

1. Purpose

This policy aims to provide a comprehensive framework outlining the principles and processes that govern recruitment, and staff rights and responsibilities. It is designed to ensure a respectful, inclusive, and productive work environment where all staff feel valued and supported. By promoting transparency and accountability, this policy seeks to uphold organisational integrity while adhering to all relevant legal and regulatory requirements. It establishes clear guidelines to create and maintain a culture of professionalism, fairness, and compliance across all aspects of employment at the Country Universities Centre Norfolk Island (CUCNI).

The policy affirms the organisation's commitment to being a culturally safe and inclusive workplace. It sets out expectations, responsibilities and processes to prevent and respond to racism, discrimination, harassment and vilification. The organisation recognises that racism can be individual, interpersonal, institutional and systemic, and is committed to identifying and addressing all forms.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the CUCNI:

- Staff,
- Board members,
- Rights and responsibilities of staff regarding their employment

3. Policy

A. Recruitment

The recruitment process for new staff will be managed collaboratively by the Centre Manager, the Board, and other relevant stakeholders. These parties are responsible for ensuring a transparent and equitable process.

Equal Opportunity

CUCNI is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing a work environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Furthermore, the CUCNI is committed to creating a diverse workplace and culture that reflects equal opportunity principles in the recruitment of staff. The organisation is committed to providing a workplace that is fair, inclusive and free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Equal opportunity means ensuring that all people — regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, cultural background, family responsibilities or any other protected attribute — have equitable access to employment, development and participation. We recognise that diversity strengthens our organisation and enhances the quality of our services. All staff and contractors are expected to contribute to a respectful, culturally safe environment where differences are valued and where decisions, systems and behaviours actively support fairness and inclusion.



All recruitment and selection procedures and decisions will reflect CUCNI's commitment to providing equal opportunity by assessing all potential candidates according to their skills, knowledge, qualifications, and capabilities. No regard will be given to factors such as age, gender, marital status, race, religion, physical impairment, or political opinions. The organisation will regularly review recruitment, promotion and performance systems for bias.

Advertising

CUCNI will ensure it has the best opportunity to attract the best available staff by broadly advertising (internally and externally as deemed appropriate) all vacant remunerated positions and volunteer vacancies, as well as sharing with existing staff and volunteers. As CUCNI is located on a remote island and staff need to be residents of Norfolk Island, the main avenues besides CUCNI website and social media will be the local newspaper and/or radio as appropriate.

Selection

The selection process for casual staff and volunteers includes consideration of an expression of interest and/or resume of the candidate, interview and reference checks. If the role is permanent part-time or full-time, and the number of candidates meeting the criteria for the role exceeds the positions available, a panel will be used to select the most suitable candidate(s). Each stage will be conducted in a manner that is fair and consistent for all candidates. The panel will evaluate candidates based on predefined criteria relevant to the job.

Offers and Onboarding

Successful candidates will be offered employment in writing in the form of a letter of offer, subject to satisfactory police check and, if not an Australian citizen or resident, proof of the right to work in Australia. Upon completion of employment paperwork, new staff will undergo an onboarding process which includes coverage of the purpose of CUCNI, values and culture, and provide them with the tools and information necessary to succeed in their new role, including relevant databases (Salesforce), documents (SharePoint), intranet (The Nest) and payroll system (Xero).

B. Behavioural Expectations

CUCNI is committed to promoting a harmonious workplace environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation. CUCNI celebrates creativity, diversity, and inclusion. There is a strong commitment to creating an environment where staff, students, Directors, and members of the CUCNI community are treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect. The organisation rejects all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment and vilification and commits to being an actively anti-racist organisation, not merely non-racist.

CUCNI is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing all staff with equal access to available work opportunities, and taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the working environment for all staff and visitors is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, vilification, and victimisation (together known as unacceptable behaviour) during work activities and at work related events. CUCNI does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment in all forms, vilification and victimisation relating to:

- gender,
- sexuality,
- pregnancy or potential pregnancy,
- marital/domestic/relationship status,



- disability (including physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric, neurological, and learning disability, physical disfigurement, the presence in the body of an organism capable of causing disease),
- race, colour, national extraction, social origin, descent, and ethnic, ethno-religious or national origin,
- age,
- family responsibilities, family status, status as a parent or carer,
- racial classification,
- religious or political affirmation, views, or belief, or
- personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

Staff must:

- Treat others with respect and cultural sensitivity
- Comply with this policy and related procedures
- Report racism, discrimination or harassment
- Participate in training and capability building
- Avoid microaggressions by choosing language and behaviour that is respectful, inclusive and free from stereotypes or assumptions.

