

Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE Policy no. POHR14	Title: Employee Code of Conduct Policy Executive approved: 21/03/2017 (Amended 26/04/2017, 24/04/2018, 2/10/2018) Responsible Officer: Executive Manager Human Resources Authorising Officer: CEO Review: Biennial (21st March 2019)
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EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist employees to understand their responsibilities and obligations and provide guidance on expected behaviour in the workplace.

This Code of Conduct does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of ones work, instead it aims to provide guidance on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

2. SCOPE

This code applies to all employees of GOTAFE, whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis. Contractors and volunteers must also be made aware of and abide by this code.

As GOTAFE is part of the Victorian Public Sector all employees are expected to also adhere to the **Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees**, which is based on the Public Sector Values and Principles and relates to both performance and conduct. Both codes should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation, and GOTAFE's policies and procedures as required.

All employees also need to be aware of their relevant professional Code of Conduct.

3. PRINCIPLES

GOTAFE observe the following organisational values to guide how we behave:

Value	Description
Responsiveness	Timely and accurate actions with a willingness to deliver flexible solutions
Creativity	The freedom to generate ideas and to apply them to improve our services and products
Collaboration	Thorough external alliances and internal teamwork
Excellence	Achieving the highest standards in all that we do
Accountability	To be responsible for your own actions, your role within your team and as a representative of GOTAFE
Integrity	At all times being honest, reliable and trustworthy. Ensuring that if you cannot meet your commitment that you communicate this and renegotiate an outcome
Respect	To be open to each other's perspective and to appreciate and accept the different points of view of students, staff and customers

4. POLICY

4.1 Expectations

All employees are expected and supported to:

- perform duties to the best of their ability and be accountable for performance;
- comply with the requirements of all GOTAFE policies and procedures;
- ensure that decision-making is transparent and consultative and is undertaken according to the principles of natural justice;
- conscientiously and honestly discharge duties in an ethical and professional manner and consider the economic, environmental and social impacts of GOTAFE's professional standards, products, programs and services when making decisions or providing advice;
- be courteous and responsive in dealing with colleagues, students and young people and members of the public;
- respect and seek the professional opinions of co-workers in their area of expertise, and acknowledge their contribution;
- provide prompt and appropriate responses to lawful instructions given by an authorised manager;
- act at all times in the best interest of GOTAFE.

Manager / Supervisors are expected and supported to:

- model the professional behaviour expected from employees;
- promote collaborative workplaces by developing a positive work environment in which all employees can contribute;
- treat employees fairly and consistently when making selection decisions and allocating work;
- set realistic goals, timelines and workload, whilst providing adequate resources and appropriate information to complete work;
- regularly monitor work and check progression towards targets of their staff;
- trust employees to manage their work autonomously but also provide them with support when needed;
- exercise leadership by working with staff to create effective communication and ongoing support and feedback;
- understand and respond to legitimate concerns of employees and encourage work arrangements that enable employees to achieve a work life balance;
- address performance matters directly, promptly and confidentially with their staff.

4.2 Relationships and Professional Boundaries

Relationships and Conflict of Interest

While it is recognised that employees may sometimes form consensual personal relationships with other employees, such relationships should not intrude or be seen to intrude on the workplace for the following reasons:

- Workplace practices may be compromised.
- Such relationships may create difficulties in maintaining the boundaries between professional and private life.
- Difficulties may arise from unequal power of the persons concerned, particularly in relationships where supervision is involved.
- Some relationships may disrupt the work environment for co-workers.
- Personal relationships between employees (and other employees) can result in potential conflict of interests, or perceptions of unreasonable advantage or disadvantage.

Where a personal relationship, such as family relationship or close friendship exists between an employee and a student, or where there is a pre-existing sexual relationship

with an adult student attending the same workplace, the employee concerned is responsible for reporting the conflict of interest, or any potential conflict, via the Conflict of Interest procedure.

Professional Boundaries

The table below illustrates the types of behaviours which may be classed as crossing the professional boundaries if employees undertake in any of the examples below:

Type of Boundary	Example
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to join their personal electronic social networking site or accept student’s invitation to join theirs. • Offering advice on personal matters to the student. • Hold conversations of an intimately personal nature, where they disclose personal information about themselves. • Have contact with students via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat line, without a valid context. • Neglecting to notify management of circumstances that may be in breach of any of these guidelines. • Neglecting to act in accordance with GOTAFE’s policy where a breach of GOTAFE’s policy has occurred. • Transporting a student under the age of 18 years in a car without prior approval from a supervisor and a parent or carer.
Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend parties or socialise with students. • Flirtatious behaviour/intimate gestures directed towards a student. • Have a sexual relationship or develop an intimate relationship with a student. • Use sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and /or material with students. • Exhibit behaviours which may be construed as unnecessarily physical, e.g. inappropriate sitting laps. • Build relationships with the students family or guardian that that may be deemed as Grooming under the child safe standards.
Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implying that the student’s grades will be affected if the student does not comply with the teacher’s request. • Withholding information about academic performance to manipulate ‘alone time’ or opportunities with a student. • Impose physical punishment on a student. • Put students at risk of making them feel unsafe (for example locking door, offering to meet them outside of GOTAFE). • Doing things of a personal nature that students can do themselves.
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing or implying preferential treatment to students without legitimate reason. • Failure to recognise the role of a teacher is not a ‘friend’, ‘personal counsellor’ or ‘parent’ of the student.

