



UNIVERSITY
OF TRENTO - Italy

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO

This is a courtesy translation from the Italian original. This document has therefore no legal value.
The Italian text is the only legally valid version.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

INDEX

Art. 1 - Aim	2
Art. 2 - Scope	2
Part 1 - General principles and values	3
Art. 3 - General Principles	3
Art. 4 - Values.....	3
Part 2 - Rules of Conduct.....	4
Art. 5 - Integrity.....	4
Art. 6 - Respect for others	6
Art. 7 - Equal opportunities.....	6
Art. 8 - Accountability and transparency	7
Art. 9 - Autonomy and democracy in decision-making processes	7
Art. 10 - Freedom	8
Art. 11 - Quality of research and teaching	8
Art. 12 - Equality and merit.....	8
Art. 13 - Protection of the environment and safety at work.....	8
Art. 14 - Confidentiality.....	9
Part 3 - Implementing provisions.....	9
Art. 15 - Dissemination.....	9
Art. 16 - Implementation.....	9
Art. 17 - Academic Senate Commission for the Implementation of the Code of Ethics.....	9
Art. 18 - Procedure for determining infringements and sanctions.....	10

Art. 1 - Aim

1. The University of Trento, herein after also the “University”, believes that part of its mission is to promote the highest standards of professional ethical behaviour, and this Code of Ethics defines the general principles and ethical values it considers to be fundamental.
2. The University undertakes to ensure that these principles and values are integrated into teaching, research, knowledge transfer and management and administrative services.

Art. 2 - Scope

1. This Code of Ethics - hereinafter the “Code” - applies to the following components of the University of Trento, hereinafter referred to as “university members”:
 - teachers, researchers, students, executives and technical-administrative staff, and all those who contribute, even temporarily, on a voluntary basis or with various contractual arrangements, to the implementation of educational, scientific and technical and administrative activities.
 - members of the governing and collegial bodies of the University.
2. The Code defines the standards of behaviour that university members, either individually or as members of the governing bodies, must observe when they make decisions which may have an impact on the University, on the university members and on the different stakeholders.
3. Compliance with the legal rules regarding civil, criminal, administrative, accounting and disciplinary liability, does not exempt university members from compliance with this Code.
4. The University may, in accordance with the values and rules of conduct outlined in this Code, issue specific codes of conduct and guidelines for specific components of the University, and for specific types of behaviour.
5. The University is committed to promoting and disseminating knowledge of this Code.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

6. The Code is divided into three parts:
- Part 1 sets out the general principles and values that form the parameters for the assessment of personal conduct and, more generally, a tool with which to settle and evaluate ethical issues that are important to the life of the university;
 - Part 2 sets out the positive and negative rules of conduct which express the principles defined in Part 1;
 - Part 3 regulates the implementation of this Code and provides for the establishment of a special Academic Senate Commission with an advisory and updating role.

Part 1: General principles and values

Art. 3 - General Principles

1. In the choice of behaviour to adopt and encourage, the University is guided by the fundamental principles of the Italian Constitution and, in particular, the principles of equality (art. 2 and 3), promotion of culture and of scientific and technical research (Art. 9), freedom of the arts and sciences and education (art. 33), and the right of able and deserving students to attain the highest possible levels of education (art. 34).

Art. 4 - Values

1. **Integrity.** Behaving with integrity means implementing conduct based on the principles of honesty, loyalty, transparency, fairness, and impartiality. It means acting in the interests of the University and rejecting any opportunistic behaviour.
2. **Respect for others.** Respect for others means giving the highest consideration to the dignity and needs of the people with whom one interacts in the performance of one's duties.
3. **Equal opportunities.** Guaranteeing equal opportunities means promoting the principle of equality, avoiding discrimination against individuals or groups based on their age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, maternity or paternity. The university confirms its commitment to promote equal opportunities through initiatives aimed at addressing under-representation issues in compliance with the principle of merit in the activities of study, work and research, and facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life. The knowledge and skills of university members are also enhanced by giving particular consideration to people in situations of physical and psychological difficulty.
4. **Accountability and transparency.** Accountability means understanding the consequences of one's behaviour and moderating one's actions in order to make them useful to the common good without infringing the rights of others. Transparency means making one's decisions and actions public and available, as well as the criteria on which they are based, in accordance with the procedures in force, and in compliance with the confidentiality requirements deriving from the nature of the decisions and the collegiality of the bodies that take them. Transparency means providing the information necessary so that university members have the opportunity to evaluate the performance of each member and body and, where entitled to do so, to make informed decisions.
5. **Autonomy and democracy in the decision-making process.** The decision-making process and the governance of the University respect the principles of autonomy and democracy as they are defined by the Law and by the Statute.

