

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to act as a statement of Institute principles and to outline the standards of responsible and ethical behaviour expected of all MIT staff.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Institute staff.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Confidential information (of the Institute)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes but is not limited to information regarding Institute: students and associated student data, lists and agreements, student information and other personal information; academic programs and components of academic programs; business and marketing methods and strategies; budgets, costings, financial affairs and accounting methods; Intellectual Property/trade secrets and commercially valuable information; manuals, procedures, academic and training materials, and computer programming information; records of commercial discussions or dealings in relation to possible or actual arrangements with third parties; legal advice; staff information held under privacy principles, records of disciplinary proceedings against individual staff members; research and development; or any information that could reasonably be assumed to amount to commercial-in-confidence or confidential information and also means Institute information considered confidential where the Institute reasonably believes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the information were disclosed it would be in some way detrimental to MIT, or advantageous to others; the information is confidential, secret and not in the public domain; in light of the use by, or practice of, higher education providers, the information would be regarded as worthy of protection.
Conflict of interest	<p>A conflict of interest occurs where there are two competing interests, that is, a conflict between the duties of a staff member to the Institute and the private interests or personal circumstances of the member of staff. A conflict of interest may also arise where a staff member acts, or appears to act, on behalf of another person and not in the best interest of the Institute.</p>

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Term	Definition
Intellectual property	means confidential information or any rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields, including but not limited to rights under the Patents Act 1990, Copyright Act 1968, Design Act 2003, Trade Marks Act 1995, Plant Variety Rights Act 1987, Circuit Layouts Act 1989 and rights under any convention to which Australia is a party and under the common law.
Media comment	means comment that is made in the public arena and includes comment made by print, film and social media.
Staff	means all fixed term, casual and continuing staff, trainees, interns and work experience staff; and includes the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and members of the Institute's Executive Management Team.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. Staff should perform their duties diligently, impartially and conscientiously to the best of their ability.
- 4.2. All staff are expected to make every effort to comply with and meet the TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework.
- 4.3. Integrity
 - 4.3.1. Institute staff should demonstrate integrity in their dealings with colleagues, students and members of the wider community, by:
 - a commitment to creating and maintaining an environment which is professional, safe and free from any form of unlawful or inappropriate behaviour;
 - being honest, open and transparent in their dealings;
 - using their powers responsibly;
 - demonstrating impartiality by making decisions and providing advice on merit and without bias or self-interest;
 - reporting improper conduct;
 - avoiding any real or apparent conflicts of interest;
 - striving to earn and sustain trust of a high level;
 - complying with all relevant legislative, industrial or administrative requirements, and the Institute's rules, policies and procedures;
 - conforming to the principles of sustainability as they are generally understood;
 - maintaining confidentiality of official information;
 - avoiding any activity that could potentially compromise the performance of their professional duties; and
 - carrying out their work safely and avoiding conduct that puts themselves or others at risk, (this includes the misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances).

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4.4. Media comment

Non-academic staff may only make media comment that is related to the Institute, when specifically authorised. Such comment is restricted to factual information and avoids the expression of personal opinion. Staff may make comment as an individual provided it is not related to the Institute.

4.5. Respect

4.5.1. MIT staff should demonstrate respect for colleagues, students and members of the wider community by (including but not limited to):

- treating them fairly and objectively with courtesy and sensitivity;
- ensuring freedom from discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- using their views to improve outcomes on an ongoing basis;
- provide all necessary and appropriate assistance when requested or required; and
- valuing and promoting diversity as an important element of demonstrating respect.

4.5.2. Students

In their dealings with students, staff should (including but not limited to):

- maintain an attitude of high expectation for every student, recognising and (including but not limited to) developing each student's abilities, skills and talents.
- consider all viewpoints fairly and communicate well and appropriately with students.
- work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- model and engage in respectful and impartial language
- encourage the protection of students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm
- enhance student autonomy and sense of self worth and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values
- respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate

4.5.3. Colleagues

In their relationships with colleagues, staff should:

- contribute to a safe, encouraging and supportive work environment;
- be responsible for their own behaviour;
- recognise and value staff diversity, abilities and contributions;
- create a fair and inclusive working environment where unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation in any form are considered totally unacceptable;
- reinforce equity, diversity and social inclusion;
- value input from their colleagues;
- use appropriate forums for constructive debate on professional matters;
- share expertise and knowledge;
- expect different approaches to teaching and learning;
- provide support for each other, particularly those new to the Institute; and
- treat each other with courtesy and respect.

