



Policy PL91 - Code of Conduct

Version 1 APPROVED		
Author(s) Chief People Officer		
Owner Director		
Department People and Culture		
Approval Authority WEHI Board		
Key Words		
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Key Points

NA

1. Purpose

WEHI is committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour. While we conduct our business within the framework of applicable laws and regulations, for us, compliance with the law is not enough. We know that to innovate and excel, our people – and those we work alongside – need to thrive. The Code of Conduct outlines the behaviour standards that we strive to live in our day-to-day activities to create a safe, inclusive, vibrant and equitable workplace.

The Code of Conduct is designed to guide how we collaborate, make decisions and navigate issues. It is also intended to reassure visitors, contractors, consumers, suppliers, members of affiliated institutes and partners, other medical research institutes, and the wider community that these important decisions are being made against a background of professional standards and accountability.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all board members, executives, staff, students, contractors, consultants, volunteers, visitors, and tenants of WEHI (collectively **Personnel**).

3. Policy

The guiding principles that we strive to live in our day-to-day activities are referenced in WEHI's values and culture. Our values influence how we work, how we behave towards each other, and how we engage with others external to WEHI.

3.1 Our Values

- Contribution to society
- Integrity and respect
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Accountability
- Creativity

- Pursuit of excellence

3.2 Our Values in Action

The following behaviour guidelines, expectations and work practices provide examples of how our values are lived:

3.2.1 Overall value: contribution to society

The value in action: Respectful, efficient, and careful use of WEHI's resources

The resources and equipment available to personnel are to be managed in a respectful, effective, and careful manner. For example, computers are provided to enable personnel to work. Limited personal use is acceptable if such use does not interfere with fulfilling job duties, causes harm to others, or negatively affects WEHI. WEHI will from time-to-time monitor computer activity, email, and internet access, in line with applicable laws and regulations. WEHI will take the necessary precautions to prevent unauthorised access to information systems. All personnel are required to safeguard their password or other means of access to WEHI technology. Further information is contained in WEHI's Information Security Policy.

The value in action: Understand and support WEHI's commitment to progressing reconciliation, gender equality, and other key diversity and inclusion issues

Personnel should not engage in any conduct that breaches the [Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Policy](#), or the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#). This includes conduct that may be unlawful and contrary to anti-discrimination legislation, and other types of unwelcome and inappropriate conduct that has the potential to intimidate, humiliate or offend another individual or treat someone unfavourably because they have a particular characteristic (such as age, sex, race, sexual preference, or some other attribute). Personnel should not victimise anyone who has complained of harassment or discrimination.

Personnel value all ideas and contributions, recognising the importance of diversity as a creative force that broadens views and supports innovation. They understand why WEHI is committed to supporting and upholding equity, access and inclusion, both internally and as a public advocate.

3.2.2 Overall value: integrity and respect

The value in action: Uphold the highest ethical and technical standards

Research standards

Personnel are committed to complying fully with all relevant legislation, regulations, codes, and guidelines regarding research. WEHI supports research integrity by providing training and education, and investigates research integrity concerns and resolves disputes. WEHI's expectations regarding research conduct are outlined in the [Research Integrity Policy](#), [Animal Research Policy](#), and the [Human Research Policy](#). Research misconduct, in the form of fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, deliberate misrepresentation, or other questionable practices will not be tolerated.

WEHI supports researchers to consider the implications of their research and encourages them to play an active role in communicating their findings to the broader community.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest can be actual, perceived or potential and arises when there is a conflict between, a person's private interests and the interests of WEHI. The best way to mitigate conflicts of interest is for personnel to avoid a situation where their actions might create a conflict, whether it is actual, potential, or perceived. If this is not possible for any reason personnel are unsure as to whether a conflict exists, they should refer to the Conflict of Interest Policy to help resolve the matter as soon as possible.

3.2.3 Overall value: collaboration and teamwork

The value in action: Recognise the benefits of a diverse and inclusive organization, building positive and effective relationships

Fostering diversity and inclusion builds teamwork and success. Personnel should seek to value the unique contribution that each member of WEHI brings, recognising that we accomplish more when people from diverse backgrounds, and with different talents and ideas, work together effectively.

Personnel have a key role to play in actively and intentionally being inclusive of diverse people and ideas. This includes being collaborative and supportive of each other, and building connections with colleagues across all disciplines to deliver on outcomes.

The value in action: Provide constructive feedback and support others to develop knowledge and skills

At WEHI, the performance of personnel is evaluated objectively. Employment and promotion decisions based on an individual's knowledge, experience, and abilities. Please refer to the [Career Planning and Development program](#) for more information. Personnel are encouraged to seek the development opportunities that WEHI and others offer to build and strengthen their knowledge and skills.

3.2.4. Overall value: Accountability

The value in action: Understand my role and responsibilities and strive to excel in meeting expectations

At WEHI, our work practices and processes represent the highest ethical and technical standards. Personnel should always seek to exceed the minimum training standards and ongoing professional development.

We expect personnel to give their best efforts, learn from successes and setbacks, and pursue opportunities to improve performance. WEHI requires personnel to participate in training and personal development and take responsibility for the achievement of the competencies essential to their role. Personnel are encouraged to share their learning as appropriate, contributing to the learning and development of others.

The value in action: Committed to ensuring a safe working environment for oneself and their colleagues

Personnel safety and the safety of others they are in contact with is the highest priority for all at WEHI. Personnel are committed to providing a safe working environment and comply fully with laws and regulations regarding safety, acting to protect individuals from risk. Personnel also take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others. Personnel will report any health and safety issues immediately to their manager and other relevant contacts as outlined in the [Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#), the [Child Safety Policy](#), the [Workplace Behaviour Policy](#), the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#), and the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

3.2.5 Overall value: Creativity

The value in action: Create an environment where new ideas flourish

Personnel value the unique contribution that each member of WEHI brings. Personnel recognise that more is accomplished when people from diverse backgrounds and with different talents and ideas work together in an environment where everyone can contribute.

The value in action: Receptive to new ideas and develop new approaches

At WEHI we are committed to helping personnel keep their knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to their scope of practice through participating in professional development.

WEHI requires personnel to keep up to date with and follow the law, and other requirements relevant to their practice as well as seek feedback, using it to improve their practice.

3.2.6 Overall value: Pursuit of excellence

The value in action: Explore and assess new development to enhance practice

Personnel should work collaboratively with each other, helping their colleagues when needed and sharing relevant work knowledge and experience. WEHI expects personnel to encourage others to come up with fresh and creative approaches to navigate the everyday challenges they encounter. An environment where personnel feel supported to take informed risks is encouraged to see creativity flourish. Team discussions regarding new ideas should be honest and critical, yet respectful and open-minded of other perspectives. Personnel should encourage others to speak freely, and seek to give and receive constructive criticism to improve ideas and ways of working.

3.3 Values based decision-making

Every day, personnel will face choices and make decisions. Sometimes the right thing to do in a situation is not clear. Sometimes personnel will observe behaviour that is not right, but do nothing or assume someone else will act.

All members of WEHI have a responsibility to adhere to the Code of Conduct and/or act if we see something that is not right. To help provide clarity, WEHI encourages personnel to ask themselves a few questions to determine whether they may be in breach of, or observing a breach of, the Code of Conduct.

- Is what I am doing or being asked to do in line with WEHI values? Is it in line with my personal values?
- Would I be comfortable explaining this to my family, friends, or work colleagues?
- Would I ask a member of my family or a close friend to do it?
- Is this behaviour legal?
- How would this behaviour or action look on the front page of a newspaper or circulating widely on social media?

If personnel are still unsure of the appropriate response in a situation or require further guidance, they should seek assistance from their supervisor, People and Culture Business Partner or Research Integrity Officer.

3.4 Reporting rights and responsibilities

WEHI has formal mechanisms in place to enable personnel to report any workplace concerns regarding employment, legal, regulatory or compliance matters. WEHI encourages and welcomes reporting workplace concerns.

If personnel suspect or observe misconduct or improper actions in relation to WEHI, there are a number of channels they can access to report their concerns. These options are outlined as follows:

1. they can consult their manager, and/or
2. People and Culture representatives, and/or
3. Research Integrity representatives, and/or
4. WEHI's external integrity line, and/or
5. WEHI's external whistleblowing line, and/or
6. A member of WEHI's executive team, including the Chief People Officer or Director, and/or
7. WEHI's President.

The [Whistleblowing Policy](#) and [Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Policy](#) outline the options available for addressing misconduct or improper actions. These include identifying how personnel can do so anonymously.

If personnel are concerned about the way they are being treated related to their employment, they should consult the [Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Policy](#) or [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) and follow the [Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Procedure](#).

3.5 Non-retaliation for reporting issues

WEHI does not tolerate any reprisal against personnel for raising a concern. If personnel believe that they or another person is being subjected to victimisation or retaliation, they should immediately report the matter in line with the Whistleblowing Policy or Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Policy.

3.6 Consequences of breaching the Code of Conduct and / or associated policies

Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in the termination of employment or affiliation with the institute in line relevant WEHI policies and procedures.

3.7 Changes to our Code of Conduct

WEHI at its discretion may amend, withdraw, or replace the Code of Conduct in line with legislation, regulation, and operational changes.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 References

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4.2 Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

The way we relate documents has changed. Documents related prior to the change are listed below.

Policies

[Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Policy](#)

[Animal Research Policy](#)

[Child Safe Policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Corporate Credit Card Policy](#)

[Dispute Resolution Policy](#)

[Gifts and Anti-Bribery Policy](#)

[Human Research Policy](#)

[Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

[WhistleblowerPolicy](#)

Procedures

[Acceptable Workplace Behaviour Procedure](#)


Document Id	Name	Type	Status
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5. Review and Consultation

Action	Name and role
Drafted by	Elizabeth McMahon, Chief People Officer
Primary Review	WEHI Executive

Review Cycle

 **Initial**
3 Year(s)

 **Ongoing**
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 **Next**
2026

Version History

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Board People & Culture Committte	18/05/2023	1/06/2023	New Policy	1