



**Agreement from 14 December 2022 of the Consejo de Gobierno (Governance Council) of the University of Zaragoza approving the Code of Ethics of the University of Zaragoza.**

## **CODE OF ETHICS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ZARAGOZA**

The University of Zaragoza is the public university of Aragon. Rooted in its society and committed to its development, it is a creator of culture, an enhancer of thought as well as an engine of economic and social progress. It presents itself as a space for permanent change and exchange in which people, science, culture and technology are promoted. It understands the Knowledge Society as a common good to be created and shared, assuming a leading and proactive role, offering comprehensive quality education through teaching and research by means of an involved and innovative teaching staff.

Its mission, purpose and vision describe the University of Zaragoza as an institution with values that is also dynamic, open, sensitive to people's needs and social demands, and involved in the progress of Aragon. At the same time, it is developing its national and international vocation, with a notable presence in Europe and Latin America, with the aim of being a benchmark for quality and prestige in teaching and research.

The mission, purpose and vision of the University of Zaragoza are developed within an established regulatory framework, to which it is obliged by its very nature, and which also requires a commitment that goes beyond laws and regulations, an expression of the vocation and human dimension of the institution: a Code of Ethics.

This Code of Ethics of the University of Zaragoza is the result of the work of a team of people belonging to the University and the *Consejo Social* (Social Council). It must be the general reference framework that guides actions which form part of university activities.

### **1. OBJECTIVES:**

- To achieve the corporate, institutional and strategic goals established in the University's Statutes, in accordance with generally accepted ethical and social standards.
- To highlight and emphasise the reputation of the institution with the groups to which it is directly and indirectly related.
- To achieve excellence in democratic and ethical quality within governance and the inherent activities of the University of Zaragoza.

### **2. SCOPE AND LINKAGE:**

- University community.
- Governing and representative bodies of the University.
- Individuals, organisations and institutions that are directly or indirectly related to the University.



### **3. BASIS OF THE CODE OF ETHICS**

The Code of Ethics, as an express declaration of the values, principles and guidelines of conduct for the development of all the University's activities, is based on the principle of legality, consisting of absolute respect for current regulations, and is inspired by the declarations of international organisations on human rights, development, sustainability, etc., which are a reference for the achievement of the institution's goals:

- DECREE 1/2004, 13 January, of the Government of Aragon, approving the Statutes of the University of Zaragoza. Chapter I, On the nature and purpose of the University of Zaragoza.
- Organic Law 3/2007, 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men.
- Royal Decree 1791/2010, 30 December, approving the University Student Statute.
- Royal Legislative Decree 5/2015, 30 October, approving the revised text of the Law of the Basic Statute of the Public Employee, which incorporates the ethical principles in articles 52 to 54.
- Law 5/2017, 1 June, of the Government of Aragon on public integrity and ethics, referring to the Code of Good Governance and Conduct that includes the University of Zaragoza and Public Employees in its scope of application.
- Law 3/2022, 24 February, on university living.
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015.

### **4. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES**

The University of Zaragoza, committed to the construction and progress of the society it serves, is guided by the general principles of freedom, justice, solidarity, respect for human rights and critical thinking. All of them are embodied in the following principles and values:

#### **Dignity and respect for diversity.**

The comprehensive training of people is the main mission of the University, and must be carried out in an environment of respect and dignified treatment to all who are part of the university community or related to it. The University is a place of peaceful coexistence with respect for personal and functional diversity that guarantees ideological and religious freedom, affective-sexual freedom and non-discrimination based on origin, ethnicity, identity, gender, age or any other personal circumstance.

#### **Equality, inclusion and equity.**

The University of Zaragoza guarantees equal rights and obligations for all members of the university community. It will take measures to ensure that equal opportunity is a fact, regardless of any personal, social or cultural condition or circumstance. Special attention will be paid to the elimination of those practices contrary to equality in gender identity and expression, social equality and non-discrimination.

