

Nepean Community College Policy Against Abuse

RTO ID: 1223

1. Purpose

Nepean Community College (NCC) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all students, staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy outlines NCC's approach to preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting all forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, cultural, and digital abuse. The policy supports NCC's obligations under relevant NSW and Commonwealth legislation and reinforces NCC's zero-tolerance stance on abusive behaviour.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all NCC employees (permanent, temporary, casual)
- trainers and assessors
- students (including minors, vulnerable adults, and individuals with limited English literacy)
- volunteers
- contractors and service providers
- work-placement hosts and community partners
- visitors to NCC premises
- members of the College Council and governance bodies

3. Definitions

- **Abuse:** Any action or behaviour that causes harm, fear, intimidation, exploitation, or violation of a person's rights or wellbeing.
- **Physical Abuse:** Causing physical harm or threatening physical harm.
- **Emotional/Psychological Abuse:** Behaviour that demeans, humiliates, intimidates, or controls another person.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any unwanted or non-consensual sexual behaviour.
- **Financial Abuse:** Misuse or exploitation of a person's money, assets, or financial decision-making.
- **Cultural Abuse:** Actions that demean or disrespect a person's cultural identity, beliefs, or practices.
- **Digital Abuse:** Use of technology to harass, threaten, monitor, or harm another person.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide necessary care, support, or supervision, particularly for vulnerable individuals.

4. Policy Statement

NCC has zero tolerance for abuse in any form. NCC is committed to:

- ensuring all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness
- preventing abuse through education, awareness, and safe practices

- responding promptly and appropriately to allegations or incidents of abuse
- supporting affected individuals through trauma-informed and culturally sensitive approaches
- complying with mandatory reporting obligations
- maintaining safe learning and working environments across all NCC sites and programs

5. Principles

5.1 Safety First

The safety and wellbeing of students, staff, and community members is NCC's highest priority.

5.2 Respect and Dignity

All individuals have the right to be free from harm, intimidation, and discrimination.

5.3 Zero Tolerance

Abuse in any form will not be tolerated and will result in immediate action.

5.4 Accountability

All members of the NCC community share responsibility for preventing and reporting abuse.

5.5 Trauma-Informed Practice

NCC responds to disclosures with empathy, confidentiality, and support.

5.6 Cultural Safety

NCC recognises the importance of culturally safe practices, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, refugees, and culturally diverse learners.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 All Staff, Trainers, and Volunteers

- treat all individuals with respect
- report suspected or actual abuse immediately
- participate in required training
- follow NCC's Code of Conduct and reporting procedures
- support safe and inclusive learning environments

6.2 Students

- behave respectfully toward others
- report concerns about abuse affecting themselves or others
- comply with NCC behavioural expectations

6.3 Executive Management

- ensure compliance with legislation
- allocate resources for training, safety, and reporting systems
- oversee investigations and risk management

- ensure staff are trained in trauma-informed responses

6.4 HR / Administration

- maintain confidential records
- support reporting and investigation processes
- ensure recruitment and onboarding include screening and safety checks

6.5 Contractors, Partners, and Third-Party Providers

- must comply with NCC's Policy Against Abuse
- must ensure safe environments for students on placement or in external programs
- must cooperate with investigations and reporting requirements

7. Prohibited Conduct

The following behaviours are strictly prohibited at NCC or in any NCC-related activity:

- physical violence or threats
- verbal abuse, yelling, intimidation, or harassment
- bullying (in-person or online)
- sexual harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour
- discriminatory or racist behaviour
- coercion, manipulation, or controlling behaviour
- financial exploitation
- stalking or monitoring through digital means
- any behaviour that creates fear, distress, or harm

8. Reporting Abuse

Anyone may report suspected or actual abuse. Reports may be made to:

- NCC CEO
- RTO Compliance & Quality Assurance Manager
- NCC Admin Team
- NCC Complaints & Serious Wrongdoing process
- NSW Police (000 in emergencies)
- Child Protection Helpline (if minors are involved)
- Domestic Violence Line (1800 65 64 63) Reports may be made anonymously. NCC will protect individuals who report abuse from retaliation or victimisation.

9. Response and Investigation

When abuse is reported or suspected, NCC will:

- prioritise immediate safety
- provide support and referral to appropriate services

- notify relevant authorities where required
- conduct a fair, confidential, and timely investigation
- take disciplinary action where misconduct is substantiated
- review systems and practices to prevent recurrence

10. Training and Awareness

NCC will provide:

- induction training on abuse prevention and reporting
- refresher training every two years
- specialised training for staff working with vulnerable cohorts
- awareness materials for students in accessible formats

11. Related Documents

- NCC Code of Conduct
- NCC Child Safe Policy
- NCC Complaints & Serious Wrongdoing Procedure
- NCC Behaviour Management Plan
- NCC Misconduct & Removal Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Discrimination legislation
- Domestic and Family Violence legislation

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed every **two years at the beginning of Term 1**, or earlier if:

- legislative changes occur
- significant incidents arise
- NCC undergoes major operational changes

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