Autonomy in the decision-making process is achieved when the objectives and the rules of the University reflect the will of the academic community, expressed by the representative bodies.

For the decision-making process to be democratic, debate on the most important issues must be free, participated and transparent. Freedom of discussion, also through spontaneous meetings and assemblies of all the university members, is an instrument to learn of the decisions and to understand their effects.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

6. **Freedom.** The essential prerequisites for the correct implementation of the University's activities, for the purpose of accomplishing its institutional and academic mission, are freedom of teaching and research, intellectual autonomy, independence from all kinds of political, religious and economic influence, the respect for the democratic principle.
7. **Quality of research and teaching.** Research, teaching and the applications of knowledge and scientific discoveries contribute to the wellbeing and progress of society, as well as to the improvement of the quality of life. Striving for excellence means promoting a scientific and institutional context which encourages permanent updating, opportunities for discussion and mobility, freedom of judgment and criticism and participation in the international scientific and academic community.
It also means encouraging the sharing of knowledge and of scientific results so that everyone can make their contribution to research and teaching, while ensuring the protection of personal contributions and intellectual property rights.
Procedures for the evaluation of teaching and research which can inform decision making processes are essential to promote excellence.
Openness of research and teaching results constitutes a primary value.
8. **Fairness and merit.** Without prejudice to the fact that the University has a duty to provide instruments and resources in an equitable manner in order to ensure equal opportunities for all, in situations that require the use of merit criteria, university members are guided by the recognition of individual skills and competences and by the quality of the performance, following, in their evaluation, the principles of transparency and having previously defined the criteria to be used and avoiding any discrimination and favouritism.
9. **Environmental protection and safety and dignity in the workplace.** Protecting the environment means recognizing the primary value of natural resources and making choices in compliance with the principle of environmental sustainability. Protecting dignity and safety at work means behaving with due respect for the workplace, public property and resources, safeguarding one's and other people's safety.
10. **Confidentiality.** Protecting confidentiality means guaranteeing the protection of personal data of natural persons and legal entities who, for whatever reason, have contact with the University. The secrecy of confidential information acquired by virtue of sharing functions, research projects and activities, is guaranteed. Personal data and confidential information are processed in a lawful, relevant and not excessive manner, for the purposes stated and in compliance with the regulations in force.

Part 2: Rules of Conduct

Art. 5 - Integrity

1. University members must refrain from opportunistic behaviour in relations with other members and with the institution. Opportunistic behaviour includes pursuing a personal or group interest, circumventing legal obligations and ethical duties, or taking advantage of situations of information asymmetry or imperfect prediction of events which may render legal, regulatory or contractual provisions incomplete.
2. More specifically, the following shall be considered opportunistic behaviour:
 - attempting to avoid one's institutional, teaching and research duties;
 - using one's authority to obtain personal or undue benefits;
 - colluding with other university members or with external parties to avoid checks or assessment of one's work, or to partake in dealings against the interests of the University, or to exercise influence on decisions in order to obtain advantages in terms of benefits or resources that, in the interest of the University, would be more usefully allocated elsewhere.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