The institution prioritises inclusion as a means of developing equality policies that favour the effective incorporation of people with disabilities or with specific educational support needs into



university life. In order for equality to be effective, we will act with equity, taking into account personal circumstances and implementing measures to compensate for these disadvantages.

## **Cooperation, social commitment and public service**

The principle of cooperation with society in its different areas will inspire the people who are part of the university community. In practice, interaction with the social environment will convey commitment and vocation for public service, contributing to social, economic and cultural progress and development, through the generation, dissemination, criticism and transfer of knowledge for a fairer society.

To this end, the necessary alliances will be established with the rest of the groups and institutions of civil society and enterprise.

## **Leadership and example**

The University responsibly assumes the leadership that Aragonese society demands of it in the areas of education, training, values, R&D&I, scientific production, and social and cultural transfer and development. This leadership is established within a framework of thought in which human rights, solidarity, civil and social rights as well as peace are the object of research, training and dissemination in all its fields of action.

Members of the university community shall observe exemplary conduct in accordance with the values and standards of this code, contributing to the prestige, dignity and reputation of the institution and avoiding any conduct or attitude that may damage the good name and image of the University of Zaragoza.

## **Integrity and honesty**

Personal integrity and honesty must govern the fulfilment of the tasks undertaken in the different areas of research, teaching, management and educational learning. Plagiarism, deceit and nepotism are behaviours contrary to these values.

## **Transparency**

The University of Zaragoza will act with total transparency in the exercise of its functions and in the achievement of its objectives. Society must be aware of the resources made available to it, their purpose, the way in which they are used and what results are obtained. The members of the university community must be accountable and act with the utmost respect for the obligation of transparency with the exceptions foreseen in the law.

## **Loyalty**

The University of Zaragoza is committed to acting with loyalty, both to institutions and to the organisations with which it works for the proper development of activities, cooperation and mutual respect. Likewise, this principle is extended so that it is assumed by each of the members of the university community with respect to the institution they are an active part of.



## **Participation, co-responsibility and dialogue**

The active participation of the university community members, both as individuals or as representatives, is essential for the proper functioning of the institution. Co-responsibility and dialogue are key to the fulfilment of the purpose, principles and values established in the University Statutes and specified in this Code of Ethics.

## **Quality and excellence**

The University of Zaragoza assumes quality as a standard and excellence as a permanent task in all areas of university management and activity. The entire university community must be involved in achieving high levels of performance and efficiency for the adequate functioning of the public service.

## **Sustainability**

The University of Zaragoza conceives sustainability in its broadest sense as a value that, when applied efficiently, has a positive impact on the economic, territorial, social and environmental areas, generating social value. Governance, management, curricula, research, transfer and dissemination of knowledge will be based on sustainable development criteria.

## **5. BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS**

The guidelines indicated here are of a transversal nature; by analogy they can be applied to any activity of the University of Zaragoza and apply to all the components of the university community.

### **REGARDING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

The University has total confidence in the loyalty and commitment of the university community members in accordance with the mission, vision and regulatory framework that determine the proper functioning of the institution. It is the starting point for implementing some behavioural guidelines:

- Actions of the members of the university community must be carried out observing the principles of confidentiality in the handling of information and protection of the privacy of individuals.
- Actual and potential conflicts of interest shall be avoided. If these occur, the person involved must communicate them according to the established protocol, disassociating him/herself from this procedure.
- The relationship with suppliers and collaborators shall not result in obtaining personal or material advantages for themselves or for persons or entities related to them.
- No benefits or gifts will be accepted, beyond the usual social or courtesy customs. Exceptionally, the giving and acceptance of gifts and presents shall be permitted when the following circumstances concur simultaneously: they are of irrelevant or symbolic economic value, they are signs of courtesy or customary commercial attention, and they are not prohibited by law or by generally accepted commercial practices.



