

Code of Ethics of the University of Hradec Králové

Preamble

The Preamble of the Czech Act No. 111/1998, on higher education institutions, defines the role of higher education institutions as follows:

Higher education institutions, being the highest level of the educational system, are regarded as the top centres of education, independent knowledge and creative activity and play a key role in the scientific, cultural, social, and economic development of society.

The Act guarantees academic freedoms as a precondition for the higher education institutions to meet their role. The members of the higher education community are accorded academic rights governing their professional activities., The Act also declares historic continuity of the European higher education: Over the centuries, the European university education gained a position of highly esteemed bodies of educated personalities who created values in science, culture, arts, and economics, thus participating directly in creation of the national, state, or another entity wealth. This wealth was not only material but it was wealth of ideas as well. Its content and form of its creation were devised to successors for use and development. Creation of this wealth required highly deliberate and organized activity and, therefore, can occur under the conditions of spiritual, individual, and community freedom.

The specific aims and efforts to gain success have given rise to specific internal self-organization of academic communities with specified rules. The self-organization has been developed and declared to varying degree and external forms. It is notable that thanks to fortitude, it has overcome even the power and political interventions. It has been based on the content and autonomy. Ideas and models of behaviour have passed down from one generation to the next and thanks to openness, they have had great influence outside the academic communities as well.

A member of an academic community – a member of society – has to comply with the generally acknowledged principles based on the general human rights, mutual respect of people and moral principles. He/she is obliged to adhere to the norms like the given country law, professional regulations, and legal regulations. He/she has internal obligations to comply with specific rules of conduct and activities and, moreover, to guide other members of the academic community and his/her collaborators to comply with them. A higher education institution employee shall, both in his/her professional and private life, make decisions and argue. His/her behaviour has serious consequences for him-/herself as well as for the whole groups of other people. He/she engages in discussions, works with information and findings, has to make predictions and qualified conclusions. His/her potential errors or misconduct lead to serious personal and professional or economic consequences. However, demands not specified in laws and regulations are also made on him/her.

The University of Hradec Králové incorporates this code of ethics in its academic life as a document specifying the basic ethical principles and instructions relating the professional conduct of both the individuals and groups in their educational, scientific and research work, procedures for dealing with a research subject, for conduct in mutual relations and potential conflicts. It is an invitation to humanism-based mutual understanding and responsibility in professional and personal relations. The aim of the UHK Code of Ethics is to provide basic orientation to potential personal conduct, to identify inadmissible conduct, or, on the contrary, to help finding a suitable way out of a problem. All provisions of the Code of Ethics are based on free expression of each individual's view and on free communication of individuals or groups. Even the best organization cannot work without being convinced about the binding force of ethic rules.

The Code of Ethics shall serve to all members of the academic community and, in the appropriate extent, also to each UHK employee. The institution atmosphere based on moral relations and respect brings personal satisfaction, motivation, and enthusiasm and increases the will to make a work or study effort.

The University of Hradec Králové believe that the ethical values must be kept and developed. The UHK thus express their will that all members of the UHK academic community and all employees identify with the formulated ethical rules and create environment favourable for their compliance in their activity.

I. Relation of Academic Staff to Students

- 1) The relation between the academic staff and students is of key importance from the point of view of the University mission. Both the academic staff and students are fully aware of their rights and duties resulting from such relation. The academic staff relation to students shall be based on the principles of tolerance, respect for the man, freedom of thought and expression, and dedication in the pursuit of knowledge.
- 2) The academic staff shall support tolerant and democratic approach. They shall also differentiate consistently the results of research and opinions based on such results. They shall pursue tolerance of diverse political, religious, and worldview beliefs.
- 3) The academic staff shall behave fairly to students, without regard to their personal likes and dislikes, and make deliberate effort to be impartial. Although instruction requires certain unified demands, it shall respect every human being regardless of his/her gender, origin, ethnicity, race, skin colour, native language, age, health condition, sexual orientation, religion, and political affiliation.
- 4) The academic staff shall regard students as partners on the journey in the pursuit of knowledge and shall make an effort to support them in their growth of qualification, professional development, and independent critical thinking. They shall be willing to help students in their professional development even beyond the usual instruction.
- 5) The academic staff shall support students' personal growth by personal example and experience passing. They shall guide students to assume responsibility for their own conduct. They shall not be unconcerned with any potential students' ethical failures.
- 6) The academic staff shall teach responsibly and for students' benefit, with the aim to motivate students, facilitate their understanding, and arise their interest in knowledge.
- 7) The academic staff shall evaluate students fairly, on the basis of clear, predetermined requirements. They shall not be given in to pressure influencing the evaluation.
- 8) The academic staff shall not take unfair advantage of their superior teacher position. They shall protect students' right for privacy and confidentiality of communications.
- 9) The academic staff shall not require students to do activities involving the academic staff's own duties, shall not appropriate students' work and results achieved by them.
- 10) The academic staff shall not accept any gifts that could influence their activities or decision-making.

