



EVROPSKÁ UNIE  
Evropské strukturální a investiční fondy  
Operační program Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,  
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

## **The Code of Conduct of the University of West Bohemia**

As amended by Addendum No. 1 of 12 January 2022 effective from 12 January 2022.

### **PREAMBLE**

*The University of West Bohemia is an important community who meets, on its campus, in a variety of roles. For successful development of the University, the quality of interpersonal relationships & the resulting inner atmosphere in the academic community is extremely important. It is also crucial for the University to create & deepen public confidence in the academic sphere. It is therefore necessary to encourage a positive inner atmosphere, with serious & trustworthy internal & external communication, in order to develop the University environment & not permit behaviour that damages it.*

*The Code of Conduct (the “Code”), is one of the tools that contribute to the development of the University environment. Its purpose is to define & promote desirable ethical standards of employee behaviour & university student behaviour towards their colleagues, collaborating organizations & the wider public. The University, as a carrier of education & development in the areas of scientific & creative activity cannot be satisfied with mere compliance with legal norms and, through this Code, it sets its own standards with respect to ethics.*

*The University of West Bohemia is fully aware of its responsibility towards society as a whole, for which it educates young people who will one day shape society. The University is therefore fully committed to the values & principles emanating from Europe’s cultural & historical heritage, such as freedom, inviolability of human dignity, respect for truth, justice, responsibility, professionalism, & critical thinking, as well as respect for other opinions & cultures. It is vital that the University should take care of these values both in day-to-day behaviour & in moments of important decision-making & addressing serious issues, in order to avoid their relativization, misinterpretation or politicization.*

**Article I.**  
**INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS**

1. The Code of Conduct defines the ethical principles & values to which UWB adheres. These principles & values form the ethical standard of conduct in the UWB environment.
2. The Code of Conduct is binding for all UWB staff (academics, scientists & others), & UWB students (hereinafter referred to as “individuals”). For the purposes of this Code, participants in lifelong learning are also considered students; the provisions of the Code apply to them *mutatis mutandis*.

**Article II.**  
**RELATIONSHIP OF ACADEMIC FREEDOMS & RIGHTS  
TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. The University of West Bohemia (hereinafter referred to as “UWB”), is a self-governing academic institution. As part of its academic rights, UWB creates representative academic bodies, uses academic insignia & holds academic ceremonies. As part of its academic freedom, UWB creates & implements a plan of development of educational, scientific & research activities, development & innovation, artistic & other creative activities. The following academic rights & the rights of academic staff & students are applied at UWB in accordance with this plan.
2. UWB respects the following academic freedoms & the academic rights of academic staff & students:
  - a) freedom of research & development activities & artistic creation, & publication of their results,
  - b) the freedom of teaching, consisting primarily in its openness to various scientific opinions, research & development methods & artistic styles & directions,
  - c) the right to study, including a free choice of study orientation within study programmes & the freedom to express one’s own views in teaching,
  - d) the right of members of the academic community to elect representative academic bodies.

3. The academic freedoms & academic rights of academic staff & students referred to in the preceding paragraph are exercised in accordance with the ethical conduct standards defined in this Code.

### **Article III.**

#### **GENERAL STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**

1. The understanding of ethical principles at UWB is generally based on the principle of Kantian ethics: “Act always only according to a maxim whereby you could, at the same time, want that maxim of yours to become a universal law.”<sup>1</sup>.
2. Regardless of their own concepts of morality, individuals respect the general ethical principles & principles of decent interpersonal relationships.
3. Individuals respect the basic values to which UWB is committed, in particular: freedom, equality, democracy, academic freedoms & social responsibility, professionalism, sense of discipline & economy, sustainable development in the knowledge society, the applicability of knowledge & its embedding in the regional as well as the national, European, & international environments.
4. Students respect the principles expressed in their matriculation pledge & in their academic pledges; they, in particular, honour UWB & do not allow their actions to damage UWB’s good reputation.
5. Individuals:
  - a) act in accordance with the mission of UWB specified in its Statutes, & do not favour their interests over this mission;
  - b) respect the principles applied in the academic environment, in particular the principle of collegiality & loyalty to a particular department, UWB Part as well as to the whole of UWB. They always act so as not to damage the good name of UWB;
  - c) take care of UWB property & do not abuse it to implement their private interests or gain personal benefit;
  - d) do not accept gifts or benefits for the performance of their activities at UWB, if such behaviour is contrary to good manners or principles & values set out in this Code;

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<sup>1</sup> Kant, Immanuel: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Prague: Publisher Svoboda, p. 65.

