

ACOLA CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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Overview

This Code of Conduct and associated guidelines, policies and procedures (Policy) have been developed to provide context and guidance to ACOLA appointed Officials, employees and others representing or otherwise involved with ACOLA in its efforts to achieve its [strategic objectives](#).

The document covers ACOLA's values, expectations and requirements regarding conduct, the policy principles on which the Policy is based, and guidelines and procedures for responding to breaches of the Policy.

ACOLA does not tolerate inappropriate / unreasonable behaviours, bullying or harassment and has a commitment to investigating and where warranted acting on reported or alleged instances of unreasonable behaviours, bullying or harassment in a prompt and decisive manner.

The ACOLA Board approved the Code of Conduct (Policy), and a process for reviewing allegations that a person/s has breached the Policy. Alleged breaches by external parties should be directed by email to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at ceo@acola.org.au unless this is not possible or appropriate, refer to the policy Reporting procedures.

ACOLA cannot undertake investigations of alleged breaches except those that deal with internal matters. All other allegations must be supported by the public record of the outcome of an investigation by an organisation with jurisdiction over the complaint, usually an employer.

The details of this policy will evolve over time, in line with workplace and legislation developments.

Purpose and Scope

ACOLA is established to benefit Australia by developing and supporting interdisciplinary collaboration, research and scholarship in humanities and the arts, social sciences, natural and physical sciences, and technological and engineering sciences to address issues of national and regional importance utilising the expertise of the Member Academies.

This Code of Conduct and associated guidelines, policy and procedures have been developed to provide context and guidance to ACOLA appointed Officials, employees and others representing or otherwise involved with ACOLA in its efforts to achieve its strategic objective.

It covers:

- ACOLA's values
- expectations and requirements regarding conduct
- the policy principles on which the Policy and its implementation are based, and
- guidelines and procedures for responding to breaches of the Policy.

The Policy applies to the following, in their relationships with ACOLA and its staff:

- ACOLA Board members, officers and board appointed committee members (e.g. Research Committee / Audit, Risk and Finance Committee), including those acting as a proxy (herein '**Officials**')
- ACOLA staff (herein '**Employees**')
- Expert/Reference Group members/chairs, Steering Committee members/chairs, expert contributors, stakeholders, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers, interns, student placements, speakers, representatives, clients and other such persons engaged on ACOLA projects, activities and/or events (including all attendees of workshops/meetings and persons providing input papers) (herein '**Contributors**')
- Attendees, visitors, job candidates, and others attending ACOLA activities (herein '**Participants**')

The Member Academies of ACOLA hold their own policies including those on discrimination, harassment, and bullying for participants in Academy specific activities. Please contact the relevant Academy for access to their policies.

ACOLA Code of Conduct Policy

All employees are protected by this policy if they witness or are subject to unreasonable behaviour, harassment or bullying by anyone during their course of work.

All reports of workplace unreasonable behaviour, harassment or bullying will be treated seriously, and will be responded to promptly, impartially, and confidentially.

Values

The work of ACOLA is underpinned by core values of:

- Integrity
- Rigor
- Transparency
- Inclusiveness
- Creativity
- Collaboration, and
- Interdisciplinarity.

ACOLA is committed to leading and supporting a positive and ethical culture in all our work and activities where all persons treat each other with respect.

Importantly, ACOLA does not tolerate unreasonable behaviour, bullying or harassment under any circumstances. ACOLA is committed to investigating, and where warranted acting on, reported or alleged instances of workplace unreasonable behaviour, harassment or bullying, treating it seriously, and responding promptly, impartially, and confidentially.

To support and uphold these values, ACOLA is committed to provide an inclusive workplace, meeting places and for a for robust discussion and other activities; that these places are safe, free from unreasonable behaviours, discrimination and harassment, that encourage and promote intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and exchange of ideas. In our places of work, in holding meetings and delivering public launches and workshops, ACOLA acknowledges Australia's Traditional Owners, and pays respects to Elders past and present.

Code of conduct

ACOLA Employees and Contributors, and all those involved with or representing ACOLA in any official capacity are expected to maintain a standard of conduct in their dealings with and on behalf of ACOLA that is consistent with ACOLA's values and which upholds the high-standing and reputation of ACOLA in the community.

