



ACT Recovery College
learning · connection · opportunity · hope

STUDENT



HANDBOOK

2020



www.recoverycollegeact.org

learning · connection · opportunity · hope



Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people, the traditional custodians of this land on which we are meeting and pay respect to their Elders both past and present. I extend this respect to all indigenous people in attendance today.

I would also like to acknowledge mental health consumers and carers both past and present that have paved the way for groups like the ACT Recovery College to exist and flourish.



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WELCOME

Thank you for enrolling as a student at the ACT Recovery College (the College). We look forward to welcoming you to our courses throughout the year. Our courses are designed to assist you to develop skills and knowledge to become experts in your wellbeing, to make informed choices and fulfil your hopes, goals and ambitions. All our courses seek to inspire people to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives.

OUR MISSION, VISION, PRINCIPLES & PURPOSE

Mission Statement

The ACT Recovery College seeks to promote wellbeing and recovery by empowering individuals with the belief and ability to find and develop their own social, emotional and practical resources.

Vision Statement

The Canberra Recovery College – a place of learning, connection, hope and opportunity.

Core Principles

The ACT Recovery College is guided by the following principles:

- **Learning:** promoting person-centred education where the voice of the lived experience is heard and respected in equal partnership with clinicians and professionals.
- **Connection:** enhancing social inclusion and community belonging is central to ‘living a good life’.
- **Opportunity:** It’s never too late to learn new knowledge, attitude and skills.
- **Hope:** recovery is possible

Our Purpose

- Promote the control of and minimisation of the impacts of mental illness through provision of education, training and information
- Promote person-centred education where the voice of the lived experience is heard and respected in equal partnership with clinicians and professionals
- Promote and advance social inclusion, community belonging and wellbeing



OUR CHARTER

Our *Charter* outlines our values and expectations. These are the beliefs that underpin how we do things at the College.

- **We are all people.** It is sometimes useful to label the roles we play, such as 'client' and 'professional', or 'student' and 'teacher', but these labels do not change the fact that we are all people.
- **Living is learning.** The wisdom that often comes from life experience is immensely valuable. Often what you learn from tough times can guide you and others in profound ways.
- **All states of mind are human experiences.** There is nothing 'abnormal' about extreme emotions, hearing voices, high highs, low lows, and other ways of being in the world. If you have experienced it, it's a human experience.
- **Many heads are better than one.** When it comes to mental health, no one has all the answers. It helps to share what we know.
- **We call a spade a spade, with respect.** Our communication is clear, honest, direct and respectful. We encourage people to describe their experiences in their own words. We respect that what's true for one person may not be for another.
- **We focus on strengths.** We help people identify and build on one another's strengths. We don't get hung up on the challenges people face. A person's strengths can certainly include the things they've learned from mental distress.
- **It's for everyone.** The College is for anyone over 18 years old who wants to get involved. We do our best to remove any barriers people face in teaming or contributing to activities.
- **Miracles happen in safe environments.** We do our best to find out what works best for everyone and who learns or teaches at the College.
- **Growth happens outside our comfort zone.** Just as important as safety is the choice to step outside your comfort zone when you want to. At every level of the College, we encourage experimentation to learn and grow, recognising that this involves taking risks and helping people learn from any mistakes.



OUR LOGO



The vision for our logo was to reflect the College's values. Traditionally bluebells are emblematic of humility.

The colour, blue and green were chosen to symbolise tranquillity, dependability, trust, knowledge, growth, renewal, strength and health.

OUR TEAM

The team at the College are happy to provide you with support and guidance to ensure your enrolment and attendance at courses is as easy as possible. We hope that you enjoy learning at the College and find it a satisfying experience.



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ATTENDING COURSES

You will be contacted on the working day before each class you are enrolled in, to confirm your attendance. If you are unable to attend a class for any reason, please contact the College and let us know, so we can advise the Educator.

We expect that students are supported to speak freely in class discussions, without interruptions. The Educators will ensure each student is given a fair and equal chance to contribute and that discussion stays relevant to the topic and is purposeful. It is important to remember that we all have different opinions and perspectives, however if we disagree, we must be respectful of other students' point-of-view.

STUDENT WELLBEING AND LEARNING SUPPORT PLANS

We offer individual support to all students. It's a chance to sit down with the Education Co-Ordinator or Recovery College Manager – who have lived experience of mental health and recovery – to identify your educational, wellbeing and life goals. It's also a chance to discuss privately any access or learning support you might need.

It's also a space for sharing your lived experience, your hopes and ambitions and identify small steps you can take to help you achieve your goals.

EVALUATION

An important part of our quality assurance process is to gather data on students' wellbeing, goal attainment and learning journey. The ACT Recovery College has also only be funded for a two year pilot, and we are required to gather information to prove the effectiveness of our courses. You will be invited to contribute to the evaluation process.

STUDENT NEWSLETTER

The College produces a quarterly *Student Newsletter*. Students are encouraged to send in articles, poems, short stories or photographs that focus on recovery journeys and positive aspects of staying well. Submissions can be sent to this email:

admin@recoverycollegeact.org.

STUDENT VOICE

Your opinion is important to us. If you have any suggestions for courses you may like us to run in the future, or have any other ideas for the College, please email:

admin@recoverycollegeact.org. We also have an anonymous Feedback Box in our Reception area.



COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS

If you have any compliments or concerns, we also encourage you to talk to our team. If something is concerning you, we can work together to find a solution. If you do not feel comfortable discussing your concerns with members of our team, you can contact Simon Viereck, Executive Officer of the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC ACT) who is an independent person, who will look into your specific issue and help provide a resolution. **Ph:** 02 6249 7756 **Email:** simon.viereck@mhccact.org.au A copy of our complaints policy can be found in the Appendix

You can expect us to:

- provide you with a warm and professional welcome at all times
- attend to your enquires in an efficient, professional and friendly manner
- provide information, guidance and advice, taking into account what you have told us about your situation and requirements
- make every effort to provide accurate information about our courses
- ensure quality courses that promote learning, knowledge sharing, opportunity and self-direction
- and provide a safe and healthy learning and teaching environment
- in our actions and responses ensure the College environment is free from discrimination
- respect your personal beliefs, life choices, religious and cultural practices
- welcome your feedback.

We ask you to:

- provide us with any information relevant to your own wellbeing
- be punctual and call us as soon as you can if you run into difficulties ahead of facilitating a course
- help us to make your Educator experience enjoyable and beneficial by giving us constructive feedback and suggestions
- be considerate of others
- respect housekeeping rules, policies and guidelines
- respect the individual rights, including confidentiality, of all people attending the college
- approach us if you have questions or are not sure about anything.



STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Our *Rights & Responsibilities* policy outlines your rights and responsibilities and what is expected of you when you work or study at the College. All staff and students are expected to sign and abide by these *Rights & Responsibilities* prior to working at the College or attending a course.

Students have the right to:

- Be treated fairly and with respect by College staff and students
- Be treated in a warm and professional manner
- Privacy, dignity & confidentiality
- Quality provision of courses that provide hope, opportunity, personal control and appreciate individual needs and learning styles
- Complain through appropriate channels
- Be protected from all forms of harassment and discrimination
- Know about policies referring to them
- A safe & clean learning environment
- Have enquiries dealt with in an efficient manner
- Information, guidance and advice on courses
- Support for specific learning needs if you tell us about a disability or learning difficulty
- Have your personal beliefs, religious and cultural practices respected
- Express your views and be involved in developing the college

Students have the responsibility to:

- Treat other students and staff with respect and fairness
- Behave in an acceptable and appropriate manner towards other students and staff and to respect the property of the College and host community venues
- Refrain from swearing in classrooms and other learning areas
- Not behave in any way that could offend, embarrass or threaten others
- Limit use of mobile phones to emergency use at any time in the class
- Follow normal safety practices (eg: following both written and verbal directions given by staff)



- Ask for clarification about anything you are not sure about

Students should:

- Act in a responsible manner and foster mutual respect and understanding
- Respect the rights, beliefs and opinions of others
- Not act in a way that may be considered threatening or disruptive, or likely to cause physical or emotional harm
- Refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal drugs when attending the College

The College considers the following examples to constitute misconduct and subject to disciplinary procedures, or termination of your role as an Educator:

- Prevention or disruption of learning or other activities
- Violent, indecent, threatening or offensive behaviour or language
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises
- Theft, damage or misuse of College or host organisation's property, or the property of staff, students or visitors
- Action likely to cause injury or impair safety on College or host organisations premises
- Any act which constitutes a criminal offence
- Sexual, racial or other harassment of any staff member, student or visitor to the College

PERSONAL DISCLOSURE

It is important to decide what personal information you want to share e.g. disclosure of marital status, where you live, diagnosis, medication, salary, etc. Consider, is it necessary to share this information, will I feel comfortable about this later?

What to avoid

- Do not enter into discussions about medications.
- Do not burden other students or Educators with your problems or medical history.
- Do not disclose your personal contact details.

Students must maintain awareness that some topics may trigger mental distress in other students in the classroom e.g. stories about suicide, disordered eating etc. It is vital to use purposeful storytelling within a *DoNOHarm* framework when sharing relevant aspects of your story in a way that promotes recovery and fosters hope.



'DONOHARM: SAFE STORYTELLING' FRAMEWORK©2011

The ACT Recovery College operates under MIEACT's 'DoNoHarm: Safe Storytelling' Framework ©2011 (<https://mieact.org.au/>). This framework is a best-practice approach to communicating about mental distress.

Six Principles of *DoNoHarm*

1. Context / Purpose:

- a. Who is your audience?
- b. What role are you 'playing' when you tell your story?
- c. What messages are you trying to put across?
- d. What do you want people to take away from it?
- e. Is it age or audience appropriate?

2. Recovery Emphasis

- a. Recovery is a key part of addressing negative stigma.
- b. Focus on recovery aspects – how you live with the consequences of mental illness in the family.
- c. Doesn't exclude the hardships.
- d. Include where and how you got help.

3. Safe Talking

Avoid talk that may encourage a listener to copy behaviour or have the impression that such behaviours are normal. Details must not be shared about:

- a. Planning suicide or suicide attempts
- b. Methods of self-harm
- c. Use of drugs and alcohol as a way of coping with mental illness
- d. Sexual or physical abuse
- e. Description of personal trauma – whether as an adult or child
- f. Behaviours associated with eating disorders: e.g. weight control techniques, purging cycles or excessive exercise

4. Limits to Helping

- a. Listen
- b. Maintain appropriate boundaries; remember where you end and that there are limits to your capacity



- c. Offer useful information about help-seeking

5. Respectful, inclusive language

- a. Language plays a crucial part in creating stereotypes, myths and stigma.
- b. Use language that is respectful, inclusive, non-judgemental and has an emphasis on recovery.
- c. People 'live' with a mental illness (not suffer) - they are not defined by their mental illness, e.g.. 'living with schizophrenia' NOT 'a schizophrenic'.

