



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

Code of Conduct for Employees

Welcome

Welcome to your Rockhampton Catholic Education (RCE) Code of Conduct training.

This training is relevant for all RCE employees. Please note that some of the material in this training powerpoint relates to the school environment and may not apply directly to employees who do not work in or visit schools.

Rockhampton Catholic Education

Our Vision

Inspired by the person and teaching of Jesus Christ, we serve the communities of the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.

Our Mission

Providing

- Life-long faith education
- Religious education
- Relevant, holistic, quality education

Assisting all in their search for meaning for life

When Does the Code Apply?

- When performing your duties you must act in accordance with the Catholic ethos and the core values of the Catholic Church, as set out in the Statement of Principles for Employment in Catholic Schools or Statement of Principles for Employment Catholic Education, which forms part of your employment contract.
- Conduct which is contrary to the educational, religious and social values and teachings of the Catholic Church must be avoided by you.

When Does the Code Apply?

When does the Code apply to RCE employees?

- A. At the workplace
- B. Outside work hours



Select the answers you think apply.

When Does the Code Apply?

Answer – A & B



When Does the Code Apply?

The Code applies to all RCE employees at the workplace and during work hours and in some cases, it will apply to employees away from the workplace and at activities outside work hours.

When Does the Code Apply?

Examples include:

- During work activities when interacting with students, other employees or the school community.
- At work related events such as training or social functions.
- On social media when you might interact with other employees or members of the broader community.
- When participating in activities outside of normal working hours such as supervising students on camps and excursions.

What Happens if there is a Breach of the Code?

- You are accountable for your actions. If you do not comply with the Code, RCE may take action under their procedures, including the RCE Staff Complaints Management Procedure, RCE Staff Misconduct Procedure or RCE **Guidelines for Managing Unsatisfactory Performance (V2 Oct 2017)**.
- In taking any action under these procedures, RCE will afford you the fundamental principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.



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Duties and Responsibilities



Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

Law and Regulation

- You must comply with all applicable laws and regulations together with industrial awards and agreements.

Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

Law and Regulation

Example:

- Any change in your criminal history must be reported to your Principal or Manager. Registered teachers must also give all required notifications to the Queensland College of Teachers, including if you are charged with or convicted of an offence. School officers, other support staff and holders of Blue Cards must notify Blue Card Services of any change in their police information.

Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

Professional Standards of Professional Bodies

- You must comply with the professional standards of relevant professional bodies.

Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

Professional Standards of Professional Bodies

Example:

- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics

In addition, teachers are encouraged to abide by the *'Code of Ethics and Professional Boundaries: A Guideline for Queensland Teachers'* published by the Queensland College of Teachers.

Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

RCE's Policies and Procedures

- You must comply with all RCE's policies and procedures and attend the relevant training or briefings to enable you to be familiar with them.

Compliance with Laws, Standards and RCE Policies and Procedures

RCE's Policies and Procedures

Example:

- Student Protection Processes
- Workplace Bullying and Sexual Harassment Procedure
- Staff Dress Standards
- ICT Code of Practice
- Conflict of Interest Declaration Procedure
- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures



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Professional Responsibilities

You are required to carry out your duties in a professional, competent and conscientious manner.



Professional Responsibilities

- You should conduct yourself and present yourself appropriately to enhance your professional reputation and the reputation of Catholic education.
- You need to demonstrate that you are honest, trustworthy and accountable and not engaged in illegal, disreputable or scandalous activities.
- You need to follow the lawful and reasonable directions of RCE and your Principal or Manager.
- If you have a supervisory role you must exercise responsible management, leadership and supervision of your staff.



Duty of Care and Management of Risk

You have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of yourself, your colleagues and any students in your care. You must take reasonable action to protect students from reasonably foreseeable risks of harm.

Duty of Care and Management of Risk

- You should takes steps to eliminate or minimise any risks to health and safety in the workplace.
- You must comply with RCE's policies and procedures in relation to health and safety.

Duty of Care and Management of Risk

Examples in the workplace:

Providing active supervision of students including playground supervision.

Ensuring that the school grounds, premises and equipment are safe for students to use.



Duty of Care and Management of Risk

Examples in the workplace:

Reporting bullying and harassment or discriminatory behaviour.



Assessing the risks of an activity and taking preventative measures to remove or minimise foreseeable risks.





Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

You should ensure that your personal use of social media, electronic communications and phones does not damage your reputation or RCE's reputation.

Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

You should exercise sound judgement in your use of social media, electronic communications and phones and recognise the potential for negative consequences for yourself, other employees, RCE students or parents and carers in your school community.



Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

- You are responsible for the content that you publish on social media and electronic communications and you should ensure that it does not cause you to breach your obligations under this Code or any other RCE policy or the law.
- Telephone, email and social media contact with students must only be used as part of an approved school-based process for communication. It should never be used for social or personal communication.

Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

- It is critical that you maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students in your use of social media, emails and phones.
- Always use your work email address and students' RCE email address when communicating with students and only for valid educational reasons. Don't provide your personal mobile or home phone number to students.

What are your responsibilities in relation to the use of private social media, electronic communications and phones?

DO

- Think before you post and act responsibly online.
- Advise your Principal/ Manager if a student makes contact with you or asks to 'friend' you on your private social media.

DON'T

- Post private and confidential information about students.
- Post RCE's confidential information.
- Communicate with students via your personal telephone or mobile telephone. School approved processes for a valid educational reason are acceptable.

What are your responsibilities in relation to the use of private social media, electronic communications and phones?

DO

- Tell your Principal/ Manager if you have mistakenly communicated with a student on your private social media or on your personal email, telephone or mobile.
- Politely cease communication and actively discourage student contact with you via your private social media.

DON'T

- Post material in relation to another employee or student or parent that may be taken to be threatening or harassing, bullying, racist, sexually explicit, fraudulent, intimidatory, defamatory, discriminatory or derogatory.
- Communicate with students via your private email accounts or private social media.

Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

What should you do if a student contacts you via Facebook?

A. Politely make it clear that you cannot communicate with the student unless it is on the RCE email address (and for an appropriate educational reason)

Yes/No?

B. 'Block' future attempts by the student to contact you on Facebook

Yes/No?



Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

What should you do if a student contacts you via Facebook?

C. Check privacy settings on Facebook to make it difficult for a student to contact you.

Yes/No?

D. Inform your Principal/Manager if you have responded to communication from a student via Facebook and the steps that you have taken to cease further communication.

Yes/No?

Social Media, Electronic Communications and Phones

Answers – **Yes** to all four questions





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Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

You must comply with the law and must not take, be under the influence of, or in the possession of illegal drugs, nor purchase or provide students or other employees with drugs.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

- You must not be under the influence of prescription drugs that may cause impairment while you are at work or in any circumstances where you are responsible for students. If you are using medication which may affect your performance at work, you must notify your Principal or Manager.
- You must never purchase or provide students with smoking products or alcohol or encourage or condone the use of smoking products or alcohol by students.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

- You must never consume or be under the influence of alcohol at work or in any circumstances where you are responsible for students either at school or on camp, excursion or study tour.
- You must ensure that you exercise care and are not under the influence of alcohol at school or work events or social functions.
- You are legally banned from smoking on all school property and within a 5 metre boundary of school land. This law applies at all times during and after school hours, on weekends and during school holidays.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

You are responsible for ensuring that your capacity to perform your duties is not affected by the use of alcohol, drugs or any substance. Never put yourself or any other person's health or safety at risk.



NO SMOKING





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Managing Conflicts of Interest

You must ensure that your private interests or personal views do not conflict with your obligations to RCE and the proper performance of your duties.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

You may not use your position as an employee of RCE to promote or benefit your private interests including benefiting your private business or your family and friends.



What should I do if I have an actual or potential conflict of interest?

- If you do have an actual or potential conflict of interest, you should declare it to your Principal or Manager by using the RCE Conflict of Interest Declaration Procedure.
- Your Principal or Manager will assess and manage actual or potential conflicts of interest and provide you with guidance to resolve any issues.

What should I do if I have an actual or potential conflict of interest?

In some cases, you may be able to engage in other employment while employed by RCE, however, you must ensure that you continue to meet your obligations under this Code (including adhering to privacy and confidentiality requirements, adhering to professional boundary requirements with students and making appropriate use of RCE resources).

Examples of a Conflict of Interest

- Using information at work about students for your personal use such as offering tutoring.
- Holding other employment which compromises your employment with RCE.
- Tutoring or coaching students in your class in return for payment.
- Supervising a relative or a close friend.
- Participating in selection and appointment processes of a relative or friend.
- Accepting large gifts from parents or carers.



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Privacy and Confidentiality

Private and confidential information such as students or other employees' personal details must always be handled confidentially and in accordance with the RCE Information Collection Notice and the RCE Privacy Policy.

Privacy and Confidentiality

You must only use confidential information for work related purposes and not disclose it to anybody else unless required by law.





Use of RCE Resources

How can I use RCE resources?

You must use all RCE resources, information and equipment responsibly and with due care for legitimate, work-related purposes and in accordance with the law and RCE's policies and procedures. You must use RCE's ICT resources in accordance with all policies and procedures.



