

Faculty of Science of Masaryk University directive No 1/2018

Faculty of Science of Masaryk University academic and professional employee code of ethics

(effective as of 1st October 2018)

In accordance with Act No. 111/1998 Sb., on Higher Education Institutions and on the Modification and Amendment of Other Acts (Higher Education Act), as subsequently amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Higher Education Act"), I hereby issue this directive:

Section 1
Initial provisions

(1) The Faculty of Science of Masaryk University (The Faculty) Academic and Professional Employee Code of Ethics (hereinafter referred to as "Code of Ethics") sets out the basic ethical requirements for the conduct of Faculty of Science employees in connection with their professional and academic activities.

(2) The Code of Ethics is binding for all academic and professional Faculty of Science employees (hereinafter as "employees"). The observance of moral conduct standards in the workplace and beyond as formulated in this document constitutes a legitimately anticipated requirement for the proper performance of employee's line of work. Breach of this Code of Ethics may be considered as employee misconduct.

(3) Principles and rules laid down in this Code of Ethics are applicable also to senior and superior (related to work position within the organization) employees regarding their relationship with junior or subordinate employees. Breaching of ethical rules and principles laid down in this Code of Ethics from the position of power, e.g. in teacher-student or superior-subordinate relationship is particularly deplorable.

Section 2
Academic Freedom

(1) The academic freedom of employees includes, in particular, the free will and decision-making in the area of teaching, self-education, and scientific research including the choice of research material and methodology. These aspects of academic freedom must be exercised

a) in full agreement with the development concept and focus of educational, research and development activities of MU and The Faculty,

b) in accordance with common moral principles and with universally accepted work ethic in the area of education, research and development activities,

c) in accordance with the principles of moral conduct expressed in this Code as well as in additional internal MU regulations,

d) while respecting constraints imposed by specific research conditions in agreement with additional rules arising from internal MU regulations.

(3) Free expression of opinion and freedom of communication constitute significant aspects of the academic freedom of employees.

Section 3
General Requirements of Ethical Conduct

(1) Employee's conduct in the workplace and beyond shall adhere to generally accepted moral principles and standards.

(2) Additional general requirements of moral conduct associated with academic activities also include

a) compliance with field-specific ethical requirements,

b) compliance with work ethic universally accepted in the area of education and research and development activities,

c) observance of relevant ethical principles codified at institutional, field-specific, national and – in the case of international cooperation – international level,

d) refusal to accept unethical conduct in the area of education, research and development activities,

e) honesty in the area of teaching and research and development, including continuous self-education and improvement of one's capabilities as a university teacher and researcher,

f) support of the academic freedom principle and intolerance of any violation or abuse thereof.

(3) An employee shall not use his or her position, whether academic or any other, for the purpose of personal gain, gain of other persons, or for any type of discrimination. Employee criticizes cases of authority abuse.

(4) An employee respects the equal rights of all persons with regard to access to information, education, and employment. In accordance with his or her abilities and given valid regulations, an employee shall

a) eliminate barriers leading to discrimination and exclusion,

b) support the involvement of disabled persons in academic life.

(5) An employee treats everybody with respect and dignity, regardless of their age, sex, gender identity, racial and ethnic background, nationality, or other sociocultural differences. An employee shall respect others' feelings, different views, opinions, and habits.

(6) Any form of violence or harassment, whether of sexual nature or based on personal or cultural differences, is strictly forbidden. As violence or harassment is considered in particular unsolicited sexual attention, enforcing sexual relationship through workplace position, inappropriate verbal or nonverbal expressions on account of person's physical appearance, nationality or cultural background and habits, other inappropriate, degrading or abusive behaviour or forcing private relationship despite obvious reluctance of another person.

(7) Employees shall strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect at the workplace.

Section 4 Education

(1) An employee is responsible for the quality of his or her teaching and training carried out for the benefit of students and young scientists. To that end, he or she is also required to maintain a high standard of applied teaching tools and ensure their adaptation to current scientific knowledge.

(2) An employee respects the need for self-education as a prerequisite to achieve the highest possible teaching and research quality.

(3) An employee selflessly passes both general knowledge and his or her own findings on to students and young scientists while setting a personal example with respect to the fulfilment of moral principles in education and research and development.

(4) An employee is responsible for communicating and conducting teaching activities in such a way as to instill the notion of academic freedom, support the development of independent and critical thought, and promote personal growth and professional development of students.

(5) Teaching, as well as the evaluation of study requirements, examinations and any other contact with students, require objective and unbiased approach of an employee. An employee communicates with students in an open and fair manner, avoiding any underestimation, humiliation, and disparagement. Conduct with students must be carried out in such a way as to support the desired level of collegiality.

Section 5 Research and Development

(1) Research and development activities shall be the mean of elevating the level of public knowledge and shall contribute to the quality of education provided to students and young scientists.

(2) An employee

a) considers the publication of research and development results as a standard and self-evident procedure, and engages in publication activities in accordance with the standard practices of a given field,

b) assumes responsibility for the quality and authenticity of research and development activities results,

c) respects the rules derived from internal university regulations relevant to the acquisition, storing, and utilisation of research data,

d) sets a personal example with respect to the implementation of ethical principles for research and development activities in which students participate.

(3) With regard to his or her own research and development activities and their implementation, an employee accepts personal responsibility for

a) choice of research and development topic in terms of its contribution to scientific knowledge, particularly in case of recurrent research, choice of topic requiring disproportionate costs in comparison with the anticipated contribution of achievable results,

- b) research objectivity and adequate research methodology choices,
- c) reproducibility of research and development results and correctness of procedures associated with their further processing, including adequate data archival methods and the observance of rules or obligations consistent with a higher data archival standard,
- d) correct interpretation of own research and development results as well as of results achieved by other research workers,
- e) efficient use of financial and human resources,
- f) carrying out ethically sound research, adherence to relevant, internationally recognized, standards.

