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# TCAA CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

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**Version:** 1.2

**Effective Date:** 2 June 2026

**Review Date:** 2 June 2027

**Approved by:** TCAA Committee of Management

**Replaces:** TCAA Code of Conduct 2019??

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## 1. Purpose and Scope

### 1.1 Purpose

This Code of Conduct and Ethics sets out the standards of behaviour, professionalism, and accountability expected of members of the Tai Chi Association of Australia (TCAA).

The Code is intended to:

- Maintain the reputation and integrity of the TCAA and its members
- Ensure professional and ethical conduct in all Tai Chi-related activities
- Protect students, participants, and the wider community
- Ensure compliance with Australian law and relevant regulatory frameworks, including private health fund requirements

### 1.2 Scope and Application

This Code applies to all categories of TCAA membership and accreditation, including:

- TCAA Individual and Organisational members
- TCAA Accredited Instructors
- TCAA Accredited Instructors who are Health Fund Provider Evaluated

Members are required to comply with **all Parts of this Code that apply to their membership or accreditation status.**

This code must be:

- Acknowledged upon joining TCAA or applying for accreditation
  - Reaffirmed at every membership renewal
  - Reaffirmed at every accreditation renewal
  - Followed at all times while a member or accredited instructor
  - Breach of this Code may result in:
    - ❖ Warning or corrective action
    - ❖ Suspension of membership or accreditation
    - ❖ Termination of membership or accreditation
    - ❖ Referral to relevant authorities (if criminal activity involved)
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## 2. How to Read this Document

This Code is structured in four substantive Parts:

- **Part 1** applies to **all TCAA members**
- **Part 2** applies to **TCAA Accredited Instructors**

TCAA member and organisational instructors are strongly encouraged to follow these standards as best practice, even though compliance is not mandatory.
- **Part 3** applies to **Accredited Instructors who are Health Fund Provider Evaluated**
- **Part 4** applies to **all TCAA Members**

This part covers responsibilities, reporting, and enforcement

Each Part clearly states who it applies to. Where additional obligations apply to specific roles, this is explicitly stated.

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## 3. Key Definitions

**TCAA Member** - Any individual or organization holding current TCAA membership

**TCAA Accredited Instructor** - A member who has successfully completed the TCAA Instructor Accreditation process and maintains current accreditation

**Health Fund Evaluated** - Status allowing an accredited instructor to apply to be a Health Fund Provider

**Participant** - Any person attending or enrolling in Tai Chi classes or services

**Instructor** - Any TCAA member who teaches Tai Chi, whether accredited or not (though only accredited instructors may use TCAA credentials)

**CPD** - Continuing Professional Development (ongoing learning activities required to maintain and enhance professional capabilities and accreditation)

**TCAA Intellectual Property** - All materials owned or controlled by TCAA including logos, brand names, trademarks, documents, teaching materials, assessment tools, and other content

# PART 1

## CORE STANDARDS FOR ALL TCAA MEMBERS

### 1.1 Application of Part 1

This Part applies to **all individuals and organisations holding current TCAA membership**, regardless of accreditation status.

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### 1.2 Support for Tai Chi and TCAA

All members shall:

- Support the development of Tai Chi in Australia
  - Promote the benefits of Tai Chi to the community
  - Adhere to internationally recognised Tai Chi ethics, principles and guidelines
  - Be a positive role model for Tai Chi at all times
  - Support the mission, values, and activities of TCAA
  - Respect the diversity of Tai Chi styles, lineages, and traditions
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### 1.3 Professional and Respectful Conduct

All members shall:

- Conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and ethical manner in all Tai Chi-related activities and interactions
  - Refrain from making or publishing defamatory or derogatory statements about TCAA, other Tai Chi organisations, or individual members, except in legal proceedings
  - Maintain confidentiality regarding complaint processes and investigations
  - Avoid discriminatory, harassing, abusive, or intimidating behaviour on any protected ground including but not limited to age, gender, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation
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### 1.4 Legal and Ethical Compliance

All members shall:

- Comply with all applicable Australian laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Privacy Act 1988, Competition and Consumer Act 2010, Anti-discrimination, Workplace Health and Safety Legislation
- Not engage in conduct that brings TCAA or the Tai Chi community into disrepute
- Honour commitments and agreements made with TCAA, other members, students, and third parties

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## 1.5 Extended Applicability

A breach of a comparable code of conduct while a member of another affiliated or recognised organisation may be treated as a breach of this Code.

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## PART 2

# ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR TCAA ACCREDITED INSTRUCTORS

## 2.1 Application of Part 2

This Part applies to members who hold **current TCAA Instructor Accreditation**.

