



Mahatma Gandhi University
Priyadarsini Hills P. O.
Kottayam, Kerala - 686560

(Re-accredited by NAAC with A Grade)

Code of Ethics and Conduct



Mahatma Gandhi University

Code of Ethics and Conduct

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity and transparency with regard to the Mahatma Gandhi University Code of Conduct and Ethics.

2. Scope

All functions and operations are carried out by Mahatma Gandhi University.

The Code of Conduct (Code) applies to the following members of the Mahatma Gandhi University community:

- Teaching & Non-Teaching staff
- Students of the Mahatma Gandhi University
- Any individual employed by the University, using University resources or facilities, or receiving funds administered by the University
- Other representatives when speaking or acting on behalf of the University.

3. Definitions

- Institute refers to Mahatma Gandhi University
- Stakeholders refer to all academic, and administrative staff and students of Mahatma Gandhi University.
- Approval Refers to a decision taken by the highest authority in support of a recommendation or endorsement by a lower authority within the University.

4. Policy Statement

In all functional and operational areas of Mahatma Gandhi University, the code of ethics and conduct support the vision and mission of the University.

5. Policy Governance Structure

Committees, Panels, and Boards reporting to the Vice-chancellor of the University

6. Preamble

As members of the Mahatma Gandhi University community, we have a responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards among our stakeholders. Integrity, honesty, and fairness are values that the University strives to incorporate into its teaching, research, and other activities. This Code serves as a public declaration of our shared commitment to upholding the ethical, professional, and legal standards that guide our daily and long-term decisions and actions. We must all be aware of the relevant policies, standards, laws, and regulations that govern our work and follow them. We are all responsible for our

own actions, and as members of the University Community, we are all responsible for upholding these standards of conduct and complying with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

7. General Standards of Professional Ethics and Conduct

7.1 Ethical Considerations: All employees and students are expected to follow all applicable laws as well as Mahatma Gandhi University's policies and procedures when conducting the business of the University. Members of the university community are expected to act in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct, be personally accountable for individual actions, diligently fulfil obligations toward students, colleagues, and other stakeholders and in performing duties as members of the University community. Violations of these may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the existing provisions.

7.2 Teaching and Research Ethics: University researchers have an ethical obligation to the University and to the larger global community as they seek knowledge and understanding. Faculty and students are expected to propose, conduct, and report research with integrity and honesty; protect people involved in research or teaching; follow animal ethics protocols; ensure originality of work and faithfully transmit research findings; protect intellectual property rights, and fairly assign authorship credit based on appropriate intellectual contributions.

7.3 Fairness and Respect: Tolerance, diversity, and respect for differences are important values at the University. Members of the community are expected to treat others with respect, fairness, and civility; speak candidly and truthfully; avoid all forms of harassment, illegal discrimination, threats, or violence; provide equal access to programs, facilities, and employment; and promote conflict resolution when dealing with others.

7.4 Standards of Integrity: To ensure that the University can fully commit to its academic and educational vision, it is expected that an individual's personal integrity will be reflected not only in honest and responsible actions but also in a willingness to provide guidance to others whose actions may be harmful to themselves or the community. The University expects its students, faculty, and staff to be truthful and open

7.5 Responsible Supervision: Community members who supervise or instruct employees or students are entrusted with a great deal of responsibility by the University. All superiors and branch heads must ensure that appropriate training and guidance on applicable workplace and educational rules, policies, and procedures, including this Code of Conduct, is available and delivered. They should also ensure that all applicable laws, policies, and workplace rules are followed, as well as promote a healthy, innovative, and productive environment that encourages dialogue and responds to concerns.

