

## ***ACEx Misconduct Reporting Policy and Procedure***

### *Overview*

ACEx expects professional and appropriate conduct from its members at all times as outlined fully in the ACEx Code of Conduct. This involves scientific and ethical integrity, respectful behaviour towards others and equality of opportunity and treatment for everyone. Members of ACEx are expected to work proactively to promote good professional conduct within the Centre and our scientific community and to help each other to resolve issues, if they occur.

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this document is to establish the procedures that will be followed by ACEx in the event of misconduct being reported either against an ACEx member or an attendee of an ACEx organised event.

### *Scope*

The scope of this procedure is limited to:

1. Members or guests of the ACEx
2. Grievances linked to or based on deviations or violations from the ACEx Code of Conduct

### *Definitions*

ACEx Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member – A member of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Exciton Science.

ACEx Partner University – A university named in the ACEx Participants Agreement or any university where an ACEx member is employed or enrolled.

Partner Organisation – An organisation named in either the ACEx Participants Agreement or a named ACEx Affiliate Organisation.

### *Reporting a Violation*

While minor concerns can often be resolved by discussion with the parties involved, if appropriate, if the affected member is not able, or does not feel empowered to do this, they are encouraged to seek help from

- a trusted colleague
- the activity organiser
- A member of the ACEx Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- a member of the Executive Committee.

While this should be done as soon as possible, the fact that there has been a delay should not be used as a reason not to act or report a violation.

The purpose of the ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member is to be a point of contact/liaison to assist and support someone who may have grounds for a complaint. The ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee members commit to supporting anyone who raises a concern by listening to them, taking their concern seriously, considering their wishes, and by acting through the referral of the complainant to the correct channels for professional support and or making a formal complaint to the requisite university. You can find the list of members on the Exciton Science website's 'EDI' page. Contact [equity\\_diversity@excitonscience.com](mailto:equity_diversity@excitonscience.com) to reach all committee members.

The role of assessment and review of complaints lies with the ACEX partner university of the complainant. Therefore, if the complainant seeks to move forward with lodging a formal complaint, the ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member will refer the complainant to the relevant HR department at the ACEX partner university or organisation. All further action will be handled in accordance with the relevant university or organisation's policy.

#### *Further Information*

The ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member may speak to another member of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and or the Executive Committee if appropriate, to seek further advice on how to best assist the complainant, and while they may relay details of the incident, no identifying attributes will be disclosed unless the complainant provides express consent.

*Anyone who experiences, observes, or has knowledge of a violation of the ACEX Code of Conduct can bring it to the attention of one of the ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee members. It should also be reported to a representative of the university, if appropriate.*

It is acknowledged that a person may find it difficult to discuss a concern or make a statement, in which case they are encouraged to seek the help of a trusted friend and/or seek professional help from their workplace or university, trained counsellor, or another source. ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee members can guide the person where to seek help from within their University.

Misconduct reports can be made in confidence with no further action undertaken against the accused. The ACEX Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member must ensure that the person reporting the offending behaviour is appropriately advised of the support services available to them, as well as any options to pursue the matter further if they wish.

### *ACEx Events*

If an ACEx Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee member is notified of a situation, they should report the behaviour to an appropriate senior ACEx Member (the COO or a CI), with the express consent of the complainant, so that immediate action can be undertaken to reduce harm and risk to any member of the ACEx community.

In the event that a breach of the code of conduct has been reported at an ACEx event, and it is found by the Executive/EDI/organisers to require immediate action, the requisite senior person is granted full discretion, with no prejudice to further judgement, to ask the accused to leave the event as soon as possible.

It is important to emphasise that these actions are still at the discretion of the senior ACEx Member, and confidentiality will be of highest priority.

### *Managing Unacceptable Behaviour*

A formal report of misconduct or potential misconduct is not required for an employer to manage unacceptable behaviour. Action may be taken by the ACEx Executive or other senior ACEx members to manage and minimise damaging behaviour through conversations with the accused.

Management of problem behaviour does not necessarily need to be managed through a formal HR misconduct reporting process. However, advice on mediation is available.

### *Consequences*

If an ACEx person is found to have been in violation of the Code of Conduct through a formal investigation by their home institution HR department, it may be appropriate that the person be removed from their association with ACEx or suspended from engaging with ACEx for a specified period of time. This will be dependent on the findings and recommendations of their home institution.

Endorsed by the Executive: October 2021