Staff must not:

- Engage in unacceptable behaviour when participating in any work-related activity
- Aid or encourage any other person to engage in unacceptable behaviour
- Make racial slurs, jokes, stereotypes or derogatory comments
- Exclude individuals based on race or cultural background
- Use mocking accents, names, cultural practices or appearance
- Engage in online harassment or discriminatory content

CUCNI will:

- Provide information on appropriate workplace behaviour,
- Enforce a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of unacceptable behaviour,
- Provide guidance to staff on how to deal with unacceptable behaviour,
- Support all staff to have complaints dealt with promptly in a manner that is supportive, respectful, and fair.

C. Grievances

CUCNI is committed to ensuring that staff are treated fairly and seeks to establish a culture of trust and respect between CUCNI and its staff by creating an environment where any issues can be addressed and resolved in a timely and fair manner. All CUCNI staff can raise concerns, lodge complaints, and receive an appropriate resolution to all matters at work. CUCNI takes all complaints seriously and works towards an amicable resolution. CUCNI provides staff with a confidential and safe environment to voice their concerns.

What is considered a Grievance

Grievances may be lodged about matters that occur within the workplace that are considered bullying, discrimination, harassment, vilification, unfair or unjust treatment, or any other dispute that affects the nature of a staff's work. This does not include matters covered under whistle-blower



protections, such as unethical, illegal, corrupt, fraudulent, or otherwise undesirable conduct involving CUCNI.

Examples of workplace grievances covered under this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Interpersonal conflicts between staff.
- Decisions relating to engagement, transfer, or promotion of staff.
- Terms and conditions of employment.
- Suspension, termination, or other disciplinary measures taken towards staff.

Note that open communication as to work expectations and timelines, and communicating when work does or does not meet the expectations, is normal business practice and staff must possess sufficient emotional intelligence to receive and respond to constructive feedback in a timely and appropriate manner.

Making a Grievance

CUCNI staff have a right to a fair and just working environment. If staff experience any action or behaviour from other staff and associates of CUCNI, they can express their concerns to be addressed. There are three options for addressing the grievance:

- *Informal:* Where the staff addresses their concern directly with the person or people involved in the grievance. This should be done verbally, by explaining the matter that has occurred and why a grievance has been raised. It is preferable to address matters informally, where possible, as the parties involved may be unaware of the effect of their action or behaviour, which can lead to quickly resolving the matter. The staff raising the concern is expected to identify that they are about to raise an informal grievance and provide the other staff with the option of having a third person present as witness to the discussion. This may mean scheduling the discussion for another time. Staff are expected to continue working cooperatively and respectfully in the meantime until the informal grievance is addressed. It may also be appropriate to schedule discussion on the informal grievance rather than proceeding immediately, such as in situations where a staff member feels elevated emotionally and a break is appropriate before calm engagement can resume.
- *Management:* A CUCNI staff member that wishes to raise an informal grievance but does not wish to do so directly with the person concerned, may raise it with the Centre Manager or, if the grievance is regarding the Centre Manager, with the Company Secretary. The Centre Manager and/or Company Secretary may opt to speak with both parties separately to identify a solution.
- *Formal:* If a CUCNI staff does not feel safe or comfortable to raise an informal grievance, or if the staff raises a grievance informally or through management and is not satisfied with the outcome, a staff may opt to lodge a formal complaint. This should be submitted in writing and signed and submitted to the Centre Manager. It should include information about the matter such as date, time and location, who is involved as a party to the grievance or as a witness, including relevant details and attachments as appropriate. Upon receiving the formal complaint, the Centre Manager may take carriage of the grievance or may opt to have a Board Member take carriage of it.

Investigation of the Grievance



All grievances will be treated seriously, confidentially, and impartially. The investigation and outcome will be conducted in a timely manner. Any information related to the grievance will only be shared with the relevant staff to complete a thorough investigation. The investigator will consider all relevant evidence, including any documents or statements from the staff raising the grievance and any witnesses, as well as any other evidence related to the grievance. The staff raising the grievance will normally be interviewed during the investigation. Where the grievance relates to another person's behaviour, the person does have a right to be informed and share their perspectives for consideration, in writing and signed. Staff will be kept informed of the investigation's progress and outcome.