3. **Honest behaviour.** University members must behave in an honest, impartial and fair way and must fulfil their obligations in accordance with the rules and regulations in force, upholding ethical and professional standards. In particular, university members must present their qualifications, role, affiliations and academic qualifications correctly.
4. **Quality of services.** In carrying out their duties, university members must meet the demands and needs expressed by other university members, providing quality services by the established deadline, or at least within a reasonable time.
5. **Appropriate use of money, property and services.** University members shall use the University's material and financial resources and services to achieve institutional goals with efficiency, without waste and with integrity in every situation of financial reporting. The abuse of resources which causes material damage or harms the image of the University is particularly serious.
6. **Gifts, benefits, favours.** University members may not accept gifts or other benefits, for themselves or others, except for items of little value.
7. **Abuse of position.** University members must not take advantage of their position to secure personal benefits or services that do not constitute fulfilment of their legal or professional duties.
8. **Conflict of interest.** There is a conflict of interest when the interests of a university member are in conflict with the proper pursuit of the institutional aims of the University. The conflict of interest can be personal or institutional.

The conflict of interest is *personal* when a university member has an interest which is in *direct* conflict with the interests of the University as a result of his/her activities, positions or duties, or when he or she has an *indirect* conflict of interests because of:

- a) a position of responsibility or financial participation, including through intermediaries, in bodies or legal entities whose interest is in conflict with that of the University;
- b) family relationships by marriage, kinship or affinity to the fourth degree, cohabitation, or emotional relationships with persons with an interest which is in conflict with that of the University;
- c) reciprocal agreements with third parties who have an interest in conflict with that of the University.

The conflict of interest is *institutional* when a university member in a decision-making position or in a leadership role in the government and organization of the university also holds appointments or institutional roles within public or private bodies, or when legal entities have an interest in conflict with that of the University. There is no institutional conflict of interest:

- a) if a person holds administrative or managerial positions in companies, businesses, associations and foundations adopted by resolution of the governing bodies, or on behalf, of the University;
- b) if the position or the institutional role has first been examined and approved according to the procedures laid down by the University.

University members must in any case clear any potential conflict of interest, informing the University of the existence of the conflict and refraining from participating in decisions that involve a conflicting interest.

Conflict situations, both personal and institutional, are deemed "structural" under art. 20 of the Statute, when they do not concern specific actions or decisions but, because of their duration or scope, regard the general policy of the University or a significant part of it.

Any persons wishing to put themselves forward for election or appointment to a governing body or management of the University must declare in advance other appointments, roles and positions held in the year prior to the election or appointment.

9. **Nepotism and favouritism.** Without prejudice to what is provided by law and by the rules on conflict of interest described in this Code, a university member may not, even indirectly, use his or her role or academic position to influence decisions and procedures for the purpose of, or with the result of, favouring



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

relatives, partners, people with whom they have a relationship (nepotism), or personal or professional relationships other than pure academic collaboration (favouritism). The university member must refrain from taking part in any decision-making concerning employment positions, promotions and assignments, calls for researchers or professors, funding, research grants, scholarships or doctoral grants, contracts and the like, when they involve people to whom they are connected.

10. **Intellectual creations and copyright issues.** All research is based on the proper recognition and acknowledgement of intellectual work. University members must therefore avoid any form of plagiarism or improper use of other's intellectual work. Any possible plagiarism or improper use of intellectual work is even more serious if it results from negligence or abuse of a hierarchical or academic position. With particular regard to theses and written works, as well as in the performance of exams, it is the specific responsibility of the university member to respect these rules and avoid all forms of plagiarism and dishonest conduct. It is also the responsibility of each university member to report any case of plagiarism or improper use of another's intellectual work of which he or she becomes aware.
11. **Intellectual property.** University members have the right to be recognized as the authors of the results of their own research. However, the author of an industrial invention which is owned by the University may not use it for private purposes and is required to maintain confidentiality regarding the results achieved until they are disclosed officially. Property rights arising from innovation are regulated by the relevant laws and by the specific provisions of the University.
12. **Behaviour in public.** University members' behaviour must respect standards of dignity and decorum both inside and outside the University. Even when not in service, university members must always take into account the consequences that their behaviour might have on the reputation and image of the institution. It is the duty of each university member to maintain the high reputation of the institution.

