

CODE OF CONDUCT

**For Employees and Volunteers
in Catholic Education
South Australia**



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1 Purpose

This Code of Conduct describes the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of all Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) employees and volunteers, and others who work in partnership or in connection of any kind with CESA. This document explains the principles covering appropriate conduct in a variety of contexts and outlines the minimum standard of behaviour expected.

The standards of conduct required to be met under this Code of Conduct exist alongside, and are separate to, requirements set out in an employee's employment contract and Position Description (PD) and any other relevant professional standards associated, or codes of conduct (eg Teachers Registration Board of South Australia's Code of Conduct), with an employee's role. The same standards apply to a volunteer or other person (eg contractor) engaged to undertake unpaid or paid activities for a CESA entity or at a CESA location.

Integrity in our Common Mission is a National Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers working for the Catholic Church in Australia. The National Code addresses four themes:

- A Culture of Safeguarding,
- Positive Relationships,
- Stewardship for all,
- Lifelong formation,

The SACCS Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers is informed by and aligned with the principles of the National Code.

2 Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees, volunteers and others (including contractors and anyone who provides services of any kind to CESA). All employees and volunteers are required to meet professional and ethical standards of behaviour and act in accordance with the mission, vision and values of CESA.

The governing authority of separately governed schools is respected, noting those governing authorities may choose to adapt this Code of Conduct according to their respective arrangements, whilst still operating under relevant and related SACCS policies.

3 Definitions

Conduct for the purpose of this policy, refers to an employee's or volunteer's (and others) behaviour, actions, and adherence to comply with expected professional and ethical standards, legislation, policy, procedures, guidelines etc. in a work-related situation.

School or CEO includes all Catholic Schools in South Australia and the Catholic Education Offices at Adelaide and Port Pirie (CEO), as well as sites on which staff employed in Catholic Education SA or others engaged in duties or activities such as excursions or conference attendance sanctioned by their school or CEO.

Worker means a paid employee employed by any Catholic School or Catholic Education Office.

Volunteer means a person who willingly gives their time and service for the common good and without payment or financial gain in any Catholic School or Catholic Education Office.

Others include contractors, members of the school community and people outside of the school community who interact with it.

Confidential information relates to privileged communication shared only between authorised people for legitimate, authorised purposes.

4 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct requires all employees, volunteers and others to adhere to the standards set out below in their interactions as workers and representatives of CESA.

The Code of Conduct applies to work-related activities and other social activities or interactions electronically or online in any work or social forum, and on any work or personal communication and social media platform, whether they take place within or outside work premises and/ or work hours if the identity of the person as an employee, volunteer of CESA or in another other associated capacity with CESA, can be linked or inferred and where activities or comments may have a detrimental employment, professional, financial or reputational impact on children/students, colleagues, employers, the Catholic Church, school or CEO communities.

4.1 Responsibilities

All employees, volunteers, and others are responsible for applying and complying with the Code of Conduct.

Leaders, in addition to themselves adhering to the conduct requirements of the Code, have a responsibility to:

- set and model a good example and high standard of professional and ethical conduct at all times;
- effectively implement, promote and support the Code of Conduct in their areas of responsibility and ensure workers and others understand and follow the provisions outlined;
- take appropriate action if a breach of the Code of Conduct is found to have occurred;
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly, considering all available and applicable information and requirements; and
- provide opportunities for workers and others to participate in decisions which affect them, as appropriate.

All employees, volunteers, and others are expected to:

- be accountable for their own conduct and operate with integrity, honesty and respect for each other;
- undertake their duties in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of the Code of Conduct and treat others with courtesy and sensitivity;
- comply with legislative and industrial requirements;
- operate in a safe and responsible manner;
- preserve the environment from harm;
- report suspected unlawful and/or corrupt conduct and/or report any departure from or breach of the Code of Conduct by themselves and/or others as soon as practicable; and

- seek advice from their leader (or other appropriate person), if they are unsure about suitable action to take in a particular situation.

4.2 Compliance with Legislation and Regulations

All employees, volunteers, and others are expected to comply with all relevant legislation as well as the technical and ethical requirements of any relevant regulatory or professional body which applies to their work. Those found to have breached any law or regulation may face legal or disciplinary action, including termination of employment or engagement. Ignorance of the law or a good intention does not excuse the obligation to comply.