Support Available

Staff who lodge a grievance will be supported throughout the process, including during the investigation, and following the outcome. The staff may also opt to have an independent support person who may be present during any interviews or meetings during the process. An Employee Assistance Program is available to all staff for support. Depending on the nature of the grievance, reasonable adjustments may be made for the staff involved, such as reassignment of tasks.

Outcome of the Investigation

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will determine if the grievance is substantiated or unsubstantiated:

- *Substantiated grievances* will be addressed appropriately, and appropriate action will be taken. Action taken may include, but is not limited to, formal apologies, official warnings, disciplinary action, and employment changes such as reassignment.
- *Unsubstantiated grievances* will be reported back to the complainant with a written explanation of what the findings have been during the investigation and why the conclusion has been reached.

It may also be determined that the grievance is *unwarranted*, such as where it is based upon normal business interaction (in which case the complainant may be guided in communications skills or other training) or that the grievance has been *fabricated* (in which case action may be taken against the staff in line with the Code of Conduct).

External Options

If the complainant does not accept the outcome of the investigation, they may seek external advice and support. This may include accessing independent legal advice, lodging a case with the Fair Work Ombudsman, or contacting the Australian Human Rights Commission.

D. Working from Home or other Location

CUCNI is committed to ensuring a workplace that is flexible and contemporary in its work arrangements with staff to promote engagement and retention, while balancing the importance of face-to-face interactions between students and staff in the CUC model. Whilst staff who are staffing the Centre are expected to be present in the Centre, there may be some roles, projects or tasks which can be worked on remotely such as from home or when off-island. Reasons for working from home, as well as guidelines and procedures to support staff to balance safety, wellbeing, organisational goals and requirements, and flexibility in employment, must be considered.

The following aspects should be considered by CUCNI staff regarding working from home:

- That the CUCNI model promotes face to face support and human interactions as a point of difference to remote student services provided by tertiary institutions



- Staff should ensure they can still participate in scheduled meetings, such as by ensuring a Teams connection is available and they have adequate internet access from their remote location.
- Certain aspects of CUCNI employment must be performed from the Centre. This includes student engagement, student orientations to the Centre, supporting an inclusive student environment, Centre events, community engagement including people who come into the Centre making enquiries and seeking course guidance.
- Cloud-based approaches will assist access to required materials for staff to work remotely.
- CUCNI Staff will ensure measures are in place to ensure security precautions are taken with technology when working remotely.
- Performance when working from home will be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure the balance between workplace flexibility and organisational success.
- Communication channels such as Teams, WhatsApp, email and phone will be accessible for network collaboration when required.
- Communication from students will be available while working from home via phone or email.
- All working from home arrangements, including approval of days and hours, will be negotiated with the Centre Manager.

The following reasons may be considered acceptable for working from home:

- Staff are sick but still able to work,
- Close contact to serious illness,
- A child's school is cancelled, or
- A negotiated regular allowance e.g., 3 days per calendar month, or when off-island, as approved by the Centre Manager.

Where a casual staff who is scheduled to staff the Centre and is unable to attend, and there is not another staff member with whom they can swap hours, the work time is lost and there is no entitlement to 'make-up' the hours at another time.

Where staff attend to their work in the Centre but have incidental tasks needing to be completed outside of their regular hours staffing the Centre (such as where there is follow up with a student or other staff member) which represent less than 10% of their regular working hours, a staff may simply go ahead, taking note of time taken to include in their timesheet. If the amount of work intended to be undertaken remotely exceeds 10% of regular working hours, the staff will first consult the Centre Manager for agreement on the tasks and their duration.

E. Staff Internet, Email and Use of Centre Resources

Staff may use the internet and email access provided by CUCNI and Centre Resources for:

- Work and work-related purposes,
- Limited personal use which:
 - Is infrequent and brief.
 - Does not interfere with the duties of the staff or other staff.
 - Does not interfere with the operation of CUCNI.
 - Does not compromise the security of CUCNI systems.
 - Does not impact on CUCNI electronic storage capacity.
 - Does not decrease network performance (e.g. large email attachments can decrease system performance and potentially cause system outages).
 - Incurs no additional expense for CUCNI.



- Violates no laws.
- Compromises none of the confidentiality requirements of CUCNI.
- Does not fall under any unacceptable use (gambling, criminal, illegal activities, offensive).