6. Self-Care

- a. Looking after yourself is essential.
- b. Sharing stories is emotionally demanding.
- c. Monitor yourself closely.
- d. Debriefing opportunities.
- e. Know your limits and triggers.
- f. Expect the unexpected when talking about emotions

Talking about self-harm

- Avoid perpetuating common myths about self-harm.
- Avoid language used in media reports which may glamorise or sensationalise self-harming behaviour.
- Labelling people as 'cutters' or 'self-harmers' can lead to judgement and alienation of people.

Talking about Suicide

- Do acknowledge that suicidal thoughts happen to some people
- Do highlight that suicidal thoughts are a strong warning sign about not coping.
- Do emphasize the impacts and consequences.
- Do focus on encouraging help seeking and provide information on seeking help.
- Do promote recovery.
- Do not normalise, romanticise, glamorise, trivialise or encourage suicide as a solution.
- Do not provide detailed descriptions of places and methods.
- Do not mention celebrities who have completed suicide.



- Do not talk about suicide as a solution
- Do not talk about suicide as a way to cry for help or as a part of everyday life.
- Do not present data in a way that makes suicide seem common or acceptable.
- Do not normalise suicide or suicidal ideation
- Do not say you “survived” an attempt

If suicide is in your story

- Share what helped you.
- It is important to acknowledge:
 - that suicidal thoughts happen to some people
 - that people who have suicidal thoughts are not alone
- Emphasize if someone is feeling suicidal, to seek immediate help.

Use recovery-orientated language

Avoid saying	Consider replacing with
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful Suicide attempt• Unsuccessful Suicide attempt• Commit Suicide• Just a cry for help• Suicide prone person• Epidemic or spread of suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Suicide• Die by suicide• Taken their life• Non-fatal Suicide• Fatal Suicide• Person at risk of suicide• Help Prevent Suicide

Talking about Eating Disorders

- Present eating disorders as a serious mental illness accompanied by physical and psychological consequences rather than a lifestyle choice.
- Explore the impacts that eating disorders can have on families and friends.
- Do not detail specific behaviours, measurements and quantities, methods of purging, or body size and shape
- Do not present eating disorders as a glamorous option for dealing with problems
- Be careful not to reinforce the stereotype that only women develop an eating disorder.

Safe Talking about Medications and Alcohol and Other Drugs

- Do not detail specific types of drugs when talking about illicit drug and/or alcohol use



- Do not mention names of specific medications you used or currently use in your recovery
- Don't encourage self-medication

Further information

- Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT): <https://mieact.org.au/>
- The Mental Health Coordinating Council NSW developed the Recovery Oriented Language Guide in 2013. This was updated in 2018. This is an exceptional resource which can be found on their website: http://www.mhcc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Recovery-Oriented-Language-Guide_2018ed_v3_201800418-FINAL.pdf or please ask us for a copy.

HEALTHY, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Students should not attend classes when intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. If a student presents as intoxicated or under the influence of drug, staff will support you to leave the College safely, and encourage you to return another time. Refer to the ACT Recovery College *Work Health and Safety Policy*.

CONFIDENTIALITY

During a course, you may choose to disclose personal information, where relevant to the learning environment. Safe, personal disclosure and purposeful storytelling is encouraged.

Confidentiality is very important in the classroom. We ask that you respect the confidentiality of all students and educators and not share this information outside the classroom.

DUTY-OF-CARE

All staff are bound by 'Duty of care' requirements. This means that information remains confidential unless someone discloses they:

1. Are planning to harm themselves
2. Are planning to harm someone else
3. Or any other behaviour raising concern regarding the safety of the person, children or animals in their care

In these situations, the ACT Recovery College has a 'duty of care' to inform a third party – either your emergency support contact, mental health service or police.



USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO OR AUDIO EQUIPMENT

- The recording of any course sessions is not permitted, by students or educators.
- The use of still photography, video or audio equipment is not permitted, except in agreed circumstances.
- Consent forms are required to be signed for any photographs taken for use in promotional materials. It is not compulsory.

COURSE CANCELLATION

There are occasionally times a course has to be cancelled. In such instances, the College will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to students.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many people will be in a course?

Each course has two facilitators and a maximum of 12 students.

Who will my classmates be?

Your classmates will be a mix of people with lived experience, carers, University/CIT students, and people working in mental health or related areas.

Is the College the same as school, CIT or Uni?

The College is not the same as school, CIT or Uni. There are no exams. There may be homework tasks set to aid reflection or reinforce learning, but this is not marked or assessed. The atmosphere is about the sharing of experiences and learning from each other – as equals - in a safe environment.

What happens once I enrol?

Once you enrol, you will be invited to complete a Student Orientation and Wellbeing & Learning Plan session at the College. You will also receive confirmation information.

How many courses can I attend?

You can attend as many courses as you like.

How much does it cost?

All courses are free.

Who teaches the courses?

The courses are delivered by two Educators, at least one of whom is a person with a lived experience of mental health concerns, or caring for someone with mental health concerns. Educators also have professional skills or expertise relevant to the topic.

