



### CODE OF ETHICS POLICY

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Custodian:	REGISTRAR		
Policy approved by:	UNIVERSITY COUNCIL	Date:	
Chairman of Council's Signature:		Date	29.09.23
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* Revision recommended by: Senate or University Policy committee		Date:	
* Revised policy approved by:		Date:	

## 1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The University has established this Policy to maintain and promote its reputation for excellence and integrity. The Policy sets forth the general principles to which the University and all its members subscribe. These principles have been derived from legislative laws and regulations, University policies and procedures, contractual obligations and generally accepted principles of ethical conduct. Great Zimbabwe University expects all Covered Parties to uphold ethical standards in conducting the business of the University. The good name and reputation of the University are critical to its mission.

1.2 This is a new policy that aims to govern ethical conduct of University staff, its members and stakeholders. Its presence will eliminate unprofessional dealings which tarnish the image and reputation of the University as a corporate entity. It also conforms with the requirements of the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act which seeks to promote professionalism and fight corruption to complement government efforts.

## 2. SCOPE

This Policy is intended to guide activities engaged in by all employees of the University in the course at their work. The private conduct of each employee and representative is a personal matter except when such conduct compromises the reputation, image, or integrity of Great Zimbabwe University.

## 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this policy -

"Ethics" refer to the standards of behaviour that the University and individual members of staff apply in decision-making and action in the course of their day-to-day work activities

"Code" refers to the Great Zimbabwe University Code of Ethics Policy;

"Head of Department" means a person appointed to lead a department in terms of the Statutes;

"Department" means a department of the University established in terms of the Statutes;

"Covered Parties" refers to all employees, volunteers and representatives of Great Zimbabwe University;

"Committee" refers to Ethics Committee constituted in terms of the Great Zimbabwe University Act/ Statutes

## 4. POLICY PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 The University has upheld and will continue to uphold the highest levels of ethics and integrity in all its affairs. To this end, this Code of Ethical Conduct serves to:
- 4.1.1 emphasize the University's commitment to ethical conduct and compliance with the law;
  - 4.1.2 to set forth basic standards of ethical and legal behavior;
  - 4.1.3 to provide reporting mechanisms for known or suspected ethical or legal violations;
  - 4.1.4 to help prevent and detect wrongdoing.
- 4.2 Given the variety and complexity of ethical questions that may arise in the course of carrying out the University's business, this Code can serve only as a general guide. Confronted with ethically ambiguous situations, Covered Parties should keep in mind the University's commitment to the highest ethical standards and seek advice from the Council and Management Committee of the University so as to ensure that this commitment is honored at all times

## 5. ETHICAL STANDARDS.

### 5.1 Conflicts of Interest

- 5.1.1 A conflict of interest exists when a University Covered Party's direct or indirect personal interests are inconsistent with or interfere with the best interests of the University.
- 5.1.2 Considerations of personal gain must not influence the decisions or actions of individuals in discharging their University responsibilities. Such incentives might create a perception of impropriety and, therefore, require that such conflicts be identified, and then managed, reduced or eliminated.
- 5.1.3 The following activities are examples of situations that may raise questions regarding an apparent or real Conflict of Interest:
- 5.1.3.1 Undue personal gain from University funds or resources;
  - 5.1.3.2 Excessive and unauthorized use of University time or resources for professional, charitable, entrepreneurial or community activities;
  - 5.1.3.3 Exploitation of students for private gain;

5.1.3.4 Compromise of University priorities due to personal financial considerations;

5.1.3.5 Unfair access by an outside party to Great Zimbabwe University programs, services, information or technology;

5.1.3.6 Selection of an entity as a University vendor by an individual who has a personal or economic interest in that entity, this includes engaging a relative as an independent contractor, subcontractor or consultant; and

5.1.3.7 Engagement in a competing professional or personal activity of interest by a member of staff who is in a position of trust.

