Code of Conduct - Employees

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') is a place of education, community, professionalism and forward thinking. The Code of Conduct – Employees ('the Code') is informed by our values and provides guidance for employees to recognise and practise these values to shape our culture.

(2) The University will provide employees with access to education and training to ensure their comprehension of the requirements of the Code and related procedures. Where employees, students, clients or partners are uncertain about the interpretation of this document, they should consult with the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor, Director or Manager where appropriate.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) The Code articulates and supports the expectation of the University that all employees will adhere to the highest standards in their conduct and behaviour in relation to both their work practices and the University.

(4) All University employees are expected to perform their work with respect to the minimum standards and obligations outlined in this code, and carry out their duties ethically, efficiently and fairly.

Section 3 - Scope

(5) The Code of Conduct – Employees ('the Code') applies to all employees of the University, honorary appointees, volunteers, members of Council and others who may be engaged with or represent the interests of the University.

(6) It also applies to clients, colleagues and partners engaged in employment or partnerships with the University on campus, in University online environments, social media or in external locations when representing the University. These clients, colleagues and partners are included in the definition of employees for the purposes of this document.

(7) This Code has been developed in compliance with the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 ('the Agreement') and should be read in conjunction with the Agreement.

Section 4 - Policy

(8) All Charles Darwin University employees are required to comply with relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation as well as the University's governance documents. Employees must maintain awareness of the Governance Document Library and seek guidance from their supervisor or Governance if they are unsure of their legal and policy requirements.

Our Values

(9) The Code is informed by our values. The Code of Conduct embodies our ethos, underpinning the decisions we make, from the way we interact, to how we conduct ourselves, our business and who we partner with.

Courage

(10) We make courageous decisions to act in the best interests of our students, our people and our communities. We have the courage to try new things, to be innovative and to make a difference. We have the courage to learn from our mistakes and when we fail, to try again.

Kindness

(11) We have a generosity of spirit in all of our dealings and when tough decisions are required, we act with kindness, empathy and compassion. In all things we act with respect, decency and integrity and strive to understand each other's differences and points of view.

Openness

(12) We communicate and listen openly and frankly in a way that is honest and respectful, recognising our limitations and embracing diverse perspectives. We share information with candour and empower our people with knowledge.

Innovation

(13) We develop, implement, pursue and embrace ideas, take action, are resourceful and find imaginative and enduring solutions that are innovative and impactful. As a learning organisation, we value the collective effort and embrace new knowledge.

Leadership

(14) We are leaders in our chosen fields of expertise, creating positive influence and making a lasting impact. We develop and enable leadership to flourish throughout our university and our communities. We value the knowledge of others: we are all leaders, and we are all followers.

Behaviours – demonstrating our values

(15) Employees are expected to conduct themselves to the highest professional standard that can be reasonably expected.

(16) University employees will:

a. behave objectively, impartially, professionally and with integrity;
b. declare and manage any actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest in line with the Conflicts of Interest Policy and the Conflicts of Interest Procedure;
c. declare and manage any gifts and benefits they are offered in accordance with the Gifts and Benefits Policy;
d. be responsible and accountable for their own actions and decisions;
e. achieve high standards on behalf of the University and perform their duties to the best of their ability;
f. ensure their behaviours and actions are in compliance with the Agreement, the Code and all University governance documents;
g. treat other members of the University community with the highest level of respect, professionalism and kindness, as an employee and when engaged in a position of leadership;
h. only make public comment in their private capacity and not identify themselves as speaking on behalf of the University, unless authorised;
i. understand and comply with the requirements of the Social Media Policy and the Media Policy;
j. ensure information relied upon to make decisions is factually correct, transparent and current;
k. comply with all reasonable direction given to them by a person with authority to do so;
l. not be absent from duty without authority or good cause;

m. not conduct external or personal duties during paid University hours and declare and manage any external employment in accordance with the External Employment Policy and Procedure.
n. as soon as practicably safe to do so, report workplace hazards, incidents and accidents in compliance with Work Health and Safety processes;
o. take care of their own health and safety and that of others within the workplace and follow all reasonable directions as such;
p. conduct themselves in adherence to the commitment from CDU against racism, bullying, harassment and discrimination; and
q. use the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees to report behaviours that do not align with the Code.

Academic Conduct

(17) The University is a centre of teaching, learning, and research. Academic integrity and responsible academic conduct are central to who we are and what we do. Academic employees must work ethically and with integrity at all times.

(18) Academic employees have a fundamental responsibility when dealing with the students they teach and supervise. At all times, academic employees will:

a. model academic integrity and ethical practice in learning, teaching and research;
b. maintain appropriate physical and emotional distance between themselves and students;
c. avoid intimate personal relationships with students when directly responsible for their teaching or supervision; and
d. declare a conflict of interest should an intimate personal relationship develop between themselves and a student, in accordance with the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Official and Confidential Information

(19) In accordance with CDU policy, employees must:

a. Not access or attempt to access confidential information other than in connection with the essential performance of their duties and/or as authorised.
b. Not disclose confidential information acquired through their employment unless required to by law.
c. Not misuse information gained in their official capacity for their own or for others' personal benefit or gain.
d. Maintain the security of official and/or confidential information for which they are responsible.
e. Ensure the privacy of an individual is maintained and only collect, use or disclose the personal information of individuals in accordance with the information privacy principles under the Information Act 2002.

