Student Code of Conduct

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline the expectations of student behaviour at Acknowledge Education and ensure a safe, respectful, inclusive, and academically honest learning environment for all students and staff.

2.0 Scope

This Code applies to all students enrolled at Acknowledge Education across all courses, campuses, and modes of study, including online.

3.0 Regulatory Context

The Student Code of Conduct is informed by the legislative and regulatory obligations of Acknowledge Education as a provider of higher education, vocational education and training (VET), and courses to international students. It reflects the standards and expectations of the following regulatory bodies:

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

- **Section 2.3 – Wellbeing and Safety**, by promoting a respectful, inclusive, and safe learning environment.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

- **Standard 5 – Support and Progression**, which requires clear communication of rights and responsibilities to ensure learners are adequately informed.
- **Standard 8 – Compliance with Legislation**, which includes the requirement to implement policies and procedures for managing misconduct and ensuring student welfare.

4.0 Principles of Conduct

4.1 Respect and Integrity

- Treat all members of the Acknowledge Education community with dignity, fairness, and respect, regardless of background or personal attributes.
- Refrain from all forms of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and intimidation.
- Communicate respectfully with peers, educators, and staff both in person and online.

4.2 Learning Engagement

- Take responsibility for your own learning by attending classes, participating in activities
- Submitting assessments on time.
- Actively engage with course content and contribute positively to learning

environments.

- Seek academic support where needed and proactively monitor your academic progress.

4.3 Academic Integrity

- Avoid all forms of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, fabrication, and falsification of data.
- Acknowledge the work of others appropriately and comply with assessment conditions.
- Comply with the Academic Integrity Policy and understand the consequences of academic misconduct.

4.4 Use of Resources and Facilities

- Use all facilities, services, and technology responsibly and ethically.
- Respect the property of the College and others.
- Follow health, safety, and hygiene standards across all learning environments.

4.5 Behavioural Expectations

- Refrain from behaviour that disrupts learning or impacts the safety and wellbeing of others.
- Do not attend classes or campus events under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Use mobile phones and electronic devices responsibly and in accordance with instructions provided by educators.
- Abide by all local, state, and federal laws, and the College's policies and procedures.

4.6 Psychological Safety

Acknowledge Education is committed to maintaining a learning environment where all students feel safe to express themselves without fear of embarrassment, rejection, or retaliation.

Students are expected to:

- Support a culture where diverse perspectives, questions, and constructive debate are welcomed.
- Contribute to a respectful atmosphere in which peers and staff feel heard, valued, and able to make mistakes without fear of humiliation.
- Avoid behaviours that may undermine others' sense of belonging, such as ridicule, dismissive comments, or exclusionary practices.

- Engage in open, respectful communication and collaborate in ways that build trust within the classroom and community.

Psychological safety underpins effective learning, respectful peer relationships, and academic integrity. Disrespectful or undermining behaviour will be addressed in line with the student conduct process.

5.0 Student Rights

Students at Acknowledge Education have the right to:

- Study in a safe and inclusive environment free from discrimination or harassment.
- Receive clear, timely, and accurate information about course requirements, assessments, and timetables.
- Be treated fairly and equitably in all dealings with the institution.
- Access support services including academic, personal, and wellbeing support.
- Provide feedback about units, teaching, and services without fear of disadvantage.
- Be heard through fair complaints and appeals processes.

6.0 Breach of Conduct and Disciplinary Process

Where a student breaches the Student Code of Conduct, Acknowledge Education will follow a fair, transparent, and proportionate disciplinary process, consistent with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness

6.1 Overview of Process

The process will generally proceed through three formal stages, unless the severity of the breach warrants immediate escalation.

