

# Community Colleges Australia Code of Ethics

## Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to affirm the professional and ethical standards expected of members of Community Colleges Australia (CCA). Members of CCA are required to act with integrity in all dealings with past, present and future students, clients, employers, community members, industry, government, funding bodies, regulatory bodies, other organisations, employees or workers (including contractors and volunteers) and with CCA.

As a condition of admission and continuing membership of CCA, all members must agree to abide by the CCA Code of Ethics.

## Objectives

This Code of Ethics is intended to:

- Define standards of conduct expected of members of CCA in their dealings with one another and with CCA, in accordance with the CCA Constitution and By-laws;
- Provide students, clients, funding organisations, regulators and others, as listed in the 'Purpose' above, with a clear statement of the standards which they can expect member organisations to adopt in their dealings with them;
- Reflect the Code of Conduct requirements of Commonwealth and State Government and independent agencies for accrediting and registering organisations, qualifications and courses under legislation which fund, subsidise training for and/or regulate the provision of educational and training services for local and overseas students; and
- Promote confidence and community trust in the services provided by members of CCA.

## Definition and Interpretation

Words defined in the CCA Constitution or By-laws shall have the same meaning in this Code of Ethics unless expressly stated to the contrary.

The word 'student' includes all learners and other clients receiving education and training and/or assessment services from a CCA member.

## Scope

This Code of Ethics is binding on all CCA members. Adherence to the principles of this Code of Ethics will be considered a formal condition of all applications for membership.

Members will adopt and maintain practices that ensure high professional and ethical standards in all aspects of their operations, including but not limited to their general management and the marketing and delivery of education and training services. Members must not engage in any conduct that is contrary to government policy or has the potential to bring their institution, the sector, or CCA, into disrepute.

## Quality Education

Members will:

- Comply with the registration standards of their accrediting bodies;
- Ensure the highest possible standards in the selection of staff and the planning and delivery of courses and training;

- Ensure that trainers, assessors and facilitators are suitably qualified and have relevant industry experience;
- Maintain a learning environment that is conducive to the success of students;
- Be vigilant in ensuring student attendance and academic progress;
- Ensure students have appropriate equipment, training resources and facilities and use methods and materials appropriate to the requirements and levels at which courses are offered;
- Monitor their training and education to ensure effective delivery and continued relevance;
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of qualification completion rates and utilise recruitment and student support strategies to maximise completion;
- Implement a continuous improvement process of self-assessment for excellence in quality that involves managers, staff, students, employers, subcontractors, industry and other partners;
- Evaluate students' progress and achievement; and
- Ensure a safe working and learning environment.

## **Financial Standards**

Members must safeguard the funds paid by students in accordance with relevant legal requirements. They will properly document and make available their contractual and financial relationships with students. Where they are unable to provide planned services, they will refund or recompense students in accordance with relevant Commonwealth and State legislation and the member refund policy, which is publicly available.

## **Student Services**

Members will ensure that all students are given appropriate enrolment information, orientation, up-to-date advice and regard to student cultural and special needs. Members will monitor the progress of students and ensure individualised support and contextualised training/assessment where appropriate.

Members will ensure ethical standards in the educational and social relations between staff and students.

Members will respect the confidentiality and privacy of their students and comply with privacy legislation. Members will provide effective complaint resolution and grievance procedures for students and staff.

## **Marketing**

Members will market their education and training services with integrity and accuracy. They will not make false or misleading comparisons with other education and training providers. They will not take any action that may damage the reputation of Australian education and training.

Members will recruit and support students with the express aim of maximising their capacity to complete the qualification, course or program. When recruiting students, members will:

- Ensure marketing meets legal requirements and any applicable funding or student loan conditions;
- Appropriately assess a potential student's desire to participate in and complete a course or program; and

- Ensure the potential student is aware of the course or program requirements, relevant policies, course or program costs (including any pre-requisites, course tuition fees, textbook fees or any other charges) and the conditions and requirements of any student loans program.

Members marketing their services overseas will do so according to legal requirements and in a manner that is consistent with the educational, cultural and regulatory systems of the relevant countries. They will provide accurate information about cost of living, health and welfare, opportunities for further study and language prerequisites for undertaking relevant courses. Under no circumstances will members give any guarantee or misleading information regarding the results or outcome a student might achieve.

### **Obligations to CCA and other Members**

Members will conduct their affairs in such a way as to ensure the best interests of CCA and the Australian not-for-profit community education sector and ensure the continued high standing of CCA and its members, both in Australia and overseas.

Members will not engage in misleading or deceptive conduct, including but not limited to:

- Making false statements of fact;
- Making statements that are factually true but which are capable of inducing students, CCA or other members into error;
- Conduct which misleads or deceives, including conduct that is negligent or reckless and results in misleading or deception; and
- A failure to disclose facts where there is a reasonable expectation that a member should do so.

Members will not deliberately criticise the services or quality of education or training provided by other members, entice students from other member organisations or encourage students enrolled at another organisation to change providers.

Members will co-operate with fellow members in upholding and enforcing this Code of Ethics.

On relinquishing CCA membership or having their membership terminated, former members will refrain from claiming CCA membership or the grant of any licence from, or accreditation or recognition by, CCA.

Members agree to provide accurate and timely information when requested, in accordance with the CCA By-laws and/or Constitution. Members must also notify CCA within forty-eight (48) hours if regulatory sanctions or conditions are placed on the organisation's registration by a national or state regulatory body.

### **Sustainability and Social Responsibility**

Members of CCA share a commitment to promoting and embracing sustainability and social responsibility by:

- Striving to protect and minimise the impact of their services on the environment;
- Acting to ensure the efficient, effective and sustainable use of resources;
- Striving to embrace environmental, social, economic and cultural sustainability in their communities;
- Striving to contribute to the cultural and social well-being of our communities which may include targeted courses and programs for disadvantaged learners;

- Promoting socially-inclusive learning and employment practices; and
- Treating the natural environment and wildlife with consideration and sensitivity.

## Noncompliance

Members will adopt clearly defined procedures for dealing with complaints that involve alleged breaches of this Code of Ethics or any internal code. They will ensure that students and others are made aware of these procedures and, where a complaint is not able to be resolved internally, there are other avenues available to them to resolve it. Members will ensure that students are not penalised or victimised for pursuing a complaint in good faith.

Complaints relating to an alleged breach of a provision of this Code of Ethics may be made to CCA or its designated officer via the Chief Executive Officer of CCA. Complaints to CCA about a breach of the Code of Ethics by a member will be dealt with in accordance with the CCA Constitution and By-laws. Members recognise that it is their responsibility to be informed about the impact that a failure to uphold the requirements of this Code of Ethics may affect them and their business. Failure to act in accordance with the Code of Ethics may result in their membership of CCA being terminated and associated negative impacts.

## Publicity

Members will publicise the fact that they adhere to this Code of Ethics, or an equivalent internal Code, which defines their obligations to students, clients, stakeholders and the community. Members may publish the CCA logo on their website and appropriate marketing material and a link to the CCA website to emphasise they are a CCA-endorsed quality member.

## Monitoring and Review

CCA will review this Code of Ethics by February 2018, and thereafter every three (3) years as required.

## Version History

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Date of Effect	Sections Modified
Version 1.0	Board of Directors	20 February 2017	20 February 2017	Policy Released

## Published by

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20 February 2017