ORMOND COLLEGE
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

WADE INSTITUTE

Policy Number HR012

ANTI RACISM POLICY

1. Rationale

Ormond College is committed to creating and sustaining a community that is culturally safe, inclusive, respectful and free from racism. Racism, whether overt or subtle, individual or systemic, undermines dignity, wellbeing and belonging and is inconsistent with the College's values of Respect, Community, Learning, Diversity, Heritage and Integrity.

Racism can occur in behaviours, decisions, structures, systems and institutional norms. The College recognises that racism in Australia is connected to the history and ongoing impacts of colonisation, and that First Nations peoples experience disproportionate harms.

Ormond College is an affiliated college of the University of Melbourne. The University's Anti Racism Commitment and Anti Racism Action Plan acknowledge that the University was founded in a context of dispossession of Aboriginal peoples and influenced by policies such as the White Australia Policy, and that these histories have shaped who has had access to the University and whose knowledge has been valued. The College acknowledges these histories and their impact on our own community, and commits to supporting the aims of the University's Anti Racism Action Plan while also taking responsibility for College specific action.

The College also recognises that racism takes specific forms that cause particular harm, including racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, antisemitism and Islamophobia. Jewish students and staff across Australian universities have reported increased antisemitism since October 2023. In July 2026 the Commonwealth Government introduced an anti-racism standard for higher education providers. It requires providers to adopt definitions of antisemitism, racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Islamophobia, to maintain transparent complaints processes, and to give students and staff clear guidance on safety on campus and online. This Policy reflects that standard.

This Policy outlines Ormond College's approach to preventing, identifying and addressing racism, and provides clarity on expectations for behaviour, responsibilities, reporting pathways and support.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate how Ormond College will uphold its commitment to a culturally safe, inclusive and respectful community by clearly outlining the standards, processes and supports that guide our anti-racism work. This Policy aims to:

- Define racism in its various forms, including but not limited to individual, interpersonal, structural and systemic racism, and specific forms of racism including racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, antisemitism and Islamophobia
- Set clear standards of behaviour for all members of the College community
- Provide guidance on how concerns or complaints relating to racism can be raised and responded to
- Ensure that concerns are managed promptly, fairly, sensitively and with integrity
- Support a culturally safe and inclusive environment where all people can thrive
- Affirm Ormond College's commitment to anti racism, truth telling, equity and respect for First Nations peoples and culturally diverse communities
- Align Ormond College's anti racism work with the University of Melbourne's Anti Racism Action Plan, while recognising that the College is a separate institution with its own governance

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all members of the Ormond College community and to all individuals who engage with the College in any capacity. This includes, but is not limited to:

- All employees of Ormond College
- Students and residents
- Council members
- Volunteers and contractors, including external service providers such as cleaning, maintenance, advisory and other contracted services
- Visitors, guests and external partners who engage with or represent the College

This Policy applies in all contexts where individuals are acting in connection with Ormond College, including but not limited to:

- On College premises, including academic, residential and shared community spaces
- College-related events and activities, whether on-site or off-site
- Work-related activities undertaken on behalf of the College
- College-provided accommodation
- Online and digital environments, including social media, where interactions have a connection to the College or may impact members of the College community

4. Definitions

Racism:

Racism includes any behaviour, action, decision, policy or practice that results in unfair treatment, stereotyping, harassment or exclusion based on a person's:

- Race
- Colour
- Descent
- National or ethnic origin
- Cultural background
- Language
- Immigration status
- Indigenous identity
- Religious identity, where it is connected to race, ethnicity or culture (for example, Jewish or Muslim identity)

Racism may be:

- Direct: explicit unfavourable treatment based on race or ethnicity
- Indirect: rules or practices that appear neutral but disadvantage a particular racial or cultural group
- Interpersonal: behaviours such as racial slurs, stereotyping, mocking accents, exclusion or microaggressions
- Systemic or structural: institutional processes, policies or norms that create or maintain unequal outcomes

Racism can occur in person, online, and through social media platforms.

Racism is assessed by its impact, not only by its intent. A lack of intention to cause offence or harm does not excuse racist conduct or lessen the harm experienced. The College will take every report seriously and respond, whether the behaviour is overt, subtle or systemic.

Racial Vilification

Public conduct that is likely to incite hatred against, or that a reasonable person from the targeted group would consider hateful towards, a person or group because of their race, ethnicity, origin or religious belief, as described in the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic). Public conduct include, but not limited to, conduct in workplaces, education settings and online.