## 5.2 Corporate Opportunities

5.2.1 Covered Parties owe a duty to the University to advance its legitimate interests whenever possible, and they are prohibited from taking for themselves, opportunities that are discovered through the use of University property, information, or position without prior written consent of the University.

5.2.2 No Covered Party may use University property, information, or position for improper personal gain, and no employee may directly or indirectly compete with the University. Additionally, Covered Parties should not engage in economic activities even on their own times that might affect decisions at their University job, or that might lead them to disclose confidential information learned on the job.

5.2.3 Simply put, Covered Parties should not engage in business or investments that might make them want to do their University job differently.

## 5.3 Fair Dealing

5.3.1 Whenever they act on the University's behalf, and regardless of whether they are dealing with colleagues or third parties, Covered Parties are required to act honestly, in good faith, and with professionalism.

5.3.2 No Covered Party may take unfair advantage of another person through harassment, manipulation, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts, or any other unfair practice.

5.3.3 Stealing proprietary information, possessing trade secret information that was obtained without the owner's consent, or wrongfully inducing such disclosures by past or present employees of other organisations is prohibited.

#### **5.4 Confidentiality**

- 5.4.1 Covered Parties must maintain confidentiality of information entrusted to them, except when disclosure is authorized by an appropriate officer of the University or required by law.
- 5.4.2 Confidential information includes all non-public information that might be of use to competitors or other third parties or harmful to the University or its constituencies if disclosed; it also includes information that third parties have entrusted to the University.
- 5.4.3 The obligation to preserve confidential information continues even after employment ends.

#### **5.5 Protection and Proper Use of University Assets**

- 5.5.1 Covered parties should protect the University's assets and ensure their proper and efficient use. Theft, carelessness, and waste have a direct impact on the University's operations.
- 5.5.2 Any suspected incident of fraud or theft should be immediately reported for investigation.
- 5.5.3 University facilities and equipment should not be used for non-University business without express authority, although incidental personal use may be permitted.
- 5.5.4 The obligation of Covered Parties to protect the University's assets includes, but is not limited to, its proprietary information.
- 5.5.5 Proprietary information includes intellectual property such as patents, trademarks, and copyrights, as well as business plans, databases, records, employment information, and any unpublished financial data and reports.
- 5.5.6 Unauthorized use or distribution of this information violates University policy and may also be illegal and result in criminal and/or civil liability.

#### **5.6 Compliance with Laws, Rules, and Regulations**

- 5.6.1 Obeying the law, both in letter and in spirit, is the foundation on which the University's ethical standards are built. In conducting the affairs of the University, Covered Parties must comply with applicable laws, University policies, rules, and regulations at all levels of jurisdictions in which the University does business.
- 5.6.2 Although not all Covered Parties may not know the details of these laws, it is important to know enough about applicable local laws to determine

when to seek advice from supervisors or other appropriate personnel. When in doubt, ask.

## **5.7 Timely and Truthful Public Disclosures**

- 5.7.1 Covered Parties involved in the preparation of financial and other reports and documents (and information included therein) filed with or submitted to the Ministry and its other public stakeholders of the University are required to make disclosures that are full, fair, accurate, timely, and understandable.
- 5.7.2 They shall not knowingly conceal or falsify information, misrepresent material facts, or omit material facts necessary to avoid misleading the authorities or the University's independent auditors.
- 5.7.3 The same standards apply to other public communications made by the University.

## **5.8 Significant Accounting Deficiencies**

- 5.8.1 Great Zimbabwe University is committed to a policy of equal treatment, opportunity, and respect in its relations with its schools, staff, students and stakeholders who come into contact with the University.
- 5.8.2 Every member of the University is prohibited from:
  - 5.8.2.1 discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, marital or national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, and any other legally protected status;
  - 5.8.2.2 physically assaulting, emotionally abusing, or harassing anyone;
  - 5.8.2.3 depriving anyone of rights in his or her physical or intellectual property, under University policy, or under state laws.

