SOUTHERN ACADEMY OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

Southern Academy of Higher Education (SAHE)

Academic Freedom Policy

Table of Contents

1. Policy Statement 3
2. Scope 3
3. Policy Principles 3
4. Right to Academic Freedom 3
5. Responsibilities in Exercising Academic Freedom 4
6. SAHE's Responsibilities of Academic Freedom 4
7. Appeals 4

1. Policy Statement

The Academic Freedom Policy ('the Policy') provides the principles to safeguard, defend and promote academic freedom of expression at the Southern Academy of Higher Education ('SAHE' or 'the Academy'). This Policy provides a framework for staff and students of SAHE regarding their rights and responsibilities related to academic freedom.

1.1 Definitions

For definitions, please refer to the '*Dictionary of Terms*'

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all students and staff, including sessional/casual staff of SAHE.

3. Policy Principles

In accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, this Policy articulates how the Academy promotes and protects academic freedom. The academic freedom at SAHE is shaped by the following principles:

a. to explicitly demonstrate respect for the rights of others related to or impacted by freedom of expression;
b. to uphold the freedom to express views, theories or content in a professional manner, free from harassment, and in a way that does not constitute misconduct or is unlawful;

Academic freedom does not include the teaching of doctrines (religious, political or of other groups) or the dissemination of propaganda that is inconsistent with the stated purpose of SAHE nor does it allow for the dissemination of thoughts or materials that do not meet scholarly standards or may be detrimental to SAHE's reputation as a provider of higher education.

4. Right to Academic Freedom

4.1 Staff and Students

One of the core values of SAHE is to safeguard, defend and promote the traditional principles of academic freedom. That is to ensure staff and students at the Academy are free to engage in critical enquiry and public discourse without fear or favour. SAHE staff and students have the right to:

a. hold and express opinions about the operations of the Academy and higher education policies without fear of censorship, intervention, disadvantage or fear of its impact on their employment status;
b. participate in professional or representative academic bodies, student societies and associations;
c. participate in public debates and identify with the Academy when commenting within their field of expertise;
d. participate in public debate on issues outside a field of expertise and in a personal capacity when not speaking on behalf of the Academy
e. promote intellectually rigorous and open discussion in all forums and avoid actions that may inhibit freedom of inquiry and expression.

4.2 Invited and External Visiting Speakers

Invited visiting and/or external speakers have the right to:

a. seek permission to use the Academy's land or facilities, or speak at a meeting or event held at SAHE;
b. express opinions and engage in open and robust debate without fear of being harassed,

intimidated or vilified.

4.3 SAHE

SAHE has the right to:

a. determine the terms and conditions by which invited visiting and/or external speakers may use SAHE land and facilities or speak at a meeting or event held at SAHE;

b. refuse or withdraw permission, based on reasonable grounds, for any invited visiting and/or external speaker to use SAHE land and facilities or speak at a meeting or event held at SAHE.

5. Responsibilities in Exercising Academic Freedom

SAHE staff and students are required to respect and promote an open, supportive academic culture valuing the contributions and academic freedom of their colleagues and fellow students. Staff and students have the responsibility to:

a. demonstrate respect for diversity and individual academic views within the discipline of study;

b. act lawfully and express views with intellectual honesty;

c. commit to participating ethically and responsibly in the activities and decisions appropriate to their role and consistent with the principles of SAHE as described in this Policy.

6. SAHE's Responsibilities of Academic Freedom

The Academy has the responsibility to:

a. ensure that no member of staff or student suffers disadvantage or discrimination on any basis including race, gender, sexuality, age, religion and/or political belief;

b. ensure that academic freedom principles are at the forefront of the development and implementation of the Academy's administrative and governance policies;

c. recognise viewpoint diversity and the right to express opinions on the SAHE campus and in public forums such as the media;

d. ensure that it fulfils any other legal obligations with respect to the protection of staff and students;

e. investigate complaints and issues regarding abuses of or undue restrictions on academic freedom in accordance with the relevant SAHE policies.

7. Appeals

Staff or students may appeal a decision made under this Policy or if they believe their right to academic freedom has been restricted or limited. The appeal shall be reviewed as outlined in the Academy's *Student Grievance Management Policy* for students and the *Human Resources Management Policy* for staff.

Version Control

Version	v1.1
Review	The Academic Board will review this Policy in accordance with the Southern Academy of Higher Education *Policy Documents Review Schedule*.
Approving Body	Academic Board
Approval and Effective Date	31 May 2021
Policy Custodian	Dean
Policy Contact	Dean
Higher Education Standards Frameworks (Threshold Standard) 2015 (Cth)	B1.1 "Higher Education Provider" Category Standard 3.1, ss 2 Standard 3.2, ss 1, 3 Standard 4.1, ss 2 Standard 4.2, ss 2 Standard 6.1, ss 4
Benchmarking Institutes	Macquarie University Federation University James Cook University The University of Melbourne The University of Technology Sydney
Related Document	Dictionary of Terms Scholarly Activity Policy Academic Integrity Policy Ethics Clearance Policy and Procedure Intellectual Property Policy Human Resources Management Policy Quality Assurance Policy Teaching and Learning Plan

Related Legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 & 2021 (Cth) Higher Education Support Act 2003 Tertiary Education Quality Assurance Agency Act (2010)