- e) avoid conflicts of interest. Generally, a conflict of interest means a situation in which the requirement to respect & promote the interest of UWB or its Parts may conflict with the loyalty to another institution or person. Conflicts of interest may arise, for example, in the case of parallel participation of one person in managerial positions at various levels within UWB, in the presence of close persons in managerial positions at different levels within UWB or in the case of parallel involvement of an individual in addressing a particular scientific or creative task within UWB & in another institution, unless such activity is based on a contractual relationship between UWB & the institution. If an individual becomes involved in a conflict of interest, they immediately inform their senior staff;
  - f) respect the freedom of expression & opinion; if they express criticism, then such criticism should always be factual, reasoned & substantiated with solid arguments. Individuals should be equally critical towards the results of their own work & make sure they develop their professional capabilities, knowledge & skills;
  - g) always behave towards each other in a decent way & in accordance with generally accepted social manners. They respect & honour each other. They act so as not to damage someone else's honour, reputation or dignity;
  - h) regard any discrimination based on race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, religion, belief, worldview, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social or financial status as prohibited. UWB supports a positive approach to people with special needs & creates & improves the conditions for their activity within the academic sphere.
6. UWB is committed to the principle of political neutrality of the academic sphere. The academic sphere is not used to promote or support the interests of political parties & movements.
  7. In the academic environment, sexual & gender-based harassment, i.e. conduct that is of a sexual nature & whose intent or effect is to reduce the dignity of a person & create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, or which can legitimately be perceived as a condition for decisions influencing the exercise of rights & obligations arising from legal relationships. Any sexual pressure or solicitation, or unwanted & unpleasant attention or the application of gender stereotypes to other employees or students are considered inadmissible. It is the responsibility of each individual to report such behaviour, when confronted with it, to his or her superior or the [Ethics Committee of UWB](#).
  8. When exercising functions, individuals exercise their powers responsibly and in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. In addition, they lead others to comply with the Code.

9. If individuals encounter unethical behaviour in their surroundings, they do not tolerate it: neither out of loyalty nor for their own benefit. They always strive to remedy such behaviour & do everything possible to prevent such behaviour in the future. Employees report suspected unethical behaviour to their superior or the [UWB Ethics Committee](#). Students report alleged unethical behaviour to the [UWB Ethics Committee](#).
10. An individual must not be exposed to any negative consequences resulting from the reporting of unethical behaviour in accordance with this Code.

**Article IV.**  
**STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY & STUDY**

1. Teachers develop students' knowledge & skills using all their capabilities & experience. They familiarize students with different approaches to solving problems; they are open to discussion & collaboration with students. They encourage the development of students' critical thinking & their autonomy in achieving learning goals, & assist in adding to their qualifications, & professional & personal development.
2. In front of students, teachers care about professionalism & are fully aware of the fact that through teaching, they represent the University in front of their students. By their own professionalism, they set examples for students; they always adhere to the general rules of the teaching profession as well as individual agreements regarding the fulfilment of study duties.
3. When evaluating students' work, teachers are always objective & unbiased; their assessments are carried out on the basis of transparent criteria.
4. Teachers interact with students openly and in a collegial manner. Teachers do not disrespect the results of students' work, neither do students denigrate the results of the work of teachers or other employees of UWB. Critical & well-founded criticism cannot be regarded as disparaging the work of students, teachers or other employees.
5. Teachers do not abuse their position to enforce fulfilment of any requirements beyond the properly-defined study duties. They never transfer fulfilment of their own job responsibilities to students.
6. Students use their study for personal or professional growth. They are wholeheartedly devoted to their study, actively engage with suggestions of teachers & are open to teamwork.
7. In fulfilling their course requirements, students do not cheat, nor do they help others cheat. No form of plagiarism is allowed.

**Article V.**  
**STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH &  
CREATIVE ACTIVITIES**

1. UWB respects the plurality of scientific & creative fields & approaches to research & creative tasks.
2. Individuals:
  - a) focus their research or creative activities on expanding the frontiers of human knowledge, & on developing artistic & cultural values, & the general education level. They always make sure that the results of their research or creative activity serve the benefit of society;
  - b) seek to ensure that, in addition to the professional public, also the general public gets acquainted with research results. Direct communication with the public aids in better understanding of the interests & concerns of the public in the areas of scientific & creative activity;
  - c) are conscientious in their research, take into account current knowledge in the given field of science, with emphasis on ensuring that the results of their research can be reviewed, & respect other principles of professional ethics in the given field of science. If they discover a mistake in their publications, they take all necessary & possible steps to remedy it, do not try to conceal or mask it or transfer the responsibility for the mistake to someone else;
  - d) maintain an overview of the current state of research in order to avoid duplication of previously achieved research results. They do not repeatedly publish the same research results, nor do they purposely fragment the results of their research into a larger number of publications in order to artificially increase the number of published outputs;
  - e) observe the principles of intellectual property protection. They do not present the results of research or creative activity of others as their own results. They never commit plagiarism. They respect citation policies & practices that apply in the given field;
  - f) perform research or creative activities at UWB & ascribe the results of this activity to their workplace or Faculty. They never ascribe research results achieved at UWB in favour of another institution;
  - g) publish the results of their research or creative activities on field-relevant & serious publishing platforms. They avoid publishing within platforms of so-called predatory publishers & journals;