4.3 Professionalism

The following outlines CESA's professional standards. You must:

- obey any lawful and reasonable direction from a person who has the authority to give that direction;
- support the aims of, and act consistently with, the Catholic ethos of the relevant school or CEO and conduct yourself in a manner that will not damage or discredit the reputation of the relevant school or CEO and/or the Catholic Church;
- carry out your duties in a professional, collegial and competent manner, to an appropriate standard of work, and be accountable for your performance;
- refrain from all forms of discrimination, exploitation, abuse, harassment including sexual harassment, bullying, and intimidation as required under federal and state legislation or act in a way that is contrary to maintaining respectful and professional relationships;
- present to work in a timely manner, in professional attire (appropriate to your role or function) and in a fit state to work including being in sufficient physical and mental health to be capable of complying with your duty of care to yourself, students, colleagues and others;
- be courteous, sensitive, and considerate to the needs of others, as reasonable, and respect cultural, ethnic, and religious differences as appropriate;
- comply with all international, Federal, State and local laws, as applicable;
- work co-operatively and collaboratively with others to achieve common goals and promote a positive work environment and refrain from persistent negativity, gossip, spreading rumours or making inappropriate comments through any form of communication, including electronic and social media forums;
- observe confidentiality in relation to confidential information encountered or received in the course of employment or engagement and disclose such information only to authorised staff, authorised others, or as required by law;
- comply with all applicable work health and safety legislation, policies and requirements including taking reasonable care to ensure their own health and safety at work and avoiding adversely affecting the health and safety of others;
- maintain the currency of employment related requirements (e.g. teacher's registration, Working with Children Check, RRHAN-EC training, etc.) and any other required accreditation requirements (e.g. Graduate Certificate in Catholic Studies) applicable to their employment.

4.4 Ethics

The following outlines CESA's ethical standards. You will:

- behave honestly, ethically and with integrity and respect the rights and duties of others at all times. This includes a duty to report others who are behaving dishonestly or unprofessionally, or breaching the code;
- demonstrate equity and fairness in dealing with colleagues, students, parents/carers, contractors, visitors and members of the public;
- not take or seek to take improper advantage of your position or access to any official information gained in the course of your employment for personal benefit or commercial gain for yourself or others;
- not allow personal political views/affiliations or other personal interests to detrimentally influence the performance of your duties or exercise of responsibilities;
- if professionally registered, observe all laws, professional codes of conduct, ethics and standards relating to your professional membership/s and keep up to date with advances and changes in your knowledge of professional and ethical standards relevant to your position and area(s) of expertise;
- act in good faith by not making unfounded complaints with malicious, frivolous or vexatious intent, against another person or persons; and
- not solicit any gifts or benefits nor accept gifts or benefits for yourself or others which might in any way, either directly or indirectly, compromise or influence you in your professional capacity.

4.5 Child Safeguarding

CESA is committed to maintaining a culture of safe and protective environments for our students, particularly those most vulnerable to exploitation, abuse or exclusion.

CESA has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment including any form of child abuse.

All employees, volunteers, and others who work with children and young people are required to comply with all child protection legislation, follow all relevant policies, procedures, standards and instructions with regard to the safety of children and young people and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their behaviour towards children and young people.

Employees, volunteers, and others have a legal and professional obligation to safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people with whom they come into contact as part of their engagement and an agreement to comply with this Code of Conduct includes agreement to comply with all child protection legislation, follow all relevant policies, procedures, standards and instructions with regard to the safety of children and young people.

Employees, volunteers, and others will pay particular attention to safeguarding children and young people who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with particular vulnerabilities, for example children who can't live at home.

Key documents requiring demonstration of compliance at all times are listed in Section 6.

4.6 Confidentiality

Preserving confidential business information is vital to protect the interests of CESA employee, volunteers and other stakeholders. Such information includes but is not limited to computer programs, codes, processes and data, employees, volunteers, family and student databases, lists, and employment information, internal financial details, marketing strategies and data and all forms of internal communications.

All employees are required to comply with CESA's confidentiality requirements as a condition of employment. Even when this statement is not specifically and separately prepared and signed, the condition remains enforceable for all workers as confidentiality is part of their conditions of employment. Confidentiality requirements also apply to volunteers, contractors and others who provide services to CESA.

