



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## INTRODUCTION

The Code of Conduct (Code) outlines the standard of behaviour expected of employees of Aurora Training Institute. It is designed to assist staff to understand their responsibilities and obligations and provide guidance on expected behaviour in the workplace, or if faced with an ethical dilemma or conflict of interest in their work involving colleagues, students, and members of the wider community.

The Code does not seek to encompass all possible scenarios arising in employment with Aurora Training Institute however, it provides a set of principles to guide staff on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

The Code should be read in conjunction with Aurora policies, procedures and your Employment Agreement.

Aurora Training Institute's vision and values serve as our moral and ethical compass and underpin the Code of Conduct:

| Vision/Value                    | Description  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Courage                         | To attempt new things; to do the impossible  |
| Leadership                      | To be at the forefront of everything we do; to create opportunities for the future |
| Excellence                      | To commit to be the best at whatever we do   |
| Corporate Social Responsibility | To value people and the planet   |
| Integrity                       | To be transparent and accountable to ourselves and to our clients                  |

Our vision and values guide how we behave towards our students, and the wider community. These principles are what we stand for and we will bring these principles to life in everything we do.

This Code confirms that commitment and outlines the expectations of all staff members of Aurora Training Institute and is designed to promote a culture of fair, respectful and ethical behaviour.

The Code will ensure that all staff:

- Maintain appropriate standards of conduct;
- Exhibit fairness, impartiality, honesty and equity in decision making; and
- Foster and protect the reputation of Aurora Training Institute.

Staff can expect that members of Aurora Training Institute senior management will lead by example in actively promoting and complying with the Code.

All staff are expected to act with integrity, which includes being aware of and acting within the laws that apply to their position.

Essentially the Code is a public statement about how Aurora Training Institute expects to be perceived and, ultimately, judged. All staff are required to comply with the Code.



## **A. FAIR, SAFE AND ETHICAL ENVIRONMENT**

An ethical environment relies upon individuals having responsibility for their own professional behaviour. Aurora Training Institute has a responsibility to provide a safe, encouraging and supportive work environment that recognises and values staff diversity, abilities and contributions. All members of staff are entitled to be treated with respect and work in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, violence (or threats of violence) or vilification. Equally, staff have a responsibility to act with integrity, honesty, transparency and impartiality in their dealings with colleagues, students and members of the wider community.

Staff members are required to perform their duties in a safe and competent manner in accordance with relevant Occupational Health and Safety legislation and Aurora policies and procedures. Staff must take care not to put themselves, colleagues, students or members of the wider community at risk or reduce their ability to carry out their duties through unsafe practices, inappropriate behaviours or the misuse of alcohol or drugs. This also includes prescription and over the counter medications, staff members are to insure these do not adversely affect the performance of their official duties. If you are using medication that may affect your work performance, you should notify your manager. Every effort should be made to ensure that students (particularly those under 18 years of age) are safe and secure on campus or at external businesses when under their duty of care including functions or activities.

## **B. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

Staff members are to perform any duties associated with their position diligently, impartially and conscientiously, to the best of their ability.

In the performance of their duties, staff members are to:

- Treat members of the public, students and other staff members with courtesy and sensitivity to their rights;
- Provide all necessary and appropriate assistance;
- Strive to keep up-to-date with advances and changes in their industry and the professional and ethical standards relevant to their area of expertise;
- Comply with any relevant legislative, industrial or administrative requirements, and all Aurora policies and procedures;
- Maintain adequate records to support any decisions made;
- Strive to obtain value for public money spent and avoid waste and extravagance in the use of public resources;
- Conform with Aurora Training Institute's commitment to sustainability;
- Maintain the confidentiality of official information in accordance with Aurora Training Institute's Confidentiality Statement provided under 6.1 of the Employment contract;
- Avoid undertaking any activity that could potentially compromise the performance of their duties; and
- Comply and adhere to this Code in conjunction with the Staff Handbook.

### **C. EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

Staff will be instrumental in creating a work and study environment where all members of Aurora Training Institute's community are able to participate fully, find a sense of belonging, and have opportunity to engage meaningfully with the broader community.

Staff will act to create a fair, respectful, inclusive and safe environment, where diversity is valued and where unlawful discrimination, violence (or threats of violence), bullying, harassment and victimisation in any form are considered unacceptable.

Staff will seek to understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to State and Federal anti-discrimination legislation and integrate the principles of equality of opportunity, natural justice and inclusivity into their day-to-day practices and behaviours.