In other words, Officials, Employees, Contributors and Participants in ACOLA activities are expected to treat others with courtesy and respect and to be mindful of and proactively uphold ACOLA's values.

Upholding these values requires individuals to maintain an awareness of their own conduct and interaction with others when representing or participating in ACOLA activities and in their relationship will all at ACOLA.

It also requires an awareness of the conduct of others and, where such conduct is violating ACOLA's values or potentially adversely impacting others, it requires a willingness to intervene directly or through alerting relevant officials in order to promptly address the situation.

ACOLA expects all people to:

- behave in a responsible and professional manner
- treat others with courtesy and respect
- listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of others, and
- be fair and honest in their dealings with others.

This policy applies to behaviours that occur:



- in connection to ACOLA and its activities, even if it occurs outside the workplace or outside working hours
- during work activities, for example when dealing with staff, stakeholders, contributors, and participants
- at work-related events, for example at workshops, seminars, conferences and work-related social functions
- on social media, for example where workers interact with colleagues, contributors or stakeholders and their actions may affect them either directly or indirectly, and
- on email, for example where incorrect or inappropriate usage can result in a loss of confidentiality and reputation damage.

The Policy includes particular expectations for different groups.

ACOLA OFFICIALS

In the course of fulfilling their duties, when representing ACOLA, involved in ACOLA activities and at other times, all Officials (ACOLA Board members, officers and board appointed committee members (e.g. Research Committee / Audit, Risk and Finance Committee)) are expected to:

- Abide by their obligations to serve ACOLA according to its Constitution and Terms of Reference.
- Uphold the reputation and standing of ACOLA within the community as an independent, authoritative body comprising membership of Australia's Learned Academies, and other esteemed associates.
- Respect requests for confidentiality of ACOLA documents and information.
- Respect and support ACOLA employees and officers in the conduct of their duties.
- Uphold the reputation and standing of Fellows of other Member academies as experts elected by their peers on the basis of outstanding contributions to their field or discipline.
- Uphold and support the integrity of ACOLA's processes, whether delivery of reports, engagement with stakeholders (Government, Industry and Academia), or nominations for ACOLA activity committees.
- Uphold and support [ACOLA's priorities](#)
- Refrain from making public comment on behalf of ACOLA or its Members without their knowledge, unless duly authorised by a member of ACOLA's Board.
- Declare any potential conflict of interest that may impact or be perceived to impact the fulfilment of duties.
- Respect ACOLA's partners and stakeholders in government, industry and academia. This includes an expectation that Officials will exercise judgement in moderating or refraining from sharing private views on particular individuals, organisations or political parties when these views may be connected with or reflect on ACOLA.
- Be willing to use their standing as an Official of ACOLA to ensure that this Policy is upheld by others; for example, by intervening in cases of bullying, discrimination, harassment, or unreasonable behaviour.

ACOLA EMPLOYEES AND CONTRIBUTORS

In the course of fulfilling their duties, when representing ACOLA, involved in ACOLA activities and at other times, all ACOLA Employees and Contributors (staff, Expert/Reference Group members/chairs, Steering Committee members/chairs, expert contributors, stakeholders, contractors, sub-contractors, volunteers, interns, student placements, speakers, representatives, clients and other such persons engaged on ACOLA projects, activities and/or events (including all attendees of workshops/meetings and persons providing input papers)) are expected to:

- Maintain the highest standards of professionalism when dealing with co-workers, Officials, Academy Fellows, Participants and other stakeholders. This includes official communication within or outside of work hours in the form of verbal communication, email and social media.
- Be part of and foster a culture of respect, dignity, collaboration and support for co-workers.
- Abide by relevant ACOLA policies and procedures and acknowledge the ACOLA management structure and processes.

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- Exercise due care and diligence when fulfilling duties and exercising powers, including making efficient use of resources, mitigating financial and reputational risks, and acting within the bounds of authority and delegation.
- Refrain from making public comment on behalf of ACOLA unless authorised by the CEO.
- Not accept any gift or benefit from any stakeholder or supplier that may influence or could be perceived by others to influence decision making.
- Declare to relevant supervisors the receipt of any other gift or benefit from an external supplier worth more than \$100, with details of the value and circumstances of the gift.
- Protect the confidentiality of ACOLA's operations as well as any personal information acquired in the course of ACOLA duties.
- Declare any potential conflict of interest that may impact or be perceived to impact their fulfilment of duties.
- Refrain from taking part in any action that may constitute an inappropriate behaviour, harassment or bullying.
- Raise promptly with the relevant ACOLA managers any concerns regarding possible or actual breaches of this Policy by any individual.

