

Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Policy is to promote a professional, inclusive, safe, and productive workplace at Victoria University (VU).

(2) The Policy:

- a. Establishes core professional and behavioural expectations for all VU staff; and
- b. Outlines the consequences of engaging in behaviour that is not acceptable.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable / Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Vice-President, People and Culture
Responsible Officer	Vice-President, People and Culture

Key Decision-making powers under the Policy (if applicable)

(Delegated) Power	Role
n/a	n/a

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all staff and associates of the University.

(4) This Policy does not apply to students of the University. Students should reference the [Student Charter Policy](#).

(5) Where there is inconsistency or uncertainty between this Policy and other employment related policies, this Policy prevails.

(6) The examples provided in each section of this Policy are intended as indicative, not comprehensive. Behaviours staff are expected to avoid are not limited to items specifically mentioned within each section; rather, any behaviours which may conflict with the positive attributes required should be avoided.

Section 4 - Definitions

(7) Staff

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(8) VU aims to employ and develop a workforce characterised by flexibility, agility and forward thinking. Our workforce is committed to providing and enabling the best possible student experience in everything we do. This informs the way we expect all staff members to perform their roles.

(9) VU is committed to providing an inclusive, respectful and safe workplace where staff are enabled to do their jobs well. Expectations of staff are set out clearly in this and other policies to foster and maintain a professional environment.

(10) As a VU staff member, you are expected to comply with:

- a. all relevant Commonwealth and State legislation, regulations, codes, standards and agreements derived from legislation;
- b. University statutes, regulations, policies and procedures; and
- c. your particular terms and conditions of employment.

Part A - Respect

(11) When working with others, and while engaged in work-related activities such as conferences and work-sponsored social occasions, you must treat students, other staff and members of the community with respect. You are expected to:

- a. Have due regard for the rights and dignity of others at all times.
- b. Be courteous, honest and fair when dealing with others and when making decisions that impact others.
- c. Treat all people equitably, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion, marital status, age, political conviction or other attributes as protected by law.
- d. Use appropriate language at all times.

(12) You are also expected to use respectful language towards others in any communications related to your employment, including conversations on social media. This requirement exists regardless of:

- a. whether or not the communication took place within working hours;
- b. whether or not the communication took place on VU premises or using VU equipment or networks;
- c. whether or not you purport to speak on behalf of the University.

(13) To uphold clause (9), you must not, in person or via any other form of activity:

- a. Bully others.
- b. Sexually harass or assault others.
- c. Behave in discriminatory ways with respect to attributes protected by law (including, but not limited to, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability and parental status).
- d. Commit or threaten any acts of violence.
- e. Act aggressively or in an intimidating manner to others.

- f. Speak loudly and aggressively to others.
- g. Victimise others.
- h. Vilify anyone.
- i. Stalk, or assist another person to stalk, anyone.
- j. Make a false claim of any of these behaviours against another person.

Part B - Professionalism

(14) You are expected to conduct yourself professionally at all times in your role at VU. This includes expectations that you will:

- a. Dress in neat and clean attire appropriate to your work area at all times.
- b. Observe appropriate hygiene and personal presentation standards to facilitate comfort and safety.
- c. Attend work punctually in line with the requirements of your role.
- d. Carry out your duties with diligence and competence.
- e. Complete any required staff training in a timely fashion.
- f. Follow any reasonable direction given to you by your manager with respect to your work.
- g. Protect the privacy of others and maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding personal and commercial matters.

(15) To uphold clause (14), you must not:

- a. Make statements on social media or other forums in which you claim to speak on behalf of the University, or could be construed as speaking on behalf of the University, unless it is your job to do so or you are authorised to do so.
- b. Fail to notify your manager of your inability to attend work or complete assigned work in a timely manner.
- c. Inappropriately disclose confidential or private information that you can access as part of your role.
- d. Fail to notify your Manager of any existing or emerging situation that may affect your ability to carry out the inherent requirements of your job e.g. relevant injury or condition, use of a substance, use of medication etc.

Part C - Honesty and Integrity

(16) You are expected to behave honestly and with integrity at all times. This includes expectations that you will:

- a. Behave ethically and take action to prevent unethical practices.
- b. Conduct all financial transactions involving University funds to which you are a party with transparency and integrity.
- c. Report suspected breaches of integrity by others where these may occur.
- d. Maintain strict standards of integrity in respect to your own academic and research work, including respecting the intellectual property of others.

(17) To uphold clause (16), you must not:

- a. Make false or misleading statements to VU during recruitment or during the course of your employment, or fail to disclose a relevant matter.
- b. Accept gifts or favours that may be construed as influencing your decisions on behalf of VU.
- c. Use your position to pursue personal, sexual or financial relationships with other staff, students or members of the community or coerce other staff, students or members of the community into personal, sexual or financial

relationships.

- d. Defraud, or attempt to defraud, VU in any way.
- e. Induce or attempt to induce another employee to perform work in competition with the University or to act in a manner contrary to employment obligations.
- f. Solicit the business or service of a student in competition with the University.