Use of University Resources

(20) At all times, employees must:

a. Ensure University resources are utilised in effective, efficient and appropriate ways and in accordance with CDU policy. This includes the appropriate use of information, communication technologies and intellectual property at all times.
b. Ensure University resources are only used for allowable and approved purposes.
c. Avoid excessive use of University resources.
d. Not misuse resources gained in their official capacity for their own or for others' personal benefit or gain.

Employee Complaints Process

(21) The University is committed to ensuring all employees are treated fairly and feel safe to voice issues and raise complaints, where resolutions are effective, timely and fair.

(22) All employees must:

a. Understand and comply with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees.
b. Engage and participate in the process if required, and do so in a professional manner and in good faith to reach a reasonable solution.
c. Maintain a high level of confidentiality during the process.

Disclosure of Wrongdoing

(23) It is mandatory that University employees report their own or others' workplace behaviour that is:

a. Suspected as improper.
b. In violation of any law.
c. In breach of this Code or the Agreement; or
d. Is a danger to the health and safety of any person within the University community.

(24) The University has mandatory reporting obligations under the Northern Territory Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2017 (ICAC Act) and other legislation. All University employees and members of Council are public officers who are obliged to report any instance of actual, or suspected, improper conduct or breaches of the law under the ICAC Act mandatory reporting obligations.

(25) Disclosure is to be made initially to Senior Managers or the relevant People Partner.

Criminal Offences

(26) As soon as practicable, employees must advise their supervisor and Director People and Culture in writing if they have been:

a. Charged with any criminal offence and the full details of the charge(s) relating to the alleged criminal offence including impending court dates.
b. Convicted of any criminal offence including any sentence imposed.
c. Acquitted of any criminal offence.

(27) This obligation remains in place for the entirety of the employee's relationship with the University.

Conduct in the Workplace

(28) In accordance with clause 59 of the Agreement, behaviours that are not in compliance with the University values, this Code, or University governance documents may result in an issue of misconduct or serious misconduct.

(29) Misconduct is conduct that is unsatisfactory, however does not warrant Serious Misconduct proceedings.

(30) Serious Misconduct is deemed to be:

a. Willful or deliberate behaviour by an employee that is inconsistent with the continuation of the contract of employment.
b. Conduct that causes serious and imminent risk to:

i. The health or safety of a person; or
ii. The reputation, viability or profitability of the University.

(31) At CDU, the following behaviours are Serious Misconduct and therefore in breach of the Agreement and the Code:

a. The employee, in the course of their employment, engaging in:
   i. Theft.
   ii. Fraud.
   iii. Assault.
   iv. Sexual harassment.
   v. The employee being intoxicated at work.
   vi. Serious research misconduct.
   vii. Breaches of the Code and/or any University policy.
   viii. Repeated misconduct of the same nature.
   ix. The employee refusing to carry out a lawful and reasonable instruction that is consistent with their contract of employment.

(32) This list is not exhaustive and if deemed necessary can be added to.

(33) In accordance with the Agreement, the Code, University policy and due process, the outcomes from misconduct findings may be the following disciplinary action:

a. Formal censure.
b. Counselling, training, coaching and/or mentoring.
c. Demotion by one of more classification levels or increments.
d. Withholding of an increment.
e. Suspension with or without pay.
f. Termination of employment (only in the case of Serious Misconduct or Unsatisfactory Performance).

Section 5 - Non-compliance

(34) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct – Staff or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(35) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Code of Conduct – Staff and Code of Conduct - Students.

(36) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	1st December 2023
Review Date	1st December 2026
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	30th November 2023
Expiry Date	15th February 2026
Responsible Executive	Fiona Coulson Vice-Chancellor
Implementation Officer	Peta Preo Director People and Culture
Enquiries Contact	Peta Preo Director People and Culture People and Culture

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Discrimination" - Where a person or group of people are treated unfairly on the grounds of an attribute. This includes but is not limited to: race; language, including signed language; sex; gender identity; sexual orientation; sex characteristics; age; relationship status; accommodation status; employment status; employment in sex work or engaging in sex work including past employment in sex work or engagement in sex work; pregnancy; carer responsibilities; breastfeeding; disability; HIV/Hepatitis status; subjected to domestic violence; trade union or employer association activity; religious or spiritual belief or activity; political opinion, affiliation or activity; irrelevant medical record; irrelevant criminal record; physical appearance, health or medical status or ability; the person's details being published under section 66M of the Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Act 2001 (NT); and Association with a person who has, or is believed to have, any of these attributes.