

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy

[SASH]

Purpose

The Whitecliffe Institute of Creative Arts and Technology ("Whitecliffe") is committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment that is free from sexual assault and sexual harassment. This policy outlines the expectations, rights, and responsibilities of all members of the Whitecliffe community regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment. It applies to all students, faculty, staff, administrators, and visitors.

Purpose

This policy applies to all students, staff and personnel of Whitecliffe.

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Student Handbook
- Complaints & Appeals Policy
- Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Staff Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Access & Equity Policy
- Student Support Policy

All documents referenced in this policy can be accessed via the [Forms & Policies](#) section on the college website.

Related Legislation

This framework considers the following legislation:

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (VIC)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)

Compliance and Relevant Legislation

At the Institute, we prioritise the safety and well-being of our community members, and we treat instances and reports of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) with the utmost seriousness and urgency.

1. All reports are promptly logged in our Critical Incident Register;

2. All reports are swiftly escalated to the Executive Leadership Team, Academic Leadership Team, the Governing Board, and relevant authorities for immediate attention and decisive action.

In adherence to our commitment to transparency and compliance with regulatory standards, we strictly follow Section 29(1)(a) of the TEQSA Act. This mandates that a registered higher education provider must notify TEQSA if an event occurs or is likely to occur, significantly impacting the provider's ability to meet the Higher Education Standards Framework (HES Framework).

In alignment with Standard 2.3, which emphasizes the importance of promptly reporting any risks to the well-being and safety of our community, we ensure that TEQSA is informed of investigations into sexual assault on campus that identify failures in policies and processes designed to protect our students.

With reference to the Australian Government's Action Plan Addressing Gender Based Violence, which outlines the accountability of higher education providers for achieving whole-of-organisation performance in preventing and responding to gender-based violence, the institution will promote awareness of and provide practical information on reporting a sexual assault or harassment or instance of gender-based violence.

By taking these proactive measures, we demonstrate our commitment to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment, fostering trust, and upholding the highest standards of compliance with regulatory requirements.

Definitions

Sexual Assault	Any non-consensual sexual act or behaviour, including but not limited to sexual intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, fondling, or any other sexual activity that occurs without the explicit consent of all involved parties.
Sexual Harassment	Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create a hostile environment. It includes, but is not limited to, unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

1. Prevention and Education

- a. Whitecliffe is committed to promoting awareness and prevention of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Educational programs, training, and resources will be provided to all members of the community to foster a culture of respect, consent, and bystander intervention.
- a. Prevention and education programs will cover topics such as understanding consent, recognizing and reporting incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment, support resources available, and the consequences for violations of this policy.

2. Reporting Procedures

1. Any member of the Whitecliffe community who experiences or witnesses sexual assault or sexual harassment is encouraged to report the incident promptly. Reports can be made to any of the following:
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - Student Support Advisor
 - Chief Academic Officer
2. Reports can be made verbally, in writing, or through an anonymous reporting mechanism, where available. The institution will make efforts to respect privacy and confidentiality to the extent permitted by law and ensure that individuals making reports are informed about the available support resources.

If any incident reported under Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment must be escalated due to critical nature, it will be delegated externally to a complaints committee.

3. Support and Resources

1. Whitecliffe will provide support services to individuals who have experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment. These may include counselling, medical assistance, academic accommodations, and assistance in navigating legal processes.
2. The institution will maintain a list of on-campus and off-campus resources, including but not limited to counselling centres, crisis hotlines, medical facilities, and legal services. This information will be readily available and accessible to the community.

4. Investigation and Disciplinary Procedures

1. The institute will conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation into all reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Investigations will be carried out by trained individuals who handle such matters with sensitivity and respect for all parties involved.
2. Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken against individuals found responsible for sexual assault or sexual harassment. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, warnings, probation, suspension, termination, expulsion, or legal action.

5. Non-Retaliation

1. Whitecliffe prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a sexual assault or sexual harassment incident. Retaliation includes adverse actions or behaviours that are intended to punish, intimidate, or deter the reporting party or witnesses.

Change and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Authored by	Approved by	Description
1.0	29 June 2023	QA Manager	Corporate Board	Policy created for ICAT
1.1	9 Dec 2023	Collaborative	Director of Operations and Compliance	Minor revisions made to expand and make more robust section on 'Compliance and Relevant Legislation'
1.2	01 July 2025	Academic Compliance Lead	Governing Board	Compliance and Relevant Legislation section updated to include reference to Australian Government's Action Plan Addressing Gender Based Violence. Updated positions responsible based to reflect current organisational structure. Updated Related Policies section.

Policy Information

Author:	Academic Compliance Lead
Policy owner:	Chief Executive Officer
Approved by:	Governing Board
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