

POLICY C23.2

INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

In the provision of their business, including higher education, vocational education and bespoke courses for industry, Scentia and its subsidiaries, the Australasian College of Health and Wellness Pty Ltd (ACHW), the Australian Institute of Management Education and Training Pty Ltd (AIM) operating as AIM Business School (ABS), and AIM VET, a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), (collectively ‘the Scentia Group’) and Third-Party Partners (TPP) ensure that the health and safety of students and Workers (defined by legislation as staff, contractors, agency staff, labour hire staff, people on work experience (where applicable), sub-contractors, trainees, volunteers, out-workers and others who work within the organisation) is protected. As part of this, effective control of an infectious disease outbreak and the ongoing prevention and control of infection is vital.

ACHW students are supervised by TPP staff in external clinics under a Third-Party Agreement (TPA) and ACHW Staff under a Room Hire Agreement and these clinics are an area where there are specific infection control requirements.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the principles and responsibilities governing the management of infectious disease in the workplace and for the prevention and control of infection, to minimise as far as possible risks of harm to students and Workers which may arise from the spread of infection.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all students and Workers of the Scentia Group and TPPs.

This policy applies to all facilities used by the Scentia Group and TPP’s, including physical offices, campuses, hired premises and online operations and learning environments. It also applies to the external clinics ACHW uses for the teaching of clinical skills.

1.4 Scope Exceptions

None.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Refer to the health and safety responsibilities in the Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy, which apply equally to this policy in terms of each person's duty of care for health and safety. None of these responsibilities are able to be delegated to others.
2. Heads of School, Heads of departments, and Third-Party Partners are responsible for communicating this policy and its procedure to students and Workers.
3. Students and Workers are responsible to comply with this policy and its procedure.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 Principles

1. The Scentia Group is committed to the provision of a safe and healthy workplace, free of discrimination, for its students and Workers.
2. The Scentia Group's approach to managing infectious disease and the risk of infection is focused on complying with legislation and using practices and precautions recommended by State and Territory government health departments, including notifications of infectious disease where required, vaccination, and standard precautions.
3. The Scentia Group promotes informed awareness of infectious disease, and how infection is spread and controlled, through the publication and communication of up-to-date information, for example, on vaccination.
4. There is no general requirement for students or Workers to disclose that they have an infectious disease. However, in circumstances where the disease is likely to affect others, disclosure to the relevant manager is strongly encouraged for health and safety reasons.
5. Every organisation in the Scentia Group has a statutory responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of information about students and Workers who have an infectious disease. All steps are taken to ensure privacy and confidentiality in all situations related to infectious diseases and infection.
6. The Scentia Group will act on any breach of confidence and the release of confidential information by students and Workers. Such breaches are illegal, may constitute discrimination, would breach codes of conduct, and may result in the lodgement of a complaint with the State/Territory Anti-Discrimination Board, the Human Rights Commission or Office of the Privacy Commissioner.
7. Infection control, as part of health and safety, is integrated into all student and Worker activities where appropriate and is not an additional set of practices.

8. Students' and Workers' rights are respected at all times, and they are not discriminated against in the event they have an infectious disease; they are involved in decision-making about their support, and they are sufficiently informed to be able to participate in reducing the risk of transmission of infectious agents.
9. Australian Standards, equipment information, and thorough induction are provided to students and Workers as required, including for the use of equipment at external clinics which have the potential to spread infection, such as syringes through needle-stick injury.
10. Grievances and complaints related to this policy are managed in accordance with the Student Grievances and Complaints Policy or the Staff Grievances and Complaints Policy.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- **Infection** requires three main elements - a source of the infectious agent, a mode of transmission such as via a needle-stick injury or splashing blood into an eye, and a susceptible host.
- **Infection control** - is establishing procedures, and providing training, information and resources which aid in preventing the transmission of infectious organisms and managing infections if they occur.
- **Infectious agents** - are biological agents that cause disease or illness to their hosts.
- **Infectious Disease** - a disease such as cholera, hepatitis, influenza, Covid 19, measles, or tuberculosis) that is transmissible by contact with infected individuals or their bodily discharges or fluids (such as respiratory droplets or blood), by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects, by ingestion of contaminated food or water, or by direct or indirect contact with disease vectors (such as mosquitoes, fleas, or mice).
- **Needle-stick injury** - a penetrating stab wound from a needle (or other sharp object) that may result in exposure to blood or other body fluids. The main concern is exposure to the blood or other body fluids of another person who may be carrying infectious disease.
- **Standard precautions** - are work practices which require everyone to assume that all blood and body substances are potential sources of infection, independent of perceived risk.
- **Students** - all individuals enrolled in an education program with a member of the Scentia Group, or TPP, either online, in face-to-face mode or in blended delivery.
- **Workers** - are defined in the Work Health and Safety Act 2009 (C'wealth) as those who 'carry out work for a person conducting a business and include employees, contractors, agency staff, labour hire staff, people on work experience, sub-contractors, trainees, volunteers and out-workers'.

- **Work Health and Safety Act (2011)** - the (Commonwealth) Work Health and Safety Act (2011) implements the Model Work Health and Safety Act in the Commonwealth jurisdiction, helping to form a system of nationally harmonised work health and safety laws. It was passed in Parliament on 24 November 2011 and received Royal Assent on 29 November 2011.

5.0 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED INFORMATION

- ACHW Clinical WHS Manual
- ACHW Clinical Quality Assurance Framework
- ACHW Equipment Procedures
- ACHW External Clinics Policy and Procedure
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
- Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy and Procedure
- [Human Rights Commission](#)
- Infectious Disease and Infection Prevention and Control Procedure
- Privacy of Student Information and Records Policy
- Privacy of Staff Information and Records Policy
- [State and Territory government health departments](#)
- Staff Grievances Policy
- Student Grievances and Complaints Policy
- Work Health and Safety Act (2011) (Commonwealth) and Regulations

6.0 POLICY OWNERSHIP

Policy Owner	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Status	Reviewed on August 2021
Approval Authority	Scentia Corporate Board, with endorsement by ACHW and AIM Corporate Boards
Date of Approval	21/10/2021
Effective Date	21/10/2021
Implementation Owner	Head of People and Culture
Maintenance Owner	Senior Policy and Compliance Officer
Review Due	October 2024
Content Enquiries	Liz Douglas - Head of People and Culture Email: ldouglas@scentia.com.au

7.0 AMENDMENTS

Version	Amendment Approval (Date)	Amendment Made By (Position)	Amendment Details
C23.0	10 July 2017	Head of Compliance / Director ACHW	Initial document review after purchase of MHMHE
C23.1	10 March 2020	Academic Board	General review
C23.2	21 October 2021	Scentia Corporate Board	<p>Policy and Procedure separated.</p> <p>New template.</p> <p>The Term 'Worker' introduced to comply with legislation.</p> <p>Becomes a Scentia corporate policy applying across all of the Scentia Group and TPP's.</p> <p>Aligned with the corporate Health, Safety and First Aid in the Workplace Policy.</p> <p>Additional definitions and references.</p>