

Regent European University Code of Conduct – University Council and Members of Office

1. Foreword

Regent European University expects all holders of office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. In support of this, all Council members must abide by the principles set out in this Code of Conduct.

The Code sets out, clearly and openly, the standards expected from those who serve on the University Council and should form part of individual members' terms and conditions of appointment. It also makes clear that harassing, bullying or other inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour is not consistent with what is expected of a Council member and will not be tolerated. Any breach of the Code should be viewed as a breach of the terms of appointment.

The Code complements the University's governing documents (legislation, memorandum and articles of association, charters) and any administrative documents (framework agreements, memoranda of understanding) which may set out the responsibilities and obligations of its Council members. The Code's provisions must be observed alongside the provisions set out in these documents.

2. Introduction

As a holder of office at the University, your behaviour and actions must be governed by the principles set out in this Code of Conduct. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with, and comply with, all the relevant provisions of the Code.

3. Key principles of public life

The key principles upon which this Code of Conduct is based are the Seven Principles of Public Life. These are:

i) Selflessness

Holders of office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

ii) Integrity

Holders of office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

iii) Objectivity

Holders of office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

iv) Accountability

Holders of office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

v) Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

vi) Honesty

Holders of office should be truthful.

vii) Leadership

Holders of office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

These principles should inform your actions and decisions as a Council member.

4. General conduct

4.1 Use of Funds

You have a duty to ensure the safeguarding of funds and the proper custody of assets which have been funded, privately or publicly.

You must carry out these obligations responsibly, that is, take appropriate measures to ensure that the University uses resources efficiently, economically and effectively, avoiding waste and extravagance. It will always be an improper use of public funds for public bodies to employ consultants or other companies to lobby government or political parties.

4.2 Allowances

You must comply with the rules set by the Council regarding remuneration, allowances and expenses. It is your responsibility to ensure compliance with all relevant Revenue and Customs' requirements concerning payments, including expenses.

4.3 Gifts and Hospitality

You must not accept any gifts or hospitality which might, or might reasonably appear to, compromise your personal judgement or integrity or place you under an improper obligation.

You must never canvass or seek gifts or hospitality.

You must comply with the rules set by the University on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality. You should inform the Chancellor (or equivalent) of any offer of gifts or hospitality and ensure that, where a gift or hospitality is accepted, this is recorded in a register in line with the rules set by the University.

You are responsible for your decisions on the acceptance of gifts or hospitality and for ensuring that any gifts or hospitality accepted can stand up to public scrutiny and do not bring your office and the University into disrepute.

4.4 Use of Official Resources

You must not misuse official resources for personal gain or for political purposes. Deployment of such resources must be in line with the University's rules on their usage.

4.5 Use of Information

You must not misuse information gained in the course of your service to the University for personal gain.

You must not disclose any information which is confidential in nature or which is provided in confidence without authority. This duty continues to apply after you have left the Council.

4.6 Political Activity

In your role, you should be, and be seen to be, politically impartial.

On matters directly related to the work of the University, you should not make political statements or engage in any other political activity.

4.7 Employment and Appointments

If you wish to take up additional employment or appointments during your term of office, you must inform the Chair in advance, and allow them the opportunity to comment.

4.8 Conflicts of Interest

When accepting an appointment to the University, you should consider if any conflicts of interest arise from your private interests or by virtue of any other roles you hold. You should consider, with advice from the Chancellor and Rector how these should best be managed, and agree these with the organisation.

You must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your University duties and your private interests, financial or otherwise.

You must comply with the rules of the University on handling conflicts of interests. As a minimum, these will require you to declare publicly, usually in the register of interests, any private financial or non-financial interests of your own, or of close family members, which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with your University duties.

The rules will also require you to remove yourself from the discussion or determination of matters in which you have a financial interest. In matters in which you have a non-financial interest, you should not participate in the discussion or determination of a matter where the interest might suggest a danger of bias.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with the University rules on handling conflicts of interests, that you comply with these rules.

5. Responsibilities as a Council member, including non-executive chairs

You should play a full and active role in the work of the University. You should fulfil your duties and responsibilities responsibly and, at all times, act in good faith and in the best interests of the University.

You should promote an inclusive and diverse culture in the University and your actions should help create an environment where different perspectives and backgrounds are encouraged and valued.

You must comply with any statutory or administrative requirements relating to your post.

You should respect the principle of collective decision-making and corporate responsibility. This means that, once the Council has made a decision, you should support that decision.

You must inform the University of any bankruptcy, current police investigation, unspent criminal conviction or disqualification as a company director in advance of appointment, or should any such instances occur during your appointment.

6. Responsibilities towards employees and students

You will treat any staff employed by and students enrolled at the University with courtesy and respect. It is expected that employees and students will show you the same consideration in return.

You will not ask or encourage employees to act in any way which would conflict with their own Code of Conduct.

7. Social Media

Social media is a public forum and the same considerations, including the provisions of this Code, apply as would to speaking in public or writing something for publication, either officially or in a personal capacity. When engaging with social media you should at all times respect confidentiality, financial, legal and personal information.

Where any personal social media accounts used by you make reference or link to your public role, you should take care to ensure that it is clear in what capacity you are acting.

8. Raising concerns

You should ensure that the University has an open, transparent and safe working environment where employees and students feel able to speak up and raise concerns, and complaints procedures are clearly communicated to them.

If you have a concern about a possible breach of this Code, a concern that you or any staff of the University are being asked to act in contravention of their own code of conduct, or a concern about misconduct or wrongdoing in any other areas, then you have a responsibility to raise that internally with the Chancellor of the University.

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