4.5.4. Confidentiality

Staff should manage Institute information in such a manner that its confidentiality will be maintained. Staff have a duty not to misuse or abuse confidential information of the Institute and must ensure such information is not directly or indirectly passed to a third party or that it is used in non-Institute communications or dealings.

Staff are entitled to confidentiality and privacy with respect to information relating to them in accordance with their contract of employment.

4.5.5. Academic scholarship

The Institute through its Academic Board aims to ensure sustained and engaged scholarship inclusive of all academic staff.

Academic staff are encouraged to actively participate in professional and representative bodies.

The Institute acknowledges the academic freedom of its academic staff's enquiry and expression, except where there are prohibited commercial-in-confidence contracts or where it contains derision, defamation or communication contrary to Institute policies.

Academic staff are encouraged to comment publicly on matters relating to their area of specialisation in teaching, learning and/or research and to contribute debate. However, if opinions expressed by staff are outside their area of specialisation, they may do so as an individual but not a staff member of MIT.

4.6. Responsibility

4.6.1. All staff are responsible for:

- working to clear objectives in a transparent manner;
- making decisions and taking actions within the scope of their authority, that are lawful and consistent with relevant legislation and Institute policy;
- seeking to achieve best and appropriate use of Institute resources and equipment as authorised by the Institute;
- submitting themselves to appropriate scrutiny; and
- keep up-to-date with advances and changes in the body of knowledge and the professional and ethical standards relevant to their area of expertise.

4.6.2. Conflict of interest

Staff must avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest and act in the best interests of the Institute. It is the responsibility of each staff member to disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest to their manager and stand down in any decision making process where they may be compromised.

A conflict can be actual, potential or perceived. It may relate to circumstances where the staff member is or could be directly influenced, or where it is perceived the staff member might be influenced, due to their conflicting private interests. Conflict of interest can be financial or personal and involves the interests of a staff member or members of the staff member's family or friends. Staff must not misuse the influence of their position to pursue personal, sexual or financial relationships with other staff, students or members of the community.

Examples of conflict of interest:

- When a staff member, or his/her immediate family, friends or business interests, stands to gain financially from any business dealing or services of the company;
- When a staff member stands to gain personally or professionally from any insider knowledge, if the knowledge is used to his/her personal or professional advantage.

Staff must:

- immediately declare any conflicts of interest to their manager or supervisor;
- assure that there are no private interests that could influence, or appear to influence, judgements made during the course of their duties; and
- assure that judgements made in the course of their duties are not unduly influenced by any conflict of interest caused by personal, sexual or financial relationships.

4.6.3. Gifts, benefits and/or hospitality

Staff must not seek gifts and benefits (including hospitality), and all offers of gifts and benefits, that could reasonably be perceived as influencing them or undermining the integrity of the Institute or themselves, should be refused.

However, where a gift over the estimated value of \$AU200 is accepted as part of a social, cultural or ceremonial practice, then it must be declared, listed on the MIT Gift Register and remains the property of MIT.

4.6.4. Other employment

Where staff engage in other employment, the activity should not conflict with their role as an Institute staff member, and/or impede or detract from their work performance. Employment includes a second job, conducting a business, trade or profession, or active involvement with other organisations (paid employment or voluntary work).

Staff must inform the Institute through their supervisor of activities undertaken during normal working hours and/or if they conflict with normal employment at the Institute.

Full-time staff must gain approval from their supervisor for activities undertaken during normal working hours and/or if they conflict with normal employment at the Institute.

4.6.5. Contribute to improvement

The Institute and its staff are committed to continuous improvement and encourage a best practice approach to the performance of their work. Staff should identify and actively promote appropriate strategies, methods and processes that lead to improved performance.

4.6.6. Intellectual Property and copyright

Staff must:

- comply with the Intellectual Property obligations under their employment contract, the Intellectual Property Policy and copyright law;
- not misuse the Institute's intellectual property; and
- protect the Institute's intellectual property from unauthorised use.

4.6.7. Maintain records

All documents that form part of the Institute's public record must be placed on official files, and staff must not damage, dispose of, or in any other manner interfere with Institute documents or files.

5. Breach of Staff Code of Conduct

Breach of the Code of Conduct may lead to action under relevant performance management or misconduct processes.

6. Implementation and communication

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

- Announcement on the Institute's webpage;
- Internal circulation to staff;
- Staff professional development;
- MIT Employee Manual

7. Supporting documents and References

7.1. Institute documents:

- MIT Policies and Procedures
- MIT Gift Register
- Whistleblower Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy and Procedure

7.2. Other:

- Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees, State of Victoria (Victorian Public Sector Commission)
- The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct, Victorian Institute of Teaching