PARTICIPANTS

Attendees, visitors, job candidates, and others involved in ACOLA activities who are not Officials, Employees or Contributors of ACOLA are expected in the course of their engagement with ACOLA activities to:

- Uphold ACOLA's values.
- Support and promote diversity, participation, inclusivity, intellectual freedom and freedom of expression.
- Treat all other participants in ACOLA activities with courtesy and respect.
- Raise promptly with ACOLA Employees or others acting for ACOLA in an official capacity, any concerns regarding possible or actual breaches of this Policy by any individual.

EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace bullying is defined as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers at work, and that behaviour creates a risk to health and safety.

Repeated behaviour refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range of behaviours over time.

Unreasonable behaviour includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening. Whether a behaviour is unreasonable can depend on whether a reasonable person might see the behaviour as unreasonable in the circumstances. (Bullying & harassment | Fair Work Ombudsman, 2021)

Depending on the nature and context of the conduct, bullying behaviours can include:

- the making of vexatious allegations against a worker
- spreading rude and/or inaccurate rumours about an individual, and
- conducting an investigation in a grossly unfair manner (What is workplace bullying? | FWC, 2021).

The following behaviours could also be considered as bullying:

- aggressive and intimidating conduct
- belittling, untruthful, or humiliating comments
- victimisation
- spreading malicious rumours
- teasing, practical jokes or initiation
- pressuring someone to behave inappropriately
- exclusion from work-related events, and
- unreasonable work expectations or demands.



These unreasonable behaviours are just some examples of what could be considered bullying.

Single incidents of unreasonable behaviour can also present a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated.

Video by FairWork Commission – [What is workplace bullying?](#)

What is not workplace bullying?

Reasonable management action taken by managers or supervisors to direct and control the way work is carried out is not considered to be workplace bullying if the action is taken in a reasonable and lawful way.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

Workplace harassment is a behaviour that is unwelcome and unsolicited, and is considered to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or annoying. Workplace harassment behaviours may be either verbal or non-verbal. The following are examples of types of behaviour that will not be tolerated in the ACOLA workplace. It is important to understand that a one-off incident can constitute harassment.

Verbal: Teasing or mocking a person or group because of their race, disability, age, sex, sexuality or other projected attributes; repeated unwelcome invitations to go out with someone; unwanted sexual advances; sexual or suggestive remarks; including spreading of sexual rumours about someone. (Not limited)

Non-verbal: Displaying or circulating racist, sexist, and other stereotyped cartoons or literature; ignoring someone, not sharing information with someone, or being particularly cold or distant with them; offensive hand or body gestures, wolf whistles. Sexually suggestive or offensive material on walls such as pin-ups, computer screen savers, emails and other work areas. Suggestive looks, leers or lewd comments about a person's appearance. (Not limited)

Disciplinary measures and possible dismissal may follow the reporting of such behaviour if complaints are found to be true.

What is not workplace harassment?

Reasonable and fair provision of work performance feedback.

Reporting procedures

Individuals experiencing or observing breaches of this Policy are encouraged to document their observations and discuss the alleged incident with their relevant manager, official or the CEO, even if the breach appeared relatively minor or was not experienced in a negative or distressing manner.

The CEO will be notified of all reported breaches of this Policy. In the event that the CEO is not available, or is not the appropriate person, the report should be directed to the Chair of the Board.

In the event that the CEO or Chair of the Board are not available or are not the appropriate persons, such as for reasons of gender, the report can be made to another member of the ACOLA Board. Where a report is made to a Board member, that member must then report this to the CEO, or the Chair of the Board if the CEO is the subject of the report.

While such reporting lines may vary by context and availability, in general, reports of breaches of this Policy should proceed as detailed below. If an employee receives a report and is not comfortable for any reason in addressing the matter, the report may be directed to the CEO or Chair of the Board where the CEO is a party to the allegations.

