



BOND UNIVERSITY

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Secretariat for Review of Freedom of Speech
Quality and Access Branch
Higher Education Group
Australian Department of Education and Training

Email: freedomofspeechreview@education.gov.au

Dear Secretariat

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Freedom of Speech Review in Australian Higher Education announced by the Hon Dan Tehan MP on 14 November 2018.

Bond University has a deep and abiding commitment to the principles of free expression and the expectation of unhindered intellectual inquiry. Our commitment to "*Truth, inquiry and the pursuit of advanced knowledge*" features prominently within our institutional values¹, alongside concepts of respect, excellence, accountability and collaboration.

Bond students are taught the value of open and critical discussion and positively encouraged to participate. The Student Charter² states that "*Students as individuals can expect to be able to communicate freely and to be able to voice alternative points of view in rational debate*". More broadly, the Student Charter also shows respect for the student voice by ensuring their representation on University committees and involvement in formal processes.

Intellectual enquiry and freedom of expression, through the ability to critically evaluate, manage, reflect on, integrate and apply the knowledge acquired, are also embedded within the University's Graduate Attributes³. This critical practice also sits within CORE curriculum subjects⁴ that all undergraduate students must take at the commencement of their program, which include *Ethical Thought and Action* and *Critical Thinking and Communication*.

Our commitment to free expression and intellectual inquiry is, for students, reinforced by the Student Code of Conduct. The Bond University Regulations⁵ state that students are expected to "*behave in a way that allows reasonable freedom to others to pursue their studies, researches, duties and other lawful activities in the University and on its sites, and to participate in the life of the University*" [Part 3, 5(2)(a)]. Any activity that "*impairs the reasonable freedom of others to pursue their studies, researches, duties and other lawful activities in the University or on the site, or on the site of a partner or affiliate organization, or to participate in the life of the University*" is identified as a form of misconduct for which the student will be made accountable [Schedule B, 1(1)(a)].

¹ <https://bond.edu.au/about-bond/university/introducing-bond/bond-mission-strategic-plan>

² <https://bond.edu.au/files/870/student-charter.pdf>

³ Knowledge and critical thinking: <https://bond.edu.au/about-bond/academia/learning-teaching/graduate-attributes>

⁴ <https://bond.edu.au/current-students/study-information/enrolment/program-structure-and-sequence/core-curriculum>

⁵ <https://bond.edu.au/files/676/Part3DiscipRegs.pdf>

Bond University's broad commitment is further reinforced by our Academic Freedom Policy, which defines rights and responsibilities for all staff, students and visitors at our University. This policy has recently been updated and is currently in the final stages of consultation. Formal adoption of the new policy, included here as Attachment 1, is expected in early 2019. Attachment 2 provides extracts of two related University Policies.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Brailsford', with a stylized, flowing script.

Professor Tim Brailsford
Vice-Chancellor and President



ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

Policy Number	COR 1.12
Name of Policy:	Academic Freedom Policy (Issue Two)
Applicability:	All Staff, Students and Visitors
Policy Owner:	Chair, Academic Senate
Contact Person:	Chair, Academic Senate
Policy Status:	Amendment to Approved Policy
Date of approval:	4 October 2013
Date last amended:	7 November 2018
Date last exposed:	December 2018
Date last reviewed:	
Date of next review:	February 2022
Related policies:	Media Policy (CPR 2.01) Social Media Policy (COR 4.03) Code of Conduct (HRP 3.05) (staff) <u>Student Charter</u>

1. CONTEXT

Bond University recognises that the protection of freedom of inquiry and expression 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 Academic Freedom of Inquiry and Expression

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

- 2.1.1. A core value of Bond University is to preserve, defend and promote the principles of 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.
- 2.1.2. 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.

2.2. Responsibilities

The right to academic freedom of inquiry and expression carries the following responsibilities.

Academic inquiry and expression:

- must be conducted reasonably, professionally and in good faith.
- must be conducted lawfully, including in accordance with laws regulating defamation, harassment, vilification and obscene speech, and the provisions of the Privacy Act, the Corporations Act and other legislation.
- must be conducted in accordance with principles of academic and research ethics.
- must include transparent reasoning and references so that those who wish to respond have a basis to do so.

- must 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, the University's Media Policy, and other relevant University 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

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

EXTRACTS OF TWO RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Document Name	Policy No.	Extract
Media Policy	CPR 2.01	<p>2.3 Freedom to Speak</p> <p><i>The University is committed to academic freedom. Members of the University community are free to contribute to public debate, subject to University's Academic Freedom Policy (COR 1.12) and the law, including the law of defamation, laws regulating harassment, vilification and obscene speech, and the provisions of the Privacy Act, the Corporations Act and other legislation.</i></p>
Social Media Policy	COR 4.03	<p>2.1.1. Personal responsibility</p> <p><i>2.1.1.1. Staff and students are personally responsible for anything they publish online. Bond University does not review, edit, censor, or endorse individual posts. Staff members and students of the University must not only consider how their posts reflect on them as an individual, but also about how they reflect on Bond University thus ensuring the University is not brought into disrepute.</i></p> <p><i>2.1.1.2. Bond University encourages participation in the online social media space, but urges staff and students to do so appropriately, exercising sound judgment and common sense. If there is any doubt as to the suitability of a message, it should not be posted. Post sensibly and responsibly in accordance with Bond University's policies and guidelines. Anything posted that can potentially tarnish Bond University's image will ultimately be the responsibility of the individual staff member or student.</i></p>