## **5.9 Gifts**

- 5.9.1 The acceptance of gifts or benefits by Covered Parties must always be weighed against the perception that the gift is meant to sway or influence the discharge of official duties on behalf of the University.
- 5.9.2 Covered Parties should never accept any gift or benefit that might make influence their decisions on the job.
- 5.9.3 Employees should report all monetary gifts or benefits received to their immediate supervisor and/or respective Heads of Departments.
- 5.9.4 Meals, plaques and awards are not considered gifts or benefits under this policy.

## 5.10 Nepotism

- 5.10.1 Covered parties shall not, directly employ or supervise single handedly any member of their immediate family.
- 5.10.2 A member of one's immediate family means (1) a spouse; (2) a child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece, or the spouse of any such person; (3) a person having a step-relationship described in (2) above; (4) a parent-in-law or a brother- or sister-in-law.
- 5.10.3 For purposes of fairness and transparency, all appointments shall be made through the appropriate Appointments Board as per the University recruitment policy.
- 5.10.4 All Covered Parties are required to disclose immediate family members employed anywhere within the University on their Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms (including the duty to supplement disclosures) and be recused from participating in the matters.

## 5.11 Misrepresentations

- 5.11.1 No one should engage in conduct which constitutes a substantial misrepresentation of the University, including the nature of its educational programmes, financial charges, or the employability of its graduates.
- 5.11.2 Misrepresentation includes any false, erroneous or misleading statement, or a statement that has the likelihood or tendency to mislead or confuse, **(a substantial misrepresentation is one on which the person to whom it was made can reasonably be expected to rely, or has reasonably relied, to that person's detriment.)**
- 5.11.3 Students, prospective students and others who believe they have experienced misrepresentation as described by this policy should contact the University on their hotline ([ethics@gzu.ac.zw](mailto:ethics@gzu.ac.zw)) or other appropriate official and report the misrepresentation, seeking help to rectify the matter.

## 6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 This Code of Ethics has been created and exists for the benefit of the entire University. It exists in addition to and is not intended to limit the specific policies, procedures, and rules enacted by the University and each of its Schools.

- 6.2 Each member of the University is expected to uphold the standards of Great Zimbabwe University and to report suspected violations of the Code or any other apparent irregularity to either his or her Supervisor or respective Head of Department.
- 6.3 The University will, if requested, make every reasonable effort to keep confidential the identity of anyone reporting a suspected violation, to the extent permitted by law; except if doing so would effectively prevent the University from conducting a full and fair investigation of the allegations.
- 6.4 Reports of suspected violations will be investigated by authorised University staff who have a special duty to adhere to the principles of the Code, to encourage their subordinates to do so, and to recognize and report suspected violations. Each member of the University is expected to cooperate fully with any investigation undertaken.
- 6.5 If it is determined that a violation has occurred, the University reserves the right to take corrective and disciplinary action against any person who was involved in the violation or who allowed it to occur or persist due to a failure to exercise reasonable diligence.
- 6.6 Additionally, the University may make an appropriate disclosure to law enforcement authorities.
- 6.7 Disciplinary action will be determined on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the applicable disciplinary codes.
- 6.8 There will be no adverse action, retribution, or other reprisal for the good faith reporting of a suspected violation of this Code, even if the allegations ultimately prove to be without merit.
- 6.9 The University will, however, pursue disciplinary action against any member who is proved to have knowingly filed a false report with the intention to injure another.
- 6.10 The University reserves the right, at any time, and without notice, to amend this Code of Ethics in its sole, good faith and discretion.

7. **AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICY**

- 7.1 The policy shall be amended/ reviewed every five years or as and when need arises. All such changes shall be reduced in writing and approved by the Executive and Council.
- 7.2 Minor changes to the policy may be suggested and approved by the Vice-Chancellor, and these shall be communicated to the university community and stakeholders for their edification and noting.

8. **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Policy document shall take effect from the date of signature and shall be read in conjunction with the Great Zimbabwe Staff Handbook.