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Ethical Guidelines

for

The MIECAT Institute staff and students
in interactions with others
and in companioning practice

2015

THE MIECAT INSTITUTE INC

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Preamble

The MIECAT Institute is a not-for-profit higher education provider that offers accredited post graduate courses in therapeutic arts practice.

Our approach seeks congruence between what is taught and how it is taught. The dynamic process of inquiry invites you to be curious, challenged and immersed in a community of co-learners.

MIECAT creates opportunities for you to reconstruct understandings of experience, values and meanings, to enrich professional practice and to contribute creatively to society.

Our primary purpose is education and research in the tertiary sector in Australia. The MIECAT Institute offers an accredited Masters in Therapeutic Arts Practice and Professional Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice.

MIECAT inquiries are dedicated to the idea of lifelong pursuit of meanings that enable individuals to participate effectively in the work force as well as contribute constructively to society. Human meanings are constructed in the purposeful search for understanding that is found in relational experiencing. MIECAT uses a multi-modal, experiential arts approach to explore meanings and the choices for action. This form of inquiry is based in respect, compassion, and commitment to the search for ways of living that support the flourishing of the planet.

The MIECAT Institute aims to teach a program of study for those specifically interested in becoming creative arts health and education practitioners, community development workers, community activists, or anyone committed to the development of a civilized society. The MIECAT Institute also supports individuals who wish to understand more about themselves, groups wanting to explore shared meanings, and organizations that rely on collaborative intersubjective approaches to achieve work related goals.

The guidelines

This document articulates the values that underpin therapeutic arts practice and the relational actions and responsibilities of the staff and students of The MIECAT Institute as well as describes the personal attributes that The MIECAT Institute fosters in the education of therapeutic arts practitioners.

The guidelines apply to all enrolled students and to The MIECAT Institute's staff in their roles as teachers, supervisors or administrators.

Any complaints related to staff or student misconduct can be pursued through The MIECAT Institute's Grievance Policies (These are available online and from the MIECAT Institute's office).

Students undertaking companioning practicums during their course would be expected to abide by the ethical guidelines and code of conduct of the organisation in which they are working.

The MIECAT Institute core values

- An extended epistemology for inquiry into lived experience – the use of the MIECAT multi-modal procedures of inquiry as the basis for interactions with others,
- Collaborative interactions that emphasise curiosity, openness, equality and joint responsibility,
- A safe, secure, mutually trustworthy relational process,
- The expression of intersubjective resonances that are relevant to the ongoing inquiry, and contribute to the relationship,
- Acceptance of diversity and a wide range of human qualities and the multiple ways of knowing that can be brought to bear in relationships.

Companioning responsibilities at MIECAT

Companions have the responsibility to attend supervision where appropriate and required as a part of the course in which they are enrolled

Companions remain non-judgmental and companion with the intention to inquire with the other.

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Companions recognise and respect cultural differences and diversity among people and oppose discrimination and oppressive language and behaviour.

Companions are honest and accountable in all their dealings with others

Companions maintain confidentiality of information disclosed by co-inquirers within the companionship relationship. Companions must obtain written permission before any material (verbal, taped or in artistic forms) is shared in any written documentation or verbal exchange with another. Information may only be shared with the companion's facilitator/ supervisor if the companion feels there is some clear risk to self or other in not disclosing this material. Unless it is a clear situation of crisis, it is best for the companion to discuss the situation with the inquirer prior to meeting with the facilitator or supervisor.

Companions must take all appropriate steps to ensure the safety of those with whom they work

Companions are responsible for communicating the terms on which companionship is offered (for example within an educational environment or as part of a Masters program of study).

Companions have a responsibility to themselves to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and ability to work with others. They are expected to monitor their own personal functioning and to seek help, support and supervision.

Companions have a responsibility not engage in or to withdraw from therapeutic arts practice when their functioning is impaired due to personal or emotional difficulties, illness, alcohol, drugs or for any other reason.

The personal attributes we foster in all students and staff members are:

- A capacity to be deeply present and remain attentive to relational processes
- An awareness of personal interactions as a joint construction
- A generosity of spirit towards other including respectfulness, acceptance, openness, warmth and genuineness
- A highly developed capacity to be attuned to one's intuition, resonance and embodied, felt sensing and to respectfully attune to another's experiencing
- A commitment to fairness and justice.
- A reflexive self-awareness in all interactions with others

In conclusion

We expect students who have graduated from The MIECAT Institute to seek membership of an appropriate professional organisation for example; ANZATA, ACATA, ACA or PACFA and to work within the scope of practice defined by these organisations.

The Institute also expects the graduates of MIECAT will take steps to maintain and develop their competence throughout their professional lives and abide by the laws of the society in which they practice and to conduct themselves in their companioning related activities in ways which maintain public confidence in their role as therapeutic arts practitioners and in the work of other creative arts therapists/practitioners.

Other relevant MIECAT policies and documents

The MIECAT Institute Academic Grievance Policy

The MIECAT Institute Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy

The MIECAT Institute's HREC application forms and guides

The MIECAT Institute's Guidelines for Work Place Practicums

Additional reference material

Australian Counselling Association (2012) *Code of Ethics and Practice*. Retrieved from <http://www.theaca.net.au/documents/ACA%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20v8.pdf>

Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (2013). *Policy Paper: Australia's workforce of allied health professionals*. Retrieved from http://www.ahpa.com.au/Portals/0/Representation/AHPA_Policy_Paper-Workforce-March_2013.pdf

Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (2014). *Consultation paper: A National Code of Conduct for health care workers*. Retrieved from http://www.ahmac.gov.au/cms_documents/A%20National%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20for%20health%20care%20workers-National%20Code%20consultation%20paper.pdf

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Australian and New Zealand Art Therapy Association Code of Ethics Retrieved from <https://www.anzata.org/Ethics-Standards>

Health Education and Training Institute (2012). *The superguide: a handbook for supervising allied health professionals*, HETI, Sydney.

Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia Code of Ethics Retrieved from <http://www.pacfa.org.au/practitioner-resources/ethical-standards/>