Employees who disclose confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action which may include termination of employment. Volunteers and contractors who breach confidentiality may result in their involvement or engagement with CESA being discontinued.

Note that these provisions do not apply in circumstances where a public authority (eg law enforcement agencies, WorkCover, Teachers Registration Board) has a statutory right to require information in certain circumstances.

4.7 Conflict of Interest

All employees, volunteers, and others have an obligation to ensure there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest between personal and professional duties and activities and their ability to fulfil their work obligations and to act in accordance with Catholic values and ethics. In general, if any personal advantage is obtained or may be perceived to be obtained, there is potential to bring your actions into question.

Employees must not undertake employment outside their working hours that would in any way directly or indirectly compete with the activities of CESA or which conflicts with their duties or affects their performance.

All employees and volunteers have an obligation once they become aware that there is, or may be, a potential conflict of interest between their personal interest and professional duty (whether real or apparent) to immediately inform their leader and seek guidance on how to proceed.

In general, it is not necessary for any employee to obtain permission to be involved in voluntary or unpaid activities. However, where an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest arises between these activities and work responsibilities, you have an obligation to discuss the situation with your leader in a timely manner.

4.8 Intellectual Property and Copyright

All employees:

- assign to the school/CEO all existing and future Intellectual Property Rights where it is in any way related to or arising from their employment with the school/CEO and agree to do all things necessary to assist the school/CEO to identify, document and protect its Intellectual Property Rights; and
- acknowledge that this obligation extends beyond termination of their employment.

"Intellectual Property Rights" means copyright, trademark, design, patent, process or any other matters capable of legal protection.

All employees and volunteers who reproduce and/or communicate copyright material have an obligation to develop their knowledge and understanding of the relevant requirements of the *Copyright Act 1968* as amended, and to ensure that any content downloaded from the internet or uploaded to school/CEO hosted servers does not infringe copyright

The school / CEO owns any intellectual property rights, including but not limited to teaching resources and materials created as part of the employment position, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

An employee nearing completion of, or in preparation of, their employment arrangement ending is required to seek permission from their leader before deleting work files or removal of resources.

4.9 Public Comment

Individuals have a right to their personal opinions on political and social issues in a private capacity as members of the community. Employees, volunteers, and others must not, however, make public comment on matters relating to the school such as on social media platforms or to media outlets, CEO, CESA or the Catholic Church unless they are:

- authorised to do so by the Executive Director (or delegate);
- giving evidence in court; or
- are otherwise authorised or required to by law.

Employees, volunteers, and others cannot discuss or release the contents of privileged knowledge unless they have the authority to do so. This includes making comment on and/or sharing/liking information on social media forums.

Employees, volunteers, and others engaged in separately governed schools must also comply with the directives and delegations of their Governing Authority, so named, which includes working in collaboration with the Executive Director (or delegate).

4.10 Fitness for Work

General Health

All employees, volunteers, and others have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and ensure they don't adversely affect others. This means they must be fit and well to carry out their duties in a safe and responsible manner and not be impaired by alcohol or drugs, while at work.

Employees, volunteers and others are not to present for work or for volunteering or other activities, if they are not sufficiently physically or mentally well or if they are impaired by alcohol and drugs to an extent that they cannot perform their work safely or fulfil the requirements of their role. Additionally, employees, volunteers, and others should not remain at the workplace if they become unwell or are affected by alcohol and/or drugs and are unable to fulfil the requirements of their role. Employees, volunteers, and others are not to return to the workplace until such time they satisfy the "fitness for work" requirements.

Employees, volunteers, and others who are concerned about another person at work or at a work-related event who does not appear to be sufficiently physically or mentally well or seems impaired by alcohol and/or drugs (of any kind) should inform their leader or someone in authority.

An employee may be required to undergo a medical assessment, and/or drug or alcohol testing where there is a reasonable belief that they are not sufficiently physically or mentally well or impaired by alcohol and/or drugs and may be putting themselves or others at risk.

An employee who is considered unfit for work because they are a safety risk or because their work performance is impaired, will be removed from the workplace (on paid/unpaid leave or suspension from duties, as applicable) until such time they can demonstrate fitness for work.