Step 1: Initial Concern and Informal Resolution

- A relevant staff member (e.g lecturer, trainer, student services officer, placement officer) will meet with the student to discuss the concern.
- The discussion will focus on identifying the issue, providing guidance, and agreeing on behavioural expectations going forward.
- A written Record of Informal Resolution will be completed, with a copy provided to the the the student, and stored securely in the student's file within the student management system.
- Gross Misconduct: If the breach involves a serious threat to safety, wellbeing, or institutional integrity, the student may be temporarily suspended

Step 2: Formal Review Meeting

- If the behaviour persists or the breach is more serious, the student will be invited to a formal meeting with the Course Coordinator, Head of Department, or another

authorised academic or administrative leader.

- The student will have the opportunity to present their perspective and may bring a support person. The support person plays an important role in assisting the student but must not advocate on their behalf or disrupt the process.

  The support person may:

  - Attend the meeting with the student to provide emotional support and reassurance.
  - Help the student prepare for the meeting (e.g., reviewing documents or questions).
  - Take notes during the meeting.
  - Request a break on behalf of the student if needed.

  The support person **may not**:

  - Speak on the student's behalf unless expressly permitted by the meeting facilitator.
  - Interfere with the meeting or act in a disruptive manner.
  - Provide legal representation unless approved in advance by Acknowledge Education.

  The support person should respect the confidentiality of the process. If the student wishes to have a support person present, they should notify the organiser of the meeting in advance and provide the support person's name and relationship to the student.

- Outcomes may include a written behaviour agreement, formal caution, or referral for support services.
- A Formal Misconduct Report will be completed, outlining the breach, the meeting discussion, and agreed-upon actions. This report will be saved securely to the student's record.

Step 3: Final Warning or Termination of Enrolment

- Continued or unresolved breaches may result in a Final Written Warning outlining the consequences of further misconduct, including possible enrolment termination.
- If no satisfactory improvement is observed within a specified timeframe, or if another breach occurs, the student's enrolment may be terminated.
- A Termination Report and supporting documentation will be compiled and reviewed by the relevant Dean or Executive and then recorded on the student's official file.

6.2 Documentation and Recordkeeping

All misconduct proceedings will be:

- Documented using standardised reporting templates (Informal Resolution Record, Misconduct Report, Final Warning Letter, Termination Report).
- Stored securely in the student's digital file within the institution's Student Management System (SMS).
- Access restricted to authorised personnel only.
- Retained for a minimum of seven (7) years after the student's last enrolment date, or longer if required by regulatory obligations.

6.3 Student Rights

At all stages of the process, students have the right to:

- Be notified of allegations and provided with relevant evidence.
- Be heard and respond to allegations before any decisions are made.
- Be accompanied by a support person to meetings.
- Appeal any decision via the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

7.0 Continuous Improvement

This Code is reviewed every two years or as required by changes to legislation, best practice, or institutional priorities. Input from students and staff will be sought during each review cycle.

8.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Integrity	A commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in academic work. It includes avoiding cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct.
Bullying	Repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a student or staff member that creates a risk to health and safety.
Code of Conduct	A set of expectations that outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviours for students enrolled at Acknowledge Education.
Collusion	An unauthorised collaboration between students or with others on assessment tasks, resulting in work that is not wholly one's own.
Complaints and Appeals Policy	The formal process through which students can raise concerns or appeal decisions related to their enrolment, academic progress, or treatment.
Discrimination	Unfair or unfavourable treatment of an individual or group based on characteristics such as gender, race, disability, age, religion, or sexual orientation.
Harassment	Unwelcome behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates another person and targets them based on personal attributes.

Gross Misconduct	Behaviour that is unethical, unlawful, or significantly breaches institutional policies, including violence, threats, theft, or academic fraud.
Misconduct	Any conduct by a student that is contrary to Acknowledge Education's policies and may include behavioural or academic violations.
Plagiarism	Presenting someone else's work or ideas as one's own without proper acknowledgment or permission.
Student	A person who is currently enrolled in a course or unit of study at Acknowledge Education, either full-time or part-time, on campus or online.
Suspension	Temporary removal of a student's right to attend classes or access services due to a breach of policy or conduct.
Termination of Enrolment	The formal cancellation of a student's enrolment by Acknowledge Education as a result of serious or repeated breaches of the Code of Conduct.
Wellbeing	A holistic concept that includes physical, mental, and emotional health and safety.
Equity and Diversity	Principles that ensure fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

