



Staff Code of conduct

Purpose and Scope

This code of conduct applies to all staff at The Centre. This code of conduct is to support staff in implementing The Centre's values of

- respect towards ourselves, the organisation and others;
- accountability by doing what we say we will do;
- excellence and efficiency in everything that we do;
- a safe environment that values diversity and supports innovation and creativity; and
- working collaboratively to strengthen individuals and our community.

The Code of Conduct is utilised across The Centre to provide staff with a consistent framework to benchmark their own professional performance and to guide staff on The Centre's expectations in six key areas. Staff performance is monitored and managed in relation to the six key areas below through regular catch-ups with their supervisor, performance reviews and the Staff Discipline Procedure. The Centre actively encourages staff to engage in their profession and be reflective of their own professional practice. All staff must agree and sign this Code of Conduct prior to commencement of their employment.

1. The Centre's code of conduct is developed around 6 key areas:

- 1.1 Professionalism** – We act in a professional manner at all times. We interact and communicate with our colleagues with respect. Our appearance is that of a professional and our internal and external interactions are conducted with trust, respect and integrity. We strive to perform at our best in our roles and contribute to The Centre our knowledge, skills and experience. We reflect on our own individual practice and actively pursue opportunities for personal development and improvement.
- 1.2 Accountability** – We conduct and complete work within our responsibility. We question and understand our responsibilities in our individual roles. We are accountable for our actions or lack of action, identify, acknowledge and learn from our mistakes and ensure we deliver excellence and efficiency in our responsibility. We ensure that our legal and ethical obligations are consistently met and we seek advice and support to make informed decisions within our accountable areas. We accept our responsibility to embrace and adapt to change in our workplace. We strive to seek out and implement efficient, innovative and positive changes in our work environment for the betterment of The Centre, our learners, stakeholders and the wider community.
- 1.3 Authority-** We make decisions, speak on behalf of The Centre and enter into transactions that we have the authority to do so through our position, policy, procedure and delegation. We do not exceed our authority and always conduct ourselves with integrity and in the best interests of The Centre and the wider community.
- 1.4 Collaboration-** We collaborate as a team to achieve common goals and The Centre's strategic objectives. We support each other to excel in our roles. We share our knowledge, experience, learning and mistakes to develop ourselves as professionals, learners, managers, and educators. We actively collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders to provide excellence in the services that we provide the community.
- 1.5 Quality-** We understand and accept our responsibilities within our area of accountability. We strive to support the compliance system and quality improvement through our engagement in The Centre's established systems. We work within the requirements of the policies and procedures of The Centre. We actively seek support to ensure we meet our legal, ethical, registration, funding and contractual requirements. We actively participate in training to increase our compliance capabilities and widen our understanding of compliance requirements. We consistently strive to deliver excellence on our quality programs and services which are flexible, meet customer requirements and demonstrate the diversity of The Centre's projects, programs and services. In our delivery of services to our customers, we set and surpass expectations with our high standard of quality.

1.6 Child Safe- We are an organisation where children feel safe. We provide a place for children to feel safe from abuse or harm, to express themselves and communicate any concerns, to have input into decisions relating to their learning and to participate in an adult learning environment. We set the example for children through our professional behaviour and our approach to teaching and learning.

2. Code of Conduct

Professionalism

As employees we:

1. Act honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in a professional manner at all times, having regard to individual responsibilities, the interests of The Centre and its reputation, the welfare of other staff members, volunteers, and clients
2. Treat clients, volunteers and colleagues, whether supervisors, peers, or subordinates, with courtesy and respect, without harassment or abuse (physical or verbal, emotional, psychological or sexual)
3. Maintain positive, constructive and open channels of communication with all clients, colleagues and various people associated with The Centre. Respecting and adhering to The Centre's organisational structure and reporting lines at all times.
4. Do not engage in discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, religious or ethical beliefs, or any other grounds prohibited by Australian law
5. Avoid placing ourselves in situations where we may be compromised, or allegations made against us
6. Be an active member of our profession by engaging in professional development, self-learning and self-reflection on practice and
7. Maintain and develop the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out our duties and responsibilities.