II. Relation of Academic Staff to Scientific and Research Activities

- 1) The academic staff shall aim their scientific and research, artistic and/or creative activities at extension of human knowledge, development of artistic and cultural values, general education, technical innovations etc. They shall ensure that their results were for the benefit of the society.
- 2) The academic staff shall defend the freedom of thought, research, expression, exchange of views, and information. In their scientific or other creative activity, they shall pursue objective and rational approaches free from any one-sided ideology, demagogy, and lack of scientific precision.
- 3) The academic staff shall be fully responsible for the objectivity and credibility of their research. When publishing their findings and results, they shall ensure their completeness, verifiability, and objective interpretation.
- 4) The academic staff shall be adequately critical of the results of their work, open to initiatives, discussions, arguments, and constructive criticism of their colleagues. Their approach to the results of other persons' research shall be objective, critical, and collegial.
- 5) The academic staff shall be presented as authors or co-authors of results only if they themselves obtained them or contributed to them in a significant way. They shall avoid any form of plagiarism rigorously. In publications, they shall acknowledge objectively their colleagues' and predecessors' contribution. Quotations shall always show clear and accurate source reference.
- 6) The academic staff shall perform all reviewing activities in person, independently, and carefully. They shall ensure the protection of intellectual property of authors of reviewed materials (manuscripts, project drafts, reports, pieces of art etc.), shall not use them for their own benefit, and shall not provide them to third parties. They shall respect strictly the confidentiality of information related to their reviewing and expert activities. They shall refuse to draw an expert opinion if its conclusion could be biased by their own interests.
- 7) The academic staff shall set personal example of ethical and fair approach to the scientific and research activities of their students and influence them actively in that respect.
- 8) The academic staff shall remain critical; their criticism shall be constructive and aimed at efficient help to the others to get to more correct results. They shall express their objections mainly through internal discussion.

III. Mutual Relations of Academic Staff

- 1) The academic staff shall be loyal to the UHK; they shall strive to build and support the UHK reputation.
- 2) The academic staff's core values in mutual relations shall include fairness, respect, esteem, self-esteem, consideration, loyalty, honesty, health, and safety of all employees.
- 3) The academic staff shall treat all employees in a non-discriminatory manner, equally, regardless of any differences, and respecting their rights.

- 4) The academic staff shall not tolerate any verbal attacks, physical or another obvious conduct creating adverse or unfriendly work environment. They shall not disrespect anybody.
- 5) In their work, the academic staff shall ensure the truthfulness of reports, records, and announcements.
- 6) All worksites shall support cooperation, mutual trust and healthy employment and interpersonal relations. The academic staff shall approach their colleagues with collegiality; they shall respect them and appreciate their work.
- 7) The academic staff shall, in both their superior and inferior positions, respect the organization system but shall not tolerate disrespect, haughty or degrading treatment.

