

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

Policy Number	COR 1.12
Name of Policy:	Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy (Issue Four)
Applicability:	All Staff, Students and Visitors
Policy Owner:	Chair, Academic Senate
Contact Person:	Chair, Academic Senate
Policy Status:	Approved Policy
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Related policies:	Media Policy (CPR 2.01) Social Media Policy (COR 4.03) Code of Conduct (HRP 3.05) Student Charter

1. CONTEXT

Bond University recognises that the protection of Freedom of [Speech](#) and [Academic Freedom](#) within the academy has been and will be of major benefit to human society and to the development of knowledge as a whole.

Bond University acknowledges that universities have a special role as institutions dedicated to free, open and critical expression across the full scope of human knowledge and endeavour. Central to this role is the freedom of [Staff](#) and students to teach, research, debate and learn independent of external circumstance and pressure.

Bond University is committed to supporting critical and free inquiry, and informed intellectual discourse and public debate on our campuses and amongst our Staff, students and visitors.

2. THE POLICY

2.1. Right to Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

Section 2.1 is subject to the provisions of Section 2.2 of the Policy.

A core value of Bond University is to preserve, defend and promote the principles of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in the conduct of its affairs, so that all Staff, students and visitors at the University are free to engage in critical inquiry, scholarly and scientific endeavour, and public discourse without fear or favour.

Accordingly, the University supports the right of all Staff, students and visitors at the University to search for truth and to hold and express diverse opinions. It recognises that scholarly and scientific debate should be robust and uninhibited. It recognises also that members of the Bond community are entitled to express their ideas and opinions.

Every member of the Staff and every student enjoys Freedom Of Speech and Academic Freedom subject only to prohibitions, restrictions or conditions imposed by:

- law;
- reasonable and proportionate regulation necessary to the discharge of the University's teaching and research activities;
- the right and freedom of others to express themselves and to hear and receive information and opinions;
- reasonable and proportionate regulation necessary to discharge the University's [Duty to Foster the Wellbeing of Staff and Students](#);

- reasonable and proportionate regulation to enable the University to give effect to its legal duties; and
- the University by way of its reasonable requirements as to the courses to be delivered and the content and means of their delivery.

2.2. Responsibilities

The right to Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom carries the following responsibilities.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom must:

- be conducted reasonably, professionally and in good faith;
- be conducted in accordance with principles of academic and research ethics;
- include transparent reasoning and references so that those who wish to respond have a basis to do so; and
- make clear affiliations, sources, funding, and potential conflicts of interest where applicable.

In commenting publicly, Staff of Bond University must act according to the rights and responsibilities set out within this Policy and the University's Media Policy, Social Media Policy, and other relevant policies and regulations. Where Staff are commenting on topics outside their area of professional expertise, they should not link their comments to their association with the University. Staff holding multiple roles should make clear which role they are representing when making a statement.

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom, for the purposes of this Policy, comprises the following elements:

- the freedom of academic staff to teach, discuss, and research and to disseminate and publish the results of their research;
- the freedom of academic staff and students to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express their opinions and beliefs, and to contribute to public debate, in relation to their subjects of study and research;
- the freedom of academic staff and students to express their opinions in relation to the higher education provider in which they work or are enrolled;
- the freedom of academic staff, without constraint imposed by reason of their employment by the University, to make lawful public comment on any issue in their personal capacities;
- the freedom of academic staff to participate in professional or representative academic bodies;
- the freedom of students to participate in student societies and associations;
- the autonomy of Bond University in relation to the choice of academic programs and subject offerings, the ways in which they are taught and the choices of research activities and the ways in which they are conducted.

Duty to Foster the wellbeing of staff and students

- includes the duty to ensure that no member of staff and no student suffers unfair disadvantage or unfair adverse discrimination on any basis recognised at law including race, gender, sexuality, religion and political belief;
- includes the duty to ensure that no member of staff and no student is subject to threatening or intimidating behaviour by another person or persons on account of anything they have said or proposed to say in exercising their freedom of speech;
- supports reasonable and proportionate measures to prevent any person from using lawful speech which a reasonable person would regard, in the circumstances, as likely to humiliate or intimidate other persons and which is intended to have either or both of those effects;
- does not extend to a duty to protect any person from feeling offended or shocked or insulted by the lawful speech of another.

Speech

Extends to all forms of expressive conduct including oral speech and written, artistic, musical and performing works and activity and communication using social media; the word 'speak' has a corresponding meaning.

Staff

All paid, honorary and volunteer staff of the University, including academic, emeritus, adjunct, executive, professional and general staff members.

4. RELATED PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND FORMS