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# FUOC Code of Ethics

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Board of Trustees

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30/03/2023

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## Versions table

Version	Date	Change	Reason for the change
00	08/07/2009	Entire Policy	New creation
01	13/03/2017	2 & 7	Adaptation to the new reality of the Institution
02	30/03/2023	5 & 7	Adaptation to the legislation

Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
-	-	Governing Council 08/07/2009
-	-	Executive Board 13/03/2017
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## 1. Introduction

01. The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), in order to meet its objectives, has decided to take on a series of values, principles and guidelines designed to inspire the behaviour of the members of the University.
02. The Code of Ethics is a valuable point of reference for the whole of the university community and its mandatory nature is based on its underlying moral logic. Its strength comes exclusively from everyone's commitment to respect these shared principles and values.
03. Thus, the Code of Ethics is not a legal regulation, but a series of moral guidelines and principles to ensure harmonious relations between different individuals and groups at the University.

## 2. Objectives

04. The aim of this code is to present and broadcast a series of ethical commitments covering both the University's operations and its relations with society in general:
  - a. It acts as a letter of introduction, highlighting the University's general values, principles and commitments with relation to society.
  - b. It provides guidelines for how to act with the different agents in our university community.
  - c. It is a general guide to the ethical values and principles that form the basis of the wide range of rules and regulations in force at the University.
05. To meet these aims and comply with the code's values, principles and guidelines, the UOC has regulations on rights and responsibilities and a code of conduct that set the standards for responsible behaviour that all UOC professionals have to abide by

## 3. Scope

06. The code covers all the individuals and groups that form part of the UOC's university community. It also covers the relations of the University and its staff with other bodies and companies that provide their services to or collaborate with the UOC.

## 4. The UOC's mission

07. The UOC is an innovative university that is rooted in Catalonia and open to the world. It offers people lifelong learning to help them and society advance, while carrying out research into the knowledge society.
08. Its educational model is based on personalization and accompanying students using e-learning.

## 5. General principles and values for all of the university community

09. The university community undertakes its tasks in accordance with the general ethical principles and values detailed below.
- a. People should be treated with respect. Respect is a general value that must guide the behaviour of everyone who forms part of the UOC. A basic premise of this is the absence of discrimination relating to anyone's origin, race, sex, religion, opinion, or any other personal or social condition or circumstance. This respect must be present in all the university's written, oral and audiovisual communications, which must employ language that is free of discrimination and sexism. With this goal in mind, we must seek to use resources that allow everyone to feel included, as regards language and audiovisual aspects.
  - b. Respect for diversity in all its forms that do not infringe on human dignity and universal human rights. In the case of the UOC, this diversity is fundamentally based on the commitment to and respect for the application of policies on gender, promotion and acceptance of cultural plurality, alongside an indispensable commitment to Catalan culture and society.
  - c. The confidentiality of any private communications received and the commitment to not provide third parties with data obtained from mailing lists or information in public sections of the UOC Virtual Campus.
  - d. Promotion of open knowledge, alongside respect for intellectual authorship in all of the UOC's academic and professional activities. Knowledge must be disseminated and authorship of the ideas, materials or documents used properly recognized.
  - e. The participation of the whole community in the University's dynamics, with

the appropriate channels for free expression of proposals and the actions required to maintain and improve our activity while fostering dialogue and accountability in our university community and in society in general.

- f. Sustainability, in all its forms, as the basis for planning and development of the University's activities. Processes and actions undertaken must be environmentally sustainable.
- g. Innovation must underlie all our activities. The UOC is open to educational, technological and institutional innovation, while also promoting entrepreneurial initiatives and the creativity of the people who form part of the university community.
- h. Quality must form part of the institutional culture. We will work to achieve excellence in the educational services, teaching and research activities, and organizational processes. The voice of students, graduates and society in general must be taken into account and the academic rigour of the teaching programmes and lines of research guaranteed. La comunidad universitaria ejerce sus tareas con unos valores y unos principios éticos generales que se concretan en los puntos que se describen a continuación:
- i. Cooperation, especially with respect to society as a whole and the productive sector, with the aim of consolidating an organizational culture based on flexibility, a commitment to social issues and building institutional ties rooted in collaboration.
- j. Dignity of professional, teaching and working conditions, by providing the resources and conditions needed to develop the functions of the different groups working at or with the UOC.
- k. Proper use of the resources available. As an institution that provides a public service, the UOC must take particular care of its resources and be accountable for their use and the results.
- l. A commitment to project to society a series of values traditionally associated with university activities, such as freedom, equality, dialogue and critical thinking.