Use of RCE Resources

Can RCE monitor my usage of RCE's ICT resources?

Yes, RCE may carry out computer monitoring and surveillance on RCE's ICT resources to monitor usage. The monitoring may also include investigating alleged breaches of the law, misconduct, compliance with this Code or compliance with other RCE policies and procedures.

Use of RCE Resources

What happens when I cease employment?

You must return all RCE property and resources before you cease employment with Rockhampton Catholic Education.



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Professional Behaviour of Employees



Professional Behaviour with Students

If your work includes interacting with students, you must act appropriately and professionally at all times in your dealings with students, including outside of school hours, to ensure that you maintain professional boundaries and are a positive role model for students.

You must establish and maintain appropriate, positive relationships with students and show them respect, courtesy and consideration.



Professional Behaviour with Students

You will need to develop effective and consistent management strategies for your interactions with students as a preventative system of behaviour support. These strategies must be in accordance with your school's student behaviour support policy and where an individual support plan has been developed for a student, you are required to act in accordance with that plan.

Professional Behaviour with Students

If you work with students you hold a special position of trust, care and authority. You need to set clear professional boundaries in your interactions with students and ensure that you maintain appropriate physical, emotional and behavioural boundaries with students.

Professional Behaviour with Students

The following self-assessment may assist you in assessing whether you are managing your professional boundaries.



Am I dealing with a particular student in a different manner than I deal with others?

Professional Behaviour with Students

Is my dress, availability or language different with a particular student?

Would I act or speak this way if a parent or carer or a colleague was present?



Professional Behaviour with Students

Are my personal feelings translating into inappropriate actions?

Are the consequences of my actions likely to have a negative outcome?



Professional Behaviour with Students

Can a school employee (teacher or school officer) attend non-school based social events when they know that students will be attending?

A. Yes

B. No



When Does the Code Apply?

Answer: A – Yes



A school employee can attend non-school based social events when they know that students will be present, however, the employee should inform his/her Principal before attending the event and follow-up any guidance the Principal provides.

When does the Code Apply?

You should be mindful of the following when attending a social event where students are present:

- Your professional responsibilities must still be considered while attending the event including professional boundaries.
- You should ensure that you are not alone with a student and do not discuss with the student, personal matters, work related matters or student's learning or progress at school.
- You should be careful about the extent to which you are socialising with students. It is acceptable to have a brief chat to students at a social event but not to socialise exclusively with students.



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Physical Boundaries with Students

You must respect physical boundaries with students.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in RCE schools.

Physical Boundaries with Students

- Physical contact with students must be reasonable and appropriate for the behaviour, teaching, support, management or care of the student.
- Physical interventions including the restraint or the removal of a student are only ever appropriate as a measure of last resort to ensure safety and protection. Acceptable instances for physical intervention are restricted to occasions when a student or another person is being harmed or is at imminent risk of being harmed (for example, a student attacking another student or an employee).

You may violate a physical boundary with students by:

- Using force to manage or direct a student's behaviour:
E.g. Pushing, pulling, grabbing, poking, shoving or throwing.
- Using force to correct or punish a student:
E.g. Hitting with an object, punching, kicking, pinching or shaking. Corporal punishment is forbidden in any Rockhampton Catholic Education school.
- Refusing biological necessities:
E.g. Disregarding or refusing a student's reasonable request to access food, drink or use a toilet.

You may violate a physical boundary with students by:

- Inappropriately touching or massaging a student:
E.g. Patting a student on their bottom or stroking a student's hair.
- Applying painful or noxious conditions to a student:
E.g. Exposing a student to protracted physical management techniques such as standing still for an unreasonable length of time, making a student pick up rubbish or reach into a rubbish bin without protective gear e.g. gloves.

Physical Boundaries with Students

Can a teacher touch a student?

A. Yes

B. No



When Does the Code Apply?

Answer: A – **Yes**



A teacher can touch a student but only if the physical contact with a student is appropriate and reasonable for the behaviour, teaching, support, management or care of the student.

When Does the Code Apply?

The contact must also be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the student. Physical contact with a student should be consistent with any behaviour plan in place for that student.

When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience, employees must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable for the duty to be performed.

Physical Boundaries with Students

Examples of situations in which physical contact with a student may be appropriate include:

- Assessing a student who is injured or ill where some touching may be required. Employees should advise the student of what they intend to do, and where possible, seek the student's consent.
- Teaching sport, music and other activities where touching a student may be required.
- Guiding a student in a non-threatening manner.
- Comforting a distressed student in an appropriate manner, for example, by a pat on the arm or shoulder.