Racial Harassment

Unwelcome conduct that offends, humiliates, intimidates or demeans a person on the basis of race, culture or ethnicity, or a religious identity connected to them.

Microaggressions

Everyday comments or actions that communicate derogatory, dismissive or negative assumptions about someone's racial or cultural identity.

Cultural safety

An environment in which there is no assault, challenge or denial of a person's identity, of who they are and what they need. Cultural safety recognises the historical context and ongoing impacts of colonisation, and the power imbalances and institutional barriers experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other culturally diverse communities. It is achieved through actions by individuals, the College and its systems that recognise, respect and nurture cultural identity, including addressing unconscious bias, racism and discrimination, sharing decision-making, and supporting self-determination. Only the person receiving a service or interaction can determine whether it is culturally safe.

Antisemitism

Antisemitism is discrimination, prejudice, harassment, exclusion, vilification, intimidation or violence that impedes Jews' ability to participate as equals in educational, political, religious, cultural, economic or social life. Criticism of the policies of the Israeli government or state is not, in itself, antisemitic, but may become so where it relies on antisemitic stereotypes or holds Jewish people responsible for the actions of Israel.

Islamophobia

Hostility, prejudice, discrimination, harassment, vilification or violence directed at Muslims, or people perceived to be Muslim, because of their actual or perceived Muslim identity or practice. Criticism of religious ideas is not, in itself, Islamophobic.

Racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Racism directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including denial or disrespect of their identity, culture, connection to Country and history, stereotyping, and practices that perpetuate disadvantage.

5. Policy

5.1 Zero Tolerance

Ormond College will not tolerate racism in any form. Any person found to have engaged in racist behaviour, vilification or discriminatory decision making will be subject to disciplinary action, as prescribed in Section 9 of this policy, up to and including termination of employment or the removal from residence.

Zero tolerance means that every report of racism will be taken seriously, assessed promptly and fairly, and responded to. Where a breach of this Policy is found, the College will take action. The action taken

will be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the conduct, its impact on the people affected and any previous conduct, as set out in Section 9.

The College recognises that racism and discrimination can increase the risk of exploitation, including modern slavery. The College's commitments on modern slavery and ethical recruitment are set out in HR001 Recruitment and Selection Policy.

5.2 Expectations of Behaviour

All individuals covered by this Policy must:

- Treat others with dignity, fairness and kindness
- Recognise and respect cultural differences
- Avoid behaviours, language or decisions that are discriminatory or racist
- Not encourage or support racist conduct by others
- Report racism witnessed or experienced through appropriate channels
- Maintain confidentiality if involved in a complaint or investigation
- Participate in College provided training and education related to anti racism, cultural safety and diversity

5.3 Examples of Racial Misconduct

Racist conduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Racial slurs, nicknames or jokes
- Mocking or questioning a person's accent, name or cultural practices
- Spreading racist stereotypes
- Excluding a person from opportunities or activities due to race or ethnicity
- Racial profiling or biased assumptions in decision making
- Displaying racist symbols, images or online content
- Mimicking or appropriating cultural expressions in a derogatory manner
- Comments suggesting a person does not belong in Australia, at the University or at the College
- Dismissing or minimising someone's experience of racism
- Institutional practices that unfairly disadvantage a racial or cultural group
- Targeting a person because they wear religious or cultural dress, such as a hijab, kippah or turban

5.4 Freedom of expression

The College values free inquiry and respectful debate, including about the policies of any government. This Policy does not prevent lawful political expression. It applies when expression becomes discrimination, harassment, intimidation or vilification of people because of their race, ethnicity, national origin or religious identity.

5.5 Anti-Racism Training

The College is committed to building the capability of its community to recognise, prevent and respond to racism. Training opportunities may include, but limited to:

- All staff will complete anti-racism and cultural safety training at induction, with refresher training bi-annually.
- Members of the Executive and Senior Management Forum will complete anti-racism training bi-annually, including responding to disclosures of racism and bias-aware decision making.
- Residential and student leaders will complete anti-racism training before commencing their roles each year.
- Training will include First Nations-informed content developed or delivered by, or in partnership with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or organisations, as well as content on antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- The College will evaluate the effectiveness of training through participant feedback and assessment, and by monitoring reporting trends, staff and student survey results and the quality of decision making.

