



**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE**  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

## **Ethical Conduct Policy**

### **Category: Academic (ACA)**

#### **1. Policy Statement**

The Australian Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd (“AIH” or “the Institute”) is committed to high standards of professional and ethical behaviour by its academic staff, students and administration at all times. This Policy is concerned with the Student Code of Conduct as well as ethical behaviour and processes that should be adhered to by students, staff and university personnel. It is also concerned with ethical conduct in human research where human research is undertaken by students and/or academic staff involved in teaching and scholarship activities.

The Executive Dean is responsible for developing and supervising an ethical framework that is to be adhered to by the academic staff and students. The Academic Board is responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of an ethical academic environment and framework.

A commitment to ethical behaviour is a responsibility shared by everyone at AIH including the academic staff, students, administrative staff, any personnel of AIH, and governance boards.

#### **2. AIH Student Code of Conduct**

The AIH Student Code of Conduct applies to all AIH students in relationship to personal and academic conduct whilst enrolled at AIH.

##### **2.1 Personal conduct**

All students must:

- Treat all AIH staff, students, appointees, employees, any other AIH personnel, as well as members of the public with respect, dignity and professionalism at all times,
- Act honestly and ethically in all their dealings with AIH staff, students, appointees, employees and any other personnel,
- Ensure that they do not impede the ability of AIH staff, students, appointees, employees and any other personnel in their study, research or work at AIH at any AIH premises,
- Respect the privacy of all AIH staff, students, appointees, employees and any other personnel, and
- Ensure that they do not discriminate or encourage any discriminatory behaviour against AIH staff, students, appointees, employees and any other personnel.

##### **2.2 Academic conduct**

All students must:

- Ensure that their enrolment and progress is lawful and consistent with the rules, policies and regulations of AIH, including maintaining honest and clear communication with AIH at all times,
- Read all official communication from AIH in a timely manner,
- Act ethically and honestly in all academic matters and activities, including academic activities, scholarship, submission of assessment items and conduct during examinations,
- Avoid any behaviour that may disadvantage another student(s), and

- Ensure that usage of AIH's resources are lawful and as far as possible, environmentally responsible.

### 3. Ethical Conduct in Human Research

#### 3.1 Application

Current standards for ethical conduct in human research are prescribed in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), 2007[[1](#)]). This Policy adheres to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (NHMRC, 2007) and requires that all AIH staff and students comply with its prescriptions. Ethical conduct in Human Research applies to involvement in human beings when conducting research such as observation, surveys, interviews, access to personal documents, or any information that can be personally identifiable. Research broadly includes work that is of relevance to industry, public and not-for-profits sectors, and scholarship. It does not include non-original teaching materials, such as the obtaining of secondary information.

Responsible conduct of research and scholarship should include:

- Observation of prescribed guidelines (NHMRC, 2007) of:
  - Research merit and integrity
  - Justice
  - Beneficence
  - Respect
  - academic honesty and integrity
- Appropriate acknowledgement of the role of others in the scholarship activity, and
- Responsible communication of the outcome of the scholarship activity.

#### 3.2 AIH Ethics Agreement

Whenever students conduct research on an external stakeholder that involves:

- analysis or communication of an actual organisation's information, such as when visiting an organisation,
- communication with an individual concerning their actual organisation or work,
- undertaking an analysis of a company, or
- guest speakers divulging organisational information,

the lecturer and the student(s) and the relevant external person or organisational representative has to have a signed AIH Ethics Agreement containing the appropriate information and consent.

The AIH Ethics Agreement should include:

- identifying the relevant Unit and nature of assessment (where applicable)
- the scope, nature and timeframe of the academic activity
- confidentiality by staff and students of the organisation or individual's information imparted to the staff and students of AIH
- protection of intellectual property (where applicable) by staff and students
- professional and ethical behaviour by all by staff and students at all times when involved in that Teaching Activity, including adherence to the AIH Student Code of Conduct
- adherence to policies and procedures of the organisation or individual's site, including occupational health and safety
- AIH contact details in the event that the participant(s) are not satisfied with the conduct of the AIH staff or students or wish to lodge a complaint
- opportunity for participants to indicate their consent, and
- appropriate insurance and indemnity by AIH if students and staff are to be present at external premises.

Any breaches of the above clauses or the occurrence of any incidents by any party has to be reported immediately in writing by the lecturer to the relevant Association Dean of Studies.

### **3.3 Visits to external sites by staff and students**

It is the responsibility of the lecturer, before any site visits by staff and students to an external organisation, to ensure that the measures below are followed:

- the students are adequately briefed by their unit coordinator about the contents of the AIH Ethics Agreement and about other relevant information about the organisation in order to maximise their visit to the organisation
- the lecturer has informed and obtained the written permission of the appropriate management at the organisation,
- AIH Ethics Agreements are signed by the unit coordinator, the students visiting the external site, and the contact person at the organisation
- the contact person at the organisation has made available to the AIH unit coordinator and visiting students relevant written administration guides such as policies, rules, and the organisation's occupational health and safety requirements and procedures, where relevant
- informed written consent by the interviewee will be obtained by the interviewer
- and that both AIH and the external organisation have adequate public risk insurance cover in relation to loss, damage or injury suffered by students and staff of AIH.

The site visit has to be given written approval by the relevant Associate Dean of Studies prior to the site visit taking place based on the unit coordinator furnishing all of the above to the Associate Dean of Studies.

All approvals for site visits will be collated by the Associate Deans of Studies and reported to the Executive Dean each semester.

Any breaches of confidentiality by staff and students should be reported immediately to the relevant Associate Dean of Studies.

## **4. Management of Data and Publications**

### **4.1 Management of research data and primary materials**

AIH undertakes to:

- provide secure storage for data and primary materials that are the outcome of scholarship activities, and
- provide the means for safe disposal of these materials after the 3 year period.

An academic staff member has to retain these materials and allow access to these materials for a minimum of 3 years to ensure that other researchers and interested parties **may refer to these data, unless prevented by ethical and confidential matters.**

### **4.2 Publication and dissemination of findings**

AIH academic staff members have a responsibility:

- to their colleagues and the wider community to disseminate fully and widely an accurate account of their scholarship.
- cite the work of others accurately and ethically.
- ensure that the published scholarship must also respect the confidentiality of the data and the contributors of the data if applicable, and
- in all instances, ensure that scholarship is conducted, attributed and disseminated in an ethical manner.

### 4.3 Executive Dean's role

It is the responsibility of the Executive Dean to monitor that all conduct in human research activities have been conducted in an ethical manner by the academic staff, and to investigate any breaches of ethics in human research. This is done primarily through monitoring of compliance with guidelines for ethical conduct in human research (NHMRC, 2007<sup>[ii]</sup><sup>[iii]</sup>), feedback from any relevant stakeholders, and through performance review of the academic staff.

The Executive Dean will report any breaches of ethical conduct in human research to the Academic Board each semester, and also ascertain how the breach has been addressed and ethical standards reinstated.

## 5. Version Control

<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Executive Dean
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