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A report of an alleged incident is considered formal in the context of this policy, if it is documented including the date/time or period of the incident, the location/s (including virtual/email/place), and details of the alleged incident.

OFFICIALS

Officials should report the alleged breach of the Policy to the ACOLA CEO.

In the event that the CEO is not available, or is not the appropriate person, the report should be directed to the Chair of the Board.

EMPLOYEES

ACOLA Employees should report the alleged breach of the Policy to their direct supervisor or manager.

If the report concerns their supervisor or they are not comfortable doing so for any other reason, they should report to a more senior manager (Director, Policy and Projects or Business Manager). If they are not comfortable reporting to a senior manager for any reason, the report should be made directly to the CEO. Or after all other avenues have been explored and in the event that the CEO is not available, or is not the appropriate person, the report should be directed to the Chair of the Board.

CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors should report the alleged breach of the Policy to their direct supervisor, manager or regular ACOLA liaison.

If the report concerns their supervisor, manager or regular ACOLA liaison or they are not comfortable doing so for any other reason, the report should be made directly to the CEO. Or after all other avenues have been explored and in the event that the CEO is not available, or is not the appropriate person, the report should be directed to the Chair of the Board.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants in ACOLA Activities should report the alleged breach of the Policy to the relevant ACOLA official with whom they have been interacting on the specific activity, for example the ACOLA Employee, Committee Chair.

EXTERNAL REPORTING AVENUES

Alleged breaches by external parties should be directed by email to the CEO at ceo@acola.org.au,

In the event that the CEO is not available, or is not the appropriate person, the report should be directed to the Chair of the Board by email to companysecretary@acola.org.au

Resolution procedures

All reports on an alleged breach of this Policy are taken seriously by ACOLA.

On receipt of a formal report of an alleged breach of this Policy, ACOLA Employees or officials should notify the CEO, or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board, **even if the individual making the report has requested that no action be taken** (where possible the individual making a report should be informed of the requirement to notify others). The CEO will then determine the appropriate steps for resolution.

In general, the subject (person/s involved in the alleged incident) of the report should be notified by the CEO (or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board) that a report has been made regarding an alleged incident. The subject will be given the opportunity to respond to the report and to participate in a transparent resolution process. The identity of the person/s making the report and the recipient/s of the alleged incident are to be kept confidential, as necessary and possible.



The following steps outline the actions available:

1. The person the report is made to will discuss the alleged incident with you, and provide options and avenues available, as detailed in this policy.
 - a. You may elect not to formally report the alleged incident. However, your manager/CEO may be required to formally report the alleged incident.
 - b. You may elect to formally report the alleged incident.
2. In the event of a formal report, the alleged incident will be registered and recorded by the person receiving the report and yourself. Both parties shall retain a confidential copy of the record.
 - a. The CEO (or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board) will be notified of the report.
 - b. The CEO (or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board) will notify the subject (person/s involved in the alleged incident) of the report that an alleged incident has been reported. The identity of the person/s making the report and the recipient/s of the alleged incident are to be kept confidential, as necessary and possible.
3. The CEO (or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board) will speak to the other party/s involved in the alleged incident as soon as possible, gather information and seek a resolution to satisfactorily address the issue for all parties.
4. If issues cannot be resolved or the alleged incident/s is considered to be of a serious nature, the CEO (or if not available or appropriate, the Chair of the Board) will appoint an investigator (impartial person),
 - a. investigator (impartial person) will be agreed by all parties,
 - b. to investigate and provide a written report on the alleged incident.
 - c. All parties will be able to state their case and relevant information will be collected and considered.
 - d. A written report, including possible recommendations will be provided to the CEO or the Chair of the Board.
5. The CEO or Chair of the Board will review the report and an outcome will be decided.
6. Relevant parties will be notified of the outcome.
7. An appeal may be considered by the ACOLA Board. Refer to Appeals procedure below.

External regulatory authorities will be notified as required by law at any stage. This step may not require specific agreement by the reporting person.

All complaints, reports and outcomes will be treated in the strictest of confidence. Only those people directly involved in the incident or in resolving it will have access to the information.

