

GURU KASHI UNIVERSITY

CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESEARCH

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THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESEARCH

A. DEFINITIONS

Academic freedom: The recognition of the right to academic freedom at the University entails the complete protection of freedom of investigation, thought, expression, publication of results and peaceful gathering.

Academic misconduct: This concept should be seen specifically within the framework of the definition of misconduct in the Statutes of the University.

Animal experiments: Any procedure which includes the use of live animals with the aim of testing a hypothesis, collecting information, promoting, transferring or demonstrating knowledge, testing or collecting a product, or registering the effect of a certain procedure on animals.

Conflict of interests: This arises when the individual's private or personal interests and professional obligations are divergent to such an extent that an independent observer may have doubt as to whether or not the individual's professional actions are influenced by personal considerations, financial or otherwise.

Consultant: A member of staff of the University who renders advice in his/her professional field to an outside individual, group or organization against payment.

Copyright: The ownership and control of intellectual property in original works subject to the Copyright Act, Act 98 of 1978. This consists in original copyright works captured as a tangible form of expression from which it can be viewed, reproduced or otherwise communicated, whether directly or by means of a machine or device.

Research / research activities: Any systematic examination aimed at the development of, or contribution to, knowledge that can be generalized. Activities complying with these requirements are

regarded as research, regardless of whether they are normally described as "development", "demonstration" or "tuition" or by another term.

Researcher: In the context of this Code, this includes any full-time or part-time member of staff or undergraduate or postgraduate student of the Guru Kashi University taking part in any research activity.

University: Is taken to mean the Guru Kashi University, unless otherwise stated.

University resources: These include, but are not limited to, all facilities, staff, equipment, materials, expertise, information and confidential information of the University.

B. PREFACE

The Guru Kashi University pursues a research culture that promotes quality as well as ethical responsibility in the search for and the creation, conservation and transfer of knowledge. Consequently, researchers at the University are required to pursue the highest standards of excellence and ethical behaviour in all their research activities.

1. THE RIGHTS OF RESEARCHERS

Researchers have the right to academic freedom when conducting research. Within the framework of the University's policy and the regulations of departments and faculties, researchers are free to choose the subject of their studies and to seek support for their research from any appropriate source.

Researchers have the right to information required for their research, in so far as there is no legal or moral limitation on furnishing such information. They are free to develop their own theories and to arrive at their own conclusions. They have the right to disseminate the results of their research, without supervision or alterations by external funders, unless this has been stipulated in advance by a signed contract

Subject to the guidelines and conditions as set out in the University's Rules for Outside Work and for Limited Private Practice, as well as in other applicable regulations, they have the right to perform outside work and in some cases to run a limited private practice.

- **The Right to an Academic Environment Conducive to Research**

The University has the responsibility to create an environment that promotes research and fosters good researchers. The Management of the University, therefore, has to create an environment in which research can flourish, by, among other things, visionary policy, innovative programmes, sound support services, appropriate incentives, effective financial management and the mobilization of funding. At the same time, researchers should be allowed sufficient time and opportunity to become involved in research activities.

- **The Right to the Facilities, Services and Other Resources of the University**

The University has the responsibility, in so far as it is feasible, to make facilities, equipment and services available to researchers for use in research and tuition, with a view to the creation of an environment which is conducive to research.

Where the University does not have sufficient resources to give effect to this right, it should endeavour to obtain resources from other sources and to allocate them to researchers, based on fairness and on the academic, educational and ethical merits of the research.

Speculation on the political or social acceptability of the research or the research results may not play a part in this regard.

Where, as a result of limited resources, the University cannot accede to all demands in this regard, it should allow researchers to negotiate facilities, funds and/or other resources from elsewhere for research programmes, as long as no conflict with the University's interests and principles is caused.

2. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS

Researchers are obliged and responsible to apply the following key values in their research.

- **Social responsibility**

Researchers should accept that they form part of a broader community and that their responsibilities therefore go beyond the academic environment. Consequently, they should be attuned to the needs and problems of local and national communities in which they are functioning, as well as of the international community. By their research they should address such needs and problems and contribute to the development of prosperous, free and just communities.

