

CODE OF ETHICS

of the UNIVERSITAT OBERTA DE CATALUNYA

Approved by the Governing Council, July 2009



UOC Code of Ethics

1. With the goal of improving achievement of its goals, the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya has decided to implement a series of values, principles and rules that must guide the conduct of our University's members.
2. The Code of Ethics provides a valuable beacon for the entire university community and its mandatoriness arises from the moral reasons that underpin it. Its strength lies solely in the undertaking made by all the community's members to abide by a series of common values and principles.
3. In this sense, the code is not a body of legal regulations but a compendium of moral rules and principles that should guide coexistence between individuals and groups at the University.

Objectives

4. The purpose of this code is to compile a series of ethical undertakings and give them visibility both for the functioning of the University itself and its relationship with society, so that:
 - a) It can act as a letter of presentation of the University's values, principles and general undertakings toward society.
 - b) It can help share reference guidelines for the activities performed by the various agents comprising our university community.
 - c) It can provide a general guide of ethical principles and values that underlie the diversity of rules and regulations applied in the University

Scope of application

5. The Code of Ethics is intended for all the individuals and groups that make up the UOC's university community. The code will also guide the relationships of the University and its staff with outside entities and companies that render services to or work with the UOC.

The UOC's mission

6. The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) is an innovative university with roots in Catalonia and open to the world, a leader in virtual lifelong education and research about the information and knowledge society.
7. Its educational and management model, led by a highly qualified team, based on personalization and integral mentoring of the student through networking and intensive use of the information and communication technologies (ICT), enables time and space barriers to be overcome, universally sharing the knowledge generated to foster individual development and improve society.

General values and principles for the entire university community

8. The university community performs its tasks guided by certain general ethical values and principles that are defined in the paragraphs below.
9. **Respectful treatment** of people and respect as a general value that should permeate the behaviour of all members of the UOC. This respectful treatment should be expressed in all written and verbal communication.

10. Respect for **diversity** in all the manifestations that are compatible with human dignity and universal human rights. In the case of the UOC, this diversity basically manifests in commitment and respect in the application of gender policies, fostering and accepting cultural plurality from a fundamental identification with Catalan society and culture.
11. **Confidentiality** in the private communications received and the undertaking to not disclose to third parties the data obtained from distribution lists or information from the public sections at the UOC's Virtual Campus.
12. Support for **open knowledge** while upholding respect for intellectual authorship in all the academic and professional activities performed at the UOC. Alongside the dissemination of knowledge, there must also be adequate recognition of the authorship of the ideas, materials or documents that are used.
13. **Participation** of the entire community in the University's dynamics, with suitable channels for unhampered expression of proposals and the necessary actions to continue and improve our activity, fostering dialogue with and accountability to the university community and society as a whole.
14. **Sustainability**, in all its forms, as the basis for planning and developing the University's activity. Steps will be taken to ensure that the processes and actions undertaken are environmentally sustainable.
15. **Innovation** as the common denominator of all our actions. The University is open to educational, technological and institutional innovation, while also supporting the entrepreneurial initiatives and creativity of the people who form part of the university community.
16. **Quality** as an institutional culture. The University will work to achieve excellence in educational services, teaching and research activities, and organizational processes. It will listen to the voice of its students, graduates and society, while also ensuring the academic rigour of the course programmes and lines of research.
17. **Cooperation**, particularly in the interaction with society as a whole and its productive fabric, with the goal of consolidating an organization culture based on flexibility, social engagement and building institutional links supported on cooperation.
18. **Dignity** in employment, professional and teaching conditions, providing the necessary resources for adequate performance of tasks by the various groups that work at or for the UOC.
19. **Appropriate use** of the means and resources available. Being an institution that renders a public service, the UOC must take particular care of its resources and must render account for their use and results.
20. The **commitment** to take to society the values traditionally associated with university activity, such as freedom, equality, dialogue and a critical spirit.

Specific values and principles for the various stakeholder groups within the university Community

21. The UOC's university community is composed of the governing bodies and the management staff, the academic staff, the administrative staff, the affiliated teaching staff and the students. Given the distinctive nature of their activity and their relationship with the rest of the university community, they must uphold, in each case, a series of values and principles that consist of the undertakings defined below.

The governing bodies and the management staff

22. Act and make decisions based on objective, adequately justified criteria, with equanimity and making suitable use of the powers vested in them by virtue of their position.
23. Foster actions and decisions based on participation, consultation and communication channels, seeking to avoid unilateral decisions.
24. Use all resources to ensure adequate communication and transparency in the information provided by the organization.
25. Acknowledge and appreciate good work by the UOC's internal and collaborating staff, and also flexibility in the performance of the responsibilities and tasks associated with its activity.
26. Observe the principles of equity, merit and transparency in recruitment and promotion processes, and also the principles of equality and transparency in the acquisition and provision of services.
27. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among the UOC's internal and collaborating staff.

Academic staff

28. Show commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of teaching-learning and research processes in their field of knowledge.
29. Take part, either directly or by delegation, in those areas of consultation and decision of the UOC that concern teaching and research.
30. Be willing to be flexible and to adapt to changes in responsibilities and tasks.
31. Foster a climate of trust and cooperation among the teaching staff, both within the faculty and with other faculties.
32. Lead the teaching process and guarantee fluid communication with the affiliated teaching staff and the students.

Administrative staff

33. Show commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of administrative processes and activities.
34. Be willing to be flexible and to adapt to changes in responsibilities and tasks.
35. Take part, either directly or by delegation, in those areas of consultation and decision of the UOC that concern administration.
36. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among the administrative staff, both within the same area and in other areas.

Affiliated teaching staff

37. Show commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of the teaching activities they undertake.
38. Take part in the initiatives and activities organized by the faculties that they work with.
39. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration with the UOC's faculty and other teaching staff.

Students

40. Show commitment to the learning process, fostering attitudes driven by a curiosity for knowledge, personal effort, responsibility, a critical spirit and cooperation.
41. Take part in improving the University's educational quality, using available participation and communication channels.
42. Foster a climate of trust, collaboration and teamwork with other students.

Monitoring

43. The UOC's *Síndic de Greuges* will monitor and assess compliance with this Code of Ethics.
44. So that it can do this, the people making or receiving appeals referring to this Code of Ethics must forward them to the Síndic.
45. The annual report issued by the *Síndic de Greuges* must include a chapter that refers specifically to the Code of Ethics.
46. The *Síndic de Greuges* will meet once a year in a working session devoted to monitoring the Code of Ethics with the people designated by the FUOC's Employees' Committee.