



Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure

1 Scope and Purpose

This policy outlines freedom of speech, academic freedom and intellectual inquiry at Russo Business School, and aims to ensure that these freedoms are not unnecessarily burdened by restrictions other than those imposed by law and for the reasonable and proportionate regulation of conduct by Russo Business School. The French Model Code was referenced to guide the development of this policy.

This policy applies to all members of Russo Business School's higher education community.

2 Definitions

Academic Freedom means the following:

(a) *the freedom of academic staff to teach, discuss, and research and to disseminate and publish the results of their research;*

(b) *the freedom of academic staff and students to engage in intellectual inquiry, to express their opinions and beliefs, and to contribute to public debate, in relation to their subjects of study and research;*

(c) *the freedom of academic staff and students to express their opinions in relation to the higher education provider in which they work or are enrolled;*

(d) *the freedom of academic staff to participate in professional or representative academic bodies;*

(e) *the freedom of students to participate in student societies and associations;*

(f) *the autonomy of the higher education provider in relation to the choice of academic courses and offerings, the ways in which they are taught and the choices of research activities and the ways in which they are conducted. (Extract from HESA 2003)*

Academic Integrity refers to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all academic endeavours, including preparing and presenting work for assessment as part of coursework or research.

Ethics are the guiding values, principles and standards that enable people to determine how things should be done and how they should act. Ethics refers to the judgements that people make and the process that determines those judgements. It is the process by which people make value based decisions which ultimately guides their actions and behaviours.

Ethical Scholarship entails the pursuit of scholarly enquiry marked by honesty and integrity, which is reflected both in individual and group approaches to study, assessment, and other scholarly activities for both students and staff.

Intellectual Inquiry is the open pursuit of knowledge, which may or may not lead to the production and dissemination of new knowledge, ideas or scholarship.

Speech extends to all forms of expressive conduct including oral speech and written, artistic, musical and performing works and activity and communication using social media; the word 'speak' has a corresponding meaning.

3 Policy Objectives

Russo Business School is committed to promoting freedom of speech, intellectual inquiry and academic freedom as an integral right for all staff and students. The creation and dissemination of new knowledge underpins scholarship and is highly valued at Russo Business School.

Freedom of speech, intellectual inquiry and academic freedom are not protections from professional misconduct. Russo Business School staff and students are expected to act in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct, the Student Code of Conduct and the Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy, and to observe the mission and values of Russo Business School.

4 Implementation

The Academic Board is responsible for the implementation of this policy and upholding and defending the rights of staff and students to pursue new ideas and knowledge, within the law, in the pursuit of teaching, learning, research, scholarship and any other academic activities.

The principles of freedom of speech, intellectual inquiry and academic freedom confer the right to pursue knowledge wherever it may lead, and it acknowledges the right to teach, research, publish, develop curricula, assess, discuss and debate free from unreasonable restriction or undue interference. Russo Business School is committed to these principles for creating new knowledge and understanding, in challenging accepted ideas and testing novel hypotheses. Russo Business School considers free and open enquiry to be critical to teaching, research and scholarship, and encourages a scholarly environment of robust debate, supported by rigorous scholarship and backed by evidence. Russo Business School defends the right of its staff and students to pursue their research, publish their findings, express their views and engage in intellectual debate without fear of censorship; so long as the expression of these views does not impinge upon, or impair, the rights of others.

4.1 Limitation of Freedoms

Although Russo Business School stands for, promotes, and defends the rights of its staff and students to free intellectual inquiry and open debate it does not endorse the views expressed by academic or affiliated staff. Russo Business School staff and students should indicate they do not represent or speak for Russo Business School's views when they speak or write publicly. Only the executives of Russo Business School can be authorised to speak on behalf of Russo Business School.

Limitations on freedoms imposed are subject only to prohibitions, restrictions or conditions imposed by:

- a. law
- b. reasonable and proportionate regulation of conduct necessary for conducting Russo Business School's teaching and research activities and to foster the wellbeing of students and staff
- c. reasonable and proportionate regulation of conduct necessary for Russo Business School to undertake its legal duties including its duties to its visitors

- d. the rights of others to express themselves
- e. Russo Business School to reasonably deliver its courses.

When entering into collaboration, memorandum of understanding (MoU), affiliation or contractual agreements with third parties, Russo Business School shall take reasonable steps to minimise restrictions or conditions on academic freedom of any academic staff or students carrying out research or study under such arrangements.

5 Procedure

Students and staff are expected to be aware of this policy and use it as a guide to pursue intellectual inquiry and academic freedom in an ethical manner. Relevant policies outline further procedures for handling issues relating to academic integrity, grievances or misconduct. In particular, the Student Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct outline standards of behaviour; the Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure outlines the management of academic misconduct; the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure provides procedures for dealing with students' complaints; and the SRG Human Resource Grievance and Disputes Resolution Policy and Procedure deals with staff complaints.

5.1.1 Freedom of Speech

Russo Business School recognises the importance of freedom of speech and promotes an environment where all members of the community are free to express themselves, within the requirements of the law, and in accordance with this Policy.

5.1.2 Rights

Staff and students have the right to:

- f. Pursue knowledge and participate in scholarly debate wherever it may lead
- g. Teach, research, publish and express their opinion without institutional censorship
- h. A learning environment that fosters free intellectual inquiry through free speech and the acceptance of diverse opinions and experiences
- i. An environment where their opinions and beliefs are tolerated and accepted with respect.

5.1.3 Responsibilities

As an intellectual community, Russo Business School upholds the rights of its staff and students to free intellectual inquiry and academic freedom and considers them critical to teaching, research and scholarship. Russo Business School will support this right by providing an environment for all teaching and learning, research and scholarship activities that facilitates:

- Scholarly exchange of ideas and discussion of opinions
- Intellectual inquiry and freedom of expression
- Diversity of opinion
- Professional debate backed by evidence
- Academic integrity and honesty (refer Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure)
- Ethical conduct and judgment.

In addition to the standards of behaviour defined in the Staff Code of Conduct, Russo Business School staff are responsible for:

- Promoting a teaching and learning environment that facilitates the open pursuit of knowledge
- Encouraging diversity of opinion and debate
- Encouraging critical and independent thought
- Facilitating respectful and positive discourse
- Identifying themselves as members of, but not spokespersons for, Russo Business School.

Staff are expected to:

- Act with honesty and integrity in teaching, learning and research
- Uphold a commitment to academic scholarship and rigour in the construction of arguments with the appropriate use of evidence
- Respect and value the right of other staff and students to hold differing views
- Sustain the integrity of teaching, learning and research by taking action when academic integrity is compromised
- Act responsibly with respect to intellectual property rights.

6 Related documents

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Academic Honesty and Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- SRG Human Resource Grievance and Disputes Resolution Policy and Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure

Relevant legislation:

- *Higher Education Support Act 2003*

7 Review

Three years from commencement.

8 Accountabilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for review and approval of this policy with input from the Academic Board.

The policy is to be implemented via induction and training of staff and distribution to students and the Institute's higher education community via the website and other publications.

Delegated Authority	Delegation
Governance	
Board of Directors	Refer to the Terms of Reference
Academic Board	Refer to the Terms of Reference
Executives	
Chief Executive Officer	Relevant to Accountability Statement
Executive Dean	Relevant to Accountability Statement

9 Revision history

Policy & Procedure Version No	Policy & Procedure Sponsor	Approval Authority	Date of Approval	Date for next review
1/2022	Chief Executive Officer	Board of Directors	13/07/2022	13/07/2024