**Muslim LGBT+ Support Group**

**Code of Conduct**

**1: Confidentiality & Privacy:**

1.1: Please inform the group members in advance if you are bringing someone new to the group.

1.2: Whatever is discussed in the group, remains in the group. It is not to be shared or gossiped about to the outside LGBT+ community and/or the wider Muslim community.

1.3: Some group members may not have come out to their families; therefore, it is crucial to maintain the confidentiality of their gender and sexual orientation.

1.4: Photos/Videos of group members are NOT allowed to be posted on media and social media unless otherwise specified.

1.5: You can NOT give address and/or phone numbers or any contact details of group members to third parties, without their consent. Be careful of people from Australian media approaching you for Muslim LGBT+ stories.

**2: Duty of Care:** It is a moral or legal obligation to ensure the safety or well-being of others.

**2.1:** Do no harm to individual members, do no harm to the reputation of the group and do no harm to the wider Muslim or the LGBT+ community members and their property.

**2.2:** Ensure that you follow Work, Health & Safety guidelines when holding a meeting or gathering in a premise.

**3: Social Media Policy:**

**3.1:** *Understanding Cyber-bullying:* Cyber-bullying is any behaviour, using digital technologies, that could reasonably be considered humiliating, intimidating, threatening or demeaning to a person, or group of people, and which creates a risk to health and safety. Examples may include harassment via mobile phone, social media, or e-mail, or setting up an offensive personal website or blog.[[i]](https://www.apsc.gov.au/what-cyber-bullying#endnote-1) While cyber-bullying typically involves an accumulation of instances of objectionable behaviour, single instances of online abuse and harassment may constitute cyber-bullying.

Examples of inappropriate online conduct include:

1. using offensive language (including terms inappropriately targeting specific groups or individuals), including swear words or insults used in different languages that other members may not understand.
2. personal attacks that embarrass, humiliate, discredit, or portray the target in a negative light. This includes messaging other group members on facebook forcing them to “back me up” and dragging them in online arguments. Furthermore, anyone who uses ‘selective’ privileges of individual Muslim LGBT+ that come from stable socio-economic backgrounds or have supportive family members and uses this information to create assumptions and insulting their families by invalidating their narratives, and breaching confidentiality.
3. spamming (i.e. sending multiple successive and irrelevant messages in the facebook group or posts that are designed to aggravate/provoke a response or which cause nuisance).
4. cyber-stalking—for example, using the internet to find, identify, and arrange to meet a person whom one intends to victimise; or sending multiple emails to annoy, embarrass, intimidate, or threaten a person.
5. publishing embarrassing or altered photos or videos of members of the group.
6. inappropriate and unreasonable use of online enquiry forms to convey abusive or offensive remarks- such as the complaints record or online membership surveys.
7. creating fake social networking profiles to be added to the group.

**3.2:** *Responding to Cyber-Bullying:*

a) No response to abuse.

b) If aggression continues over some time, a private message will be sent.

c) Secondly a public warning will be made.

d) Comments will be screen shot and then deleted to disperse aggressive trolling.

e) The person/s will be blocked, and posts will be reported to facebook.

f) Encourage other members to not get involved to avoid escalating the situation. Otherwise request “Stop”.

**4: Disclosure of Interest to avoid Conflict of Interest:**

**4.1:** It is important for ALL group members to state their expectations from the group avoiding assumptions and confusion and inform everyone as to why they want to join the group and what they hope to achieve.

**4.2:** An online survey can be filled to make the Disclosure of Interest easier to state.

**4.3:** An online training can be provided to understand and deal with Conflict of Interest.

**4.4:** This group does not involve itself in any fund raising, monetary charity or social enterprise as we are not a business nor a not-for-profit organisation, neither do we aim to.

**4.5:** Do not promote individual staff or other businesses or money-making ventures, or individual political candidates, preferences or parties in this group.

**5: Handling Complaints:**

**5.1:** When accusing another member of bullying or harassment, it is important to provide evidence of messages such as texts, social media screen shots, emails etc. If failure to provide evidence, the complaint will be registered as part of record keeping, a general warning will be issued to the group. However no further action will be taken until a different member accuses the same member of such misconduct.

**5.2:** Alternatively, if more than one complaint has been received regarding the poor behaviour of an individual by members inside and/or outside this group, the individual can be asked to leave the group in order to maintain the safety and welfare of the group members.

**5.3:** Sometimes members who misconducted in the past after interval of few months or year/s want to return. In order to return to the group, we require evidence of counselling or rehabilitation in order to activate the group membership again.

**5.4:** In case of a person with disability or special needs needing help writing a complaint, we can seek help from third party outside the members of both LGBT+ and Muslim community. We also accept written complaints in both handwritten or typed form.

**5.5:** This group has zero tolerance policy regarding assault and harassment whether it is between two gay members, two lesbian members or multiple members. Therefore, we encourage written complaints of such incidents including time, date and location of the incident. Content- what happened or what was said/done. Whom did you report to outside this group and what outcome you would like us to achieve? We offer mediation, recommendation to CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault) and other relevant services to help you recover from this incident. Unfortunately, we cannot help you write any complaints to avoid bias. However, upon severe misconduct such as assault and harassment, not only will the group member be removed. The incident will be reported to the police.

**5.6:** Any members of the group under 18 also have the right to submit a complaint without needing a signature of parents/ guardian. We understand that some Muslim LGBT+ under 18 are not supported by their families and fear coming out. Therefore, this support group of Muslim LGBT+ adults is mindful of requiring Working with Children’s Check (WWCC) should an under 18 member wants to join this group.