

Explanatory Statement for the Code of Conduct

Intent

This Explanatory Statement provides some background, explanation and context for the principles and responsibilities specified in the Code of Conduct.

Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all staff of JCU Singapore while acting in their official capacity (including senior management, executive, visiting staff).

Definitions

JCU Singapore - James Cook University Pte Ltd

Deputy Vice Chancellor - Deputy Vice Chancellor and Head of Campus Singapore.

Policy

1. Principle 1: Seek excellence as part of a learning community

1.1. Excellence and continuous improvement

It is important that the quality of our teaching programs, research projects, administration and management be properly maintained, and that periodic review be undertaken to identify and implement improvements. Staff must respect students and other stakeholders by working to ensure the excellence of delivery of all teaching programs, research projects and administrative processes. Quality assurance is also a key concern for all agreements with partner organisations and suppliers.

JCU Singapore is committed to the enhancement of staff development in the workplace. Staff are expected to strive to keep up to date with advances and changes in their areas of expertise and responsibility.

1.2. Academic freedom

Staff are free within their respective fields of competence to pursue academic endeavour in accord with appropriate standards of scholarly inquiry. Staff have an implicit right to inquire, to examine, to criticise and to challenge in the collegial and academic spirit of the search for knowledge and understanding.

1.3. Intellectual honesty

Staff, as leaders and role models to students and the wider community, must adhere to the highest standards of propriety and truthfulness in scholarship, research and professional practice.

1.4. Staff external activities

JCU Singapore encourages staff to participate in professional activities outside the scope of their normal duties. Staff should ensure that when acting in the course of professional activities, that they do not represent themselves as speaking or acting on behalf of JCU Singapore.

Staff who wish to have such activities considered as part of their official duties for the purposes of increment review, promotion or confirmation should ensure that the activity has the prior approval of their Director or Head of Division.

All paid external professional activities (research, consultancies and other contract work) must be negotiated through JCU Singapore unless exempted by the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

1.5. Right to make public comment

As members of the community, staff will, from time to time, contribute to public debate on political and social issues. However, where individuals express opinions that are not made in a professional or expert capacity, they must not identify themselves in association with their JCU Singapore's appointment.

Staff members commenting publicly in a professional or expert capacity may identify themselves using their JCU Singapore's appointment or qualifications, but must not represent their opinions as those of JCU Singapore's. JCU Singapore expects that staff will maintain professional standards when they associate themselves with its name in public statements and/or forums.

There are some circumstances in which public comment is inappropriate, especially where staff are privy to JCU Singapore's information and/or resources of a restricted or confidential nature. Where use of JCU Singapore's information and/or resources may compromise the position of JCU Singapore or infringe on the privacy of members of JCU Singapore, no unauthorised public comment must be made.

When making public comment which is considered to be outside a staff member's official duties, the use of JCU Singapore's information and/or resources, including JCU Singapore's name and logo, requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or an authorised officer.

1.6. Freedom of expression

All staff, regardless of involvement in academic duties, have the right to freedom of expression. However, this comes with a responsibility to respect the rights and reputations of others. Academic or constructive criticism is encouraged, but staff must not engage in hate speech as this conflicts directly with the universal value of respect for individuals.

1.7. Compliance with ethical standards of professions

Many staff are members of professional bodies which prescribe standards of ethical behaviour. Occasionally a staff member's obligations under the JCU Singapore Code may come into conflict with those under their professional Code. JCU Singapore accepts that a member must comply with their professional obligations except where there is an over-riding duty of care to JCU Singapore, in which case JCU Singapore's obligations prevail.

Staff undertaking research must adhere to the principles of this Code and the Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. Research must be designed to enhance knowledge in the particular field of scholarship, must employ sound methodology and ensure accuracy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality of data. The ideas, information or intellectual contribution of others must be acknowledged and the intellectual property of others respected. Staff must respect human and animal subjects in research practices. Ethical clearance by the appropriately constituted committees is required for all research involving humans and/or animals.

Staff must declare the receipt of funding from third parties when publishing research, where such funding has partially or wholly supported that research. Staff must not accept funding for research projects, which by its nature, may breach accepted norms of honesty and integrity, or detract from the good name of JCU Singapore and the academic community.