### **D. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The potential for a conflict of interest arises when a staff member has private interests that could influence or appear to influence judgements made during the course of their professional duty. Staff members must ensure that there are no real or apparent conflicts of interest with respect to:

- The misuse of influence to further personal, sexual and financial relationships, whether with other staff, students or members of the community;
- Making decisions and providing advice; and
- Use of confidential information.

Staff must not solicit gifts or benefits that might in any way compromise or influence them in their capacity as employees of Aurora Training Institute. A staff member may give or receive a gift which is offered as part of a social, cultural or ceremonial practice.

Should a staff member have a financial interest in a company that is in a position to influence a contract for business between that company and Aurora Training Institute, this interest should be declared to their supervisor before acting for Aurora Training Institute.

Where staff are working with family members or with persons with whom they develop a close personal relationships or such relationships exist with prospective staff they must be aware that this has the potential to create a conflict of interest if one staff member:

- Is involved in a decision relating to the selection, appointment or promotion of another;
- Is in a supervisory relationship to another and is responsible for employment related decisions e.g. Staff training and development, referee report or annual performance development review.
- Has a personal or family relationship with a student for whom they have direct teaching or assessing responsibility. This will compromise the staff member's obligation to assess all students fairly e.g. Assessment of units, and the awarding of scholarships.

In such cases the staff member must bring the matter to the attention of their Manager in writing using the Conflicts of Interest Declaration Form and reporting it to Quality Assurance via [qa@aurora.edu.au](mailto:qa@aurora.edu.au) and take immediate steps to resolve the conflict if necessary. Please refer to the staff handbook for this procedure.

When conducting research, conflicts of interest may occur when a staff members responsibilities conflict with their private or personal interests which may raise questions of objectivity and/or improper gain. Staff members should advise their Manager immediately. Most conflicts can be successfully resolved without impeding research activity.

Any staff member unsure if a conflict of interest exists should seek advice from a more senior member of staff.

In some cases, only the individual staff member will be aware of the potential for conflict of interest. If so, or if in doubt, the onus is on the staff member to declare any possible conflict to their Manager in writing.

Staff members found to be in breach may face disciplinary action.

## **E. GIFTS, BENEFITS AND HOSPITALITY**

Staff members have a responsibility to behave with integrity and impartiality. This includes responding appropriately to offers of gifts, benefits and hospitality, including when travelling overseas on Aurora Training Institute business.

Staff must not seek or accept gifts that could be reasonably perceived as influencing them, particularly from people or organisations about whom they are likely to make decisions involving:

- Tender processes
- Procurement
- Enforcement
- Licensing
- Regulation
- Recruitment processes or
- Student enrolment/entry procedures.

Gifts of money may not be accepted in any circumstances. If a staff member is offered a bribe, the incident must be reported to the relevant manager immediately. If a staff member is unsure how to respond to an offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality, they should seek advice from their manager.

A staff member may give or receive a gift that is offered as part of a social, cultural or ceremonial practice, however, if the gift could be construed as an inducement to act in a certain way, the staff member should not accept the gift.

## **F. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES, EMPLOYMENT AND PRIVATE PRACTICE**

Aurora Training Institute encourages staff to contribute and engage with the community by taking part in activities not limited to; expos, professional development days and collaborative research. In undertaking these activities, staff must observe the following requirements:

- Staff members must have approval from their supervisor for activities undertaken during normal working hours and/or if these activities could conflict with their employment at Aurora Training Institute;
- Outside activities must not involve the use of Aurora Training Institute resources without prior permission where appropriate.

## **G. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Staff must notify their Manager when contacted by the media.
- Staff are encouraged to speak to the media about issues relating to their area of specialisation, but are not permitted to comment on Aurora Training Institute policy or management decisions, unless prior approval is authorised
- Public comment by staff, including interviews on television, radio, newspapers, on-line and speaking engagements (conferences, guest lectures) should be limited to topics related to their area of expertise
- Staff expressing public comment on political or social issues as individual citizens should not use their Aurora Training Institute title/position
- Staff must ensure that they do not use information about students or other staff members inappropriately. This includes breaching confidentiality, privacy and discussing commercially sensitive information.

## **H. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA/INTERNET**

Staff members must be mindful of their use of social media and ensure their interactions are respectful to Aurora Training Institute.

