



Code of Conduct review submission

Thank you for submitting feedback for the review of the Victorian Teaching Profession’s Code of Conduct. You are welcome to address all questions or only those of particular relevance or interest. You can also share any additional feedback that is not encompassed in your response to these questions.

PERSONAL DETAILS *(optional)*

Name		Employer	
Email		Phone number	

Stakeholder group

- Early childhood teacher
- Australian Education Union
- Catholic Education Office
- Primary teacher
- Independent Education Union
- Early childhood sector
- Secondary school teacher
- Parent / carer
- Regulatory body
- Casual relief teacher
- Student / learner
- Community member
- Principal class
- Independent Schools Victoria
- Other: _____

SECTION 1: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 1

Jack was a secondary school teacher and seen hugging and talking privately with a learner during lunch time.

What contextual information would you require to clarify whether this is an appropriate interaction according to the Code?

What guidance do the principles of the Code provide to navigate this scenario?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 2

Emma is a Year 12 Psychology teacher. James was one of her students. After James had completed his Year 12 exams, he and Emma began a sexual relationship.

What guidance do the principles of the Code provide to navigate this scenario?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 3

Antony was an early childhood teacher who playfully tickled a learner on two occasions. The learner refused to go to kindergarten after both incidents because she was scared of being tickled again.

Even if the conduct may not be intended to be threatening and may reasonably be perceived to be playful by the teacher, would it be considered appropriate behaviour according to the Code?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 4

Lewis is a secondary school teacher in rural Victoria, and plays on a local football team which has several of his Year 11 and Year 12 learners.

What are the potential issues that may arise from this situation for Lewis?

What guidance do the principles of the Code provide to navigate this scenario?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- 1.** What contextual considerations should be mentioned in the Code for each of the specific principles? (e.g. age of learners, socio-economic background, education setting etc.)

- 2.** The following words have already been identified as needing further definition or explanation. Do you agree? Are there any other words that you would add to this list?

- dignity
- teacher
- learner
- recognition
- timely
- understandable
- parental concern
- sensitive manner
- cultural context
- community

- 3.** Should the Code explicitly address the use of social media as a communication tool between teachers, parents / carers and learners (separate from other online communications) under this section?

- 4.** To what extent should the Code explicitly restrict sexual relationships between teachers and learners (current and former)? Is there a specific length of time that a teacher should not engage in a sexual relationship with a former learner?

5. Are there any other safeguards that could be included in the Code to protect former learners, noting that the power imbalance may continue after the professional relationship ends?

SECTION 2: PERSONAL CONDUCT

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 5

Li is an early childhood teacher. She has a public social media page which depicts her drinking, partying and wearing revealing clothing.

What guidance do the principles of the Code provide to navigate this scenario?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What guidance could be provided to teachers about their personal and professional use of social media to ensure their conduct remains within the spirit of the Code?

2. The following words have already been identified as needing further definition or explanation. Do you agree? Are there any other words that you would add to this list?

- boundary
- civil obligations
- positive role models

3. What further clarification is required to define appropriate personal conduct of a teacher?

4. To what (if any) extent should we regulate the personal conduct of a teacher? How does VIT assess whether personal conduct offends the Code?

SECTION 3: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

TEACHER CONDUCT DILEMMA 6

Nic is aware of the requirement to undertake at least 20 hours of professional development to meet his renewal of registration requirements. Nic has been a primary teacher for 30 years and finds this an unnecessary burden. Each year he completes all 20 hours by undertaking first aid training. He has not sought out any professional development to improve his teaching knowledge or practice.

What guidance do the principles of the Code provide to navigate this scenario?

Are additional principles required within the Code to navigate this scenario?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. How would you expect teachers to demonstrate their commitment to professionalism?

2. Given the purpose of the Code as a guiding document for teachers, is it appropriate to recognise the shared responsibility of teachers, employers and education sectors in maintaining standards and competence?

3. Should the Code be explicit that teachers must be aware of and comply with legal obligations in relation to ensuring the safety of children? Give reasons for your response.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / FEEDBACK

Thank you for your participation and feedback. Once completed, please email this form to codereview@vit.vic.edu.au

Submissions will be accepted until **5.00pm Friday 20 December 2019**. For any further questions about the review of the Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct, please contact VIT at codereview@vit.vic.edu.au