Art. 6 - Respect for others

1. **Courtesy and respect.** University members must treat their interlocutors with courtesy, respect, loyalty and fairness.
2. **Abuse, harassment and workplace bullying.** University members are committed to work for the creation of a peaceful environment, free from all forms of abuse, harassment and workplace bullying. They must therefore refrain from activities defined in the "Regulation on prevention and protection measures for workers in cases of workplace harassment". They must also refrain from any behaviour that is of a bullying or harassment nature, that is, from any form of intimidation, threat, humiliation, ridicule, offense, insult, abuse, unfair behaviour, offensive comment or unreasonable criticism.
3. **Abuse and sexual harassment.** University members are committed to promoting an environment free from harassment or unwanted attention of a sexual nature as defined by the "Code of conduct against sexual harassment". Sexual harassment committed from a position of asymmetry, particularly in the relationship between teachers and students and between teachers and administrative staff is considered particularly serious.
The University protects people against harassment, including through the role of the Confidential Counsellor (Consigliera di Fiducia).
4. **Cultural diversity.** University members must protect cultural differences and respect the sensitivities and traditions of others, consistent with the principles of freedom of teaching and research, and the regular course of university business.

Art. 7 - Equal opportunities



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

- 1. Discrimination.** University members must not, for any reason, directly or indirectly, discriminate against individuals or groups of people based on their age, sex, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, membership in associations or organizations or other characteristics included in the anti-discrimination regulations. No discrimination is allowed on the basis of personal beliefs or opinions. University members undertake to promote a culture based on the respect of pluralism and tolerance. The use of selection criteria that define the essential requirements for the fulfilment of a particular activity is not, however, considered discriminatory.
- 2. Gender equality.** In all activities and services of the University, university members undertake to uphold effective equality between men and women in both the academic and the administrative field, and in the workplace in general. In particular, university members undertake to encourage every possible action to ensure gender balance in institutional bodies and to promote organizational choices suitable to conciliate work and family life.
- 3. Cognitive and physical impairments.** University members must facilitate the full valorisation of knowledge and skills of people with serious cognitive and physical impairments.
- 4. Obstacles to equal opportunities.** University members must seek to eliminate all factors that may prevent people who find themselves in a difficult situation to take full advantage of their opportunity to study, work and do research.

Art. 8 - Accountability and transparency

- 1. Management of resources.** University members are expected to use the available resources in a transparent, efficient and responsible way.
- 2. Active participation in university life.** University members are called to actively participate in the academic and institutional debate, and to work towards the effective operation of institutional and management bodies.
- 3. Political activity.** Without prejudice to the right of university members to participate in local and national political activity, members must avoid all forms of political bias in university activities and must refrain from using University premises, equipment and instruments for propaganda or for the dissemination of political election material.
- 4. Institutional positions, participation in government bodies and criminal offences.** Without prejudice to the principle of presumption of innocence, university members who hold institutional positions and who are indicted or convicted non-definitively for crimes, must adopt, even in the absence of a legal obligation, the necessary measures to avoid any damage to the University, included to the University's image.
- 5. Clarity and the right to know the rules.** It is the duty of all those who have responsibility for the government and administration of the University to help define, clearly and precisely, the rules and behaviours expected from university members and to ensure that these rules are easily accessible.

Art. 9 - Autonomy and democracy in decision-making processes

- 1.** Each university member helps to ensure that decision-making processes take place in accordance with the Statute, under conditions of correct information and transparency of conduct. It is the duty of each member to make the relevant information at their disposal available, without changing the meaning, and to help creating the conditions so that their individual or collegiate behaviour, as part of a body, can be understood and evaluated.
- 2.** All members of the academic community must refrain from taking advantage of their personal situation to assert their opinion, or from conduct that, directly or indirectly, undermines the fundamental right of all members to express their beliefs and ideas freely and equally.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

Art. 10 - Freedom

1. University members undertake to safeguard and promote individual freedoms, particularly with regard to freedom of thought and expression, paying special attention to people who are in the early stages of their academic, technical or administrative career, to students and young people in general, who are more exposed to situations of actual or potential vulnerability and weakness.

Art. 11 - Quality of research and teaching

1. **Freedom and responsibility in research.** Research must be free, responsible and must strive for excellence.