Can I bring a support person?

Yes, you are welcome to bring a support person to your courses. However, they will need to register as a student and participate in the classroom as a student.



Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns?

You can call or email the College at any time.

Ph: 02 6247 3821.

Email: admin@recoverycollegeact.org

What happens if I can't attend my course?

If you cannot attend your class, please let us know on the above email or phone. If you have not attended for more than two weeks in a row, your place may be offered to someone else on the waiting list.

RELVANT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Evacuation Procedures
What it is	This business rule outlines the processes for evacuation at Unit 2, (-11 Montford Cres, Lyneham
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all staff, educators, contractors, students and visitors of the ACTRC.

What to do

Actions that must be considered in every case of fire and smoke are RACE

- **REMOVE:** People from immediate danger.
- **ALERT:** Dial 000. State that there is a fire/smoke, location and your name. Alert nearby staff.
- **CONFINE:** fire & smoke. Close windows and doors if safe to do so.
- **EXTINGUISH:** or control fire if safe to do so or commence **Evacuation**.

Stages of Evacuation:

Stage 1: Smell Smoke or Fire Alert

- Investigate area to look for fire and prepare for RACE
- If location of fire is known, report via 000 and commence RACE
- Confine fire if possible.



- Extinguish fire if safe to do so.
- If location of fire is not known, still need to go to Stage 2 (evacuation of the building).

Stage 2: Evacuate the Building

- Fire Warden decides on/communicates best evacuation route. Complete evacuation of the building. Order of Evacuation: (note - applies to each room)
 1. Ambulant,
 2. Semi-Ambulant,
 3. Non Ambulant and
 4. Violent, aggressive or resistive.
- Collect documentation to be used for roll call.
- Commence evacuation, conducting search on the way, to ensure no one is left behind.
- Proceed to external evacuation area and conduct a roll call.
- Ensure anyone missing is reported to Emergency Service Personnel.
- Remain in evacuation area until notified of “stand down”.
- Do not re-enter the building until "stand down" is issued.
- “Stand down” After the ACT Fire & Rescue personnel announces "stand down", staff can return to the area.
- Do not move or alter anything in the fire-affected area.

Location of Fire Doors:

Doors located at the front, reception and Manager office and rear of the office

Location of Assembly Area:

Oval opposite the Recovery College front entrance.

Exit via either the main reception door or the door of the Managers’ office. Proceed across the road to the oval.

Code names

Code RED= fire

Code ORANGE= evacuation

Location of Fire Fighting Equipment:

- Extinguishers: To the right of the front door



- Fire blanket: In the kitchen
- Fire Warden: ACT Recovery College Manager on duty

Other information:

- Close but do not lock doors and leave the lights on, if safe to do so
- At all times follow the instructions of ACT Fire and Rescue and ACT Policing.

Post Incident:

- Attend to first aid if required, including psychological first aid.
- Conduct a debrief to evaluate the responses during the event and identify potential areas for improvement; document the outcome.

ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Feedback and Complaints
What it is	This business rule outlines the processes to provide feedback on their experiences with the organisation
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all staff, educators, contractors, students, volunteers and visitors of the ACT Recovery College.

POLICY STATEMENT

The ACT Recovery College offers all staff, educators, contractors, students, volunteers and visitors the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences with the organisation. The ACT Recovery College values this feedback and aims to manage negative feedback or complaints in a prompt, fair, transparent and consistent way. The ACT Recovery College is committed to using information gained from analysing any feedback and complaints received in our quality improvement processes.

A 'Feedback & Complaints' form is available on the ACT Recovery College website or by contacting the ACT Recovery College office. Complaints and feedback are also recorded in a 'Feedback and Complaints Register' and reviewed by ACT Recovery College staff and Board as part of annual organisational and strategic planning processes.

PRINCIPLES

- Complaints will be treated seriously, expeditiously and sensitively having due regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality and potential for victimisation.



- Concerns should be raised as early as possible to prioritise a swift resolution and ensure safety and wellbeing is maintained in the workplace.
- Information arising from the handling of any complaints must be treated confidentially.
- If a complaint is raised, all parties related to the complaint are required to participate in the complaint resolution process in good faith.
- The principles of natural justice will be observed throughout investigation of a complaint. This means that before a decision is made, all concerned parties have the right to be informed about the nature and content of the complaint/complaint, have the right to be heard by an unbiased decision-maker and have the right to have a witness present.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures are to be followed in response to feedback or complaint:

PROVISION OF FEEDBACK TO THE ACT RECOVERY COLLEGE

- Members of the public and/or stakeholders who would like to provide feedback or make a complaint to the ACT Recovery College are encouraged to contact the ACT Recovery College directly, preferably by phone or email.
- Anonymous feedback can also be left in the 'Feedback Box' located in the waiting area of the College.
- The complainant will be encouraged to first discuss and try to resolve the matter with the involved party and ACT Recovery College Manager, prior to lodging a formal complaint.
- All complaints and feedback received will be recorded in the feedback and complaint register.
- If the issue cannot be resolved, a formal complaint will need to be lodged to the ACT Recovery College.
- The ACT Recovery College will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint within three working days and provide a written response within ten working days.