All parties will be provided support during the process (for example, access to the ACOLA Employee Assistance Program and advice on appropriate public helplines and service), with no victimisation of any person involved in the alleged incident, including those making the report, helping to resolve the issue, or the person subject in the report.

If all avenues for resolution are exhausted, links to external organisations to support the individual are provided below at *External links and references*.

Complaints made maliciously or in bad faith will result in disciplinary action.

Appeal procedure

Both the instigators and the subjects of formal allegations of breaches of this Policy may appeal the outcome of an investigation, resolution and any disciplinary action. Appeals will be assessed by the ACOLA Board Chair in consultation with the ACOLA Board who will determine the appropriate course of action on the basis of information presented in the appeal.

Action may include:

- declining the appeal
- reviewing all or part of a decision
- re-opening an investigation with the same or a different investigator
- presenting the information and decision making process for review to an independent reviewer
- ceasing further investigation or action

Consequences of breaching this policy

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who is found to have breached this policy. These measures will depend on the nature and circumstance of each breach.

Consequences of breaching this policy by Employees, can include one or more of the following:

- a verbal or written apology
- one or more parties agreeing to participate in counselling or training
- a verbal or written reprimand
- reassignment, demotion or dismissal of employment.

Consequences of breaching this policy by Officials, can include one or more of the following:

- a verbal or written apology
- one or more parties agreeing to participate in counselling or training
- a verbal or written reprimand
- notification of the incident to their representing organisation. This may lead to additional actions taken by this organisation.
- demotion of role ie, position of Chair of the Committee
- removal from committee or office

Consequences of breaching this policy by Contributors or Participants, can include one or more of the following:

- a verbal or written apology
- one or more parties agreeing to participate in counselling or training
- demotion or dismissal from a specific ACOLA project, activity and/or event
- barring from future ACOLA project/s, activities and/or events, and
- cancellation current service / contractor agreement
- not to use the service provider in the future
- notification of the incident to their representing organisation. This may lead to additional actions taken by this organisation.

If the investigation finds a breach of this Policy has not occurred or cannot be substantiated, ACOLA may still take appropriate action to address any workplace issues leading to the report.

Further information, Other Policies and references

Contact the Business Manager or the CEO if you require further information or a copy of this Policy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- ACOLA Chair of the Board companysecretary@acola.org.au
- ACOLA CEO ceo@acola.org.au

OTHER ACOLA POLICIES

- ACOLA equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination policy
- ACOLA Occupational health and safety policy

EXTERNAL LINKS AND REFERENCES



- [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\) - Uprise \[uprise.co/employee/\]](https://uprise.co/employee/)
- [Fair Work Ombudsman - Bullying & harassment \[www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/bullying-and-harassment\]](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/bullying-and-harassment/)
- [Fair Work Commission \[www.fwc.gov.au\]](https://www.fwc.gov.au/)
 - In some circumstances, an order to prevent or stop a worker being bullied can be made under the Fair Work Act 2009 by contacting the Fair Work Commission
- [Australian Human Rights Commission \[www.humanrights.gov.au\]](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/)
 - The Australian Human Rights Commission investigates and resolves complaints (under federal laws) of bullying based on a person's sex, disability, race or age. It can also investigate and resolve complaints of workplace bullying based on a person's criminal record, trade union activity, political opinion, religion or social origin.
- [Safe Work Australia – Bullying \[www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/bullying\]](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/bullying/)
 - Safe Work Australia is not a regulator and cannot advise you about bullying in the workplace. If you need help, please contact your state or territory work health and safety authority.
- [Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission \(ACNC\) \[www.acnc.gov.au\]](https://www.acnc.gov.au/)
- [ASIC Whistleblowing \[www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/asic-investigations-and-enforcement/whistleblowing\]](https://www.asic.gov.au/about-asic/asic-investigations-and-enforcement/whistleblowing/)

Policy and guidelines version control

Human Resource Management:

ACOLA Code of conduct policy

Version	Reviewed by	Date	Approved by	Date	Next Review
V1.2018	ARF Committee	16.10.18	ACOLA Board	09.11.18	09.11.20
V2.2020	ARF Committee	23.04.21	ACOLA Board	21.05.21	21.05.23