Accountability

As employees we:

1. Comply with all laws, policies, procedures, rules, regulations and contracts of The Centre and governing the operation of The Centre
2. Comply with lawful and reasonable employer instructions and to work as directed,
3. Address any concerns directly with our manager (or supervisor) in the first instance
4. Promptly report any violations of law, ethical principles, policies and this Code
5. Not, at any time, attend the workplace showing the effects of alcohol or non-prescription drugs, or use or possess any illegal drug related paraphernalia
6. Not, at any time, attend the workplace adversely effected by the misuse or abuse of prescription drugs
7. Not consume alcohol on the premises, except in areas and at events sanctioned by The Centre management
8. Be present at work as required and be absent from the workplace only with proper authorisation
9. Use our best abilities and knowledge to carry out duties in an efficient, safe and competent manner, and maintain specified standards of performance
10. Maintain all qualifications and/or licenses necessary for the performance of duties legally and efficiently
11. Observe health and safety policies and obligations at all times, and cooperate with all procedures and initiatives taken by The Centre in the interests of occupational health and safety.
12. Respect the privacy of individuals and use confidential information only for the purpose for which it was intended.

Authority

As employees we:

1. Act within the scope of our authority at all times. We remain accountable for tasks delegated to others and accept we are expected to exercise adequate control and supervision over matters for which we are responsible
2. Neither use, nor allow the use of, The Centre property, resources, or funds for other than authorised purposes
3. Incur no liability on the part of The Centre without proper authorisation

4. Not demand, claim or accept any fee, gratuity, commission or benefit from any person or persons other than The Centre in payment for any matter or thing concerned with our duties and responsibilities, nor to accept any gift or favour from any source which could be seen as influencing a business relationship
5. Avoid perceived or real conflicts of interest.

Collaboration

As employees we:

1. Seek to understand each other's roles, skills and abilities, and work responsibilities
2. Work together to improve partnerships and services across The Centre and for the community
3. Develop systems, processes and provide opportunities that encourage collaboration to deliver seamless services
4. Involve ourselves in solving problems and collective decision-making
5. Are inclusive in our work and mindful of our obligations to our diverse community.

Quality

As employees we:

1. Provide high quality service to our community
2. Take responsibility for providing excellent customer service to both internal and external clients
3. Support The Centre's compliance and quality frameworks through our engagement in The Centre's established systems
4. Work within the requirements of the policies and procedures of The Centre
5. Actively seek support to ensure we meet our legal, ethical, registration, funding and contractual requirements
6. Actively participate in training and professional development to increase our compliance capabilities and widen our understanding of compliance requirements
7. Consistently strive to deliver excellence in our quality programs and services which are flexible, meet customer requirements and demonstrate the diversity of The Centre's projects, programs and services. In our delivery of services to our customers, we set and surpass expectations with our high standard of quality.

Child Safe

As Staff, we will perform our duties and responsibilities to children by:

1. Adhering to The Centre's Child Safe Policy at all times and upholding The Centre's Statement of Commitment to child safety.
2. Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse or harm
3. Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling us that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
4. Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
5. Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
6. Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
7. Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
8. Reporting any allegations of child abuse to police in the first instance then reporting internally as required by The Centre's Child Safe Policy and procedure requirements
9. Reporting any child safety concerns to The Centre Child Safety Officer if an allegation of child abuse is made, and ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.

10. Encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

As Staff we will not:

11. Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
12. Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, giving a child a massage)
13. Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors), or harm (for example, allowing a child to carry out a task where there is a significant risk of potential injury)
14. Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
15. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
16. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children
17. Express personal views on culture, race or sexuality in the presence of children
18. Discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
19. Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting).
Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, during a community/ sporting event or a social event where a child's family is also invited are all appropriate.
20. Have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
21. Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

3. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 3.1 A breach involves contravention by the staff member of the Code. A breach of this Code may lead to disciplinary consequences including termination of employment as per the Staff Discipline policy and procedure.
- 3.2 Serious misconduct involves serious and/or repeated contravention of the Code. Serious misconduct may lead to summary dismissal, that is, dismissal without notice. Refer Staff Discipline policy and procedure.
- 3.3 Serious misconduct is behaviour which undermines the contractual relationship between employee and employer, and/or threatens the wellbeing of the organisation, or its staff and clients. Serious misconduct includes, but is not confined to, the examples below:
 - 3.3.1 refusing to perform adequately, specified duties or to carry out lawful and reasonable instructions of managers or supervisors that is reasonably within the employees ability
 - 3.3.2 assaulting or threatening to assault any staff member, client, or visitor on The Centre's premises
 - 3.3.3 behaving in a manner causing safety risks to clients or staff, such as smoking in areas specifically designated as hazardous or unauthorised use of fire protection or safety equipment
 - 3.3.4 being seriously affected by alcohol or drugs while at work
 - 3.3.5 being very negative or sharing confidential information about The Centre or its clients in a public forum or to The Centre stakeholders.

4. Definitions

discrimination	Unlawful discrimination means treating a person less favourably because of a personal attribute they have which is covered by equal opportunity laws. Under Victorian equal opportunity laws, discrimination based on the following attributes is unlawful: sex, race, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, lawful sexual activity age, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, breastfeeding in public, carer status, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, industrial activity, physical features, personal association, irrelevant criminal record.
drug related paraphernalia	Equipment, a product or material that is used or intended for use in concealing an illegal drug or for use in injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing into the human body an illegal drug or controlled substance.
harassment	Unlawful harassment is any behaviour which is based on one of the attributes listed above under 'discrimination' and which is unwelcome, and offends, humiliates or intimidates the person being harassed. The fact that no offence was intended does not mean that the harassment is not unlawful. The most common form of harassment is sexual harassment. Examples of sexual harassment include: unwanted touching; indecent or sexual assault; sexual propositions; nude pin-ups and posters; obscene telephone calls; persistent requests for outings or dates; leering or staring; wolf whistling; offensive or obscene language; downloading and circulation of pornographic material and crude jokes
non-prescription drugs	This refers to non-prescription drugs of addiction eg. illicit drugs, not drugs such as cold and flu remedies etc.
reasonable	Not expecting or demanding more than is possible or achievable.
seriously affected	Where the person's judgment and ability to carry out their normal duties and activities is impaired.
staff	For the purpose of this policy staff refers to permanent, full-time or part-time employees, casual staff, volunteers and tutors. Contractors are also covered by this Code of Conduct.
workplace	Any of the buildings or structures operated by The Centre or any other place a client is receiving a component of their learning experience.

Code Operative From	08/2017	Date and Current Version	V5.00 5/2017
Responsible Officer	Quality Administrator	Document Approved By	Leadership Team
Date of Next Review	08/2018		

References

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA)

Crimes Act 1958

Minimum standards for registration to provide an accredited senior secondary course - VRQA

Related Policy

Information Privacy Policy

Human Resources Policy

Social Media Policy

Equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and bullying policy

Illegal Items Policy

Related Procedure

- Mandatory Reporting Procedure
- Staff Discipline Procedure
- Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Procedure

Related Documents

- Child abuse fact sheet
- Over View of Child Safe Standards (DHHS)
- Incident Report Template – Child Safe.

Employee Declaration:

I have read and understood my obligations under The Centre’s Child Safe Policy and this code of conduct. I have read and understood that it is an offence to fail to report child abuse when a reasonable belief has been formed that the child is at risk of harm. I have undertaken mandatory training regarding my obligations under the Child Safe legislation. By signing this document I agree to adhere to this policy and the requirements of this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: