DOMINICAN EDUCATION AUSTRALIA LTD
CODE OF CONDUCT

Dominican Education Australia (DEA) is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and adults at risk who come into contact with the Catholic Church and the Ministries of DEA.

DEA unequivocally commits to promoting the dignity and integrity of every person. The provision of a safe and supportive environment is essential to ensure Trustees and employees and those with whom they work are affirmed in their dignity and worth as people.

1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all personnel engaged by DEA including Trustees, paid employees, volunteers, committee members and contractors. The safety of children, and adults at risk, is core to the DEA mission and is reflected in this Code of Conduct.

2. WHEN DOES THE CODE APPLY?

The Code of Conduct applies to all personnel:

a) in the performance of their duties.

b) during DEA activities and at DEA-related events (whether convened by DEA or not, and whether convened during usual working hours or not); and

c) when their association with DEA is identifiable.

3. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Personnel have a responsibility to meet the high standards of professional and ethical behaviour required by DEA when interacting with colleagues, service users, contractors, and the Catholic and wider community.

Trustees and personnel undertake their responsibilities within the framework of the law and lawful and reasonable instructions from DEA. Personnel must comply with legislative and industrial requirements, with this Code and any policies and procedures that are implemented by DEA.

In performing their duties, it is expected that all personnel will support the following values of DEA.

3.1 Courage

We stand firm, act responsively and persevere

Personnel have a responsibility to:

3.1.1 Ensure that they accurately convey DEA's purpose, values and goals

3.1.2 Respectfully listen to and receive information and suggestions from others in a collaborative way

3.1.3 Make well-considered justifiable decisions, especially where they may have an adverse impact on others

3.1.4 Report suspected unethical behaviour or wrong-doing by another to an appropriate person in accordance with DEA's procedure for reportable conduct

3.1.5 Admit and take responsibility for their mistakes and work to rectify problems as quickly as possible

3.1.6 Ensure those who have admitted mistakes are treated with fairness and dignity

3.1.7 Where possible, suggest improvement in the workplace or the broader community through research, reflection and innovation

3.2 Honesty

We embrace openness and transparency, and act with integrity, probity and fairness

Personnel have a responsibility to:

3.2.1 Engage in genuine dialogue with other personnel and stakeholders through transparent, open, honest and consistent communication and consultation

3.2.2 Be accountable in all work that they do and act with authenticity, sincerity and integrity

3.2.3 Disclose all relevant information applying to them effectively performing their role

3.2.4 Immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relates to child abuse or violence against another person which occurred before, or occurs during, association with DEA

3.2.5 Comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements applying to the operation of DEA

3.2.6 Perform duties diligently, ethically and conscientiously and in accordance with reasonable and lawful supervisory directions

3.2.7 Comply with DEA's policies and procedures as amended from time to time

3.2.8 Take all reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest in the course of their employment or engagement with DEA, and immediately disclose, in writing to the CEO or Chair as appropriate, if a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest arises

3.2.9 Not use their position for advantage or personal gain

3.2.10 Not solicit nor accept any gifts, benefits or favours for themselves or for another person unless they comply with the conditions set out in DEA's policies and procedures

3.2.11 Avoid any conduct, including alcohol or substance abuse or misuse, which would adversely affect their work performance

3.2.12 Only make public comment when authorised to do so and not bring DEA into disrepute through their comments

3.3 Compassion

We honour the dignity of all and work with understanding, respect and care

Personnel have a responsibility to:

3.3.1 Act equitably, fairly and reasonably and treat others with honesty, respect, courtesy, sensitivity and compassion

3.3.2 Behave and communicate in a manner that does not intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate, and which does not harass, sexually harass, unlawfully discriminate or bully

3.3.3 Maintain a respectful, co-operative and collaborative approach to all working and work- related relationships and take all reasonable steps to resolve issues at the lowest possible level in a fair and timely manner

3.3.4 Respect the confidentiality and privacy of other personnel and stakeholders

3.3.5 Use all forms of social media platforms and online activities belonging to or connected with DEA in a responsible and appropriate manner, and not bring DEA into disrepute through their personal use of social media

3.3.6 Actively participate and contribute to the workplace to foster productivity and equity in the workload and a positive workplace culture

3.3.7 Make all reasonable efforts to project a professional public image including refraining from wearing clothing that may offend or is insensitive to other cultures, religious groups or individuals

3.4 Safeguarding

The safeguarding of children, and adults at risk, is fundamental to our work, it underpins all decision making and we are committed to giving children and adults at risk a voice

Personnel have a responsibility to:

3.4.1 Treat all children, and adults at risk, with respect regardless of their race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, nationality, ethnicity, social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation or other status

3.4.2 Use language or behaviour that is appropriate and in no way harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate

3.4.3 Use computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras and social media appropriately and not to exploit, harass or place children or adults at risk

3.4.4 Obtain informed consent before photographing, filming or audio-recording others. An explanation of how the photograph, film or recording will be used must be understood by all parties involved

3.4.5 Ensure file labels, metadata or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about children and adults at risk when sending and/or forwarding images electronically or publishing images in any form

3.5 Resources

DEA finances, facilities, equipment and information systems are accessed and or utilised only for the purposes for which they are intended. We uphold the confidentiality and privacy of personal information

Personnel have a responsibility to:

3.5.1 Use entitlements, equipment, facilities, resources and funds for their proper purpose and in accordance with DEA policy

3.5.2 Only access and/or use intellectual property, including information on electronic systems and hard copy files, for their intended/proper purpose

3.5.3 Adhere to proper records and information management practices and procedures, so that records are confidential, secure, complete, up-to-date and capable of providing organisational accountability

3.5.4 Make reasonable efforts to actively engage in learning and in personal and professional development, to continually improve their skills and knowledge relevant to their role and area of expertise, and for personal growth

3.5.5 Identify and report all workplace health and safety risks or security incidents and take all reasonable care for the health and safety of others including those who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work

4. AUTHORITIES & ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Chair of DEA has responsibility for the Policy and will:

4.1 Ensure this Code of Conduct is communicated to all personnel and signed as part of their terms & conditions of employment or appointment

4.2 Advise the Trustees and relevant personnel of any significant changes

4.3 Advise the Trustees of any breaches to the Code of Conduct

4.4 Ensure this Code of Conduct is reviewed every three years or as required

5. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The Australian Institute of Family Studies Australian provides the Commonwealth, state and territory child protection legislation which outlines the key Commonwealth, state and territory legislation, including regulations, for child protection and other areas of legislation that overlap with child protection issues. This resource provides a brief overview of child protection legislation across state and territory jurisdictions in Australia. You can find this here: https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/australian-child-protection-legislation

6. BREACHES/CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

6.1 All Trustees and personnel have a responsibility to comply with the Code of Conduct and ensure others also comply. Where it is suspected a breach of the Code of Conduct may have occurred, they should report this to the CEO or Chair as soon as practical.

6.2 Employees whose conduct falls below the standard outlined in the Code of Conduct will be dealt with in accordance with one of the following:

6.2.1 Performance Management Policy & Procedure – where the employee's behaviour is deemed as not satisfactory

6.2.2 Disciplinary Action Procedure – where the employee's behaviour is deemed as serious misconduct

6.3 Contractors whose conduct falls below the standard outlined in the Code of Conduct may face immediate cessation of their engagement.

6.4 Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect a Trustee of DEA has breached this Code of Conduct may raise their concerns in writing according to DEA's *Policy and Procedures for the Management of Complaints.*

6.5 In relation to a Trustee, the matter should be investigated by the Chair during which the Trustee will be asked to 'stand down'. Following the outcome of the inquiries or any investigation the Chair must consult with the Sponsors Council as to the appropriate course of action taking into account the need to preserve the integrity of the DEA.

6.6 If the conduct concerns the Chair of the Board of Trustees, this matter must be reported immediately to the Sponsors Council, and the Chair to 'stand down' for the duration of the independent inquiries. The Deputy Chair to act as Chair until the matters are resolved to the satisfaction of the Sponsors Council.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION

I, _____, have read, understand and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct of DEA and understand that compliance with this Code of Conduct is a condition of my employment, engagement or volunteer work.

