

Code of Ethics

Objectives

1. This Code is intended to fulfil the following functions:

- To define standards of conduct expected of members of ACPET in their dealings with one another and with ACPET, in accordance with the by-laws;
- To provide students and clients with a clear statement of the standards which they can expect member organisations to adopt in their dealings with them, subject to equivalent provisions in any code or codes which the organisation has adopted to regulate dealings with its staff, students and other clients; and
- To reflect the code of conduct requirements of Commonwealth and State Government Agencies for accrediting and registering organisations and courses under legislation which funds or regulates the provision of educational and training courses including courses for overseas students.
- To promote confidence and community trust in the services provided by members of ACPET

Definition

The word "student" includes a trainee or any other client receiving education or training from an ACPET member, whether that member be a workplace trainer or an education and training provider.

Scope

2. This code is binding on all members of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training. Adherence to the general principles of the code, or, so far as the application of paragraphs 3 to 13 of the Code are concerned, to an internal code committing the organisation to equivalent standards to those laid down in these paragraphs in relation to its students, clients, staff and other clients, will be considered a formal condition of all applications for membership of the Council under the By-laws.

General

3. Members will adopt and maintain practices which ensure high professional standards in general management and the marketing and delivery of education and training services and which safeguard the interests and welfare of students, clients and the public.

Quality Education

4. Members will ensure the highest possible standards in the selection of staff and the planning and delivery of courses and training. They will ensure that teachers and trainers are suitably qualified and have relevant industry experience. They will maintain a learning environment that is conducive to the success of trainees/students/clients and ensure adequate facilities and the use of methods and materials appropriate to the requirements and levels at which courses are offered. They will monitor their training to ensure effective delivery and continued relevance.

Financial Standards

5. Members will safeguard the funds paid by students in accordance with relevant legal requirements. They will properly document their contractual and financial relationships with students and provide students and clients with copies of this documentation. Where they are unable to provide agreed services they will make a refund to students in accordance with relevant Commonwealth and State legislation or ensure the provision of equivalent courses for overseas students in accordance with the ACPET Tuition Assurance Schemes.

Student Services

6. Members will ensure that all students/trainees/clients are given appropriate orientation, and are given reliable and up-to-date advice on accommodation, counselling, in course placements, remedial education and welfare facilities having regard to the cultural and special needs of disabled students/trainees/clients and those from different backgrounds. Members will monitor the progress of students/trainees/clients and ensure individualised support and counselling for those having difficulties with a course.

7. Members will be sensitive to the specific cultural and social needs of overseas students especially those who are under 18 years of age. They will ensure that overseas students receive adequate orientation, information and advice on accommodation, counselling, health and welfare services, and assistance in accessing bridging courses or additional educational support

8. Members will insist on the maintenance of generally accepted ethical standards in the educational and social relations between staff and students/trainees/clients.

9. Members will respect the confidentiality and privacy of their students/trainees/clients. Members understand that students/trainees/clients and prospective students/trainees/clients provide them with information for the purpose of offering an providing training and education and will not use or disclose this information for other purposes except with the consent of the individual concerned, in accordance with a legal requirement or where relevant information is routinely used or disclosed in a particular way and this is notified to the student/trainee/client at the time the information is collected.

10. Members will assume a level of responsibility appropriate to the industry or profession for which they provide education or training to assist graduates who have completed their courses to obtain employment. They will promote equality of opportunity in placement.

11. Members will provide effective internal complaint resolution and grievance procedures to deal with students' problems.

Marketing

12. Members will market their education and training services with integrity and accuracy, avoiding vague and ambiguous descriptions of courses or the qualification or capacities required by students to undertake them. They will avoid false or misleading comparisons with other education and training providers. They will avoid action which may damage the reputation of Australian education and training internationally.

13. Members will assume responsibility for the actions of their appointed agents for marketing services and processing applications for overseas students. They will ensure that their agents and partners maintain standards of behaviour and operation in relation to joint or agency activities that are consistent with this code.

14. Members marketing their services overseas will do so in a manner that is consistent with the educational, cultural and regulatory systems of the relevant countries. They will provide accurate information about, immigration and residency requirements, cost of living, health and welfare, opportunities for further study and language prerequisites for undertaking relevant courses.

14b. Members marketing their services locally will do so in a manner that is consistent with the educational and regulatory systems of that State or Territory. They will provide accurate information about cost of living, health and welfare, opportunities for further study and language prerequisites for undertaking relevant courses. If appropriate, they will provide Australian student with details of their ASTAS membership.

Obligations to other Council Members

15. Members will conduct their affairs in such a way as to ensure the best interests of the Australian private education and training sector and to ensure the high standing of the Council and its members in Australia and overseas.

16. Members will not engage in misleading or deceptive conduct in the provision of services.

17. Members will not deliberately criticise the services or quality of education or training provided by other members, entice students or trainees from other member colleges or encourage students or trainees enrolled at another college to change colleges. Members agree to raise legitimate concerns about other members in the complaint and dispute resolution framework provided in this Code and the By-laws.

18. Members will co-operate with fellow members in upholding and enforcing this Code.

19. On relinquishing membership of the Council, former members will refrain from claiming membership of the Council or the grant of any licence from, or accreditation or recognition by, the Council.

20. Members agree to provide accurate and timely information when requested, in accordance with the ACPET By-laws and/or Articles of Association.

Complaints

21. Members will adopt clearly defined procedures for dealing with complaints that involve alleged breaches of this code or any internal code. They will ensure that students and clients aware of these procedures and, where a complaint is not able to be resolved internally, the other avenues available to them to resolve it. Members will ensure that students or clients are not penalised or victimised for pursuing a complaint in good faith.

22. Complaints relating to an alleged breach of a provision of paragraphs of this Code may be made to the ACPET designated officer or to a member of the ACPET Board by a student, staff

member or client of a member or by a member other than a member to whom the complaint relates.

Sanctions

23. Complaints to ACPET about a breach of the Code by a member will be dealt with in accordance with the By-laws. Members recognise that failure to observe the provisions of this Code may result in their approval to offer courses to overseas students and their registration as approved providers withdrawn.

Publicity

24. Members will publicise the fact that they adhere to a Code which defines their obligations to students, the public and to other providers of education and training services and will have copies of this Code or an equivalent internal Code available for inspection by students and other clients who ask to inspect it.

Monitoring and Review

25. The ACPET designated officer will report to the Board every six months on

the operation of the code, measures taken to promote awareness of the code, any legislative or official policy developments relating to prudential or ethical standards affecting the code, and any issues which they believe the code fails to address. On receipt of this report the Board will review the Code and consider any amendment of the Code or any other action required to address issues raised in the report.