- 7.6 Safeguarding University Resources:** The University is dedicated to responsible stewardship. Members of the community are expected to use University property, types of equipment, funds, materials, electronic and other systems, and other resources only for legitimate University purposes, avoiding waste and abuse.
- 7.7 Preserve Responsible Academic Freedom:** Academic freedom is necessary for the University's mission to be fulfilled. Academic freedom is expected of community members, including the freedom to discuss any topic in the classroom and pursue all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression.
- 7.8 Disclosure of Conflict of Interests:** When making decisions on behalf of the University, University officials, faculty, and other employees must be objective and impartial. It is necessary to disclose any potential conflict of interest and to follow any institutional plans put in place to eliminate such interest. Everyone should make sure that personal relationships don't get in the way of objective judgment when making decisions that affect other members of the university community.
- 7.9 Information Management:** Many types of information are created and maintained by members of the university community. Various Laws and University policies govern both the public's right to access and the individual's right to privacy. Community members are expected to learn and follow RTI laws as well as University policies and agreements regarding access, use, protection, disclosure, retention, and disposal of public, private, and confidential information in order to fulfill these responsibilities.
- 7.10 Promote Health and Safety:** All stakeholders have the responsibility of providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all University students, teachers, staff, volunteers, and visitors. As a result, we are expected to observe safe work practices such as wearing suitable personal safety equipment and reporting accidents, injuries, and risky situations. All members are responsible for ensuring the safety and security of all University assets and facilities, reporting suspicious activity, protecting the environment, and treating hazardous waste and other potentially harmful agents with care.
- 7.11 Non-Discrimination:** The Mahatma Gandhi University does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, age, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected group. All stakeholders are required to follow the University's non-discrimination policy.
- 7.12 Sexual Harassment:** The Mahatma Gandhi University maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment. The University provides a physical, social, and psychological environment to prevent and promote awareness of sexual harassment and gender-based violence. In the event of such an occurrence, the University has established redressal processes. The University has an appropriate framework in place for reporting complaints and following up on them. In the event of such incidence, the University shall follow the UGC "Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of

Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions" guidelines, 2015, as well as other sexual harassment laws and regulations applicable to the University.

7.13 **Ragging:** Ragging is completely forbidden in the University, and any such events will be taken seriously. If a ragging event happens, the University will take appropriate action in accordance with University, UGC, and Government Rules. The definition of ragging shall be based on the guidelines proposed by the UGC. The University has established an anti-ragging cell to combat ragging.

7.14 **Communal Harmony:** Students and staff shall assume responsibility for maintaining a healthy and harmonious environment within the University campus. Communal harmony shall be maintained and any events/activities disrupting communal harmony, including communal violence are strictly prohibited.

7.15 **Freedom of Expression:** Within any academic institution, protest is an essential and permissible form of expression. Mahatma Gandhi University allows peaceful protest by its stakeholders. Protest, on the other hand, becomes undesirable when it obstructs the basic flow of ideas. Protests or demonstrations that violate others' rights to peaceful assembly, orderly protest, free exchange of ideas, or interfere with others' rights to utilise or enjoy the University's facilities or attend its functions will not be allowed. The University must be a place where ideas can be freely exchanged. By exercising their rights to protest, individuals cannot decide for the entire community which ideas will or will not receive free expression.

7.16 **Responsible use of Media:** The usage of online/print media by the students and staff of Mahatma Gandhi University shall be done cautiously and sensibly. Any activity in the online /print media that may harass /cause harm to others or tarnish the reputation of the University shall be avoided.

4. CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

4.1. The Vice-Chancellor/Pro-Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor/Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall:

1. Provide academic and executive leadership to develop and sustain the academic culture to think independently, critically, inclusively, and creatively.
2. Provide inspirational and motivational value-based academic and executive leadership to the university through policy formation, operational management, optimization of human resources, and concern for the environment and sustainability.
3. Conduct himself or herself with transparency, fairness, honesty, highest degree of ethics and make decisions, that are in the best interest of the University.
4. Act as a steward of the University's assets in managing the resources responsibly optimally, effectively, and efficiently for providing a conducive working and learning environment.

5. Give utmost priority to encouraging and creating an atmosphere that is conducive to free and fair academic activities and encourages excellence in output.
6. Promote the collaborative, inclusive, shared, and consultative work culture in the University, paving the way for critical and innovative thinking and ideas.
7. Endeavour to promote a work culture and ethics that brings about quality, professionalism, satisfaction, and service to the humanity and environment.