- Full objectivity shall be applied in the personnel selection and hiring processes complying with the principle of equal opportunities and in all cases taking into account the suitability of the candidate's profiles and the needs expressed in the call for applications.
- The members of the university community will carry out their work with efficiency and excellence, fulfilling their objectives within a process of continuous improvement of their personal, professional and technical skills, which add value to the University.
- The tools that the institution makes available to the people who make up our university community shall be used in a responsible manner.
- The professional and personal relationship between superiors, collaborators and any other member of the community shall be based on mutual respect and reciprocal recognition, not allowing any form of violence, harassment or abuse in the exercise of their respective functions.
- Accountability: economic, academic, research, knowledge transfer, sustainability and social responsibility information will be published periodically to enable monitoring of the institution's activities.
- Detailed information on the cost of the services provided by the institution and the use of the income received will be provided to society through the publication of the corresponding analytical and management accounting reports.
- The economic-financial information shall be a true and fair view of its economic, financial and equity reality, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the General Accounting Plan. To this end, no member shall conceal or distort the information in the accounting records and documentation, which shall be complete and accurate.
- In general, payments and collections derived from commercial transactions in cash shall be avoided. To this end, procedures will be adapted so that both payments and collections are computerised. These transactions must be clearly and accurately reflected in the accounting records.
- All members of the institution must proactively collaborate with transparency obligations.

## **IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESSES**

An essential objective of the University of Zaragoza is to offer a comprehensive education that not only includes scientific or professional training but also values and personal development. This should always be within the boundaries of respect for academic freedom, while facilitating the social and labour integration of graduates and responding to society's need for continuous training.

Guidelines to achieve these objectives:

- Teaching practice will be included in the continuous improvement of teaching quality, adapted to changes and committed to innovation.
- The opinions of the students expressed in forums or other participation channels will be taken into account in the updating, improvement and dissemination of the norms that govern the teaching and learning processes. To this end, critical and constructive thinking will be encouraged.



- All types of diversity: ideological, religious, ethnic-cultural, affective-sexual and gender will be highly respected. Any discrimination, harassment or violence on these grounds, as well as on the basis of age or economic status, shall be avoided.
- The teaching-learning processes, especially those of evaluation, will be guided by integrity, objectivity, impartiality and transparency, thus ensuring respect for equal opportunities both in the learning of students and in the assessment of the results of their effort and individual capacity.
- Teaching that involves interaction with animals, human beings or cadavers donated to science will be carried out with the same ethical and deontological standards as in the research-transfer processes.
- A collaborative spirit will be promoted as a necessary element for training; honesty will be encouraged and any form of academic and scientific fraud will be rejected.
- Access to the resources required for the development of the teaching and learning processes will be guaranteed, while ensuring their responsible and sustainable use.

#### **IN THE RESEARCH-TRANSFER PROCESSES**

The teaching and research staff as well as the technical, management and administration and services personnel will pursue the continuous improvement of teaching and research practice in an honest, rigorous, transparent, confidential, methodical and truthful manner through their personal effort, lifelong learning, study, updating of their curriculum, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

- They will contribute to training and mutual collaboration among the members of the research team, supervise and accompany the personnel in training, and will be responsible for the correct maintenance of the equipment, infrastructure and spaces in which they carry out their research activity.
- The head researcher will make appropriate use of the budgetary allocations that, based on research and/or transfer management, are under his/her responsibility.
- Whoever performs research and transfer contracts may not accept or give any kind of gift or present from or to the persons or entities involved in the provision of services, unless the exceptional circumstances established regarding good governance and accountability are met.
- The principle of intellectual honesty shall govern, rejecting plagiarism, intellectual appropriation of other people's work and the false attribution of results. Transparency in methods, sources and results will be encouraged, and the work of all those who have collaborated on a project will be recognised.
- Research personnel are not only responsible for their own activities, but must also denounce and combat any cases of fraud they may become aware of, such as plagiarism, falsification of sources, work methods, results or fabrication based on third party projects, among others.