Aurora Training Institute computers, laptops, tablets, tablet PCs and networks are to be used for Aurora-related business and purposes. Aurora Training Institute time and resources should not be used to engage in social media/internet activity for personal or non-Aurora related purposes.

Staff should protect the line between professional and personal life. Aurora Training Institute staff members need to consider the line between their professional and personal life which can often become blurred through the use of social media. Any online social media engagement should not compromise or interfere with your work at Aurora Training Institute. All staff need to decide, for example, whether to have students as Facebook friends or not. Aurora Training Institute recommends that all staff do not have “friends” on social media sites who are Aurora Training Institute students.

If communicating in an official capacity, identify who you work for and the capacity in which you are contributing and keep your personal views separate. If communicating on social media and your online profile identifies you as a member of Aurora Training Institute, make it clear that the comments are your own and not made on behalf of Aurora Training Institute. For example, use a disclaimer such as “The views expressed in this post are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Aurora Training Institute”.

You should never use the Aurora Training Institute logo in circumstances where you are posting in a private capacity or on your individual profile unless otherwise approved.

The Staff Code of Conduct, workplace agreements and contracts of employment will apply to staff when posting comments relating to Aurora Training Institute, colleagues, students or the wider community associated with Aurora Training Institute. For example it is not appropriate for a staff member to post disparaging or false remarks about their employer online. This may be considered a breach of the Staff Code of Conduct and/or a breach of the staff member’s employment contract.

Staff members intending to utilise social media sites for official purposes on behalf of Aurora Training Institute must ensure they have the approval of their Manager.

Ensure you are accurate about Aurora Training Institute, its services and products and be careful not to post potentially misleading information about Aurora Training Institute.

## **I. RESOURCES**

All members of Aurora Training Institute are accountable for the efficient and effective use of funds. Staff are expected to maintain proper documentation and records of financial transactions, report instances of misuse or misappropriation of Aurora Training Institute funds, and not use Aurora Training Institute funds or credit cards for personal use or benefit. If there is any confusion about delegation or expenditure, staff should seek clarification from their Manager.

All Aurora Training Institute facilities, equipment or vehicles must be used efficiently and in accordance with Aurora Training Institute policy. Staff must report damaged or defective equipment and facilities to their Manager and ensure that where the damage or defect is a danger to health and safety, action is taken to protect the staff member and others from danger

Staff must not allow any un-authorised access to Aurora Training Institute information systems.

Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

## **J. RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS**

The main focus of Trainers and Assessors is student learning. Trainers and Assessors demonstrate their commitment to student learning by:

- Knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities
- Maintaining a safe and challenging learning environment
- Accepting professional responsibility for the provision of quality training
- Having high expectations of every student, recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents
- Considering all viewpoints fairly
- Communicating well and appropriately with their students
- Working to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- Model and engage in respectful and impartial language
- Protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm
- Enhance student autonomy and sense of self-worth
- Respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate. That is:
  - If the student has consented to the information being used in a certain way
  - To prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of a person (including the student)
  - As part of an investigation into unlawful activity
  - If the disclosure is required or mandated by law
  - To prevent a crime or enforce the law

In their professional role, Trainers and Assessors do not behave as a friend or a parent. They:

- Interact with students without displaying bias or preference
- Make decisions in students' best interests
- Do not draw students into their personal agendas
- Do not seek recognition at the expense of professional objectivity and goals.





Trainers and Assessors hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits.

A professional relationship will be violated if a Trainer and Assessor:

- Expresses romantic feelings towards a student in written or other form
- Directs flirtatious behaviour towards a student
- Is found to be 'dating' a student
- Has a sexual relationship with a student
- Uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students
- Touches a student without a valid reason
- Uses disrespectful language, including swearing, either directed at, or in the presence of student
- Holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including but not limited to email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without a valid context
- Accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents.

A professional relationship may be compromised if a Trainer and Assessor:

- Attends parties or socialises with students
- Invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

Staff must not engage in behaviour that raises a reasonable suspicion that they have engaged in, or will engage in, sexual misconduct with a student, or that the standards applying to professional staff/student relations have been or may be breached. Staff interactions with students must be, and be seen to be, professional at all times. For clarification, this includes outside school hours.

Staff must discourage and reject any advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student with whom they have a professional relationship, or where a prohibition on sexual conduct applies and report this in writing to their Manager.

Staff members are not to transport students in their vehicles.