8. Teachers

8.1 Teachers and their Responsibilities:

Whoever adopts teaching as a profession assumes the obligation to conduct himself /herself in accordance with the ideal of the profession. A teacher is constantly under the scrutiny of his/her students and society at large. Therefore, every teacher should see that there is no incompatibility between his precepts and practice. The national ideals of education which have already been set forth and which he/she should seek to inculcate among students must be his/her own ideals. The profession further requires that the teacher should be calm, patient and communicate by temperament, and amiable in disposition.

Teacher should:

1. Adhere to a responsible pattern of conduct and demeanor expected of them by the community;
2. Manage their private affairs in a manner consistent with the dignity of the profession;
3. Seek to make professional growth continuous through study and research;
4. Express free and frank opinions by participating in professional meetings, seminars conferences, etc., towards the contribution of knowledge;
5. Maintain active membership of professional organizations and strive to improve education and profession through them;
6. Perform their duties in the form of teaching, tutorials, practical's, seminars and research work, conscientiously and with dedication;
7. Discourage and not indulge in plagiarism and other non-ethical behavior in teaching and research;
8. Co-operate and assist in carrying out the functions relating to the educational responsibilities of the University, such as: assisting in appraising applications for admission, advising and counselling students as well as assisting in the conduct of university and examinations, including supervision, invigilation and evaluation; and
9. Participate in extension, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, including community service.

8.2 Teachers and Students

Teachers should:

1. Respect the rights and dignity of the student in expressing his/her opinion;
2. Deal justly and impartially with students regardless of their religion, caste, gender, political, economic, social and physical characteristics;
3. Recognize the difference in aptitude and capabilities among students and strive to meet their individual needs;
4. Encourage students to improve their attainments, develop their personalities and at the same time contribute to community welfare;
5. Inculcate among students' scientific temper, the spirit of inquiry and ideals of democracy, patriotism, social justice, environmental protection and peace;
6. Treat the students with dignity and not behave in a vindictive manner towards any of them for any reason;
7. Pay attention to only the attainment of the student in the assessment of merit;
8. Make themselves available to the students even beyond their class hours and help and guide students without any remuneration or reward;
9. Aid students to develop an understanding of our national heritage and national goals; and
10. Refrain from inciting students against other students, colleagues or administration.

8.3 Teachers and Colleagues

Teachers should:

1. Treat other members of the profession in the same manner as they themselves wish to be treated;
2. Speak respectfully of other teachers and render assistance for professional betterment;
3. Refrain from making unsubstantiated allegations against colleagues to higher authorities; And
4. Refrain from allowing considerations of caste, creed, religion, race or sex in their professional endeavor.

8.4 Teachers and Authorities:

Teachers should:

1. Discharge their professional responsibilities according to the existing rules and adhere to procedures and methods consistent with their profession in initiating steps through their own institutional bodies and/ or professional organisations for change of any such rule detrimental to the professional interest;

2. Refrain from undertaking any other employment and commitments, including private tuition and coaching classes which are likely to interfere with their professional responsibilities;
3. Co-operate in the formulation of policies of the institution by accepting various offices and discharging responsibilities that such offices may demand,
4. Co-operate to take additional responsibilities within the jurisdiction of the institution offered/ delegated by the Vice Chancellor.
5. Co-operate with the authorities for the betterment of the institution keeping in view the interest and in conformity with the dignity of the profession;
6. Adhere to the terms of employment prescribed by the institution/ state and University Grants Commission.
7. Give and expect due notice before a change of position takes place; and
8. Refrain from availing themselves of leave except on unavoidable grounds and as far as practicable with prior intimation, keeping in view their particular responsibility for completion of the academic responsibilities.
9. Take care of University resources and protect the interest of the use of resources for the well-being of University community.

8.5 Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff:

Teachers should:

1. Treat the non-teaching staff as colleagues and equal partners in a cooperation undertaking. within every educational institution;
2. Help in the functioning of joint-staff councils covering both the teachers and the non-teaching staff.