With reference to the rules of conduct concerning the role, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers and those who work in any capacity in research, professors and researchers are expected to share and implement the principles expressed in the European Charter for Researchers issued by the European Commission, with particular regard to aspects of freedom of research, responsibility and professional development, the dissemination and valorisation of research results, mobility, and access to continuing training.

All research involving a risk to the psychological and physical well-being of the participants, or that might limit their right to privacy, to information and to decision-making autonomy must be submitted for consideration to the Ethics Committee for Research involving Human Beings of the University (Comitato Etico per la Sperimentazione con l'Essere Umano - CESP).

2. **Recruitment of researchers.** With reference to the conduct in the recruitment of researchers, professors and researchers are required to implement the principles expressed in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers issued by the European Commission, with particular regard to transparency, the assessment of merit, the recognition of mobility experience and the recognition and evaluation of qualifications.
3. **Freedom, quality and accountability in teaching.** The activity of teaching is free to the extent that it complies with the educational objectives and overall organization of teaching within the University. Professors and researchers are expected to responsibly pursue improvements in the quality of their teaching through the continuous updating of knowledge and enhancement of individual skills and research experiences, in compliance with the highest standards recognized at international level. Professors and researchers are required to undertake continuous, planned and functional teaching activities (lessons, tutoring, internships, apprenticeships, exams) which lead to the acquisition of the skills required to access to career advancements or further study.
4. **Results of research, teaching and open access.** Professors and researchers undertake to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the results of their academic research adopting behaviours in line with open access, respecting restrictions of intellectual property and confidentiality obligations in the industrial field.

Art. 12 - Equality and merit

1. In all decisions and activities carried out in the performance of their institutional duties university members must refrain from indulging in any form of favouritism towards any individual, and recognize the same rights to everyone. In taking decisions university members must privilege the recognition of individual skills, competences, personal merit and the quality of professional services offered.

Art. 13 - Protection of the environment and safety at work



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

1. **Respect for the environment.** University members are required to take environmental sustainability into account in their actions and choices.
2. **Climate and working conditions.** University members must use the means at their disposal, deriving from their own responsibilities and positions, to promote a serene working environment based on the quality of interpersonal relationships.
3. **Behaviours which put health and safety at risk.** Those using University spaces and equipment must avoid behaviours that might compromise health and safety.

Art. 14 - Confidentiality

1. **Confidentiality of personal information.** University members are required to ensure the confidentiality of personal information that the University holds as a result of its institutional activities.
2. **Confidential information and service requirements.** University members who for operational reasons have access to sensitive or confidential information must use it only for the purposes for which the information is held, and in accordance with the standards of security and confidentiality required by the specific case.

Part 3: Implementing provisions

Art. 15 - Dissemination

1. The University wishes to promote the widest possible dissemination of this Code by publishing it on the University website and through the provision of informative material and other appropriate means, including initiatives to raise awareness on ethical issues.

Art. 16 - Implementation

1. Each university member is required to be familiar with this Code, to implement it appropriately and to ensure that it is respected. University members may report violations of this Code by submitting a signed report to the Rector in accordance with art. 17. Members may also request clarification on this Code as well as make suggestions and additions. Each Department, and other organizational structures, may choose a representative responsible for the application of this Code.

Art. 17 - Academic Senate Commission for the Implementation of the Code of Ethics

1. In exercising the powers concerning the application, interpretation and updating of the Code as defined by law and by the Statute, the Academic Senate employs its own Commission for the implementation of the Code of Ethics (hereinafter "the Commission").
2. The Commission consists of three members, including at least one member external to the University, who are appointed by the Academic Senate. The Rector appoints the President from among the members.
3. Commission members must act with independence and impartiality of judgment and operate with absolute respect for the principle of confidentiality.
4. The Commission has an advisory role. At the request of the Academic Senate, it may propose to the Senate directions and guidelines:
 - a) recommendations on conduct and practices to be adopted;
 - b) opinions on compliance with the Code, acts, measures and procedures of the University whose content or scope involves assessments of ethical issues, and proposals for amendments or improvements;
 - c) opinions on current and potential conflicts of interest of university members, including as a preventative step, and also at the request of the parties concerned.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

