1 Introduction

The University aims to meet the highest ethical standards in relation to its decision making, how its decisions are put into practice and the behavior of its members. Ethical decision making and behavior is key to the achievement of our values, particularly of transparency and accountability. This is underpinned by propriety in its management and governance structures and an appropriate policy framework. This Code articulates the ethical principles which help ensure that our values are put into practice in the running of the University. It sets out the policies designed to embed ethical practice and the issues that should be taken into account in any decision making at all levels of the University.

2 Ethical behaviour

Ethical behaviour involves demonstrating respect for key moral principles including honesty, fairness, dignity and diversity. By behaving ethically, staff, governors and others associated with the University can ensure that their personal behaviour supports the collective achievement of the University’s strategic and charitable objectives. Individuals should also abide by the standards in public life: integrity, objectivity, openness, selflessness, accountability, honesty and leadership.

Ethical behaviour helps to build trust and, in the context of the University, is associated with individuals acting with integrity. Unethical behaviour is commonly associated with selfishness, seeking personal satisfaction/gain and the detriment of colleagues, the University itself, or third party individuals or organisations.

Policy framework

- Guide to the Board of Governors
- Policy on Staff-Student Relationship
- Anti-Bribery and Corruption
- Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Student Code of Conduct
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy (Whistleblowing).

For further information contact: the University Secretary

3 Accountability and ethical decision making

If you are taking decisions on behalf of the University, you should be prepared to be transparent, to take responsibility and to be accountable for those decisions. You should also ensure that any ethical issues are discussed appropriately. Personal and professional interests should be declared upfront and you should normally exempt yourself if any decision will affect you, your family or other interests you may have.

When taking decisions, particularly where there are ethical implications, you should question:
- Can you justify your behavior to your manager, colleague, friend or students?
- What would your actions look like if made public?
- What could go wrong as a result of your decision?
- Are there any reputational risks for the University or yourself?

When taking difficult decisions, you should discuss with your colleagues and your line manager to ensure that you have thought of all issues as a different perspective can help clarify issues. You should also ensure that you are following the appropriate policy. If necessary, you should take further advice: contact your VCE member or University Secretary if you are concerned about a particular issue or the decisions of others.

Policy framework

- Declarations of Interest Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure.

For further information contact: the University Secretary, your line manager or VCE member

4 Financial integrity

To ensure the University’s ongoing financial sustainability and integrity, it is essential that all decisions made and actions taken in relation to its financial affairs are handled appropriately. This includes fundraising and the acceptance of donations. You should ensure that you are familiar with the Financial Regulations and make decisions within these. You should also ensure that any good and services purchased by the University are properly procured.

Staff with responsibility for the administration and management of University's funds must never use their office or sign off University funds for personal gain or for the benefit of a family member. Staff must declare an interest if they are involved in the placing of a contract or recruitment of staff where they have an interest in the other party.

Policy Framework

- Financial Regulations
- Anti-bribery Policy
- Declarations of Interest Policy
- Donations Acceptance Policy
- Ethical Investment Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Modern Slavery Statement.

For further information contact: the Chief Financial Officer or the University Secretary

5 Respect, equality and diversity

The University is justly proud of its diverse community. We value this diversity and we aim to create an environment where all are treated equally and where staff and students can reach their full potential. All members of the University community should be treated with respect and dignity and no one should be treated less favourably on account of their personal characteristics or background or be advanced because of personal relationships.

Staff should respect professional boundaries with colleagues and particularly students. We should ensure that we provide support for vulnerable members of our community, using the policies devised for this purpose.

Staff and students should be able to raise issues and complaints within this environment without fear of retribution. All complaints should be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

Policy framework

- HR Strategy and policies
- Equality and Diversity Statement
- Faith and Spirituality Policy
- Dignity at Work
- Student Code of Conduct
- Policy on Staff Student Relationships
- Student Charter
- Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour Guidance
- Cause for Concern Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy.

For further information contact: the Director of HR (for staff) or the University Secretary (for student related issues)
6 Professional behaviour

All staff are expected to undertake their role in a professional manner, focused on the delivery of the student experience.

For academic staff, this will include maintaining high standards of teaching and support for students. Those responsible for course design should ensure that the course is fit for purpose, that it supports the employability focus of the University and that assessment is fair, rigorous and transparent.

For professional service staff, this means maintaining or supporting high standards of customer service which enable students to succeed in their study goals. Professional services staff should know how to help (or know who to refer on to) and provide well-informed advice when asked.

All staff must engage in continual professional development to ensure that they are up-to-date with current practice in their area and maintain a good knowledge of appropriate policy and procedures.

Policy framework
- Student Charter
- Academic Regulations (including Academic Misconduct)
- Quality Handbook
- Operational guidance.

For further information contact: the Head of Quality or line manager

7 Intellectual freedom

The University has duty to uphold individual freedom of expression and ensure that the University environment promotes debate. We must also uphold academic freedom to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas including controversial or unpopular opinions provided they are within the law. However, staff should exercise these freedoms responsibly in a way that does not discriminate or endanger either their safety or that of others.

Policy framework
- Code of Practice on the Freedom of Speech
- Procedure for the approval of external speakers and ad hoc room bookings.

For further information contact: the University Secretary

8 Research integrity

The University is committed to ensuring the highest ethical standards in relation to research and provides a policy framework for this purpose.

The ethical considerations in relation to all research involving human participants, security sensitive materials or research which may compromise the safety of the individual must be considered before approval may (or may not be given).

Policy framework
- Research Integrity Code
- Research Ethics Code of Practice
- Research Governance Policy
- Procedure for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in Research.

For further information contact: the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

9 Our environment

University members should treat the University environment with respect and ensure that their actions do not put themselves or others at risk. They must follow health and safety procedures and ensure that they are adequately trained to undertake their work.

The University seeks to drive environmental and sustainability benefits with regards to such matters as reducing pollution, minimising waste, product safety, and conservation of resources. All staff should aim to act responsibly with respect to the use of University resources.

Policy framework
- Health and Safety Policy and associated policies and procedures
- Environmental Sustainability Policy.

For further information contact: the Head of Property Services