In addition to the Professional Boundary requirements employees are reminded of:

- the law prohibiting sexual relations with a person under the age of consent (16 years)

- the law prohibiting sexual relations between a teacher and their student under the age of 18 years
- the law prohibiting child pornography and the required exclusions of pornography of any nature in the workplace.

4.3 Child Safe

GOTAFE is committed to providing a child safe environment. All employees must adhere to the standards provided in the Child Safety Standards by observing child safe principles and expectations as follows:

- taking reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- listening to and responding to the views and concerns of children;
- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- providing a safe environment where participation and empowerment are promoted for all children, including children with a disability;
- reporting an allegations of child abuse to a GOTAFE'S Child Safety Support Officer

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with **GOTAFE's Child Safe Policy***

4.4 Duty of Care

All employees must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others at the workplace. Considerations of safety relate to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals. Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of the children and young people in their charge.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with **GOTAFE's Duty of Care Policy and the Duty of Care of Minors Procedure***

4.5 Bullying

All employees are to have inclusive and respectful interactions, GOTAFE is committed to fostering an environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation and vilification.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with **GOTAFE's Anti discrimination, bullying and harassment policy.***

4.6 Conflict of Interest

All employees declare and avoid conflicts of interest to help maintain community trust and confidence. Conflict of interest can be actual, potential or perceived. This relates to circumstances where the employee is or could be directly influenced or where it is perceived that the employee might be influenced. Employees ensure their personal or financial interests do not influence or interfere with the performance of their role. They seek to ensure the interests of family members, friends, or associates do not influence or could be perceived to influence their performance of their role within GOTAFE.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with **GOTAFE's Conflict of Interest Policy.***

4.7 Gifts, benefits and hospitality

All employees do not for themselves or others seek or accept gifts or benefits that could be reasonably perceived as influencing them.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with **GOTAFE's Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Procedure.***

4.8 Recruitment

It is the requirement of GOTAFE that the best available people are recruited and selected based solely on their competency to perform the work, in accordance with the employment principles in the Public Administration Act.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Recruitment and selection procedure***

4.9 Engaging Contractors

The relevant purchasing principles of value for money, open and fair competition, accountability, risk management, integrity and transparency must be conformed to by employees selecting and engaging a contractor to provide services to GOTAFE.

Contractors engaged at GOTAFE are to be made aware of this code of conduct during their induction process by the employee who is engaging their services.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Consultancy contractor procedure***

4.10 Financial Matters

All employees observe the highest standards of integrity in financial matters and comply with the requirements of relevant financial management legislation, policies and procedures. They maintain a strict separation between work-related and personal financial matters and only use or authorise the use of GOTAFE financial resources or facilities for work-related purposes.

All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's;

Corporate card holder conditions of use agreement

Delegations process for Institute staff procedure

Fraud and corruption management procedure

Live work procedure

Outsourcing Procedure

Payment of monies – accounts payable procedure

Purchasing of goods and services procedure

Receipt of money procedure

Staff expense claims procedure

TAFE executive officer expense claims procedure

Tendering policy and procedure

4.11 Use of Work Resources and Equipment

All employees have a responsibility to:

- use GOTAFE resources efficiently and effectively for official purposes;
- make decisions relating to the use of GOTAFE resources that are reasonable, are correctly authorised and can withstand public scrutiny;
- treat GOTAFE property with due care and ensure it is secured against theft and misuse;
- be economical and avoid waste and extravagance in the use of resources such as office facilities and equipment, including the use of motor vehicles, travel and catering;
- seek to achieve value for money and use resources in the most effective way possible;
- work resources include physical, financial, technological and intellectual property. Intellectual property includes copyright, trademarks, registered designs, patents (including patented business systems), semiconductors, circuit layout rights, and trade, business or company names, and all other proprietary rights, and any rights to the registration of such rights, including proprietary rights developed or created by employees in the course of their employment. GOTAFE retains ownership of all these work resources.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Vehicle Procedure, Copyright Procedure and the Intellectual Property Procedure***

4.12 Confidentiality, Privacy and Freedom of Information

All employees are required to understand the importance of privacy and confidentiality. Confidential information requires special treatment and protection. Those people who provide confidential information to GOTAFE employees have the right to expect this information will be treated as confidential. Employees with access to confidential information ensure it remains confidential, and at all times act in accordance with legislation and policies relating to dealing with private information. As a GOTAFE employee, you must only use official information for the work-related purpose it was intended.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Privacy and Freedom of Information Policy***