ACT RECOVERY COLLEGE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Complaint Lodged

- Formal complaints need to be put in writing and can be received by either post or email. Complainants are strongly encouraged to provide a name and contact details.
- Anonymous complaints will be recorded and considered as part of planning and evaluation processes. Without contact details, a complaint cannot be formally responded to.



- All complainants should be given access to the ACT Recovery College's *Feedback and Complaints* policy. If complainants need assistance to complete the form, they should be encouraged to seek help from a third party.
- The ACT Recovery College will respond to a formal complaint within ten working days, although if the complaint is complex and requires significant investigation, ACT Recovery College reserve the right to contact the complainant and advise that additional time is required.
- If the matter is about another employee, this person will also be informed, in writing, within seven working days of the complaint being lodged.

The ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair of the Board should address the complaint with a view to resolving it within 14 days. This may take the form of the Manager or Chair prescribing certain actions to be adopted which address and resolve the issue/s.

- If the complaint is not resolved within 30 days, a mutually selected external mediator will meet with involved parties and investigate and resolve the problem. Possible sources of external mediators include peak organisations such as Relationships Australia or the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission.
- Written documents produced as part of the dispute should be held in a confidential file by the ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair for a period of twelve months and destroyed if no further issues arise.

Informal meeting

- The ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair will arrange an informal meeting with the complainant to discuss the complaint and come to a full understanding of it. More information may be requested, and the complainant must provide. The complainant can have an independent witness/support person attend this meeting.
- The ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair will provide written acknowledgement of the complaint received within ten days of this initial meeting.

Lodging a formal complaint

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should lodge a formal grievance. This means they must provide written details of their concerns and the grounds for the grievance, to the appropriate person according to following tables:



Complainant	Appropriate person
Student	ACT Recovery College Manager, unless the complaint is about the Manager, in which case it is lodged to the Chair of the ACT Recovery College Board
Casual Peer and/or Professional Educator	ACT Recovery College Manager, unless the complaint is about the Manager, in which case it is lodged to the Chair of the ACT Recovery College Board
MHJHADS Educator (ACT Health staff)	MHJHADS employee's Supervisor

Complainant	Appropriate process
Non-MHJHADS educator makes a complaint about another non-MHJHADS educator.	Recovery College Manager responds according to Recovery College policy.
A student or non-MHJHADS Recovery College Educator makes a complaint about an MHJHADS Recovery College Educator.	Recovery College Manager responds saying that the complaint has been received and forwarded on to the Supervisor of the MHJHADS staff member. In addition, the Recovery College Manager informs the MHJHADS Recovery College Implementation Support Officer.
MHJHADS Educator makes a complaint about another MHJHADS Educator.	Recovery College Manager responds saying that the complaint has been received and encourages the complainant to inform their MHJHADS Supervisor. In addition, the Recovery College Manager informs the MHJHADS Recovery College Implementation Support Officer.
MHJHADS Educator makes a complaint about Recovery College staff.	Recovery College Manager responds saying that the complaint has been received and encourages the complainant to inform their MHJHADS Supervisor. The Recovery College Manager will follow the Recovery College complaints process in conjunction with the MHJHADS Supervisor. In addition, the Recovery College Manager informs the MHJHADS Recovery College Implementation Support Officer. If the complaint concerns the Recovery College Manager, then the complaint will be lodged with the Chair of the ACT Recovery College Board, and the above steps will be taken.

Investigation

- On receipt of a formal complaint the ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair of the ACT Recovery College Board,
- will investigate



- refer to organisational policies and procedures
- will take all reasonable and cost-effective steps to gather any information that relates to the complaint. If other people are involved in the complaint, these people will be advised of the complaint and notified that they may need to be interviewed.

Resolving the Complaint

- The ACT Recovery College will negotiate with the complainant to implement an resolution to the issue that is acceptable to both parties
- How this occurs will depend on the nature of the complaint.
- The complainant will be encouraged to bring someone with them to this negotiation.
- The outcomes of a formal grievance process may include (but not be limited to):
 - a verbal or written apology
 - a change in policy or procedure
 - changes in work practices
 - training of staff
 - counselling of staff
 - disciplinary action

Report, Record and Take Action

- The ACT Recovery College will document the resolution, particularly any action committed to be undertaken as a result of investigation of the complaint.
- All feedback, complaints and formal grievance information will be used in organisational evaluation and quality improvement practices.

Lodging an Appeal

- Complainants [or their advocates] may lodge an appeal if they disagree with a decision made by the ACT Recovery College Manager or Chair.
- An appeal should be made in writing and submitted to the Board for investigation and response.
- A timeframe for this response will be dependent on the nature of the complaint and will negotiated on an individual basis.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the appeal outcome, they will be encouraged to take the matter to an external agency such the ACT Human Right Commission for further guidance and support.



FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS FORM

HOW TO MAKE FEEDBACK / COMPLAINTS

There are a number of ways to contact the ACT Recovery College with your comments:

Complete and submit the Feedback Form below and email it, or hand it in or post it to our office

- Address: Unit 2, 9-11 Montford Cres Lyneham.
- Email us at: admin@recoverycollegeact.org
- Phone us on: 02 6247 3821

Name: _____

Date: ___/___/___

Comment: [If you need more space, please attach another sheet]

What, if any, action would you like to see?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

If you would like to be contacted with a response, please leave your contact details:

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please be aware that while anonymous complaints will be considered, feedback cannot be provided.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The ACT Recovery College staff will review / investigate your comments and suggestions. Based on our findings one or more of the following will occur:



- If the individual has provided contact details they will be contacted by staff to acknowledge receipt of their feedback
- If the matter is a complaint the individual will be notified of the outcomes of ACT Recovery College's investigation and its intended actions in written form. We aim to do this within 10 working days, however we will advise you if we need more time. Our response will detail how the individual may respond if they are not happy with the outcome.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint there may be further follow-up in an agreed timeframe.
- If the individual is not satisfied with the conclusion they may take the matter further to the ACT Recovery College Board. Contact details provided upon request.
- The whole process will be documented and used to inform Recovery College's quality improvement process.

