive Team, Student Services
Approved by	Executive Team, College Manager 2nd April 2018
Version	1.0
Responsible Officer	College Manager
References and Legislation	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011; and Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.