All staff are expected to strive to keep up to date with changes in the professional, legal and ethical standards relevant to their areas of expertise.

2. Principle 2: Act with integrity

2.1. Behave honestly, impartially and with integrity

Staff must act truthfully, ethically and without bias.

2.2. Acting with care and diligence

Staff are expected to carry out their duties in a professional, responsible and conscientious manner, and to be accountable for their official conduct and decisions. Staff must be aware of the performance standards and obligations expected of them in their duties. Staff must be assisted to maintain their professional skills and keep up-to-date the knowledge associated with their area of work or scholarship.

2.3. Acting in good faith

Staff are expected to act with fairness, decency and good intention at all times.

2.4. Act with authenticity, sincerity and truthfulness

Acting with authenticity requires that staff act truthfully at all times and represent themselves honestly. Transactions and activities must be recorded in a fair and accurate manner.

2.5. Transparency, openness and honest communication

Staff must maintain transparency in their actions. It is important to listen to stakeholders, engage in open communication and be responsive to stakeholder concerns.

2.6. Maintaining JCU Singapore's reputation

Staff must seek to maintain and enhance public confidence in the integrity of JCU Singapore, and our actions should not adversely affect the good standing of JCU Singapore.

2.7. Use of Corporate resources

Resources are to be used for officially approved purposes. However, limited personal use of some resources may be allowed, providing staff employ discretion and respect in using those resources, and providing that such use does not divert them from their work. The use of phone, internet and email resources must be undertaken in a responsible, safe and productive manner, in line with JCU Singapore's policy and procedures and ensuring that the Institution's infrastructure is protected. Personal use must be infrequent and brief. Resources (including work time) must not be used for personal gain.

2.8. Gifts and benefits

As a general rule, a staff member must not accept a gift or benefit if it could be viewed as intended or likely to cause that person to:

- make a decision which favours the donor;
- perform their job in a particular way, which the person would not normally do, or
- deviate from the proper or usual course of duty.

A staff member may give or accept a gift which is offered as part of social, cultural or ceremonial practice (for example, when a visitor from another university offers a corporate gift). Gifts given or received that have an individual or accumulated value from a single donor in excess of \$250 per calendar year must be reported to their Head of organisational unit, for entering into the Reportable Gifts Register.

2.9. Conflicts of interest

Staff are expected to avoid, or disclose and manage, situations where a conflict (or reasonable perception thereof) may occur between their private interests and those of JCU Singapore. Any conflicts that do occur must be resolved to ensure that the best interests of JCU Singapore's are served.

Conflicts of interest may include: conflict arising due to personal relationships; financial relationships (including receipt of gifts); outside work (paid or voluntary); use of confidential information obtained in the course of official duties; or external activities and public comment.

Any staff member with a potential conflict of interest or a conflict of interest must refer all relevant decision-making to the Deputy Vice Chancellor .

2.10. Personal relationships

Staff will declare to their supervisor any instances requiring them to assess or supervise a student, an applicant or other staff member with whom they have had a personal, sexual or commercial relationship.

2.11. Limits of authority

Staff must act within the limits of their authority as specified in JCU Singapore's policies, in the delegation manual for Human Resources, Financial Management and Enrolments and as outlined by their manager.

2.12. Records management

Staff are reminded that, under the Personal Data Protection Act, JCU Singapore has a legal responsibility to adhere to proper records management practices and procedures, and that all staff have record keeping responsibilities.

Documents which form part of JCU Singapore's official record must not be placed in unofficial or private filing systems. All such documents are to be placed on official files.

Official documents must not be damaged or removed from official files. They are controlled records, and must be complete, up-to-date and capable of providing organisational accountability when officially scrutinised.

The destruction of records may only take place in accordance with a disposal and retention schedule which has been approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor.

2.13. Management of information and information systems

Staff must use JCU Singapore's information systems only for the purpose for which the authorisation was given .They must not access information where this is not authorised, and must not allow any unauthorised person such access.

Staff must take all reasonable precautions, including password maintenance and file protection measures, to prevent unauthorised access.

2.14. Providing access to non-personal/personal information

In circumstances where staff are requested to provide non-personal information, they must provide it in a timely and accurate manner in accordance with the approval from their Division Directors. In relation to personal, confidential or restricted information, staff are reminded that they must disclose this information only when required to do so by law, when called to give evidence in court, or when proper authority has been given in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Act. Staff would need to consult their Division Directors before disclosing the information.