Please note that student wishing to make a complaint may do so through a third party, advocate or via their Peak Body.

ACT Mental Health Consumer Network
Level 2, The Griffin Centre,

20 Genge Street, Canberra City ACT 2601

P: (02) 6230 5796

E: admin@actmhcn.org.au

Carers ACT

2/80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt ACT 2615

P: (02) 6296 9900

E: carers@carersact.org.au

ACT Human Rights Commission

P: (02) 6205 2222, or

E: lhuman.rights@act.gov.au



ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Privacy Policy
What it is	This business rule outlines the processes for adherence to Privacy Principles
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all staff, educators and students of the ACT Recovery College.

PRIVACY

Background

The ACT Recovery College may collect information from organisations and individuals for a variety of reasons. Except as outlined in this policy The ACT Recovery College will not on-sell or disclose, any information collected too another person, organisation or agency unless, permission has been granted or where required or authorised by or under Australian law, or a court/ tribunal order.

Procedure

The College will take reasonable steps to ensure it complies with the Australian Privacy Principles (APP). As such the below indicates how The College addresses the APP.

Part 1 - Consideration of personal information privacy

Open & transparent management of personal information – APP 1

The ACT Recovery College believes in being open and transparent about the personal information we collect, how we collect it, why we collect it and how we will use it. Whilst being open and transparent about our processes, privacy and confidentiality of information we collect and store is paramount to us and as such we will only discuss information we have collected with relevant individuals, i.e. if the individual has given the College permission or as required or authorised by or under Australian law, or a court/ tribunal order.

Anonymity & pseudonymity – APP 2

When providing information or making an enquiry to the College individuals have the right to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym.

When utilising the College website only low level non identifying metadata including IP address is collected to enable statistical analysis of views per page on our website etc.



Part 2 - Collection of personal information

Collection of solicited personal information – APP3

- Information will be collected through registration forms, during the process of registering for The College communications such as our e-newsletter and during membership application and renewal processes. Information provided during the membership process may include individual information as well as organisational information. Any individual information provided on behalf of an organisation will be used solely for the purpose of disseminating member relevant information to the member organisation.
- Information relating to individuals (including internal and external staff/ consultants) and organisations will be stored within the ACT Recovery College Database.

Policy Statement

The College may collect information from individuals and organisations. The ACT Recovery College will therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure we comply with, and store all information in line with the Australian Privacy Principles as outlined in the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012.

Dealing with unsolicited personal information – APP4

In the event that the College receives unsolicited personal information about any individual, and it is unlikely that the College would have been provided with this information, then the College will destroy or de-identify the information as soon as practical and if lawful to do so. If it is likely the information could have been collected from an individual or a third party organisation (such as in the case of membership of the College) the following will apply.

Notification of the collection of personal information – APP5

In the event the College receives unsolicited information about an individual and the information is relevant and it is likely the College could have collected it from the individual through our processes, the College will inform the individual, including how the College will use the information as soon as practical.

Part 3 - Dealing with personal information

Use or disclosure of personal information – APP6

- Information will only be provided to third parties required for the storage of and dissemination of contact details unless required or authorised by or under an Australian law, or a court/ tribunal order.
- Information collected by the College will be used for the following purposes:
 - Information about upcoming events (including possible training events)
 - Information the College considers relevant to our members
 - Information the College considers relevant to the broader mental health sector



- Information will not be used for other purposes unless:
 - The individual has consented
 - It is somehow required or authorised by or under an Australian law, or a court/tribunal order.
 - It is required to locate a missing person
 - It is required for the purpose of a confidential alternative dispute resolution

Direct marketing – APP7

The College will only use personal information collected from an individual for the purpose of direct marketing where the College believes the individual may have an interest in the material. All direct marketing will provide a simple way of requesting to not receive any future direct marketing campaigns.

Cross-border disclosure of personal information – APP8

- Information is stored within Australia.
- In the unlikely event that the location of information storage changes in the future the College will update this policy.

Adoption, use or disclosure of government related identifiers – APP9

The College does not use government related identifiers. The College will not disclose a government identifier should we become aware of it unless permission has been given for us to disclose it, or it is reasonably necessary for The College to carry out its activities or obligations or unless required or authorised by or under Australian law, or a court/ tribunal order.

Part 4 - Integrity of personal information

Quality of personal information – APP10

The College will take reasonable steps to ensure information collected and stored by the College about an individual or organisation is accurate, up-to date and complete.

Security of personal information – APP11

- Information stored within the database will only be available to internal College staff. Staff will only use information stored within the Database that is relevant to their specific role or assigned tasks for College operations.
- Where personal information is no longer required (or requested by the individual) The College will destroy, delete or de-identify the information as long as it is legal to do so.
- All hard copy forms that contain personal information will be stored securely until such time as they are no longer required in hard copy at which time they will be securely disposed of.