Part D - Children and Young People

(18) You are expected to act appropriately at all times when dealing with children and young people under the age of 18. This includes expectations that you will:

- a. Be familiar with, and abide by, all expectations laid out in the [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Policy](#), [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People Procedure](#) and [Safety and Welfare of Children and Young People - Staff Code of Conduct](#).
- b. Never engage in any behaviour with a child or young person which constitutes abuse, including verbal abuse.
- c. Take steps to minimise any exposure to harm for children and young people.
- d. Follow the directions in the [Appendix 1 - Child Safety Reporting Process](#) if you become aware of a possible instance of child abuse or harm. (NB: Reporting incidents is a mandatory requirement).

Part E - Managing Conflict of Interest

(19) You must take reasonable steps to avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and act in the best interests of the University. You are expected to:

- a. At all times, perform your duties in the interests of achieving the University's mission and strategic objectives.
- b. Disclose actual or potential conflict of interest and withdraw yourself immediately from the situation giving rise to the conflict.
- c. Declare all private paid outside work, including directorships and board memberships.
- d. Declare all commercial, personal or familial relationships that may constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest.

(20) To uphold clause (19), you must not:

- a. Solicit or accept outside work within the area of professional expertise for which VU employs you, without declaring this to your manager.
- b. Directly or indirectly use University funds, resources or assets to make any political contributions or donations or attend any political fundraisers as a representative of the University.
- c. Use the University's intellectual property and resources to benefit a third party without prior written authority of the University.
- d. Manage, assess the performance of, supervise, or directly teach a person with whom you have, or have had, a close personal or familial relationship (including a sexual relationship) unless you have declared the connection and received permission to do so.

Part F - Using University Resources

(21) You must use all VU facilities resources, including IT resources, appropriately and avoid waste where possible.

(22) You must safeguard, properly use, protect and care for VU resources at all times.

(23) You may use VU facilities and resources, including IT resources, for occasional reasonable personal use. You are responsible for exercising good judgement regarding reasonable personal use with guidance from your manager.

(24) To uphold the principles above, you must not:

- a. Use any VU owned or managed resources to engage in any activity that is illegal under state, federal or international law.
- b. Use any VU owned or managed resource for the purpose of creating, accessing or transmitting or otherwise dealing with content which may reasonably be regarded as objectionable, obscene or offensive, or in a manner which is contrary to other University policies or which may otherwise expose the University to legal liability.
- c. Use any VU network or IT equipment to breach copyright or intellectual property rights of others, including the viewing, downloading or installing of pirated material or applications which are not licensed for use by the University.
- d. Use VU IT facilities and services for your own private gain, unless you have been given specific permission to do so.

Part G - Health and Safety

(25) You must comply with occupational health and safety legislation and the University's health and safety [policies and procedures](#).

(26) You must ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that best practice occupational health and safety processes are adopted in all University activities.

(27) You must take care not to put yourself or others in the University community at risk through unsafe practices or inappropriate behaviour.

(28) If you observe a hazard that may create a health and safety risk, you must take appropriate steps to mitigate or report the hazard.

(29) You must inform your Manager of any injury or health issues that may affect your ability to carry out the inherent requirements of your job.

(30) Specifically, you must not:

- a. Fail to declare a medical condition or immunisation status that may impact on your employment.
- b. Fail to observe any safety protocols that apply to your work area.
- c. Fail to obey the directions of any designated Wardens in an emergency or emergency drill situation.
- d. Fail to properly use any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) issued to you.
- e. Engage in University activities, especially the operation of University plant or vehicles, while impaired by any substance.

Part H - Academic Freedom

(31) You have a right to intellectual freedom of enquiry and expression. This applies to areas of intellectual life over which you, as an academic, can demonstrate that you possess a level of expertise.

(32) When exercising intellectual freedom, you must:

- a. respect the intellectual property rights of others;
- b. exercise intellectual freedom in a manner consistent with a responsible and honest search for and

dissemination of knowledge; and

- c. support the role of the University as a place of independent learning and thought, where ideas may be put forward and reasoned opinion expressed freely while maintaining respect for others.

(33) Intellectual freedom does not justify breaching any aspects of this or any other VU policy.

Part I - Consequences of Breaching this Policy

(34) If you fail to behave in accordance with this Policy, the University will take disciplinary action against you.

(35) You should report suspected breaches of this Policy in the first instance to your manager or other senior staff member as appropriate. Particular breaches may be dealt with in accordance to the relevant Industrial Agreement.

(36) Nothing in this Policy restricts your right and ability to report concerns as set out within the [Public Interest Disclosures Policy](#).

Section 6 - Procedures

(37) See [Appropriate Workplace Behaviour - Staff-Authored Texts Procedure](#).

Section 7 - Guidelines

(38) Nil

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	5th February 2018
Review Date	5th February 2021
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	16th January 2018
Expiry Date	6th January 2022
Accountable Officer	Lisa Line Deputy Vice-Chancellor Enterprise and Digital Lisa.Line@vu.edu.au
Responsible Officer	Simone Wright Chief Human Resources Officer 9919 5447
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Staff" - Staff means: - all employees of the University, on all domestic and offshore locations, including student residences, and while engaged in all work-related activities such as conferences and work-sponsored social occasions; - all contractors and consultants performing work on University sites or on behalf of the University; - visiting academics, honorary, adjunct and exchange staff; - the Council and its committees; and - any volunteer in the workplace and study environment.