2.15. Alcohol and substance abuse

Staff are expected to report for work unaffected by alcohol and other drugs as this could affect the safety of others or detrimentally affect the discharge of their duties.

2.16. Compliance with legislative and statutory requirements

Staff members must uphold the local laws and Statutes. Staff must also observe the policies, rules, codes, statements and guidelines contained in the policy library.

3. Principle 3: Behave with respect for others

3.1. Honesty

Honesty encompasses clarity and transparency in rules, policies, procedures and guidelines and truthfulness in the day-to-day dealings with each other in the JCU Singapore community.

3.2. Respect and courtesy

Every individual has the right to be treated in a respectful and polite manner. Staff must have regard for the dignity and needs of the people with whom they interact.

Staff should show respect for students. In the teaching environment, for example, the discussion of contentious topics with students must be undertaken in an open, honest and non-discriminatory manner, and assignments marked on the quality of their argument and not the view on the issue expressed by the student.

3.3. Fairness and natural justice

Staff must make decisions following the principles of natural justice, which is also known as procedural fairness. Investigative and decision-making processes must be fair and transparent, and:

- give an affected individual the opportunity to understand the “case to be met” if a decision may be made which will affect their interests, to view relevant material which has led to a decision regarding their conduct, and to respond to such material before a decision is made;
- be free of bias and/or the influence of patronage, favouritism or prejudice;
- take only relevant considerations into account; and
- be made in good faith in a prompt and timely manner.

3.4. Privacy

Staff have a duty to maintain the privacy, integrity and security of official information for which they are responsible. In particular, personal information is to be accessed only for work-related purposes, and staff must not access records or disclose information without a reasonable operational requirement. Information must not be used for personal gain and provisions of privacy and commercial-in-confidence must be observed in the use of information about JCU Singapore, its staff and students or business practices.

3.5. Health and safety

Staff have a personal responsibility under workplace health and safety legislation to avoid harm (physical or other) to themselves and to others wherever possible. Such duty of care extends to ensuring information or advice provided is accurate and appropriate and to the provision and maintenance of a safe working environment for all staff, students and visitors. Staff are expected to be aware of, and to fulfil, their health and safety obligations.

3.6. Diversity, discrimination and harassment

Diversity is valued and celebrated. JCU Singapore will not tolerate acts of harassment or discrimination (other than positive discrimination). Staff must not harass or discriminate against others on the following grounds: sex/gender, relationship status, pregnancy, parental status, breast-feeding, age, race (including colour, descent or national identity), impairment, religious belief or religious activity, political belief or activity, trade union activity, lawful sexual activity, gender identity, sexuality, family responsibilities or irrelevant criminal record. Neither must they discriminate against others because of their association with, or relation to, a person identified on the basis of any of the above attributes.

3.7. Sexual harassment

Staff must not engage in behaviours which may amount to unwanted or uninvited acts or conduct of a sexual nature which embarrasses, intimidates, humiliates or offends the other person; or, which a reasonable person would anticipate in the circumstances could embarrass, offend or humiliate another. Behaviours which are consensual, welcome and based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, are not sexual harassment.

3.8. Bullying

Staff must not engage in behaviours which may amount to workplace bullying, which involves the repeated less favourable treatment of a person by another, or others, which may be seen as unreasonable and inappropriate - it is behaviour that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates another person.

3.9. Respectful and appropriate use of social media

Staff must use all forms of JCU Singapore social media platforms belonging to or connected with JCU Singapore, for example Facebook pages or Twitter, in a responsible and appropriate manner.

Examples of inappropriate use of a JCU Singapore social media platform include the posting on-line (in the "public domain") of any text, images, recordings or other material that is considered:

- a profanity
- discriminatory, harassment, bullying or offensive to a culture or another person
- copyright material which has been reproduced without appropriate approval or without adherence to the Copyright Policy
- defamatory
- an advertisement of a personal or private nature without appropriate approval
- a breach of privacy including personal information about others without appropriate approval or without adherence to the Confidentiality Policy
- a breach of confidentiality
- potentially damaging to JCU Singapore's reputation or capable of bringing it into disrepute

4. Principle 4: Embrace sustainability and social responsibility

4.1. Understanding sustainability

For the purposes of the Code, the terms environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability have the following meanings:

- **Environmental sustainability** - occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships actively support the capacity

of current and future generations to maintain the quality and integrity of the environment on a long term basis. In JCU Singapore context, this involves a focus on recycling, waste, pollution, carbon emissions, biodiversity, transport, building design, purchasing decisions and minimising our use of resources, such as energy, water and paper.