9.0 Related Policies and Procedures

- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Procedures
- Inclusive Education and Accessibility Policy
- Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy

10.0 Document Information

Document name:	Student Code of Conduct
Document number:	2.3.1
Version number:	1.2
Purpose:	The Student Code of Conduct sets out the behavioural expectations, responsibilities, and rights of students at Acknowledge Education
Audience:	☒ Staff | ☒ Students| ☒ Public
Category:	Learning Environment
Subcategory:	Wellbeing and Safety
Date approved:	19/05/2025
Date of last approval:	01/01/2020
Effective date:	19/05/2025
Next review date:	19/05/2027
Approving authority:	Academic Board
Responsibilities:	Academic Board, Executive Management

11.0 Change Log

Date	Version	By	Notes
27/01/2009	1.0		Created
15/12/2016	1.1	BS	Reviewed
27/12/2017	1.2	ABennett	Minor formatting changes, modified title
16/04/2025	2.0	NW (Dean)	Expanded behavioural expectations to include psychological safety, academic integrity, and respectful use of digital tools. Strengthened the disciplinary process. Introduced documentation templates. Added definitions. Defined the role of a support person. Enhanced student rights.

ACKNOWLEDGE EDUCATION

ANNEXURE A

Record of Informal Resolution

Student Name: _____
Student ID: _____
Program/Course: _____
Date of Meeting: _____
Staff Member(s): _____

❖ Summary of Concern

(Brief description of the conduct or issue discussed.)

❖ Summary of Discussion

(Key points discussed and the student's response.)

❖ Agreed Actions / Outcomes

(Any agreed behavioural expectations, referrals, or support actions.)

☐ Student understands the behavioural expectations moving forward
☐ Student referred to support services
☐ No further action at this stage

❖ Signatures

Student: _____ **Date:** _____
Staff Member: _____ **Date:** _____

This record will be stored in the student's confidential file and accessible only to authorised staff

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ANNEXURE B

Formal Misconduct Report

Student Name: _____
Student ID: _____
Date of Incident/Concern: _____
Date of Meeting: _____
Reporting Staff Member: _____
Position: _____

❖ **Description of Misconduct or Breach**

(Detail the nature of the breach and any evidence.)

❖ **Student Response**

(Summarise student's explanation or response.)

❖ **Outcome of Meeting**

☐ Behaviour agreement issued
☐ Formal warning provided
☐ Student referred to support services
☐ Escalated to Final Warning / Termination consideration

❖ **Notes and Follow-up Actions**

❖ **Signatures**

Student: _____ **Date:** _____
Staff Member: _____ **Date:** _____
Witness / Support Person (if applicable): _____

This report will be securely stored in the student's official file. Students may appeal through the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

ANNEXURE C

Final Warning Letter
Confidential

To: [Student Name]
Student ID: [XXXXXX]
Date: [DD/MM/YYYY]

Dear [Student Name],

Following our previous meetings on [insert dates] regarding breaches of the Student Code of Conduct, and continued concerns raised on [insert date/event], this letter constitutes a **Final Written Warning**.

Summary of Concerns

The following concerns have been raised:

- [Insert summary of breach 1]
- [Insert summary of breach 2]

These behaviours are inconsistent with the expectations outlined in Acknowledge Education's Student Code of Conduct.

Required Actions

To avoid termination of your enrolment, you are required to:

- Immediately cease the behaviours outlined above.
- Comply with all expectations discussed during our meetings.
- [Insert any specific actions, e.g., attend support session, submit apology, etc.]

Next Steps

Failure to meet these expectations may result in the termination of your enrolment, in accordance with the Deferment, Suspension, and Cancellation Policy.

If you believe this decision is unjust, you are entitled to access the **Complaints and Appeals Policy**.

Yours sincerely,
[Name]