Section 6 Teamwork

- (1) It is the moral duty of every employee to contribute, with his own efforts, to team research results while also contributing to the development of all major research and development areas associated with the tasks undertaken by his/her team.
- (2) As a research team member, an employee acknowledges the intellectual, material, and practical contributions to research team results made by the other team members.
- (3) An employee considers natural that his/her research activities contribute to achieving a constructive atmosphere in a research team, namely by:
 - a) fair-minded approach to research and development conducted by team members,
 - b) fair-minded and critical attitude to one's own results,
 - c) willingness to engage in substantive discussion while respecting the opinions of other team members,
 - d) adopting a collegial personal and professional attitude,
 - e) willingness to engage students, as equal partners, in teamwork.

Section 7 Educational, Research and Development Projects Planning

- (1) When planning educational, research and development projects and activities, an employee is required to:
 - a) exercise generally accepted procedures in order to obtain external and internal financial support,
 - b) maintain proper relationships with the third parties during research and development activities,
 - c) avoid conflicts of interest when obtaining financial support and prevent such conflicts by providing prior notice of their potential emergence when he or she is involved,

d) assume responsibility for efficient financial resource allocation while promoting clear and auditable rules for their utilisation.

Section 8 Publication of Results

(1) When publishing research results, an employee is obliged to comply with rules of publication as well as with other research and development standards, as established by professional conventions, agreements with external partners, as well as requirements set by the grant provider.

(2) An employee observes ethical principles associated with respect of intellectual property rights, namely by

a) rejecting plagiarism, falsification and misuse of results, or withholding results in the case of publicly funded research and development,

b) adopting a responsible approach to technology application and transfer of results,

In case of a repeated publication of one's own results in their original form, an employee is required to state the information about the previous publication, including the source of the original publication.

(3) An employee maintains an objective approach when assessing his/her share of authorship and the share of others when reporting authorship, especially when assessing creative contributions to the publication of results and assessing the quality and level of his/her contributions to the research.

(4) When publishing research results, an employee considers the following to be self-evident:

a) assuming responsibility for the truthfulness of data and correctness of interpretations submitted within the scope of the publication or application of results,

b) correcting subsequently ascertained erroneous data, results, or interpretive conclusions on the same publication level as originally submitted,

Section 9 Evaluative and Expert Activity

(1) When participating in evaluative and expert activities, an employee strives to maintain an impartial and unbiased approach to the assessment of project applications, article manuscripts, special-purpose works (habilitations, dissertations, Master's theses), reports, and other documents in order to provide feedback which:

a) provides a well-grounded expert opinion in a field the assessor is knowledgeable in,

b) includes a clear and explicit opinion of the assessed work,

c) is conducted in person but remains unbiased and unaffected by any external pressures.

(2) As an evaluator, an employee respects the confidentiality of information associated with evaluative and expert activities he or she is participating in, refraining from using information contained in evaluated documents for purposes other than producing an expert review (evaluation), and never disclosing such information to a third party.

(3) An employee also

a) responsibly considers whether or not to accept an evaluative assignment; in case of acceptance, he/she respects guidelines set out by the initiator,

b) approaches evaluative assignments without any attempt to use the position of evaluator ,or any information contained in the evaluated material, for either personal advantage or for the benefit or detriment of others,

c) objectively and critically assesses any conflict of interest potentially arising during evaluative and expert activities and declines the offer to participate in case when such conflict should arise.

Section 10 Principles of Collegial Conduct

(1) In relation to other MU colleagues, the employee respects their personality, the right to express an independent professional opinion, and the right to choose their own approach to academic activities freely.

(2) Moral principles governing the conduct of faculty employees include a collegial attitude to students, based on respect for

a) individual student personalities,

b) students being legitimate and equal members of the academic community,

c) students conducting creative work, especially by recognizing their equal status as authors or co-authors in case of the application or publication of research and development results,

(3) An employee disapproves of all forms of hostile conduct, acts of discrimination and coercive conduct based on work position. An employee does not adopt falsely collegial attitude which tolerates violations of key moral principles and rules set out in this code.

(4) An employee adopts a collegial approach to teamwork based on

a) mutual trust and awareness in research and development and subsequent publication of results,

b) respect for his or her own creative contribution and the creative contributions of others, especially when publishing results as a team.

Section 11
University Loyalty

An employee is loyal to the university. Employee respects the fact that the results of the research and educational activities of the employee acquired at university are not the sole property of the employee. Providing these results to third-party institutions or persons for the personal benefit of the employee is considered to be immoral.

Section 12
Relationship with the Public

It is employee's natural mission to disseminate educational and scientific knowledge, promote general awareness of research and development results among the professional and general public, and to inform the public about the potential affects of research on the environment and on the material and social well-being of the general population.

Section 13
Data Management

(1) An employee respects the need for personal data protection in compliance with additional rules based on internal MU regulations.

(2) An employee treats entrusted data – especially data associated with research and development, study-related data and personal data – in a way minimizing any possibility of the data misuse.

Section 14
The Faculty's Ethical Principles

The Faculty of Science of Masaryk University is aware of its social responsibility and expresses its belief that ethical values need to be preserved and developed. The Faculty compels its employees to act in accordance with the ethical rules formulated in this Code. As an employer, the Faculty shall create the conditions for the fulfillment of the ethical rules formulated in this code of ethics.

Section 15
Validity

This Directive will come into force on 1st October 2018.

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Dean of the Faculty of Science