- h) are open to teamwork. They do not assume the results obtained in the framework of team cooperation to be their own results; they acknowledge co-authorship to all who have been involved in the achievement of the results. Within the team, they communicate in a matter-of-fact manner & do not engage in defamation or humiliation of team members;
- i) in their roles as research or creative activity assessors, members of academic & professional committees or evaluators of scientific project proposals always observe professional considerations. When evaluating the scientific or creative activity of others, they are always objective & unbiased & follow the rules set for the evaluation. They do not deliberately prolong the evaluation period in order to benefit themselves or benefit third parties.

## **Article VI.**

### **UWB ETHICS COMMITTEE**

1. In order to address complaints about unethical behaviour, the [Ethics Committee of UWB \(hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”\)](#) is established.
2. [The Committee](#) monitors compliance with the ethical standards set out in this Code. As part of its activities, [the Committee](#) accepts & deals with suggestions from UWB staff & students concerning alleged violations of ethical standards at UWB. Suggestions to the [Committee](#) are sent to [etikom@rek.zcu.cz](mailto:etikom@rek.zcu.cz). An individual who believes he/she has encountered unethical behaviour may contact the [Committee](#). In the case of employees, the alleged unethical behaviour should be reported first to one’s superior and only then, if necessary, to the [Committee](#). This does not apply in cases where the alleged unethical conduct was committed by one’s superior.
3. Individuals may send suggestions to the [Committee](#) identifying the conduct they consider unethical & the person or persons engaged in the behaviour. The Committee shall discuss all the suggestions received.
4. [The Committee](#) consists of six permanent members & a maximum of four members appointed to discuss a specific suggestion (hereinafter referred to as “ad hoc members”). An employee or a student of UWB can become a member of the [Committee](#). Membership in the [Committee](#) is incompatible with membership in the UWB management & management roles in the University Parts.
5. The representation of men & women among the permanent members of the [Committee](#) must be equal.
6. Permanent members of the [Committee](#) are appointed and dismissed by the Rector.
7. Ad hoc members of the [Committee](#) are appointed by the Rector based on a proposal from the permanent members of the [Committee](#). The term of office of an ad hoc member begins

with the appointment & ends at the time of the decision on the matter for which the ad hoc member was appointed. At least one ad hoc member for each of the student-related suggestions being discussed is a student.

8. Members of the [Committee](#), upon taking office, sign a confidentiality statement regarding the facts learned about when the [Committee](#) discusses suggestions.
9. A member of the Committee may surrender his/her office at any time.
10. Membership in the [Committee](#) expires if the member ceases to be a UWB employee or student.
11. The Rector appoints the Chair of the [Committee](#) from among the permanent members. The Committee meetings are convened by the Chair as needed on the basis of suggestions received, at least once a year.
12. [The Committee](#) decides whether or not the conduct of the individual in question was ethical. The decision must contain, in addition to the verdict, a proper statement of reasons. The [Committee's](#) decision is always given to the attention of the Rector. In the event that an employee's conduct is assessed, the [Committee's](#) decision is given to the attention of his/her superior & the Head of the respective University Part. If a student's conduct is assessed, the decision of the Committee is given to the attention of the Head of the respective University Part.
13. The [Committee's](#) deliberations are not public. The [Committee](#) may, if it finds it appropriate & if all persons concerned so agree, publish its decisions, including justifications. When making a decision public, the protection of personal data must be respected.
14. The procedural aspects of the [Committee's](#) deliberations are determined in the Ethics Committee's Rules of Procedure. The Rules of Procedure are approved by the permanent members of the [Committee](#) following the proposal from Chair of the [Committee](#). An absolute majority of all permanent members of the [Committee](#) is necessary for approvals.
15. [The Committee](#) prepares a Report on its Activity once a year & submits it to the UWB Academic Senate & to the attention of the Rector.

doc. Dr. RNDr. Miroslav Holeček

Rector