

# C12 – CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the standard of conduct expected of staff, students, and community members and volunteers at BBI-The Australian Institute of Theological Education. This policy should be read in conjunction with *A13 Anti-Discrimination, bullying and harassment policy and procedure*.

The Institute acknowledges that the study of Theology normally entails discussion of sensitive topics, such as death, sexuality, the Bible, evolution, and other ethical or moral topics on which people may hold strong and varying opinions. As an Institute, we aim to provide a safe and open forum for discussion of these topics. Therefore, this code of conduct is designed to engender open and honest discourse in our community, while protecting the members of the Institute from words or actions that may cause harm.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students, staff, community members and volunteers at the Institute.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

*Baiting* means to purposely cause a person to feel annoyed by saying or doing things to irritate them.

*Hate speech* is any 'conduct which offends, humiliates, intimidates, insults or ridicules another person based on attributes including race, sexual orientation, religion, gender identity and disability.' It can take the form of language which demeans, threatens, or otherwise expresses intentionally offensive sentiment.

*Hijacking a thread* occurs when individuals posting onto an internet/discussion forum deliberately go off topic to create a different conversation within the current conversation.

*Trolling* means acting with the intent to make another person angry, and/or using inflammatory or inappropriate language to elicit strong emotions.

## 4. POLICY

All students, staff members, community members and volunteers are responsible for their own actions.

### 4.1 *Staff, students, community members and volunteers of the Institute are expected to:*

- 4.1.1 be informed of and comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the Institute, including *A13 Anti-Discrimination, bullying and harassment policy and procedure*;
- 4.1.2 respect and comply with the Institute's policies, and all federal, state, and local laws;
- 4.1.3 treat others in the Institute's community with integrity, professionalism, responsiveness, fairness, respect and courtesy;
- 4.1.4 be respectful of differences and remain non-discriminatory based on gender, race, sexuality, disability, cultural background, marital status, age, political or religious conviction or family responsibilities;
- 4.1.5 respect others in the Institute's community by avoiding behaviour that could be perceived as discriminatory, sexually harassing, intimidating, bullying or physically or emotionally threatening, or engaging in any form of violence, whether physical, interpersonal, psychological or sexual.
- 4.1.6 promote the wellbeing of the members of the Institute's community by avoiding behaviour that would endanger the health or safety of others, or unfairly harm the reputation and career prospects of members of the Institute's community;
- 4.1.7 ensure that the Institute's operations and property are not impaired or damaged in any way, and that any of the Institute's property or official information is not used,

without authorisation, in order to gain financial or other benefit for themselves or any other person or group;

- 4.1.8 communicate in a respectful manner regarding other personal beliefs within the Institute's community;
- 4.1.9 maintain academic and professional integrity and respect the privacy and confidentiality of others;
- 4.1.10 maintain the rights of the members of the Institute's community to freedom of academic thought, study, research and/ or involvement in the activities of the Institute;
- 4.1.11 report suspected or known fraud or corrupt conduct to appropriate staff/authorities through the Institute's *Whistle blower policy*;
- 4.1.12 ensure resources are used in a manner which minimises harm to the environment.

#### 4.2 *Students of the Institute are expected to*

- 4.2.1 take responsibility for their own learning and actively participate in the learning process;
- 4.2.2 act in a manner which reflects the values, principles, policies and procedures of the Institute, signifying the positive reputation of the Institute;
- 4.2.3 be sensitive to the feelings and opinions of other students, staff, community members and volunteers of the Institute, respecting differing points of view, and cultural, and religious perspectives;
- 4.2.4 value academic freedom and respectful debate of divergent ideas;
- 4.2.5 actively participate in all learning activities for the unit and course in which they are enrolled;
- 4.2.6 comply with the conventions of academic scholarship including, but not limited to:
  - the appropriate use and acknowledgement of copyrighted materials;
  - the acknowledgement of others' work and ideas;
  - the use of gender inclusive language, and the avoidance of slang or colloquial language in assessments; and
  - paying close attention to the online forum conventions and guidelines set out in each unit outline;
- 4.2.7 attend online classes and scheduled activities on time – where possible, advance notice should be given if you will be absent from a class;
- 4.2.8 engage proactively in online forum discussion groups, and being aware of and conforming to all guidelines for discussion group postings;
- 4.2.9 adhere to word limits and the indicated topics;
- 4.2.10 keep discourse academic and on-topic;
- 4.2.11 submit assessment tasks on time – if, as a result of exceptional circumstances, a student requires an extension to an assessment task due date they should refer to *A11 Assessment extension policy and procedure* for the application process for an extension;
- 4.2.12 know the requirements of their own course and its progression rules;
- 4.2.13 observe key dates and deadlines concerning their own unit and course enrolment;
- 4.2.14 be familiar with the resources available to assist in their studies;
- 4.2.15 ensure that their contact details held by the Institute are up-to-date; and to
- 4.2.16 present appropriate identification when requested.