- **Honesty**

"Give everyone his/her due" is the distinguishing normative core content of honesty. It refers especially to the fair treatment of the individuals or institutions concerned. Fair treatment of all individuals involved in research should therefore be one of the most important objectives of researchers and research institutions.

- **Goodwill**

In order to conduct research in an ethical way, all parties involved should not only be protected from harm, but efforts should also be made to ensure their well-being. This falls under the principle of goodwill. The term "goodwill" refers to generous or charitable behaviour that is not compulsory for everybody.

- **Respect for the individual**

To show a lack of respect for the autonomous person means to disregard that person's considered decisions, not to grant him/her the freedom to act in terms thereof, or to withhold information that is essential for making a considered decision when there is no compelling reason to do so. On the other hand, not every individual is capable of self-determination. The ability to make decisions develop in the course of the individual's life, and some persons lose this ability in full or in part because of disease, mental derangement or circumstances seriously limiting freedom. Respect for the immature or unaccountable person requires that such persons should be protected while they are becoming mature or while they are unaccountable.

- **Professionalism**

Researchers should ensure that they comply with the professional standards of the occupation. They have the following professional responsibilities:

Integrity: The individual integrity of every researcher should be irreproachable at all times, since the collective integrity of individual researchers constitutes the very cornerstone of science. Every researcher should be able to rely on the truth and objectivity of the reports of

other scientists.

Quality: Researchers are responsible for the academic character, accuracy and reliability of their own research and of anything done under their supervision. For this reason, research should be limited to the academic, technical and financial competence of the researcher. Researchers should always apply the highest standards of excellence with regard to the planning, implementation and reporting of research.

Accountability: Individual researchers should be held responsible for the originality of their work, for the complete disclosure and reporting – to the academic community as well as the general public – of all applicable procedures, theories and data used during the research process, and for maintaining financial control.

- **Refraining from abusing supervisory authority**

Abusing supervisory authority includes any form of conditional, or apparently conditional, granting of services, benefits, opportunities or facilities on the grounds of performance or events not related to the academic achievement or work performance of the person being supervised.

Such abuse of authority can take place even if it is not aimed at benefiting the supervisor concerned and even though the results thereof do not hold any benefit for him/her.

As in the case of discrimination, this practice has a negative effect on the research environment and should be avoided at all costs by researchers. This is also regarded as an unfair labour practice in terms of the Labour Relations Act of 1995.

Persons with supervisory authority over individuals immediately related to them, or persons with whom they have a close relationship, tend to cause a conflict of interests and are strongly advised either to relinquish the academic or work supervision of the person concerned, or to obtain permission (for example from the head of the department or the dean) to carry on in the capacity concerned, with the establishment of adequate preventive measures.

- **Refraining from sexual harassment**

The Guru Kashi University is an academic and educational institution striving for the creation of a non-sexist, non-discriminatory work, living and learning environment for everybody, where it will be possible for everybody to realize his/her full potential. This University recognizes that the protection of human dignity and the discouragement of offensive actions form an integral part of such environment and recognizes that sexual harassment is an unacceptable encroachment on the core values of human dignity, privacy and mutual respect, and is a form of unfair discrimination.

The University Council, Senior Management, staff and students are co-responsible for combating sexual harassment on campus. To honour this responsibility, the University community has agreed on the Sexual Harassment Policy, which forms the framework within which the researcher's behaviour is to be judged.

Researchers should avoid the following within the research practice:

Intimidation: Any action in terms of which a person exercises pressure, applies coercion or by threats tries to convince another person to act in a way that the latter person would not have done out of his or her own free will (regardless of whether or not the effort was successful).

Sexual harassment: Any action with a sexual connotation or undertone which could result in criminal prosecution or a civil claim as well as any unlawful action in terms of which an individual's right to a safe, non-intimidating work, living or learning environment is affected by, among other things –

- (a) unsolicited sexual overtures;
- (b) requests for sexual favours where the person making the request is in a position of making, among other things, appointments, promotions or positive academic and other performance judgments;
- (c) Humiliating and/or offensive verbal and non-verbal actions with an explicit or implicit sexual connotation or undertone.

Victimization: The unlawful prejudicing (or threat of prejudicing) of a person (member of staff or student) exercising or enforcing his/her rights or trying to exercise and/or enforce such rights.