6. Standards of Behaviour

This Policy aligns with the behavioural standards expected under The Code of Conduct for Staff. All community members must:

- Actively contribute to a respectful and culturally safe environment
- Listen to and take seriously individuals who raise concerns about racism
- Consider the potential impact of their words and actions, beyond intention
- Engage constructively in education and reflection, especially when feedback is given
- Recognise power dynamics inherent in a diverse and multicultural community
- Act as an active bystander where it is safe to do so

7. Reporting Racism

Reports of racism may be made to:

- A Supervisor or Manager
- A Residential Staff Member

- A Member of the Executive
- The Executive Director People and Culture
- SAFE Coordinator
- University of Melbourne Safer Communities
- External authorities where legally required

All complaints will be managed in accordance with the relevant Complaints Procedure (Employee Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure, and/or the Sexual Harm, Gender-based Violence, Discrimination and Bullying Policy).

Reports may include:

- Attempts at amicable resolution where appropriate and only if safe and comfortable
- Formal complaint processes
- Mediation or restorative processes
- Investigation and disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment or removal from residence.

Retaliation or victimisation against a person who makes a report, or who is a witness, will not be tolerated.

8. Support and Counselling

Individuals affected by racism will be provided with appropriate support, which may include:

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for staff
- OC SAFE support services for students
- Counselling and wellbeing resources
- Internal or external cultural safety advisors
- Referrals to Indigenous support services or culturally specific organisations

The College recognises that experiences of racism can be distressing and may impact mental health, wellbeing and academic or work performance.

9. Breach of the Policy

Any individual found to have breached this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the zero tolerance commitment in Section 5.1. The College will determine the appropriate action based on the nature and seriousness of the conduct, its impact on those affected and any previous conduct. Action may include, but is not limited to:

- Formal warnings
- Required training or education
- Probation or sanctions
- Removal from residence
- Suspension or termination of employment
- Termination or non-renewal of contracts for third party providers

10. Responsibilities

College Leadership:

- Model anti racist behaviour and decision making
- Ensure systems and structures are reviewed and, where needed, changed to remove bias
- Provide training, education and resourcing to support this Policy
- Monitor implementation and review effectiveness
- Complete anti-racism training as set out in Section 5.5

People and Culture Team

- Support investigations and resolution processes
- Provide advice and training on anti racism and related obligations
- Maintain relevant records and data (for example complaints, themes and outcomes)
- Prepare an annual de-identified report on racism complaints, themes, outcomes and actions taken, for the Executive, Council and College community

Staff

- Demonstrate anti racist practice in their work and interactions
- Address and or report racism they witness or become aware of
- Support students and colleagues appropriately

Students and Residents

- Uphold the standards outlined in this Policy
- Engage respectfully and report concerns
- Contribute to a culturally safe community

11.Alignment with the University of Melbourne Anti Racism Action Plan

As an affiliated college of the University of Melbourne, Ormond College:

- Supports the University's Anti Racism Commitment and Anti Racism Action Plan
- Recognises that racism exists and is a problem that must be named and addressed
- Acknowledges that there must be a shared understanding of what racism is, and what it is not, in order to set expectations and consequences
- Affirms that diversity brings strength to both the University and the College, and that this diversity must be welcomed and respected
- Accepts that responses to racism must be visible, transparent and fair, so that students and staff have confidence to speak up

Ormond College will seek to align its own anti racism actions and reporting with the University's four pillars of action, while tailoring these to the particular context and needs of the College community. The College will also seek opportunities to contribute to University wide surveys, listening processes and initiatives, and to share relevant data and insights in a way that protects privacy and confidentiality.

To demonstrate that responses to racism are visible, transparent and fair, the College will:

- Report annually to the Executive and Council on de-identified trends, themes and outcomes of racism reports, and the actions taken in response
- Keep people who make a report informed of progress and, where appropriate and lawful, the outcome
- Seek feedback from students and staff, including First Nations students and staff, on whether they feel culturally safe, supported and confident in the College's response to racism, and use this feedback to drive improvements

Related Templates, Forms and Policies

- HR027 Employee Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Sexual Harm, Gender-based Violence, Discrimination and Bullying Policy
- HR017 Code of Conduct for Staff
- HR014 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- OP005 Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- HR007 Employee Grievance & Complaints Policy and Procedure
- HR001 Recruitment and Selection Policy
- The University's Anti Racism Commitment and Anti Racism Action Plan