



Academic Freedom and Responsibility Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the right of the Institute academic staff and students to academic freedom of expression and define their responsibilities when exercising such expression.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all academic or teaching staff and students of the Institute.

This policy is intended to amplify and expand upon the principles contained within the MIT Staff Code of Conduct Policy and the Student Charter.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic freedom	is the right of academic staff to teach, discuss and research and to disseminate and publish the results of their research and scholarship; and for academic staff and students to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express their opinions and beliefs; to contribute to public debate in relation to their profession or expertise and their research; and, to express their opinions in relation to MIT.
Academic or teaching staff	Includes all academic and teaching staff employed by the Institute, regardless of their contractual conditions of employment.
Executive Dean	is the Head of the Academic Department of the Institute, to whom the Heads of School report.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. The Institute upholds the right to free intellectual inquiry in relation to learning, teaching and research and defends the right of its academics to write, speak and debate ideas in their area of expertise, in a responsible manner.
- 4.2. Academic staff should expect to be able to exercise academic freedom of expression and not be disadvantaged or subjected to less favourable treatment from the Institute for doing so. In addition, academic staff are not precluded from including content in their units solely on the ground that it may offend or shock any student or class of students.
- 4.3. The Institute supports the right and freedom of staff, students and visitors to hear and to receive information and opinions, other than speech or information which is likely to humiliate or intimidate.

Warning: uncontrolled when printed.

Original Issue

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- 4.4. The Institute reserves the right to determine the terms and conditions upon which it shall permit external visitors and invited persons to speak at its campuses and to use its facilities.
- 4.5. This policy cannot be used by Institute staff and students as a justification or defence for behaviour that is unlawful. Investigations of conduct that is in breach of Institute policies regarding staff and student conduct will be managed in accordance with the relevant policy processes.

5. Responsibilities of academic staff in exercising academic freedom

Academic freedom of expression should be exercised:

- 5.1. reasonably and in good faith; and
- 5.2. in accord with the principles of academic and research ethics, where applicable.

Where academic staff speak or otherwise express an opinion in public on topics outside their expertise, they should identify themselves as a private individual and not as a staff member of the Institute.

6. Other Responsibilities

- 6.1. The Chair of Academic Board is responsible for the maintenance and implementation of the policy.
- 6.2. The Executive Dean is responsible for providing advice to academic staff on the expression of appropriate forms of academic freedom.
- 6.3. The Institute will take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that all prospective students in any of its courses have an opportunity to be fully informed of the content of those courses.

7. Implementation and communication

This policy will be implemented and communicated through the Institute via:

- 7.1. Announcement on the Institute's webpage;
- 7.2. Internal circulation to staff;
- 7.3. Staff professional development.

Supporting documents and References

Government legislation:

Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003

Institute documents:

MIT Staff Code of Conduct Policy
Student Charter

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