- Soft copy forms that contain personal information will be stored securely on our server with restricted access.
- All College staff sign and agree to maintaining confidential, information they are privy to during the course of their employment with the College.
- All third party service providers used for storing and transmitting data have agreed to maintain the privacy of the College data.

Part 5 - Access to, and correction of, personal information

Access to personal information – APP12

- Access to information stored within the the College database will only be provided to the individual seeking access, unless the information relates to an organisation in which case access to information will only be provided to the nominated contacts within the database.
- Requests for access to information are to be made in writing to the College and will be responded to within a reasonable timeframe and where possible within the format requested.
- The College may reasonably refuse to provide an individual access to the information stored where
 - It would pose a serious threat to life, health or safety of any individual, or to public health or public safety
 - Giving access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of other individuals
 - The request for access is frivolous or vexatious
 - The information relates to existing or anticipated legal proceedings between the entity and the individual, and would not be accessible by the process of discovery in those proceedings
 - Giving access would reveal the intentions of the entity in relation to negotiations with the individual in such a way as to prejudice those negotiations
 - Giving access would be unlawful
 - Denying access is required or authorised by or under Australian law or a court/ tribunal order
 - Both of the following apply:
 - The entity has reason to suspect that unlawful activity ,or misconduct of a serious nature, that relates to the entity’s functions or activities has been, is being or may be engaged in;



- Giving access would be likely to prejudice the taking of appropriate action in relation to the matter
 - Giving access would be likely to prejudice one or more enforcement related activities conducted by, or on behalf of, an enforcement body
 - Giving access would reveal evaluative information generated within the entity in connection with a commercially sensitive decision-making process
- In the event the College is unable to provide access to information, the College will provide the reason access has not been granted and provide information on how to make a complaint about access not being granted.

Correction of personal information – APP13

- The ACT Recovery College will work to ensure information maintained within our database remains accurate, current and complete, however in the event that we are notified of inaccurate information we will make the requested changes within 2 working days of receiving written notification from the relevant person.
- Where the ACT Recovery College is unable to make the requested changes, the College will provide the reason the request will not be actioned and information on how to make a complaint.

ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Support of ACT Recovery College Students Experiencing Distress
What it is	This business rule outlines the processes for both Clinical Educators and Peer Educators (Educators) at the ACTRC to follow when a student is experiencing distress.
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all students of the SESRC. It is to be used by all Educators delivering courses for the SESRC.

Background

The ACTRC provides educational courses underpinned by the philosophy of mental health recovery. People with a lived experience of mental distress attending ACTRC are considered students rather than clients or patients. The adoption of an educational recovery paradigm recognises and makes use of students’ skills, experiences, talents, strengths and resources and emphasises the reciprocal relationships between people with professional experience, people with a lived experience, their families and Carers.



ACTRC Educators draw on professional experience and lived experience to provide education. There are always two Educators facilitating each course – usually a Peer Educator and a Clinical or Professional Educator. At the beginning of every course, the Educators negotiate a learning agreement with the students and acknowledge that the transformational learning process can create some personal discomfort.

It is recognised that a student may, at times, experience distress that goes beyond this anticipated discomfort. This distress may be related to an individual's mental health concerns, past experiences, family disruption, social or financial difficulties or issues raised during the course.

What to do

Provision of Support for a Student Experiencing Distress

- Empathy, respect, due diligence and care needs to be afforded to any student experiencing any type of distress. The approach used will depend on the level of distress the student is experiencing and consideration of safety for the individual and others.
- Upon noticing a student is experiencing distress, the Educator/s uses active listening skills and empathy to provide the student with the opportunity to express his/her concerns and take action to decrease the distress if possible.
- The Educator/s is to use his/her discretion to assess whether to provide support during the class time or wait until the end of the session. Educators may consider one person leaving the classroom to provide support to the student so as not to disrupt class time. This should be negotiated between the two Educators present.
- Where appropriate, the Educator/s should support and engage the person to link with his/her treating clinician or duty officer to provide suitable support.
- Where appropriate, the Educator/s should support the person to link with the Acute Care Team or other suitable support options.
- If additional support is required to manage the situation, the Educator/s should contact the ACTRC Manager. All Educators are provided with the relevant contact details.
- Educators are reminded that, in the context of the ACTRC, people with mental health conditions are students, not clients or patients. It is not the role of the Educator to become the primary clinician in the event of a student experiencing distress.

Documentation

- Any critical incidents or accidents should be reported to the ACTRC Manager and an incident report completed.



When to use it

This business rule must be used by SESRC Educators whenever a student experiences emotional distress.

Why the rule is necessary

The rationale for the business rule is to:

- Enable effective support at the SESRC for students experiencing distress.
- Ensure Educators provide support to students experiencing emotional distress that is in keeping with the educational environment, whilst providing due diligence and care for all students.

Who is responsible

The ACTRC is responsible for ensuring:

- Educators are provided with information on the emergency management procedures of teaching venues. - Appropriate procedures are followed in the case of a critical incident or accident. Educators are responsible for:
 - Providing suitable support for students who have experienced distress.
 - Reporting critical incidents or accidents to the ACTRC Manager
 - Following the emergency procedures of the venue.

ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Work Health and Safety Policy
What it is	This business rule outlines the Work Health and Safety requirements for the ACT Recovery College
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all staff, educators and students of the ACT Recovery College.

Background

The ACT Recovery College aims to promote and maintain the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of all individuals in the workplace. The organisation will comply with all relevant federal and state legislation to ensure a safe workplace and all



personnel have a responsibility to ensure a safe workplace by implementing safe systems of work.

ACT Recovery College will make resources available to comply with relevant Acts and Regulations associated with workplace health and safety (WHS) and to ensure that the organisation's workplace is safe and without risk to health. The physical aspect of this policy and related WHS documents apply to the location of the ACT Recovery College office and other venues where business of ACT Recovery College occurs.

ACT Recovery College will undertake regular reviews and take steps to enhance WHS on a continuous improvement basis.

In using language as outlined in WHS legislation, the term 'worker' will refer to employees (paid), volunteers, students on placement and contractors (and their employees). As it is not reasonably practical for ACT Recovery College to offer the same benefits to all those classed as a worker under the Act, other terms such as employee and volunteer will be used explicitly where applicable.

A copy of this policy will be provided to all workers and available to all members and visitors on request.

Duty of Care

ACT Recovery College has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that workers and attendees of the office are at no risk to their health and wellbeing.

A breach in ACT Recovery College's duty of care is recognised where the organisation is at fault.

Workplace Health and Safety Management System

A workplace health and safety management system will be implemented by the Administration and Student Support Officer and monitored by the Recovery College Manager. Please See Appendix One: Workplace Health and Safety Management System for information on roles and responsibilities for workplace health and safety.

A regular assessment of WHS risks will be conducted by the Administration and Student Support Officer and, where appropriate, prepare an action plan to mitigate those risks. This information will be recorded in the WHS Hazards Register. WHS will be a standing item for Staff Meetings, any issues to be recorded in the WHS Hazards Register and, where appropriate, prepare an action plan to mitigate the risks.



ACT Recovery College Business Rule

Name:	Access to Confidential Information
What it is	This business rule outlines the processes for access to confidential information.
Risk Rating	Medium
Review Date	October 2020
Who it applies to	This business rule applies to all students of the ACT Recovery College. It is to be used by all Educators delivering courses for the ACT Recovery College.

Background

The ACT Recovery College is committed to transparency in its operations and to ensuring it is open to public scrutiny. It must also balance this with upholding the rights of individuals to privacy and of the organisation to confidentiality on sensitive matters.

ACT Recovery College will prevent unauthorised persons gaining access to an individual's confidential records and permit individuals access to their own records when this is reasonable and appropriate.

Accordingly, access to some ACT Recovery College documents and records will be limited to specified individuals and not be available to others for viewing. This policy applies to the internal records and unpublished materials of ACT Recovery College.

What to do

Board and Committees

The minutes, papers and materials from any Board meeting will be open to members of the organisation following the meeting at which they are considered, except where the Board passes a motion to make any specific paper or material confidential.

The minutes, papers and materials from any Sub-Committee meeting will be open to Board members and staff, with the exception of information relating to any matter the Sub-Committee deems confidential. These items will not be available to members of the association.

ACT Recovery College students

A file is held for each student and contains:

- Student contact details
- emergency next of kin contact details
- a copy of the student consent forms



- student wellbeing and learning plan and any evaluation data submitted .

A list of students will be available to staff as required. Personal information about students (including address and contact details) is confidential and may only be accessed by Senior Staff.

ACT Recovery College Staff

A personnel file is held for each staff member and contains:

- Staff contact details
- emergency next of kin contact details
- a copy of the employee's contract
- all correspondence relating to job description changes, salary changes, leave entitlements such as long service leave, continuous service leave, unpaid and parental leave.

Access to personnel information is restricted to:

- the individual staff member accessing their own file
- the Manager
- the Admin and Student Support Officer

Course Material

The Intellectual property and copy right in all material produced for the ACT Recovery College is protected. Any unauthorized reprint or use of course materials or other documentation developed for the ACT Recovery College is prohibited. No part of course materials developed may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without express written permission from the Manager. This excludes routine processes required for facilitating a course within the ACT Recovery College. All course material developed must be original material. Any sources used must be correctly referenced and acknowledged.

Corporate records

Corporate records are those that contain confidential or commercially sensitive information about the organisation's business. They include:

- financial accounts and records
- taxation records
- corporate correspondence with Office of Regulatory Services and other bodies.
- access or user name information
- records of staff or other internal meetings



- project management files
- contracts between the organisation and other parties

Access to these records is limited to the Manager and Admin and Student Support Officer.

Requests for access – general records

Any request for access to information should be directed to the Admin and Student Support Officer who will:

- make available to staff or Board members information that they are entitled to access
- refer any request from ACT Recovery College members or the public for access to the organisation's records or materials to the Manager.

In considering a request, the Manager will take into consideration:

- a general presumption in favour of transparency
- the relevant provisions of the ACT Recovery College constitution regarding information to be made available to ACT Recovery College members
- the business, legal, and administrative interests of ACT Recovery College including commercial confidentiality and privacy obligations.

Where an external party requests access to information that requires staff to devote time to collating, copying or otherwise making material accessible, the Executive Officer may determine a fee to be charged.

Appeals

Individuals who are refused access to their own records or information files may appeal by contacting the Executive Committee who will review the decision in the context of this rule.