Emotional Boundaries with Students

- You must respect the emotional needs and wellbeing of students and ensure that you do not violate appropriate emotional boundaries with them.
- You must not discuss your own personal problems, feelings or vulnerabilities with students.
- You may violate an emotional boundary through the use of threats and fear, intimidating behaviours or moral pressure.

Emotional Boundaries with Students

Examples of when you may violate an emotional boundary with a student by making inappropriate comments about them or their family or by:

Shaming, embarrassing or humiliating them

Making derogatory remarks

Confiding personal lifestyle issues

Using sarcasm

Belittling

Teasing

Using unprofessional criticism

Making overly familiar or personal commentary including comments about a student's personal appearance

Shouting at or in the student's presence

Discuss personal matters

Behavioural Boundaries with Students

You must respect behavioural boundaries with students and not develop any relationship that could be seen to be personal rather than a professional relationship. You must treat all students consistently without inappropriate familiarity or spending 'special time' with a student.



Behavioural Boundaries with Students

Where a personal relationship exists with an employee and a student, such as a family relationship, you should declare that relationship to your Principal/Manager at the earliest opportunity.

You must comply with procedures in relation to transporting students. You must not drive a student in your car unless you first have the specific written permission of the parent and your Principal.

You may violate a behavioural boundary with students by:

- Inappropriate use of social media e.g., accepting a student as a “friend” on Facebook.
- Making phone calls or sending personal emails or texts or other forms of communication with a student.
- Giving gifts or showing special favours.
- Sharing secrets.
- Disclosing inappropriate personal information about yourself to a student.
- Inappropriately questioning a student about personal or private matters.
- Engaging in social activities with students outside of school with whom there is no declared personal relationship.

You may violate a behavioural boundary with students by:

- Driving students without the correct authority.
- Visiting students at home without appropriate authority.
- Using unprofessional language such as swearing or making inappropriate comments in front of the student.
- Failing to follow the school's behaviour support policies and procedures and using unreasonable or unfair or unjust disciplinary measures.
- Photographing a student other than for appropriate professional reasons.
- Exposing students to material that contains adult content or themes that are offensive or inappropriate to the age and maturity of the student.

Behavioural Boundaries with Students

Can a teacher support and comfort a student, who they know is experiencing difficulties at home or in their relationships with peers?

- A. Yes
- B. No



When Does the Code Apply?

Answer: A – Yes



You should ensure that you follow the school's processes in providing support and comfort to a student to ensure that you are not breaching professional boundaries with students.

When Does the Code Apply?

Examples:

- If a student forgets their lunch you should follow the school's process (e.g., tuckshop vouchers) rather than pay for the lunch yourself.
- You should not counsel students about their personal problems but refer the student to the school's counsellor who can provide professional support to students.
- You must advise your Principal and obtain the Principal's consent before providing any advice or assistance to a student on a personal matter.
- You must make any reports, as required under the RCE Student Protection Processes.




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Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students

Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students

You must never engage in sexual misconduct or inappropriate relationships with a student, including a romantic or sexual relationship with a student.

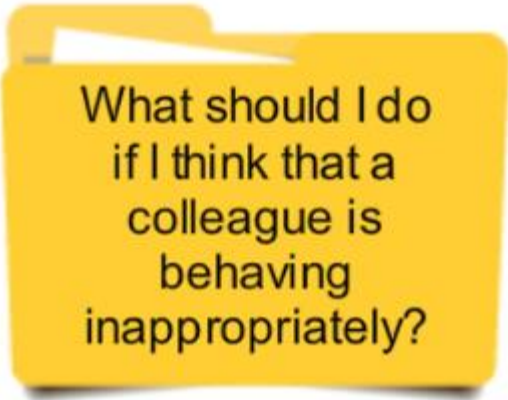


What should I remember?

It is not relevant if the relationship is lawful, consensual or condoned by parents or carers.

An employee must immediately discourage any romantic or sexual advances by a student and immediately report the matter to their Principal.


Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students



What should I do if I think that a colleague is behaving inappropriately?

If you believe that a colleague is giving too much attention to a student you should consult your Principal or the school's Student Protection Contact to discuss the matter. If your concern relates to the Principal you should contact the Diocesan Director.

Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students



What is grooming?

Grooming occurs when actions are taken deliberately to befriend or establish an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions to sexually abuse the child.

Grooming is a criminal offence in Queensland.

Grooming of a student by an employee is considered by RCE to be likely sexual abuse of a student and will be reported to the Police.