5. The Commission may also have an investigative role as specified in art. 18.

Art. 18 - Procedure for determining infringements and sanctions

1. The procedure for violation of this Code begins with the submission of a report to the Rector by any university member who believes that the required conditions are in place, and who shall attach any relevant documentation. Reports must be made in writing, must be named and signed, and must indicate the provisions of the Code that are assumed to have been violated. The Rector, without prejudice to the reporting obligations to competent authorities, forwards the report to the President of the Commission. In case the violations are attributable to the Rector or to the members of the Academic Senate the report is addressed directly to the President of the Commission. The person concerned shall be immediately notified that the procedure has been initiated.
2. The President of the Commission, after hearing the person concerned, possibly together with the person reporting the conduct at issue, may decide to dismiss the case if it is believed that there are no grounds for proceeding. The dismissal of the case shall be communicated to the parties.
3. If it emerges from the facts that there might have been a violation of this Code, the President shall convene the Commission to carry out the necessary investigation, the outcome of which shall be communicated to the Academic Senate.
4. The procedure described thus far shall be carried out in a manner that ensures confidentiality for the person reporting the facts and all other parties involved, guaranteeing the right of defence and of the adversarial principle. No access to the report or other acts of the procedure or any form of communication of the same to entities other than those specified in Sections 1 and 2, which are bound to secrecy about its contents, is permitted until the procedure has been completed. The people concerned must always be invited to participate in the procedure in their defence and, to this end, shall have a reasonable period, of not less than ten days from the notification, to examine the report, produce deductions and, if necessary, name witnesses in their favour.
5. The Academic Senate can take disciplinary measures within 60 days of receipt of the documents from the President of the Commission or from the disciplinary body. The measures can only ensue from violation of the provisions expressly mentioned in the report and they must be properly motivated in relation to the principles of the Code that were violated and to the results of the investigation.
6. As indicated in the statute, the disciplinary measures for violations of this Code, in accordance with the principle of proportionality and exhaustiveness, are:
 - a written reprimand;
 - a written reprimand with notification to the University community;
 - a written reprimand with notification to the University community and with temporary exclusion from access to the research funds of the University.The reasons for taking disciplinary measures beyond the reprimand must be communicated expressly, specifically and independently in the explanatory statement of the sanction.
7. In the event that an investigation shows that the reported behaviour could be also a violation of a disciplinary nature, the President of the Commission shall suspend the proceedings and transmit the documents, together with a detailed report, to the Board of Discipline or the Office for Disciplinary Proceedings, depending on whether the author of the alleged violation belongs to the teaching and research staff, or to the management and technical/administrative staff. At the end of the disciplinary procedure, regardless of the outcome, the process continues its course and all the acts are passed from the disciplinary body to the Academic Senate which is responsible for assessing whether the conditions justify the application of the sanctions referred to in paragraph 6.



Code of Ethics of the University of Trento

8. If the reported behaviour relates to areas which fall under the remit of the Ethics Committee for Research involving Human beings or of the Committee for Equal Opportunities (Comitato Unico di Garanzia - CUG), the President of the Commission shall first obtain the opinion of such bodies. If the behaviour falls within the scope of the "Regulation on prevention and protection measures for workers in cases of workplace harassment" or the "Code of Conduct Against Sexual Harassment", the President of the Commission shall submit the report and the related documentation to the relevant bodies, including to the Confidential Counsellor. Once their duties have been completed, these bodies forward the documents, together with a final report, to the Commission once again which will continue the proceedings.
9. If the procedure is dismissed and is deemed that the report was persecutory or defamatory, the President of the Commission for the implementation of the Code of Ethics automatically starts the proceedings against the author of the report, for violation of article 4, paragraph 2 and article 6, paragraph 2 of this Code.
10. In case of violations of this Code attributable to the President or to the members of the Commission, the preliminary investigation prior to the decision will be carried out by the Academic Senate.