

## **Code of Conduct for employees, students and graduates of Mendel University in Brno**

### **Preamble**

Mendel University in Brno (MENDELU) is committed to the support of those general and universally recognized moral and formal principles of behaviour expected of individuals and groups in an advanced society and, in particular, in relation to the pursuit of higher education and research work.

### **Article 1**

#### **Common Principles**

- (1) This Code of Conduct sets out the ethical standards to be adhered to at MENDELU.
- (2) This Code of Conduct is applicable to all employees and students of MENDELU.
- (3) MENDELU graduates shall honour the promise of the graduation pledge and fulfil its intention. Graduates, as well as those who have earned their scientific and educational titles and degrees at MENDELU, in whatever situation they find themselves in, are expected to act in accordance with the principles set out in this Code of Conduct and thus contribute to positive reputation of MENDELU.
- (4) The objective of this Code of Conduct is to establish and maintain a certain expected level of moral standards, create a positive working and interpersonal environment, prevent conflicts of interest and situations which would be in conflict with the generally accepted values underpinning human society and, as such, are to be those ethical standards adhered to and applicable to the MENDELU environment. Last but not least, another goal of this Code of Conduct is to improve the relationship between the MENDELU academic community and the public.

### **Article 2**

#### **Academic Freedom**

- (1) Basic academic freedoms at MENDELU include its freedom as an academic institution to create and fulfil its concept for the development, fulfilment and implementation of its educational, research, developmental and artistic activities. These objectives are to be carried out in accordance with generally accepted moral principles and in accordance with the generally accepted ethical standards for educational, research, developmental and artistic activities.
- (2) With respect to the academic freedom of the employees, this refers to their basic right to exercise their own free will and judgement in decision-making on the teaching of students, further professional development and pursuit of scientific research, including the choice of research subjects and approaches/methodologies. The above-mentioned academic freedoms apply only when they are:
  - a) in full compliance with the MENDELU's long-term concept of educational, research, developmental and artistic activities;
  - b) in accordance with generally accepted moral principles and generally accepted ethical standards for educational, research, developmental and artistic activities;
  - c) in accordance with the rules of moral conduct expressed in this Code, as well as in other internal and other regulations of MENDELU,

- d) in accordance with the limitations imposed by the special conditions of research, in accordance with other rules and requirements that can be found in MENDELU's internal and other regulations.
- (3) Important aspects of academic freedom for both employees and students are the freedom to express their opinions and to freely communicate with one another.

### **Article 3**

#### **General Requirements Related to the Ethical Behaviour of Employees and Students**

- (1) In their work both within and outside of the workplace, they shall be guided by moral principles and other generally accepted principles.
- (2) They shall respect human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, in particular the right to life and health, the integrity of the person and his/her privacy, the right to respect for human dignity, personal honour and reputation, freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression as well as freedom of independent scientific research and artistic creation. They shall respect the freedom of speech, the free exchange of views and information and the principles of collegiality and academic cooperation. They shall prevent actions that would violate these rights and freedoms.
- (3) They shall reject any form of discrimination, which might restrict or cause harm to certain social groups in relation to their rights and/or entitlements in any way (e.g. discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, nationality, ideology, religion, belief, world-view, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, social origin or property). They shall treat everyone with respect, regardless of socio-cultural or physical differences, and they shall thereby foster a positive attitude toward people with special needs.
- (4) They shall not use the academic environment to propound the interests of political parties and/or movements.
- (5) They shall not exert inappropriate or undue pressure on other MENDELU employees and students. Any critical suggestions that they make shall be factually substantiated. They shall express criticism and differing opinions in a due and proper manner.
- (6) They shall protect the mission of MENDELU. They shall not put their private interests above those of MENDELU and they shall give proper respect to MENDELU and do nothing that would harm its reputation.
- (7) They shall take due and proper care of MENDELU's property and use it in an appropriate manner. They shall not misuse such property for their own private benefit and purposes or for the private benefit of third parties.
- (8) They shall avoid any possible conflict of interest and, if such a situation occurs, they shall provide an appropriate notification to their superiors.
- (9) They shall be committed to their own respective educational, research, developmental and artistic activities or studies. They shall work to continuously improve their levels of knowledge and skill both within and outside of the academic community.
- (10) They shall make sure that their work and study commitments, both within and outside of MENDELU, are both adequate and sustainable. They shall also make sure that none of their activities (besides their educational, research, developmental and artistic activities) jeopardize the activities of MENDELU or its reputation.
- (11) If they accept an academic post, membership in an academic body, a selection board or a management post, they shall exercise it in an orderly, transparent and objective manner, in accordance with this Code.
- (12) Employees shall respect the generally accepted principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and they shall act in accordance with these principles and truthfully report on the possible impacts of their activities. In all of their work-related activities, they shall act in a socially responsible manner in relation to the applicable economic, social and