IV. Academic Staff in Position of Consultants for Practice, Managers, and Employers

- 1) In these activities, the academic staff shall observe human rights, shall not harm anyone, shall be honest to all interested people, and shall be loyal to the UHK. They shall ensure that the UHK has good reputation and shall participate in gaining the public confidence in the UHK.
- 2) The academic staff shall avoid any potential conflicts of interest.
- 3) The academic staff shall consider inadmissible any self-enrichment and any self-dealing to the detriment of the UHK or the institution where they act as consultants.
- 4) The academic staff shall refuse to perform such work or activity which would compromise them as members of the academic community.
- 5) The academic staff shall not act on behalf of the institution or its part if they perform private consulting or any other activity.
- 6) Being the users and administrators of the university assets, the academic staff shall treat them responsibly.
- 7) The academic staff shall not help anybody in getting certain professional position if they are not sure such person is qualified sufficiently as to his/her character, education, qualification, or other relevant features.
- 8) In their position of senior workers, the academic staff shall ensure equal approach of all inferior workers to the institution sources.
- 9) In their position of employer, the academic staff shall evaluate their inferiors justly and shall push for creation of their best possible work environment.
- 10) The academic staff shall not, especially in their position of senior officials, use personal relations to influence the employment relations.

V. Relation of Students to the UHK and to Studies

- 1) The students shall be loyal to the UHK; they shall strive to build and support its reputation.
- 2) The students shall defend the freedom of thought, expression, exchange of views, and information. During instruction, they shall have the right to express freely their judgments, statements, kind of thinking, and opinions without being afraid of punishment or disrespect.

- 3) The students shall be aware of their responsibility for their own conduct. They shall use their course of studies to personal and professional growth.
- 4) The students shall be responsible when fulfilling their study duties with respect to the study content and schedule.
- 5) The students' conduct shall also follow social rules. The students shall contribute and help in instruction and studies of all to whom the instruction is provided.
- 6) The students shall strive to solve any problems or failures in the academia at first.
- 7) The students shall refuse to perform such activity that would compromise the UHK or themselves as the UHK students.
- 8) The students shall observe the principles of work with information; they shall mainly not use computer functions for their personal benefit, shall not use other people's computer means without access permission, shall not appropriate results of other people's intellectual work or creativity. When working with a computer, they shall avoid infringement of privacy, unauthorized access, and infringement of copyright. They shall be fully aware of both personal and social impacts of their own and other people's work with information means.
- 9) The students shall not put emotional or any other pressure to the academic staff to get advantages.
- 10) The students shall not cheat, plagiarize, and take credit for someone else's work.

VI. Mutual Relations of the UHK Students

- 1) The students shall observe basic values like respect, esteem, self-esteem, loyalty, honesty, health, and safety of all people.
- 2) The students shall strive for creation of climate of mutual trust and healthy interpersonal relations with other students.
- 3) The students shall treat their colleagues equally regardless of any differences and shall respect their rights. They shall not harass them, discriminate, or treat them unfairly due to their race, skin colour, ethnicity, origin, age, gender, position, sexual orientation, or specific needs.
- 4) The students shall pursue tolerance of diverse political, religious, and worldview beliefs.
- 5) The students shall remain critical; their criticism, however, shall be aimed at efficient help to the others to get to more correct results. They shall express their objections mainly through internal discussion.
- 6) The students shall not be unconcerned with any potential ethical failures of other students.

VII. Relation of Students to Academic Staff

- 1) The students shall respect the higher education institution organization system but shall not tolerate disrespect, haughty or degrading treatment.
- 2) The students have the right to present their views on the instruction; however, they shall respect that any professional problems in instruction shall be solved by competent persons.

The Higher Education Institution Statement to Acceptance of Ethical Principles

The academic freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Higher Education Act are inseparable from the standards of ethical behaviour and acts of the members of academic communities. The need to formulate the system of ethical rules into a code of ethics is based on the historical role of universities as holders of education, free research, cultural, economic and social development of the society. Universities are not communities closed to the outside world and they do not fulfil their roles for themselves or for the members of their academic community. They are expected, like in the past, to formulate and respect the rules of ethical behaviour that will be of greater societal outreach. Universities react to this need by creating their codes of ethics involving the rules of behaviour and acts of the members of the academic community.

The University of Hradec Králové joins the Czech higher education institutions who have decided to adopt a code of ethics as an expression of their commitment to fulfil the historical role of universities as symbols of education and culture of the society.

In Hradec Králové on 1 February 2010