I understand that a breach of this Code of Conduct may be grounds for disciplinary action or in the case of serious misconduct, termination of employment or the cessation of engagement with DEA.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

_____ (Signature)

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APPENDICES

1. DEFINITIONS

Adult at risk: A person aged 18 years and over who is at increased risk of experiencing abuse or exploitation, including by virtue of their age, disability, diminished capacity, cognitive impairment, cultural background, life or personal circumstance.

Child: Child and children refers to a person under 18 years of age.

Conduct: The personal behaviour of an individual.

Conflict of Interest: A situation in which an individual has competing professional or personal interests making it difficult for an individual to fulfil their duties impartially. Such competing interests could potentially influence judgements made during professional duty.

Contractors: Contractors are those retained with a specific skill set or for a specific task, and invoice DEA, for their work. Contractors may be engaged directly or via labour hire or recruitment firms.

Discrimination: To treat an individual less favourably because of a protected attribute, or to impose unreasonable terms or conditions for which individuals with a particular attribute are unable to comply.

Disciplinary Action: Measures taken by DEA in relation to unsatisfactory performance, misconduct or serious misconduct of an employee in relation to the performance of their duties.

Employees: All permanent, fixed term and casual employees covered by common law employment contract with DEA.

Ethics: The guiding values, principles and standards that enable people to determine how things should be done and how they should act.

Fair: Behaving justly and working within commonly accepted rules.

Harassment: Any form of behaviour that is unwelcome, unsolicited and unreciprocated. The behaviour is often likely to offend, humiliate or intimidate other people and may be a single incident or reoccurring.

Misconduct: The dereliction of duty or behaviour likely to bring the reputation of the organisation into disrepute.

Personnel: Collective term for all employees, Trustees, volunteers, agency/temporary staff and contractors.

Serious Misconduct: Misconduct of such a nature that it would be unreasonable to require the organisation to continue the employment of the employee.

Supervisor: A staff member who has designated responsibility for managing and/or overseeing the performance and workplace behaviour of other personnel.

Trustee: member appointed to the Board of Trustees pursuant to the DEA Constitution

Volunteers: Volunteers include individuals or entities who donate employee time, willing given for the common good and without financial gain.

Work Resources: Includes physical, financial, technological and intellectual property.

2. DEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES CODE OF ETHICS

The Trustees of Dominican Education Australia (DEA) must at all times act with integrity in the discharge of their responsibilities, and be faithful to the traditions, values, charism and educational philosophy of the Founding Congregations of Dominican Sisters which are based on the Gospels of Jesus Christ and the teachings of St Dominic. Their approach to governance should be guided by the principles and behavioural standards as set out in 'Integrity in the Service of the Church'.

Trustees:

- must acknowledge that DEA is a significant instrument of the Mission of the Church in Catholic Education, expressed through the living tradition of the Charism handed down by St Dominic
- must act honestly, in good faith, and use the powers of their office in the best interests of DEA and the Educational Ministries which it serves, and in accordance with its Constitution and Statutes
- have a duty to use due care and diligence in fulfilling their functions and in exercising the powers attached to their role as a Trustee/Director
- must recognise the responsibility of safeguarding the interests of all those associated with DEA
- must not make improper use of information acquired as a Trustee/Director, nor may they take improper advantage of their position
- must not allow personal interests, or the interests of any associated person, to conflict with the interests of DEA, the Educational Ministries which it serves, or those of the Founding Congregations of Dominican Sisters
- must not disclose confidential information received in the course of the exercise of their duties, or allow it to be disclosed, without the authorisation of the Board
- should not engage in conduct likely to bring discredit upon DEA, the Dominican Sisters or the Catholic Church
- must at all times comply with the spirit, as well as the letter, of the law, with the principles, values and Mission of DEA, and in compliance with its Constitution and Statutes.

Foot Note: As Trustees are Directors of Dominican Education Australia Limited, they must also abide by the Code of Ethics which apply under The Corporations Act 2001 (Cth).

Document History:

TITLE: DEA Code of Conduct (Replacing Code of Ethics)			
Date	**Created/Updated**	**Approved By**	**Version No.**
November 2022	K Boland	DEA Board of Directors	1.0
September 2025	Review – No amendments	DEA Board of Directors	1.0