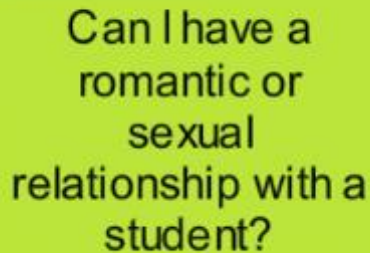
Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students

No. A relationship with a student (other than a professional relationship) is never acceptable.

Can I have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student?

Due to the relationship of trust between a school employee and RCE students, any reasonable suspicions or allegations of a sexual relationship between you and a student will be considered by RCE to be sexual abuse of that student and reported to the Police.

Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students



Can I have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student?

- Sometimes, an emotionally vulnerable employee will convince themselves that the student's wants or needs a close relationship with them or that because the student initiated the relationship or flirted with the employee, the relationship is acceptable.
- A relationship (other than professional relationship) between an employee and a student is never acceptable.

Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Relationships with Students

Can I have a sexual relationship with a student after the student leaves school?

- The obligation for you to NOT engage in a sexual relationship or inappropriate relationship with a student does not cease when the student turns 18 years of age or leaves school.
- The obligation continues to apply to an employee for a significant time after the employee/student relationship ceases.
- You should be very wary about entering into any romantic or sexual relationship with a former student especially in the first few years after the cessation of the employee/student relationship.

You may be found to have engaged in sexual misconduct or having inappropriate relationships with students if you, for example:

- Share jokes of an inappropriate sexual nature with a student
- Distribute or display pornography
- Have inappropriate conversations with a student of a sexual nature such as sharing information about sexual relationships and sexual preferences

You may be found to have engaged in sexual misconduct or having inappropriate relationships with students if you, for example:

- Engage in communication with a student that is sexually explicit or offensive
- Undress in front of a student
- Flirt with a student
- Use obscene language or gestures of a sexual nature



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Student Protection Processes

Student Protection Processes

You must follow the RCE Student Protection Processes to respond to and report allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse and harm or risk of harm to students, including staff inappropriate behaviour towards a student.

Your RCE Student Protection Coordinator or school based Student Protection Contact/Principal will support you to make all reports required under these Processes.





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Professional Behaviour

Professional Behaviour with Parents and Carers

You must endeavour to establish relationships with your students' parents and carers based on mutual trust and open communication, being respectful of their right for enquiry, consultation and information in relation to their child.

Where there is a disagreement or conflict with a parent or carer you must use your best endeavours to resolve the issue and ensure that your behaviour is not derogatory, intimidating, rude or abusive.

Ways in which you can demonstrate your professional behaviour with parents and carers include:

- Being approachable, prompt and responsive
- Treating parents and carers with consideration, respect and dignity
- Not disclosing sensitive information from families unless it is for a legitimate purpose
- Respecting cultural diversity
- Respecting different family structures
- Being tolerant of opinions and perspectives
- Exercising sound judgement and practice

Professional Behaviour Between Employees

What are my responsibilities?

You should ensure that your behaviour towards your colleagues is not derogatory, rude, aggressive, abusive, belittling, threatening or intimidating.

You must also avoid behaviour that might reasonably be perceived to amount to workplace bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination.

Professional Behaviour Between Employees

What should I do if I have a disagreement or conflict with another employee?

Where you have a disagreement or conflict with another employee try and use your best efforts to resolve the issues through the appropriate processes for managing grievances.

Information can be found in the RCE Staff Complaints Management Procedure or you can talk to your Principal or Manager.



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General Information



General Information

Copyright and
Intellectual Property

- You may use RCE's intellectual property in the course of your employment with RCE. All material created by you in the course of your employment with RCE is owned by RCE.
- You must ensure that you do not infringe the intellectual property rights of RCE or others.
- You must seek the permission of RCE, through your Principal or Manager, to use any of RCE's intellectual property for private purposes either during or after you cease employment.

General Information

Records, Notices and Approvals

- Records of all consents, approvals and declarations given to or by a Principal/Manager (e.g. Conflict of Interest Declaration or approval to transport students) must be kept on file by you and your Principal/Manager.
- You must keep all records in relation to your work in accordance with RCE's Records Management requirements and not destroy any records without appropriate authority.

Employee Assistance Program - ACCESS

- RCE provides an employee assistance program (ACCESS Counselling Services) to give free and confidential counselling to employees and their immediate families who require support or would like to discuss any work or personal issues.
- ACCESS 1300 523 985



Congratulations

You have reached the end of your Code of Conduct training.

Please contact your Principal, Manager or the RCE Administration and Governance Coordinator should you have any enquires about the content in this training.



Acknowledgement

Rockhampton Catholic Education wishes to acknowledge Brisbane Catholic Education for their support in the creation of this PowerPoint and training module.