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## 2.2 Professional Teaching Standards

Accredited instructors shall:

- Teach only within their scope of competence and accreditation level
  - Not misrepresent qualifications, skills, lineage, or experience
  - Maintain required Continuing Professional Development (minimum 10 CPD points annually)
  - Provide safe and effective instruction appropriate to student abilities, health conditions, and goals
  - Prioritise student safety and wellbeing
  - Provide recommendations that prioritise the needs of students, ensuring decisions are free from personal financial interests or any other inappropriate motivations
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## 2.3 Student Care and Professional Boundaries

Accredited instructors shall:

- Always maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students
  - Obtain informed consent from students prior to participation, ensuring that any pertinent health conditions are disclosed
  - Respect student dignity, autonomy, and privacy
  - Refer students to qualified health professionals where issues fall outside the instructor's scope of expertise
  - Not exploit students financially, emotionally, or sexually
  - Establish and maintain a supportive, inclusive learning environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, and discrimination.
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## 2.4 Safety, Risk Management, and Insurance

Accredited instructors shall:

- Maintain current First Aid certification (HLTAID011, HLTAID012, HLTAID013 or HLTAID014)
  - Implement appropriate risk-management strategies
  - Hold current public liability (minimum \$10 million) and professional indemnity (minimum \$5 million) insurance
  - Hold a current Working with Children Check (WWC) and Working with Vulnerable People if applicable
  - Maintain emergency response procedures
  - Record and report serious incidents or injuries
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## 2.5 Professional Integrity and Transparency

Accredited instructors shall:

- Represent their qualifications, experience, and accreditation accurately in all communications and marketing
  - Ensure that all information regarding course offerings, pricing, and content is presented accurately to students prior to their enrolment
  - Maintain fair, transparent pricing and refund practices
  - Honour contractual obligations to students and venues
  - Keep accurate teaching and professional records
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## 2.6 Intellectual Property

Accredited instructors shall:

- Respect TCAA intellectual property rights
  - Use TCAA logos, branding, and credentials only while accreditation is current and with permission
  - Immediately cease use of TCAA intellectual property upon suspension, expiry, or revocation
  - Respect intellectual property belonging to other Tai Chi traditions or organisations
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## 2.7 Accreditation Compliance

Accredited instructors shall:

- Maintain all accreditation requirements continuously
  - Submit renewal documentation accurately and on time
  - Notify TCAA within 30 days of any matter affecting accreditation including but not limited to:
    - ❖ Lapse in insurance coverage
    - ❖ Expiry of required certifications
    - ❖ Serious incidents or injuries in classes
    - ❖ Complaints or legal actions related to teaching
    - ❖ Criminal charges or convictions
    - ❖ Changes in contact details or teaching circumstances
  - Cooperate with TCAA quality assurance processes, audits, reviews, and investigations
  - Initiate voluntary withdrawal from accreditation if non-compliance with accreditation requirements is identified
  - Refrain from teaching as an accredited instructor if accreditation lapses
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## PART 3

### ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITED INSTRUCTORS - HEALTH FUND PROVIDER EVALUATED

#### 3.1 Application of Part 3

This Part applies only to **Accredited Instructors who have been Health fund Provider Evaluated**.

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#### 3.2 Consumer Protection and Transparency

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Provide clear, plain-language information about services, costs, exclusions, and rebates
  - Avoid misleading or deceptive conduct
  - Offer services based on participant needs or medical referral
  - Assist participants to understand health fund claiming processes
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#### 3.3 Record Keeping and Documentation

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Maintain accurate participant records
  - Store records securely in compliance with privacy laws
  - Retain records for required statutory periods (minimum 7 years recommended)
  - Provide appropriate documentation for health fund claims
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#### 3.4 Staff Training and Competence

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Ensure all instructor employees, sub-contractors, contractors or assistants (if any) are trained to:
    - ❖ Clearly explain class options
    - ❖ Provide information participants need to make informed choices
    - ❖ Understand health fund rebate processes
    - ❖ Maintain appropriate records
  - Supervise any assistants or employees to ensure they meet the same standards as the accredited instructor
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## 3.5 Participant Rights and Information

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Provide participants, upon request, with details of:
    - ❖ Their entitlements
    - ❖ Any changes to class offerings
    - ❖ Class schedules and content
    - ❖ Pricing and fees
  - Communicate in a timely, clear, and consumer-friendly format
  - Where feasible, implement transitional arrangements to accommodate ongoing participants if changes to class offerings or fees negatively impact them.
  - Ensure that information regarding the Code of Conduct and Ethics, as well as details on accessing the complaints process, is provided in class documentation and marketing materials.
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## 3.6 Complaints Handling

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Maintain an internal complaints-handling process that meets or exceeds the ISO 10002 or AS/NZS 1002 standards including but not limited to:
    - ❖ Clear information on how complaints can be made
    - ❖ Defined timeframes for responses
    - ❖ Fair and transparent investigation procedures
    - ❖ Escalation to a Commonwealth Ombudsman or relevant external body if unresolved
  - Provide clear information on how complaints can be made
  - Respond promptly and fairly
  - Maintain records of complaints and outcomes
  - Report notifiable complaints to TCAA as required by Accreditation Policy
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## 3.7 Regulatory Compliance

