Firearms Policy

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University') is committed to providing a safe environment. This is particularly important as there are increased risks when staff and students are using, handling, transporting and storing firearms. On occasions, University staff and Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates may require the use of firearms to assist in the performance of their work or a research project.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) The intention of this policy is to outline the University's obligations in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997 and Firearms Regulations 1997 when acquiring, handling, storing and disposal of firearms.

a. Other jurisdiction legislation takes precedence over NT legislation and this policy to the extent that they are inconsistent.

(3) This policy is designed to provide a safe and regulated environment for the use, handling, storage and disposal of firearms when required for legitimate work purposes.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to all University staff and HDR candidates.

Section 4 - Policy

Licences

(5) The Firearms Act 1997 and Firearms Regulations 1997 mandate that in order to use firearms in the Northern Territory for University business, the University must hold a Firearms Corporate Licence(s). For each Firearms Corporate Licence, the University must maintain compliance with and adherence to the Firearms Act 1997.

(6) The University will hold a Firearms Corporate Licence(s) and maintain a register of Licence holder(s).

(7) Staff needing to possess or use a firearm must be approved in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997, paying specific attention to the obligations noted in Division 7 – Firearms Corporate Licence.

(8) Staff or students must surrender their firearms employee license, paying special attention to Division 8 – Firearms Employee Licence of the Firearms Act 1997, in the following circumstances:

a. their employment or study no longer requires them to possess or use a firearm; or
b. where they cease employment with, or study at the University.

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Purchases and use of firearms

(9) New purchases and new users of firearms within the University or on University business will be subject to approval by the Vice-Chancellor. Approvals of firearm purchases or use will be based on essential use only.

(10) The use of firearms on University property is for essential work or research purposes only.

(11) The Corporate Licence Holder must be consulted before any action is taken in relation to the firearms, ammunition or the locked storage facilities. The Corporate Licence Holder must then contact the NT Police to agree to the action(s) prior to the action(s) being taken.

(12) Staff or students cannot possess or use firearms without having completed an approved NT Firearms Safety Training Course and hold a valid firearms employee licence for the relevant firearms category.

(13) Research projects requiring the use of firearms or ammunition must have appropriate ethics clearance if required.

(14) The use of personal firearms for or while attending University business is forbidden.

(15) Users of firearms must take express care in their handling and use.

(16) Firearms or ammunition must not be taken into teaching or student residential areas of campus.

(17) Students, other than HDR candidates needing to use firearms as part of their approved research, may not possess or use firearms or ammunition on University property.

Storage and disposal

(18) When a firearm and ammunition is not being used or carried, the firearm and ammunition must be separately stored in a locked storage facility that has been inspected and approved by NT Police and in accordance with Part 3 of the Firearms Regulations 1997. Only the Corporate Licence Holder or their deputised officer are to manage access to the locked storage facility and maintain registrations with NT Police.

a. Any other person requesting access to the firearms or ammunition must have completed an approved NT Firearms Safety Training Course and hold a valid firearms employee licence for the relevant firearms category.

(19) In the instance a firearm or ammunition is unable to be returned to the locked storage facility on campus, then the Corporate Licence Holder must approve the firearm and any ammunition being stored in an alternate location, subject to being in an approved case and out of public view in accordance with the Firearms Act 1997.

(20) Disposal of firearms must be undertaken by the Corporate Licence Holder with permission granted from the Vice-Chancellor. The register of Corporate Firearms is to be immediately updated.

Records

(21) The University will maintain a register of all Firearms Employee Licence holders who, as a requirement of their employment, are required to use firearms, including details of licences and training received.

(22) The Corporate Licence Holder at the University will maintain a register of:

a. all University firearms, including date of purchase, make, calibre and serial numbers; and
b. when firearms or ammunition are taken out of, and placed back into the locked storage facility.

(23) A copy of registers will be deposited on at least an annual basis with Records and Archives.

Section 5 - Non-Compliance

(24) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct – Staff or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(25) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Code of Conduct – Staff and Code of Conduct - Students.

(26) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	6th May 2022
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Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	24th April 2022
Expiry Date	22nd September 2025
Responsible Executive	Brendon Douglas Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Implementation Officer	Brendon Douglas Vice-President Governance and University Secretary
Enquiries Contact	Brendon Douglas Vice-President Governance and University Secretary --- Governance