environmental areas of concern and they shall take into account the CSR principles also in the training and teaching of students.

#### **Article 4**

##### **Educational Activity Principles**

- (1) MENDELU employees:
  - a) shall treat students honestly, fairly, like partners and openly;
  - b) shall make sure that they do not subject them to humiliation, immoral behaviour or inconvenient and inappropriate forms of coercion;
  - c) shall behave in such a way that they set an example to their students;
  - d) shall act in a fair and transparent manner and in accordance with the applicable legal and internal regulations when evaluating learning outcomes;
  - e) shall not abuse their authority and shall not require students to engage in activities that should be their own area of responsibility;
  - f) shall not claim the results of the students' work as their own.
- (2) Students of MENDELU:
  - a) shall not plagiarize;
  - b) shall not cheat or give others the chance to cheat;
  - c) shall not represent the work of others as their own;
  - d) shall not trivialize the results of their work or the work of their teachers, other students, employees or other persons.

#### **Article 5**

##### **Research, Developmental and Artistic Activity Principles**

- (1) Employees as well as MENDELU students:
  - a) shall be open to teamwork and professional discussions both within and outside of the MENDELU academic community;
  - b) shall communicate forthrightly and openly with proper reasoning and factual evidence and without humiliating others or disparaging their activities;
  - c) shall not disregard the proper practices of scientific inquiry and shall respect other scientific opinions, as well as the diversity of scientific and creative disciplines;
  - d) shall apply critical thinking to the ideas of their colleagues as well as to their own;
  - e) shall have their work reflect the latest trends in the field and shall be responsible for the adequacy, accuracy and objectivity of the methods used and shall ensure that the results of their work are not distorted;
  - f) shall take proper care of data and researched materials in terms of their precise description, protection and archiving;
  - g) shall make sure that the procedures and results of scientific, research, developmental and artistic work can be subjected to review;
  - h) shall observe the particular professional ethical standards inherent to a given field;
  - i) shall protect and respect intellectual property and ensure that the results of research, developmental and artistic activities are correctly attributed and shall not publish any outputs of their work in an ethically dubious way, nor shall they appropriate as their own the work of others or commit plagiarism;
  - j) shall not provide their results to third parties for personal benefit.

- (2) Heads of institutes and heads of research teams:
  - a) shall make sure that proper and open communication channels are maintained and that autocratic management styles are avoided;
  - b) shall make sure that unrestricted desire for high performance and professional ambitions do not mislead anyone to dishonest behaviour.
- (3) MENDELU employees shall always prepare their expert appraisals and scientific and other expert opinions by assuming full responsibility, with impartiality, aiming for objectivity and in the light of the current state of knowledge, without any purposeful distortion or influence by external interests. They shall make a factual assessment, use standard criteria and procedures and guarantee the integrity of their conclusions with their professional honour.

## **Article 6**

### **Disciplinary procedures for students**

- (1) Students are required to abide by this Code, as well as by the disciplinary rules of the institution to which they belong.
- (2) In order to avoid any duplicative punishment, any possible violations of this Code and/or other disciplinary rules and regulations by students shall always be dealt with using the disciplinary procedure of the institution to which they belong.

## **Article 7**

### **Ethics Committee**

- (1) The Ethics Committee has been set up to process complaints involving compliance with this Code of Conduct.
- (2) The composition of the Ethics Committee and its rules of procedure are governed by a special regulation.

## **Article 8**

### **Final Provisions**

- (1) This Code of Conduct replaces the Code of Conduct of 14 September, 2016.

In Brno 23/09/2019

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Rector