CESA encourages any worker who is having difficulty controlling their use of drugs or alcohol to seek qualified help and assistance in dealing with their circumstances. CESA's Employee Assistance Program (ACCESS Programs), offers free, confidential, professional counselling support, and is available to all CESA workers and their immediate families.

Drugs

Employees, volunteers, and others are responsible for ensuring their capacity to perform their duties is not impaired by the use of drugs of any kind and must not attend work under the influence of illegal and/or non-prescribed drugs or any other substances (including synthetic and herbal substances) that may impact their behaviour and/or performance. This includes a requirement to be drug-free at work-related events, activities and work-provided accommodation.

Employees, volunteers, and others must also exercise responsible judgement about consumption of products which contain substances that have potential to influence their behaviour (eg energy drinks, over-the counter medication).

Employees, volunteers, and others who are required to take medication (including prescription medication) which may affect and/or impair their work performance, conduct or ability to exercise their duty of care, must notify their leader of the applicable details.

Alcohol

Employees, volunteers, and others are responsible for ensuring their capacity to undertake their duties/activities is not impaired by alcohol.

Responsible consumption of alcohol may be permitted at work functions on the condition that employees, volunteers, and others are mindful of the following:

- duty of care and safety of self and others;
- professional boundaries with others;
- modelling appropriate behaviour;
- not driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs of any kind; and
- reputation of the school / CEO as well as their professional and personal reputation.

Smoking

Schools and CEOs are smoke-free environments and smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping) is not permitted anywhere on the premises (including grounds and car parks). Similarly, smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping) is not permitted whilst employees, volunteers, or others, have direct responsibility for, or contact with, or are in the general vicinity of students.

4.11 Use of Work Resources

Employees, volunteers, and others must ensure responsible management and security in the use of work resources and any resources managed by them on behalf of others.

Reasonable private use of some work resources is permitted (i.e. work-issued laptop, private use of internet, mobile phone and motor vehicle). Requests to use other work resources (eg BBQ, trailer, tools and other equipment, photocopier, etc.) outside of official work times and during weekends/holidays requires approval, in advance, and on each occasion, from the applicable leader (or person authorised to handle such matters).

Employees, volunteers, and others are not to use any CESA equipment or resources including, but not limited to, phone, internet and email, to access, transmit, copy, distribute, store or download pornographic, sexually explicit, graphic, offensive or inappropriate materials. This also extends to school communication systems and social media platforms.

If employees, volunteers, and others are approved to use work resources they are responsible for maintaining, repairing, replacing and safeguarding property, using it correctly and safely, in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, and following any special directions or conditions which apply.

Work resources of any kind are not to be used for any private commercial purposes (eg 'profit' purposes) under any circumstances.

Employees, volunteers, and others must use ICT resources (including but not limited to desktop, laptop, and tablet computers, smart-phones, ICT networking facilities, software applications and social media platforms) in a manner consistent with the SACCS ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Guideline.

5 Consequences of a Breach of the Code of Conduct

For employees, a breach of this Code may result in disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to, counselling, suspension from duties, informal/formal warnings or termination of employment as appropriate.

For volunteers and others, a breach of the Code may result in cancellation of any contract and/or other arrangement and the withdrawal of the required security/screening clearance to undertake any activities in either a voluntary or paid capacity in any CESA location, as appropriate.

Some breaches of the Code may also constitute civil or criminal offences and may result in civil action or prosecution.

6 Related Policies, Procedures and Resources

This Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with, and is additional to, any other relevant [SACCS Policy, Procedure or Guideline](#). All employees, volunteers, and others employed or engaged in CESA in some capacity are required to comply with the provisions of any such document.

[Teachers Registration Board of South Australia - Code of Conduct](#)

[Teachers Registration Board of South Australia - Guidelines to support the Code of Conduct](#)

[Teachers Registration Board of South Australia - Code of Ethics](#)

SACCS Responding to Discrimination, Bullying & Harassment in the Workplace Procedure

SACCS Anti-Sexual Harassment Procedure

Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people

SACCS Duty of Care Policy

Charter for Staff in Catholic Schools South Australia

SACCS Gender Equality Policy

SACCS Privacy Policy

SACCS ICT Acceptable Use Guideline

[SA Catholic Schools Enterprise Agreement](#)

Employment contracts, volunteer agreements and contractor agreements as issued to individual employees, volunteers and contractors, as applicable.

7 Revision Record

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