Health fund provider evaluated instructors shall:

- Comply with all legislation applicable to health service providers including but not limited to:
    - ❖ Private Health Insurance Act 2007
    - ❖ Australian Consumer Law
    - ❖ Privacy Act 1988
    - ❖ Competition and Consumer Act 2010
    - ❖ Any applicable state/territory health or consumer laws
  - Work with intermediaries (e.g., studios, brokers, or comparison services) only under clear written agreements that require equivalent standards of disclosure, training, and record-keeping
  - Maintain up-to-date knowledge of health fund requirements
  - Cooperate with audits or reviews by health funds, regulators, or TCAA
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## PART 4

# RESPONSIBILITIES, REPORTING, AND ENFORCEMENT

### 4.1 Self-Reporting and Reporting of Breaches

Members and instructors shall:

- Promptly notify TCAA of any known non-compliance
  - Take immediate steps to remedy breaches
  - Should the non-compliance remain unresolved, voluntarily withdraw from TCAA Membership and, if applicable, surrender Accreditation.
  - Cooperate fully with investigations
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### 4.2 Reporting Breaches by Others

Any member may:

- File a complaint against another member or instructor following the process outlined in the TCAA Constitution.
  - Report any suspected violations of this Code to TCAA.
  - Assist with investigations regarding breaches of the Code.
  - Act with integrity and honesty, avoiding malicious intent or unfounded accusations.
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### 4.3 Cessation of Membership or Accreditation

Upon cancellation or expiry:

- Use of all TCAA branding and credentials must cease immediately
  - Members must not present themselves as affiliated with TCAA
  - Relevant parties must be notified where appropriate
  - Return any TCAA materials if requested
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### 4.4 TCAA Committee Responsibilities

The TCAA Committee of Management shall:

- Investigate alleged breaches fairly and confidentially
  - Apply appropriate sanctions
  - Ensure procedural fairness
  - Monitor compliance and review this Code regularly
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## 4.5 Enforcement

The TCAA Committee of Management shall:

- Investigate complaints or reports of Code breaches according to TCAA Constitution procedures
  - Impose appropriate sanctions for breaches, which may include:
    - ❖ Written warnings
    - ❖ Corrective action plans
    - ❖ Mandatory additional training
    - ❖ Conditional membership or accreditation
    - ❖ Suspension of membership or accreditation
    - ❖ Termination of membership or accreditation
    - ❖ Public naming in reports (for serious breaches)
    - ❖ Referral to regulatory bodies or police (where appropriate)
  - Follow documented processes ensuring natural justice and procedural fairness
  - Maintain confidentiality of investigations and proceedings (except where public disclosure is warranted)
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## 4.6 Monitoring and Compliance

The TCAA Committee of Management shall:

- Monitor compliance through:
    - ❖ Annual self-audits
    - ❖ Random compliance checks
    - ❖ Review of complaints and incident reports
    - ❖ Audits as required by private health funds
  - Review complaints data (including from private health funds or Commonwealth Ombudsman) to identify systemic issues
  - Periodically review and update this Code to ensure it remains current and effective
  - Provide guidance and support to members and Accredited instructors in meeting Code requirements
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## 4.7 Transparency and Reporting

The TCAA Committee of Management shall:

- Maintain transparency about Code enforcement and complaint handling
  - Publish anonymized statistics about Code breaches and sanctions (where appropriate)
  - Provide reports to private health funds as necessary concerning Accredited Instructor HFP Evaluated compliance.
  - Cooperate with external regulators and oversight bodies
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## 4.8 How to Get Help

### 4.8.1 If you are Uncertain About Requirements

If you are unsure whether you are complying with Code requirements or how to address a particular situation:

#### **Contact TCAA**

Email: [conduct\\_tcaa@gmail.com](mailto:conduct_tcaa@gmail.com)

Postal address: PO Box 4322, North Rocks, NSW 2151

We're here to help you understand and meet your obligations.

### 4.8.2 If You Need to Report a Concern

If you become aware of a potential Code breach by another member:

#### **Lodge a complaint**

Online: [www.taichiaustralia.com/complaints](http://www.taichiaustralia.com/complaints)

Email: [complaints\\_tcaa@gmail.com](mailto:complaints_tcaa@gmail.com)

Mail: PO Box 4322, North Rocks, NSW 2151

All complaints are taken seriously and investigated according to TCAA Constitution procedures.

### 4.8.3 Responding to a Complaint

If you're notified of a complaint against you:

- Don't panic - you'll have an opportunity to respond and present your side
- Cooperate fully with the investigative process
- Seek clarification if you don't understand the allegations
- Respond honestly and promptly to requests for information
- Consider seeking advice if the matter is serious or complex