

Academic Freedom Policy

RSY-ACAD-PY-v1.0 Academic Freedom Policy

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Distribution List

To: All RCDC Staff
All RCDC Students
All Associate Colleges, College Directors

Cc: Chair, Council

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1 Purpose

This Policy supports Raffles College of Design and Commerce's commitment to an environment that upholds, protects and promotes academic freedom.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all students and staff at RCDC.

3 Definition of Terms

Academic Freedom: means the right to express or otherwise communicate ideas or facts free from religious, political, or institutional restrictions.

4 Policy Principles

The key principles informing this Policy is that critical debate and diversity of expression and opinion are central to academic integrity. RCDC is committed to:

- fostering a robust and engaged academic environment which values scholarly difference;
- ensuring as far as possible that staff and students are able to exercise their right to academic freedom in the areas of teaching, learning and research without fear of discrimination or harassment; and
- ensuring that academic freedom is approached ethically and with due respect for the rights and privileges of others.

5 Academic Freedom

In support of its commitment to academic freedom, RCDC recognises the right of academic staff and students to:

- 5.1 access information freely in the pursuit of intellectual inquiry;
- 5.2 reciprocate in the exchange of information, provided that any result or outcome of that information is duly acknowledged; and
- 5.3 hold opinions and communicate ideas without interference, censure or fear of recrimination.

6 Responsibilities

The right to academic freedom and free intellectual inquiry entails associated responsibilities. In order to avoid abuse of such freedoms, staff must not:

- impinge on the ability of others to engage freely in teaching, learning, research, and academic debate;
- introduce material into their teaching that is not directly relevant to the teaching subject and which may be considered controversial or offensive; or

- express views on any topic other than those within their sphere of expertise when identifying themselves as a staff member of RCDC.

While academic staff should be free from institutional censorship when writing or speaking as private citizens, any public communication may by implication extend to a judgement of RCDC. Staff speaking or writing publicly are therefore expected to take care to demonstrate academic, professional and scholarly rigor, exercise appropriate restraint, and show respect for the opinions of others.

In addition, both staff and students are expected to approach all academic matters in a fair, open, balanced and academically rigorous manner.

7 Abuse of Academic Freedom

- 7.1 If a staff member or student clearly contravenes the principles outlined in this Policy, he or she may be in breach of the relevant *Code of Conduct* and could face disciplinary action.
- 7.2 Appeals or disputes concerning any decision taken in relation to this Policy should be made under the relevant Grievance Procedure.

8 Supporting and Related Documents

- Student Code of Conduct- Student Handbook
- Staff Code of Conduct- Employee Handbook