- **Social sustainability** - occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities .In JCU Singapore context, this involves a focus on community, diversity, employee relations, socially-inclusive employment practices, human rights, health and safety, purchasing decisions, transparent reporting and ethical governance structures.
- **Cultural sustainability** - occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to maintain the heritage and cultural practices of Indigenous and ethnic groups .In JCU Singapore context, this involves a focus on cultural diversity, respect for cultural heritage and the development of culturally inclusive practices.
- **Economic sustainability** - occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures, and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to ensure that an entity or community remains viable indefinitely. In JCU Singapore context, this involves a focus on efficient and responsible resource use, ethical governance structures, financial performance, responsible management of tangible and intangible assets. JCU Singapore's influence on the wider economy, society and environment and the prudent management of risks and opportunities.

4.2. Embracing sustainability

Staff must seek to embed the principles of sustainability in all of their activities, including teaching and learning, research, management of JCU Singapore operations and in the planning, development and management of campus facilities.

Staff must consider and take responsibility for the environmental, social and cultural consequences of their decision-making, in order to reduce JCU Singapore's impact on the environment and to make a positive contribution to our community.

Consideration of sustainability issues must therefore be incorporated into teaching and research practices, as well as governance, management and operational decision-making, including strategic planning, building and development plans, purchasing decisions, employment practices and community relations. Staff must bear in mind the ethical consequences of their purchasing decisions, and consider sourcing products which are fair trade and/or have a low environmental impact - for example, products which are locally sourced, have low embodied energy/carbon emissions and which are not excessively packaged. When arranging travel on behalf of JCU Singapore, or organising events, staff must consider the environmental impact of their decisions, and consider using video-conferencing (or other appropriate technology) instead of flying, make effective use of scheduling to minimise the number of flights taken, and where travelling by car, arrange to car-pool where possible.

4.3. Efficiency and economy

Staff must use resources with care and economy in order to obtain value for corporate money spent and to reduce waste. Staff must also aim to reduce reliance on non-renewable resources, to re-use resources where possible) and otherwise to use recycled and recyclable materials where possible. It is essential that staff act consciously to minimise energy and water use (eg by keeping external doors and windows closed and turning off lights and computers when not in use), and to minimise the waste sent to

landfill by recycling waste products where possible (eg paper, cardboard, batteries, metal) through JCU Singapore's recycling program.

4.4. Socially-inclusive employment practices

JCU Singapore is an equal opportunity employer. Staff must be mindful, when recruiting new staff, that JCU Singapore supports and promotes the employment of people from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Indigenous and disabled people, and those from diverse ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds.

4.5. Treatment of animals

All animals (including domestic, farm and wild animals) must be treated with consideration and sensitivity. Where animals are used for research and teaching, they must be treated in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the National Advisory Committee for Laboratory Animal Research, and to the extent possible, staff must strive to ensure their wellbeing.

5. Other information relating to this Code

Staff will be provided with access to education and training in relation to the requirements of this Code by the Human Resources Management Office.

Related policy instruments

Nil

Schedules/Appendices

Nil

Related documents and legislation

Code of Conduct

HR Handbook

Administration

Approval Details

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Approval Authority:	JCU Singapore Board / Executive Management Group
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Revision History

Version	Revision date	Details	Author
1.0		Policy established	Jim Tan
2.0	05 January 2018	Changed company name to James Cook University Pte Ltd	Shobha Devi Director, Human Resources

2.1	05 January 2019	Reviewed with no changes	Shobha Devi Director, Human Resources
2.2	10 November 2020	Reviewed with no changes	Shobha Devi Director, Human Resources
2.3	23 November 2021	Reviewed with no changes	Shobha Devi Director, Human Resources
2.4	5 December 2022	Reviewed with no changes	Shobha Devi Director, Human Resources

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