8.6 Teachers and Guardians

Teachers should:

1. Try to see through teacher's bodies and organisations, that institutions maintain contact with the guardians, and their students, send reports of their performance to the guardians whenever necessary and meet the guardians in meetings convened for the purpose of mutual exchange of ideas and for the benefit of the institution.

8.9 Teachers and Society

Teachers should:

1. Recognise that education is a public service and strive to keep the public informed of the education programmes which are being provided;
2. Work to improve education in the community and strengthen the community's moral and intellectual life;
3. Be aware of social problems and take part in such activities as would be conducive to the progress of society and hence the country as a whole.
4. Perform the duties of citizenship, participate in community activities and shoulder responsibilities of public offices;

5. Refrain from taking part in or subscribing to or assisting in any way activities, which tend to promote feelings of hatred or enmity among different communities, religions or linguistic groups but actively work for national integration.

9 Code of Conduct for Administrative Staff

Administrative staff shall:

1. Ensure all administrative support to develop and sustain the academic culture to think independently, critically, inclusively and creatively.
2. Be dedicated and be contributing regularly to the academic and personal growth of students by rendering appropriate services throughout the duration of their academic program at the University.
3. Show a respectful and affectionate attitude towards teachers, students and colleagues.
4. Recognise the primacy of the role in supporting the academic and research activities in the University.
5. Create an atmosphere enabling them to work closely, in association with and support the academic and research activities in the University.
6. Cooperate wholeheartedly with the authorities in the fulfillment of the mission and vision of the University by performing the respective roles in a professional manner.
7. Avoid unethical practices even on the grounds that it is customary and never compromise integrity for expediency.
8. Take all reasonable steps to make sure that things are communicated appropriately and effectively with all service users in a polite and considerate manner.
9. Take care of University resources and protect the interest of the use of resources for the well-being of the University community.

10 Code of Conduct for Students.

The code of conduct for students tries to state how the University facilitate each and every student to be aware of how the University wishes the researchers and students to enjoy their lives on campus. The University ensures that students engaging in learning, research, and other curricular and co-curricular activities are given the opportunity to value individual freedom, respect others, and be aware of the ethical code of conduct toward an ideal life.

Students of the University shall:

1. Respond positively to the University's efforts to establish and sustain a scholarly community in which all members share the common goals of learning and encouraging intellectual inquiry and debates.
2. Maintain pleasant and strong relationships while remaining sensitive to the requirements of the local community.
3. Establish and maintain healthy relationships with the faculty members that are conducive to the teaching and learning process.
4. Consider teaching faculty to be guides, mentors, and well-wishers, and treat them with respect.

5. Respect the evaluations made by the faculty members and appeal in an appropriate manner if any grievances are felt.
6. Make fair use of the provisions enabling students to evaluate faculty members.
7. Use, protect, and preserve the learning resources of all forms to be utilised for future endeavours.
8. Pursue academic studies meticulously, ethically, and responsibly, taking the initiative to develop the skills and competency needed to become a successful and independent learner.
9. Follow all statutory, legal and ethical considerations while using social media and technology.
10. Take care of University resources and protect the interest of the use of resources for the well-being of University community.

11. Code of Conduct Monitoring Committee:

In order to ensure compliance with and understanding of the Code of Conduct, resolve any incidents or doubts regarding its interpretation, and ensure that it is applied fairly in the event of complaints, a Code of Conduct Monitoring Committee shall be constituted by the Vice-Chancellor. If any of the Code of Conduct Monitoring Committee members have a conflict of interest in dealing with a specific matter, said member must be removed from all Proceedings related to the matter in question.

12 Misconduct and Disciplinary measures:

In case of any misconduct, the University shall implement disciplinary measures based on the type and grade of the seriousness of the misconduct. The degree of misconduct shall determine the appropriate level at which the action shall be taken. The University authorities shall take action based on existing rules that are mandated by the UGC/State Service Rules/University Acts and Statutes and other rules and regulations applicable to the University.