

Commitment Statement on Staff-Student Relationships

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Commitment Statement makes clear our commitment to student welfare.

(2) RMIT University is committed to the welfare of all students and their right to pursue education and research in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment. The university as an institution of education and research places special emphasis on the centrality of the professional relationship between teacher and student, and supervisor and candidate. It is imperative that these relationships are open and trustful to promote the educational outcomes and personal development of all students.

(3) The conduct of all staff of the University will at all times reflect a commitment to student welfare and development. In their interactions with students, all staff will act in the interests of the students and avoid taking advantage of the real and perceived imbalance of power that is presumed to exist between students and staff.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This Commitment Statement applies to all staff (continuing, fixed term and sessional), contractors, agency staff, honorary and visiting appointments of the RMIT Group.

(5) Other members of the University community who are covered by this Statement include members of University committees, the Council and its committees.

Section 3 - Authority

(6) Authority for this document is established by the [Code of Conduct](#).

Section 4 - Commitment Statement

Professional Relationships

(7) If a member of staff commences or develops an intimate relationship with a student, the member of staff risks engaging in unprofessional behaviour and will need to demonstrate how they have upheld our commitments to our students and behaved professionally in accordance with this Commitment Statement.

(8) A staff member may never under any circumstances engage in sexual activity or engage in conduct which might reasonably be perceived to be building towards a sexual relationship with any student under the age of 18.

Our Values

(9) RMIT has a core set of values that are an integral part of our organisation. As individuals we are responsible for our

own behaviour to promote a safe and secure learning environment for our students. All members of staff are expected to report unprofessional behaviour where it occurs. Managers should refer to workplace behaviour policies for further guidance.

What is RMIT's Role?

(10) The University will:

- a. ensure members of staff and the student body are aware of this Commitment Statement
- b. provide staff assistance or skills training in having difficult conversations with colleagues and students
- c. provide staff and students with information regarding how to declare a conflict of interest.

Instances of Unprofessional Behaviour

(11) Any staff member who fails to uphold our commitment to professional behaviour may be subject to disciplinary action.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	19th October 2020
Review Date	5th March 2023
Approval Authority	Chief People Officer
Approval Date	24th August 2020
Expiry Date	9th December 2022
Policy Owner	Gaynor Witts Chief People Officer
Policy Author	Stephen Morrison Director, Policy and Workplace Relations
Enquiries Contact	People Connect