This may include for example printing an occasional personal document or having an occasional personal call or visit, or leaving the Centre briefly to order a take-away refreshment. Anything beyond this, such as borrowing Centre resources or leaving to eat at a café, need to be done by prior agreement of the Centre Manager (so that Centre coverage can be planned) and hours claimed for payroll reduced accordingly.

F. Leave

Consistent with Australian workplace laws and regulations, including the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) and the National Employment Standards, CUCNI will ensure a fair and transparent process for granting leave. Various types of leave are available to staff, based on their specific circumstances.

Casual staff

Whilst casual staff are not entitled to leave, and are only paid for the hours they work, CUCNI aims to be flexible and accommodating where other commitments or appointments unavoidably clash with the times the staff has committed to work, or where they are undertaking community service or jury service. CUCNI expects casual staff to provide as much notice as possible of any periods in which they will be off-island or unavailable to work for any reason, so that alternative staffing can be arranged and the Centre can remain open and staffed according to the published hours of opening.

Part-time and Full-time Staff

Annual leave

- Staff are entitled to the equivalent (pro-rata for part-time staff) of four weeks annual leave for each year of service.
- Annual leave accrues progressively throughout the year according to the staff's ordinary hours of work, is paid at the staff's base salary and is cumulative from year to year.
- CUCNI may, at its discretion, approve the taking of leave which has accrued but has not yet become an entitlement.
- Annual leave must be taken at a time suitable to the needs of the CUCNI.
- CUCNI may request a staff to take annual leave if they have accrued an excessive amount or if there is a period in which CUCNI is to be closed (such as over holiday period).
- In the event of excessive leave accrual, pay out of annual leave may be considered in strict circumstances subject to relevant approval.
- Upon termination of employment, any accrued but untaken annual leave will be paid out.

Personal/Carers leave

- Staff are entitled to the equivalent (pro-rata for part-time staff) of two weeks personal / carers leave for each year of service.
- Personal / carers leave accrues progressively throughout the year according to the staff's ordinary hours of work, is paid at the staff's base salary and is cumulative from year to year.
- Personal / carers leave may be taken where a staff is unfit for work or when they are required to provide care or support to an immediate family or household member.



- The staff must notify their supervisor as soon as practicable if personal / carers leave is required.
- Evidence (in the form of a medical certificate or statutory declaration) will be required for any absences of three consecutive days or longer.
- Upon termination of employment, any accrued personal / carers leave will not be paid out.

Parental leave

- Staff are entitled to the parental leave in accordance with relevant legislation.
- A staff is entitled up to 12 months unpaid parental leave if they are the primary carer.
- Parental leave is available to full time and part time staff provided they have at least 12 months continuous service with the CUC.
- Staff must notify in writing of the intention to take parental leave at least 4 weeks before the first day of leave.
- Staff must discuss and agree on their return-to-work date with their supervisor. Upon return to work the staff will resume the position they held prior to commencing parental leave.
- CUCNI recognises that in some circumstances, staff may wish to return to work part time rather than full time, and all requests must be provided in writing to their supervisor.
- If staff's plans change and they decide not to return to work following their parental leave, they must give notice in accordance with their contract.

Long Service leave

- Staff are entitled to long service leave in accordance with relevant legislation.

Compassionate leave

- Staff are entitled up to a maximum of 2 days paid leave for each occasion if a member of the staff's immediate family or household contracts, develops or sustains a personal illness or injury that poses a serious threat to their lives.
- Staff are entitled to a maximum of 3 days paid leave if a member of the staff's immediate family or household dies.
- The staff must notify their supervisor as soon as practicable if compassionate leave is required.

Community Service Leave

- Staff can take community service leave for activities such as voluntary emergency management activities or jury duty.
- Except for jury duty, community service leave is unpaid.
- A staff engages in a voluntary emergency management activity with a recognised emergency management body if:
 - the activity involves dealing with an emergency or natural disaster,
 - the staff engages in the activity on a voluntary basis,
 - the staff was either requested to engage in an activity, or it would be reasonable to expect that such a request would have been made if circumstances had permitted, and
 - the staff is a member of or has a member-like association with a recognised emergency management body.
- A recognised body that has a role or function under a plan that is for coping with emergencies / natural disasters (prepared by the Commonwealth or Norfolk Island governance entity), a firefighting, civil defence or rescue body or any other body which is mainly involved in responding to an emergency or natural disaster.



