CODE OF ETHICS of the
UNIVERSITAT OBERTA DE CATALUNYA

Approved by the Governing Council, July 2009
UOC Code of Ethics

1. With the aim of improving the fulfilment of its aims, the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Open University of Catalonia, UOC) has decided to commit to a series of values, principles and standards that should inspire the conduct of the members of our University.

2. The code of ethics is a valuable point of reference for the whole of the university community and its mandatory nature is established on the basis of the moral reasons justifying it. Its strength lies exclusively in the commitment undertaken by all the members of the community to respect a series of common values and principles.

3. In this sense, the code of ethics is not a legal regulation but a collection of moral standards and principles that should guide the coexistence between the different people and groups in the University.

Aims

4. The aim of this code is to compile a series of ethical commitments and publicise them with a view to both the working of the University and its relationship with society, so that:
   a) It acts as a charter of the University’s general values, principles and commitments to society.
   b) It aids the sharing of guidelines for the various agents in our university community.
   c) It offers a general guide for the ethical principles and values that form the basis of the different rules and regulations applied at the University.

Scope of application

5. The code of ethics is aimed at all the people and groups that comprise the UOC university community. Similarly, the code will also guide the relations of the University and its staff with the external agencies and companies that provide services to or collaborate with the UOC.

UOC Mission

6. The UOC is an innovative university, with its roots in Catalonia and open to the world, a leader in lifelong e-learning and in research into the information and knowledge society.

7. Its educational and administrative model, led by a highly qualified team, based on the personalisation and constant accompaniment of the student through networking and the intensive use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), enables it to overcome the barriers of time and space and, in this way, universally share the knowledge it generates in favour of personal development and the improvement of society.

General values and principles for the entire university community

8. The university community carries out its tasks with the general ethical values and principles that are set out in the points described below.

9. The respectful treatment of people and respect as a general value that should inspire all the behaviour of every member of the UOC. This respectful treatment should be present in all written and verbal communications.

10. The respect for diversity in all the manifestations compatible with human dignity and universal human rights. In the case of the UOC, this diversity is fundamentally channelled in commitment and respect in the application of gender policies, and of policies for the promotion and acceptance of cultural plurality based on the essential commitment to Catalan society and culture.

11. The confidentiality of the private communications that are received and the undertaking not to provide third parties with data obtained through distribution lists or information on the public spaces of the UOC Virtual Campus.

12. The promotion of open knowledge, in accordance with any copyright, in all academic and professional activities at the UOC. We must ensure the dissemination of knowledge and the proper recognition of the authorship of the ideas, materials or documents used.
The participation of the whole community in the dynamics of the University, with the adequate channels for the free expression of proposals and the necessary actions to maintain and improve our activity, with the fostering of dialogue and the accountability to the university community and to society.

Sustainability, in every aspect, as the basis for the planning and development of the University’s activity. We will ensure that the processes and actions carried out are environmentally sustainable.

Innovation, as cross-disciplinary core of all our actions. The University is open to educational, technological and institutional innovation, while at the same time fostering the entrepreneurial initiatives and creativity of the people who are in the university community.

Quality ingrained in the institution. We will work to achieve excellence in education services, in teaching and research work and in organisational processes. We will ensure that we take into account the opinion of the students, graduates and society, and we will also ensure the academic rigour of teaching programmes and lines of research.

Cooperation, especially in the relationship with society as a whole and its productive fabric, with the aim of establishing an organisational culture based on flexibility, social commitment and the construction of institutional ties sustained by collaboration.

The dignity of working, professional and teaching conditions, with the allocation of the resources and conditions required for the performance of the functions of the various groups that work at or collaborate with the UOC.

The adequate use of the available means and resources. Since it is an institution that offers a public service, the UOC must take special care of its resources and it must be accountable for their use and results.

The undertaking to disseminate in society the set of values traditionally associated with university activity, such as liberty, equality, dialogue and critical sense.

Specific values and principles for the various groups in the university community

The governing bodies and managerial staff

Act and take decisions with objective criteria that are appropriately justified with equanimity and making adequate use of the attributions given to their post.

Favour action and decisions based on participation, consultation and channels of communication, seeking to avoid unilateral decisions.

Use every resource to ensure the correct communication and transparency in the information of the organisation.

Recognise and value the good work of the in-house and temporary team at the UOC, and flexibility in the performance of the responsibilities and tasks that are derived from their activity.

Act in line with the principles of fairness, merit and transparency in the hiring and promotion of people, and also with the principles of equality and transparency in the acquisition and supply of services.

Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among the whole in-house and temporary team at the UOC.

Academic staff

Undertake a commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of the teaching-learning and research processes in their field of knowledge.

Participate, either directly or by delegation, in the areas of consultation and decision at the UOC that affect teaching and research.

Be willing to be flexible and adapt to the change of responsibilities and tasks.
31. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among the teaching staff, in both the same department and in other departments.

32. Lead the teaching process and guarantee fluid communication with the temporary teaching staff and students.

**Administration Staff**

33. Undertake a commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of the administrative processes and activities.

34. Be willing to be flexible and adapt to the change of responsibilities and tasks.

35. Participate, either directly or by delegation, in the areas of consultation and decision at the UOC that affect administration.

36. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among all the administrative staff, in both the same area and in other areas.

**Temporary teaching staff**

37. Undertake a commitment to the quality and continuous improvement of the temporary teaching work that they do.

38. Participate in the initiatives and activities organised by the departments with which they work.

39. Foster a climate of trust and collaboration among the UOC teaching staff and with other temporary teaching staff.

**Students**

40. Undertake a commitment to the learning process, promoting attitudes that are born of a desire to know more, personal effort, responsibility, critical sense and cooperation.

41. Be involved in the improvement of the educational quality of the University, using the available channels for participation and communication.

42. Foster a climate of trust, collaboration and teamwork with other students.

**Monitoring**

43. The UOC Síndic de Greuges (Ombudsman) must monitor and assess compliance with this code of ethics.

44. To make this possible, the issuers or recipients of an appeal regarding this code of ethics must refer it to the Ombudsman.

45. The annual report issued by the Ombudsman must include a specific chapter referring to the code of ethics.

46. The Ombudsman meets the people designated by the FUOC Works Committee every year in a working meeting on the monitoring of the code of ethics.