

POLICY NUMBER:	1.14	VERSION NUMBER:	2.1
DATE LAST REVIEWED:	May 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE:	May 2026
RELATED POLICIES:		RESPONSIBILITY:	Governing Board

INTELLECTUAL AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the Institute's support, commitment and protection to the fundamental principles of free speech, intellectual and academic freedom and academic autonomy, and establishes clear and practical working parameters, without fear or favour.
- 1.2 The Institute:
- is committed to, and supports, academic autonomy across all operations and subscribes to and incorporates the principles from 'A Model Code for the Protection of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers' (Chancellors' Council Working Group Revised June 2019)
 - supports a culture of academic freedom across our community
 - empowers its staff and students to explore new and controversial areas of inquiry by allowing them to freely express their views without fear of prejudice.
- 1.3 Consistent with the Code the key purpose is to:
- ensure that the freedom of lawful speech of staff, students and visitors as a key value that is not restricted other than by those imposed by law and set out in the principles of this policy
 - ensure that academic freedom is treated as a defining value
 - affirm the importance of the Institute's institutional autonomy under law in the regulation of its affairs, including in the protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to AIPC governing bodies, decision making forums, students, staff, academic staff, communities of practice and delegates, including those involved in academic governance.
- 2.2 The Policy also applies to student representative bodies to the extent that they have guidelines or terms of reference that enable application.

3.0 Principles

- 3.1 The Institute's approach to intellectual and academic freedom reflects the following principles:
- a. Every member of staff and every student at AIPC enjoys freedom of speech exercised in all Institute activity on and off campus and online, subject only to restrictions imposed by:
- law

- the right and freedom of others to express themselves and to hear and receive information and opinions
 - reasonable and proportionate regulation of conduct:
 - necessary for teaching and scholarly activities
 - to enable the Institute to fulfil its duty to foster the wellbeing of students and staff
 - to enable the Institute to fulfil its legal duties including its duties to visitors.
- b. Every member of the academic staff and every student enjoys academic freedom subject only to prohibitions, restrictions or conditions imposed by:
- law
 - reasonable and proportionate regulation necessary for teaching and scholarly activities
 - reasonable and proportionate regulation necessary to foster staff and student wellbeing
 - reasonable and proportionate regulation to enable AIPC to give effect to its legal duties
 - way of AIPC reasonable requirements as to the courses to be delivered and the content and means of their delivery.
- 3.2. Consistent with this policy, the Institute may take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that all prospective students in any of its courses have an opportunity to be fully informed of the content of applicable courses. Academic staff must comply with Institute policies and rules supportive of the duty to foster the wellbeing of staff and students and maintain compliance of its courses in accord with regulatory frameworks.

4.0 Description

- 4.1 The Institute is firmly committed to nurturing a culture of free speech and academic freedom where both its students and staff are encouraged to engage in robust academic discourse and research which may, at times, lead to conflicting points of view.
- 4.2 It is acknowledged that it is only through the pushing of boundaries that new ideas and new perspectives may be generated. Open discussion of ideas is encouraged and expected to flourish within our framework of mutual respect, respectful engagement and civility.
- 4.3 The Institute remains committed to a safe learning environment, requiring both staff and students to value difference and diversity, cooperation, respect, tolerance and academic debate balanced with social responsibility.
- 4.4 Where an AIPC student or staff member feels that their right to free intellectual inquiry has been inhibited and is in contravention of this policy, then they may lodge a formal grievance in accordance with the Grievance Resolution Policy (staff) or Non-Academic Complaints and Appeals (students) Policies.

5.0 Responsibility, Authority and Review

5.1 Academic and intellectual freedom comes with responsibilities and obligations for staff and students, including:

- The ability to freely pursue knowledge in their learning, teaching and research activities, in accord with academic, ethical, legal, professional and research standards
- All activity and debate are to be conducted in a fair, balanced, open and ethical manner with free and responsible communication of knowledge both internally and externally
- Staff and student expression of intellectual and academic freedom relates to the expression of views in relation to their area of expertise, and only those with appropriate delegated authority may represent those views on behalf of the Institute
- Staff and students are expected to exercise these freedoms in compliance with all reasonable Institute policy, direction, objectives, obligations, delegations, academic standards, and approvals and employment agreements.

5.2 The Academic Board is responsible for approving, upholding and supporting this policy.

5.3 The Chief Executive Officer and Provost are responsible for communicating, implementing and supporting its intent across all aspects of Institute academic operations. The Provost is responsible for review of this policy.

6.0 Relevant Legislative and Regulatory Documents

- Higher Education Support Act 2003

7.0 Version Control History

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	Jan 2013	Chief Executive Officer	Policy created – originally titled 2.22 Intellectual and Academic Freedom Policy
1.0	Nov 2013	Chief Executive Officer	No changes made.
1.0	Jul 2015	Chief Executive Officer	No changes made.
1.0	Mar 2016	Chief Executive Officer	No changes made.
1.0	Apr 2019	Chief Executive Officer	No changes made.
1.0	Nov 2020	Governing Board	Formatting changes.
2.0	May 2023	Governing Board	Major changes to policy. Formatting changes. Policy title changed to 1.4 Intellectual and Academic Freedom. Policy now includes the purpose, scope and principles of the policy. Description of policy expanded. New inclusions note the responsibility, authority and review processes of the policy. Relevant legislative and regulatory documents have been added.
2.1	May 2025	Governing Board	Minor update to clarify staff responsibilities. Added reference in clause 3.2 to maintaining course compliance with regulatory frameworks.