## 6. Specific principles and values for the different groups in the university community

10. The UOC's university community is made up of the governing bodies and executive team, the academic and administrative staff, affiliated teaching staff and students. Given the specific nature of their activities and their links to the rest of the university community, they must take care to maintain, in each case, a series of values and principles that form part of the commitments detailed below.

### 6.1. The governing bodies and executive team

11. Act and take decisions with objective criteria, justifying them as required, with equanimity and making proper use of the powers of the position held.
12. Encourage actions and decisions that involve participation, consultation and the channels of communication, and look to avoid unilateral decisions.
13. Use all the resources available to ensure proper communication and transparency of the organization's information.
14. Recognize and value the work well done by the UOC's own and affiliated staff, and the flexibility in the development of the responsibilities and tasks deriving from their activities.
15. Adapt to the principles of equity, merit and transparency when hiring and promoting staff, and to the principles of equality and transparency in the procurement and provision of services.
16. Foster trust and collaboration among the UOC's own and affiliated staff.

### 6.2. Academic staff

17. Commit to the quality and continuous improvement of the teaching and learning processes, and teaching and research innovation in their fields of knowledge.
18. Participate, directly or through delegation, in the areas of consultation and decision at the UOC that affect teaching, innovation and research.
19. Be open to flexibility and adaptability when faced with changes to responsibilities and tasks.
20. Foster trust and collaboration among all of the academic staff, both within their faculty and in other faculties.
21. Lead the teaching process and ensure clear communication with affiliated teaching

staff and students.

22. Promote open knowledge alongside respect for intellectual authorship in all of the UOC's academic activities. Knowledge must be disseminated and authorship of the ideas, materials or documents used properly recognized.

### **6.3. Administrative staff**

23. Commit to the quality and continuous improvement of the administrative processes and activities.
24. Be open to flexibility and adaptability when faced with changes to responsibilities and tasks.
25. Participate, directly or through delegation, in the areas of consultation and decision at the UOC that affect its administration.
26. Foster trust and collaboration among all of the administrative staff, both within their department and in other departments. Comprometerse con la calidad y la mejora continua de los procesos y las actividades de gestión.

### **6.4. Affiliated teaching staff**

27. Commit to the quality and continuous improvement of the teaching activities developed.
28. Take part in the initiatives and activities organized by the faculties they work with.
29. Foster trust and collaboration with the UOC's faculty members and other affiliated teaching staff.
30. Promote open knowledge, alongside respect for intellectual authorship in all of the UOC's academic activities.
31. Recognize and make proper reference to the intellectual authorship of the ideas, materials or documents used at the UOC.

### **6.5. Students**

32. Commit to the learning process, promoting attitudes that come from a desire to learn, personal effort, responsibility, critical thinking and cooperation.
33. Get involved in improving the educational quality of the University, using the channels for participation and communication available.
34. Foster trust, collaboration and teamwork with other students.



## 7. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation of the Code of Ethics

35. The University's compliance bodies (the Compliance Committee and the Compliance Manager) and Síndic de Greuges (ombuds officer) must take those actions necessary to ensure that all members of the UOC's university community are aware of and comply with this Code of Ethics, and that it is coherent and coordinated with the other measures adopted within the framework of the University's social responsibility.
36. Members of the UOC's university community can send enquiries, complaints or information related to compliance with the code via the university's channel for enquiries and complaints. The UOC undertakes to prevent, investigate and act against any possible reprisal, threat, coercion, penalization or discrimination (direct or indirect) against anyone simply because they have lodged a complaint (or queried something) in good faith.
37. The University's compliance bodies will inform the Síndic of any information, enquiry or complaint related to compliance with the code received via the channel for enquiries and complaints. In turn, the Síndic will inform the University's compliance bodies of any possible failure by the University to comply with the corresponding laws, regulations and policies that they are aware of, while maintaining full confidentiality and privacy as required by the regulations on data protection.
38. Failure to comply with the code leads, where applicable, to those sanctions established in the Regulations on Rights and Responsibilities, the Disciplinary Regulations, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya.
39. The Síndic monitors and evaluates compliance with this code.
40. To do so, those responsible for issuing or receiving an appeal relating to this code must make any such appeal known to the Síndic.
41. The Síndic meets annually in a working session to monitor the code with representatives designated by the bodies representing the University's staff and community.
42. The annual report published by the Síndic includes a specific section on the monitoring and evaluation of the code.