

Academic Freedom Policy

Purpose

1. This Policy outlines Global Higher Education's (GHE) commitment to academic freedom in accordance with paragraph 4 of Standard 6.1 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*.

Scope

2. This Policy applies to all GHE staff, students and members of governing bodies.

Definitions

3. Definitions for key terms are presented in the Glossary of Terms which may be accessed on the GHE website at <https://www.globalhe.edu.au/policy>

Suite documents

4. This Policy has no attendant Procedure but should be read in conjunction with the following related policies:
 - a) Communication and Marketing Policy;
 - b) Student Diversity and Equity Policy;
 - c) relevant sections of the Human Resources Framework;
 - d) Student Non-Academic Conduct and Misconduct Policy.

Policy

Principles

5. GHE recognises and values the right to academic freedom as central to teaching, learning and scholarship and is committed to upholding and protecting academic freedom within GHE.
6. Academic freedom for GHE comprises all the following elements:
 - a) the freedom of academic staff and students to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express their opinions and beliefs, and to contribute to public debate without fear or favour;
 - b) the right to speak freely extends to making statements on political and social matters, including in relation to policies affecting higher education, and to expressing opinions concerning GHE and its actions;
 - c) the freedom of academic staff to participate in professional or representative academic bodies;
 - d) the freedom of academic staff to teach, discuss, and research and to disseminate and publish the results of their research;
 - e) the freedom of students to participate in student societies and associations.
7. Academic staff and students have the right to:
 - a) exercise the right of academic freedom without fear of harassment, bullying, intimidation or unfair treatment;

- b) speak, write and publish, or perform, create and exhibit, in person or via any media, without being subject to sanction, censorship or discipline by GHE. For staff such actions must be undertaken in accordance with the provisions in the **Communication and Marketing Policy**.
 - c) express unpopular or controversial views although this does not mean the right to defame, slander, harass, vilify, bully or intimidate those who disagree with their views.
8. Every member of staff and every student will enjoy freedom of speech and academic freedom subject only to the prohibitions, restrictions and conditions imposed by:
- a) law;
 - b) reasonable and proportionate regulation necessary for GHE to:
 - i. provide teaching and learning activities;
 - ii. protect the wellbeing of students and staff;
 - iii. fulfil its legal duties;
 - c) the right and freedom of others to express themselves and to hear and receive information and opinions.
9. The exercise of academic freedom by any member of staff or student, subject to the above limitations, does not constitute misconduct nor attract any penalty or adverse action.
10. By recognising, promoting and supporting the right to academic freedom GHE does not imply endorsement of particular views expressed by academic staff. The views expressed by academic staff are their own even where an affiliation with GHE is indicated.
11. In the exercise of academic freedom, staff and students will observe all relevant codes of conduct and other GHE policies, act in an ethical manner and will not defame, slander, harass, vilify, bully or intimidate any member of the GHE community. Academic freedom is not a defence for acting unlawfully or for poor behaviour or for disrespectful treatment of others.

Associated information

Related Internal Documents	Governance Framework Human Resources Framework Communication and Marketing Policy Student Diversity and Equity Policy Student Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy Student Non-Academic Conduct and Misconduct Policy Academic Staff Employment Contracts Glossary of Terms
Related Legislation, Standards and Codes	<i>Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency Act 2011</i> <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021</i> TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Leadership, Beta version 1.0, 18 June 2019
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	3-Mar-20	V1.1 Revised draft considered by AB 7 Feb 2020 and approved by Board of Directors (BoD) 21-Feb-20, plus administrative updates
	7-July-20	V1.2 administrative updates
	9-Oct—23	V1.3 administrative updates following TEQSA registration

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