#### 4.3 *For Staff*

*Staff of the Institute are expected to:*

- 4.3.1 carry out their duties in a professional, collegial and conscientious manner guided by the mission and values of the Institute;
- 4.3.2 carry out directions from a manager of the Institute diligently;
- 4.3.3 take steps to ensure protection of the Institute's confidential information, including staff and student data and student records and interactions;

- 4.3.4 remain compliant with all privacy law and policy;
- 4.3.5 maintaining the confidentiality of the Institute's dealings when interacting with partners, clients or service providers;
- 4.3.6 take steps to ensure compliance with intellectual property law and policy;
- 4.3.7 ensure that the Institute's resources are managed effectively, efficiently, and for their specified purpose; and to
- 4.3.8 maintain adequate security over the Institute's property, resources, and information.

## 5. PROCEDURE

### 5.1 Reporting

#### 5.1.1 Confidentiality

The Institute encourages members to report incidents which breach this policy or *A13 Anti-discrimination, bullying and harassment policy and procedure* and ensures the safety and confidentiality of those who report.

#### 5.1.2 Reporting

Members of the Institute are encouraged to report any incidents to:

- a. the Academic Dean or Registrar in the case of students; or
- b. the Principal, Deputy Principal or Director Student Services and Operations in the case of staff members, community members or volunteers.

### 5.2 Breach of Institute policies, or federal, state or local laws

In addition to breaches outlined Section 4 above, the following actions may attract penalties under Institute policy, and/or federal, state or local laws (refer to *A13 Anti-Discrimination, bullying and harassment policy and procedure*):

- trolling;
- baiting;
- hijacking threads;
- hate speech;
- posting pornographic or any other form of licentious material;
- posting or sharing spam, marketing materials, or any other form of solicitous material;
- sharing the email addresses or contact details of staff, students, or other persons associated with the Institute without their express permission.

### 5.3 Management of breaches of the Code

5.3.1 The Institute manages breaches of the *Code of Conduct* in accordance with its policy framework. It has the right to restrict access to its resources for any staff member, student, community member or volunteer who is found to be in breach of the Code. Refer *E7 Enrolment Policy and Procedure* for details of temporary and permanent exclusion penalties for students who breach of the code.

5.3.2 The assessment and determination of outcomes for breaches of the code will be by the *Academic Dean* for students, and the *Principal* for staff, community members and volunteers.

- a. The Academic Dean's decisions relating to a breach of the Code by a student must be ratified by the *Academic Board Standing Committee*; or
- b. The Principal's decisions relating to a breach of the Code by a staff member, community member or volunteer must be ratified by the *Executive Committee*.

5.3.3 Staff members, students, community members or volunteers may access complaints or grievance procedures (refer *A5 Academic Complaints Policy and Procedure*, and *S6 Student Grievance Policy – Non-Academic*).

## 6. KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *A5 Academic Complaints Policy and Procedure*
- *A9 Assessment Policy and Procedure*
- *A10 Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*
- *A13 Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure*
- *R2 Records Management Policy*
- *S4 Student at Risk Policy and Procedure*
- *S6 Student Grievance Policy – non-academic*

## 7. NOTES

Contact Officer	Director Student Services and Operations / Academic Dean
Implementation Officer(s)	Executive Team / Faculty Staff / Student Administration
Approval Authority/Authorities	Executive Team/Audit and Risk Committee
Date Approved	07/02/2017
Date of Commencement	07/02/2017
Date for Review	24 months from date of commencement
Amendment History	08/05/2019 – Updated Key Related Documents section to remove non-existent policies, updated Contact Officer to replace Director Business Services. January 2021 – Extensive updating of the policy
Key Stakeholders	All staff, students, community members and volunteers of the Institute.