- A staff is entitled to take community service leave while they are engaged in the activity and for reasonable travel and rest time. There is no limit on the amount of community service leave a staff can take.
- A staff takes community service leave must give CUCNI Centre Manager notice of the absence as soon as possible (this may be after the leave starts) and the period or expected period of absence.
- CUCNI may request a staff who has given notice, to provide evidence that they're entitled to community service leave.

Domestic violence leave

- Staff can access 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave in a 12-month period.
- The full 10-day leave entitlement will be available upfront and does not accumulate from year to year if it isn't used.
- The leave renews every year on each staff's work anniversary.
- Information regarding domestic violence leave will not be included in payslips in line with legislative requirements. Payslips must not mention family and domestic violence leave, including any leave taken and leave balances.

Public holiday leave

- CUCNI will close on public holidays, and staff have a right to be away from work on a public holiday.
- Staff (except casual staff) who normally work on the day a public holiday falls will be paid their base pay rate for the ordinary hours they would have worked if they had not been away because of the public holiday.
- The base pay rate doesn't include any incentive-based payments, bonuses, loadings, monetary allowances, overtime or penalty rates.
- If a public holiday falls during a period of paid leave (for example, annual leave or sick leave), the staff must be paid for the public holiday. This includes any hours that fall on a part-day public holiday.
- If a staff takes sick leave either side of a public holiday, they should still be paid for the public holiday if it is on a day that they would normally work. Normal sick leave rules apply for the time taken as sick leave and CUCNI can ask the staff for evidence that shows the reason they took the leave.

Natural Disaster Leave

- CUCNI provides flexible options during natural disasters, including remote work or access to paid leave (personal/carer's, annual, or special leave).
- Unpaid leave may be available if paid leave is exhausted.
- Additional flexible arrangements can be approved in exceptional circumstances.

G. Flexible Arrangements

CUCNI is committed to supporting flexible working arrangements in accordance with the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth). Staff may request flexible work arrangements to balance their personal and professional commitments. These arrangements could include adjusted start and finish times, remote work options, or part-time schedules. CUCNI will consider all requests in line with business requirements and will provide a written response within a reasonable timeframe.



As part of its commitment to creating and maintaining a healthy work-life balance, CUCNI recognises the importance of staff's right to disconnect. Staff are not expected to respond to work-related communications, such as emails or phone calls, outside their agreed working hours unless required by exceptional circumstances or pre-arranged agreements.

All requests for flexible work arrangements must be made in writing and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, ensuring they meet the operational needs of the organisation while accommodating staff requirements.

H. Superannuation

CUCNI staff are covered Superannuation Guarantee legislation under the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992* (Cth). CUCNI will contribute to the superannuation fund at the current legislated minimum rate of the staff's ordinary time earnings. This rate is subject to change in accordance with the regulations set by the Australian Government. Staff have the right to choose their own superannuation fund. Contributions are paid at the same time salary and wages are paid.

I. Time, Penalties and Time Off in Lieu

Staff who work beyond their standard hours of employment may be eligible for overtime pay. Overtime rates are calculated based on the terms set forth in the relevant award or agreement as outlined in the staff's contract or letter of offer. Penalty rates apply to work carried out during evenings, weekends, public holidays, or other prescribed conditions as per the relevant award. The rate of pay for overtime and penalties typically exceeds the standard hourly rate and is determined by the specific conditions of the award.

Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) allows staff to take time off work instead of receiving overtime payment for additional hours worked, fostering flexibility and work-life balance. TOIL must be pre-approved by the Centre Manager and recorded accurately in an assessable system. Accrued TOIL should be used within an agreed timeframe, typically within three months, to avoid excessive accumulation. Managers are responsible for ensuring TOIL does not disrupt workflow and that staff take their earned time off. This approach ensures fairness, compliance with employment standards, and supports the well-being of staff.

4. Resources

- [Anti-discrimination Legislation](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- [Fair Work Ombudsman](#)
- [National Employment Standards – Fair Work Ombudsman](#)
- [Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Educational Services \(Post-Secondary Education\) Award 2020 \[MA000075\]](#)
- [Higher Education Industry-General Staff-Award 2020 \[MA000007\]](#)
- [Right to Disconnect – Fair Work Ombudsman](#)
- [Superannuation Act 2005 \(Cth\)](#)