4.13 Signatures

All employees must:

- not sign a document, which they know is not true and correct;
- only sign their own name and must never permit or encourage anyone to sign a name other than their own. Managers and supervisors must not encourage or coerce their staff to sign a document with which the employee is not satisfied. Executive Managers and above have the authority to sign official GOTAFE letterhead for their area of responsibility;
- only use their own name when, for example, sending emails, and should not give the impression that they have the authority of another person without their permission;
- never give another person their staff portal password and should take care to ensure that they have 'logged off' fully from your computer before leaving it unattended.

4.14 Public Relations and Communication

All employees should be helpful and courteous when dealing with the public, giving prompt and satisfactory service to requests and managing sensitive issues with due care and consideration.

Employees shall not make any public comment on behalf of GOTAFE unless expressly authorised by the CEO to do so, and should restrict information to GOTAFE policy, factual or explanatory information, or background material relevant to the specific request. Employees who have cause to make public comment on individually held opinions must make it unequivocally clear that their comments are not necessarily those of GOTAFE.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Media Relations Media Release Procedure, Social Media Policy and Procedure for GOTAFE Employees and the Electronic Communications Procedure for Staff***

4.15 Dress Standards

All employees must ensure their personal appearance and presentation are clean, tidy and appropriate for their work role and takes into account the particular circumstances of their workplace, including department requirements for Personal Protective Equipment.

4.16 Alcohol and other Drugs

All employees carry out their work safely and avoid conduct that puts themselves or others at risk. This includes the misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances when at work or when engaged in work related activities. The misuse of alcohol, prescribed drugs, illegal drugs and other substances is an issue for both employers and employees as it impacts on both work and personal life and in some cases the reputation of their employer.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with GOTAFE's **Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy***

4.17 Working in the Public Sector

The Victorian Public Sector values of Responsiveness, Integrity, Impartiality, Accountability, Respect, Leadership, Human Rights are embraced by GOTAFE.

The Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees prescribes the behaviour expected by public sector employees.

*All employees must familiarise themselves and abide with the **Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees***

5. REPORTING BREACHES AND CONCERNS

Any person may report a breach or alleged breach of this policy via GOTAFE's Issue resolution and investigation procedure.

6. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Any breach of this Code of Conduct or policies and procedures referred to in the code, could result in disciplinary action being taken against an individual employee according with GOTAFE's Discipline Policy.

7. DOCUMENTATION

- [Alcohol and other Drugs Policy – POOHS1](#)
- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- [Anti-discrimination bullying and harassment policy POHR18](#)
- [Child Safe Policy – POHR15](#)
- Code of Conduct for Victoria Public Sector Employees
- [Conflict of Interest Policy – POHR8](#)
- [Consultancy and contractor procedure – B23-P40](#)
- [Copyright Procedure – E9-P30](#)
- [Corporate card holder conditions of use agreement – FFI-20](#)
- [Delegations Process for Institute Staff Procedure – B21-P106](#)
- [Discipline Policy for Employees Other Than PACCT Staff – CS11](#)
- [Discipline Policy for PACCT Staff – CS34](#)
- [Duty of Care of Minors Procedure – PRSS-151](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy – POSS-02](#)
- [Electronic Communications Procedure for Staff – CS27-P61](#)
- [Fraud and Corruption Management Procedure – B-P109](#)
- [Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Procedure – PROD-153](#)
- [Intellectual Property Procedure – B-P138](#)
- [Issue resolution and investigation procedure – PRHR-191](#)
- [Live Work Procedure – B-P123](#)
- [Media Relations and Media Release Procedure – C-P110](#)
- [Outsourcing Procedure – B1-P6](#)
- [Payment of Monies/Accounts Payable Procedure – B17-P19](#)
- [Privacy and Freedom of Information Policy – OD7](#)
- [Protected Disclosure \(Whistleblower\) Policy – POHR11](#)
- [Protected Disclosure \(Whistleblower\) Procedure – PRHR-172](#)

- **Public Administration Act 2004**
- [Purchasing of Goods and Services Procedure – B18-P20](#)
- [Receipt of Money Procedure – B13-P15](#)
- [Recruitment and Selection Procedure – CS33-P93](#)
- [Recruitment Policy – OD5](#)
- [Social Media Policy – POMA-02](#)
- [Social media procedure for GOTAFE Employees – PRMA-185](#)
- [Staff expense claims procedure – B-P92](#)
- [TAFE executive officer expense claims procedure –B-P16](#)
- [Tendering Policy – B19](#)
- [Tendering Procedure – B19-P21](#)
- [Vehicle Procedure – B12-P14](#)
- **Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct**