

# Freedom of Inquiry Policy

Navitas Professional Institute

## Document

<b>Document I.D.</b>	NPI 00 [91] 11P Freedom of Inquiry Policy		
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Dean Academic		
<b>Initial Issue Date</b>	28 September 2015		
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Learning and Teaching Committee	<b>Date Endorsed</b>	8 September 2015
<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Board	<b>Date Approved</b>	28 September 2015
<b>Initial Approver</b>	Academic Board	<b>Date Initial Approval</b>	28 September 2015

## Version Control

<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
28 September 2015	Initial approval	September 2020
25 January 2016	Minor template technical amendments	September 2020

# Freedom of Inquiry Policy

## 1. Purpose and Scope

Freedom of inquiry is necessary in order for higher education providers to fulfil their roles in “advancing scientific and social progress”, as “incubators of new theories and as the promoters of the orthodoxies of tomorrow” (Senate, 2008). Academic freedom is a necessary pre-condition in the development of a knowledge society and is therefore foundational for higher education providers such as the Navitas Professional Institute.

This policy statement outlines the institution’s commitment to freedom of inquiry. This policy applies to all the institution’s functions and business units.

## 2. Policy

The institution is committed to freedom of inquiry (frequently referred to as academic freedom) as fundamental to its objects and purpose, which are to improve professional practice through the provision of education and the promotion of critical reflection, freedom of inquiry, academic excellence, research and a culture of scholarship.

## 3. Characteristics of Freedom of Inquiry

3.1 Freedom of inquiry is characteristically understood to involve the capacity to research, publish and teach in areas of established expertise without institutional interference.

3.2 Freedom of inquiry is constrained by the legal, ethical and methodological conventions of academic scholarship and by regard for the reputation and mission of the institution. Freedom of inquiry never justifies the dissemination of that which is knowingly false, poorly researched, or the product of negligently prepared or falsified data.

3.3 Within the framework of freedom of inquiry, the institution seeks to foster a collegial culture in which the exploration of knowledge, informed critical analysis, and the discussion of ideas, issues and perspectives are encouraged in an environment of openness and mutual respect.

## 4. Responsibilities

### 4.1 Academic Staff

While the institution acknowledges that academic staff members operate in the context of freedom of inquiry, it also expects that they will conduct themselves within the Australian legal environment, which includes the Privacy Act and the Human Research Ethics Guidelines of the NHMRC (used by the institution). In exercising their rights and responsibilities associated with freedom of inquiry, the institution staff members are expected to support the ethos and mission of the institution and to act in accordance with the Navitas Code of Conduct. When academics speak or write on controversial issues, they are free to express their opinions without fear from institutional censorship or discipline, but they should clearly indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

### 4.2 College Council

The College Council is responsible for ensuring that a culture of freedom of inquiry underpins all the institution’s academic work and that academics are not penalised or discriminated against on the basis of exercising their rights to freedom of inquiry.

The College Council is also responsible for ensuring that the reputation, status and integrity of the institution are not compromised by the actions of academics that fall outside the framework of freedom of inquiry established in this policy statement.

## 5. Definitions

**Academic staff/teaching staff** refers to permanent and casual employees engaged in teaching and assessment of courses at the institution.

**Freedom of inquiry**, or **academic freedom**, has been defined by the Global Colloquium of University Presidents (2005) as “the freedom to conduct research, teach, speak, and publish, subject to the norms and standards of scholarly inquiry, without interference or penalty, wherever the search for truth and understanding may lead.”

**Institution (the)/College (the)** means the Navitas Professional Institute and its colleges (see registration information below).

**International student/Overseas student** means a student required to hold a student visa for study in Australia.

**Unit** means a unit of study in a higher education course or a unit of study, subject, module and/or unit of competency in a vocational education and training course.

## 6. Review

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years by the policy owner (or designate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to Navitas' current and planned operations.

The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the Version Control section on Page 1.

## 7. Records

Records in association with this policy will be kept in accordance with the institution's Records Management Policy and Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. Confidential files related to the implementation of the policy must be maintained according relevant privacy processes.

## 8. Related documents

This policy statement should be read in conjunction with the Academic Misconduct Policy; Academic Integrity Statement; Academic Grievances Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure; and Code of Conduct.

## 9. Related legislation

Higher Education Support Act 2003; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011; National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011; Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007; and associated Commonwealth and State legislation; Australian Qualifications Framework.

## 10. References

Doyle, M. W., Fine, J., & Moneyhon, M. (Eds.). (2005). Report of the First Global Colloquium of University Presidents on Academic Freedom and International Migration. Columbia University.

Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (SSCEEWR) 2008, Allegations of Academic Bias in Universities and Schools: Report, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, December.

## Registration information

The Navitas Professional Institute is a group of colleges in the Navitas Professional and English Programs (PEP) Division of Navitas Limited the colleges being the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS), Health Skills Australia (HSA), and the Australian TESOL Training Centre (ATTC) with respect to ATTC's 39296QLD Graduate Certificate in TESOL and 39297QLD Graduate Diploma in TESOL courses. Navitas Professional Institute Pty Ltd (NPI Pty Ltd), ABN 94 057 495 299, National CRICOS Provider Code 01328A, TEQSA HE Provider Registration Code 12009, RTO 0500. Health Skills Australia Pty Ltd ABN 53 123 479 201, RTO 21646.