- Publications and academic communications resulting from a research process shall avoid conflicts of interest and, in the event of such a conflict, the aforementioned documents shall state it.
- In compliance with current legislation, research personnel shall be free to develop their projects, positioning them as far as possible within the framework of sustainability and the principles defined in the mission, vision and values of the University, and in this Code of Ethics.
- Research involving experimentation with animals, human beings or cadavers donated to science will always take into account the corresponding ethical and deontological norms, the legal framework, and the standards established by the institution's Ethical Advisory Committee for experimentation. Any action involving living beings must take into consideration the principles of replacement, reduction, refinement and responsibility in the execution and dissemination of research results. Whenever possible, and without affecting the quality of the research, they will be replaced by other methods, simulations, procedures or visualisations.
- Participation in scientific, technical, cultural and citizen outreach activities as part of the commitment of the University to the transfer of knowledge to the business community, society in general, and Aragonese society in particular, will be promoted as much as possible.
- The use and dissemination of information, especially personal information, will comply with current legislation, as well as the indications of the Data Protection Unit of the University. Information or results classified as confidential will not be disclosed.
- Those who work or collaborate with the University must never use privileged information, whether confidential or not, in order to obtain personal gain or for the benefit of third parties.
- In research and transfer contracts and projects, individuals shall not take advantage of their position to obtain personal or material benefits for themselves or for persons or entities related to them.



## **IN RELATIONS WITH SOCIETY**

The University of Zaragoza, consistent with its social commitment and its public service, will cooperate with transparency and loyalty with public administrations, institutions, social organisations and civil society in general to advance together in the transformation and improvement of society.

- The participation or collaboration of the University in clusters, platforms, companies, associations and in any type of space where its presence is required, will be decided in compliance with the content of this Code of Ethics.
- The relationship with organisations and institutions that work for equality and the elimination of any discriminatory barrier for any reason or personal or social circumstance, as the University of Zaragoza does, will be prioritised and promoted.
- In contracts for the provision of services and/or supply of goods to the University, the suitability of the bidding companies or individuals in relation to the values and guidelines of this Code of Ethics will be taken into account.
- The bidding documents, as far as possible, will include social and environmental clauses and the submission of the latest Sustainability Report. The participation of social economy enterprises will be facilitated.
- Any conduct that involves, even indirectly, influence peddling or bribery shall be rejected; likewise, the receipt of commissions related to activities, purchases or services rendered in the institution shall be waived.
- The principles and guidelines of this Code of Ethics shall be applied in the raising of private funds for the improvement of the financing of the University.
- Investment funds and financial assets. If for any reason the University has to contract any of these products, it will prioritise ethical and sustainable funds known as Socially Responsible Investing.
- Honorary awards and institutional distinctions. They shall be awarded to individuals and institutions that, in addition to the merits inherent to the object of the recognition, do not contravene the principles and conduct of the Code of Ethics.
- When members of the university community represent the University in the media, social networks or similar, they shall convey the position of the institution; otherwise, they shall state that it is a personal opinion.





## **6. MONITORING**

### **Ethics Committee of the University of Zaragoza**

The Ethics Committee of the University of Zaragoza is the body responsible for monitoring, interpreting and ensuring compliance with this Code of Ethics. Its function is to channel, consult, deliberate and resolve any proposals, consultations or complaints made in relation to the proper application of the Code of Ethics.

It shall be composed of four members and four substitutes, appointed equally by the *Consejo Social* (Social Council) and by the *Consejo de Dirección* (Directors' Council) of the University of Zaragoza.

### **Communication channel**

Any person or group who wish to address the Ethics Committee must do so through the General Registry of the University of Zaragoza or its auxiliary registries and other channels that may be enabled with the due guarantees.

### **Annual Report**

The Ethics Committee of the University of Zaragoza will draw up an annual report, referring to the corresponding academic year, which will include any incidents that have occurred, the actions carried out, an assessment of the degree of compliance and, if deemed necessary, proposals for the improvement and/or updating of this Code.

The report shall be submitted to the *Consejo de Gobierno* (Governance Council) and the *Consejo Social* (Social Council) of the University.

Zaragoza, 14 December 2022.- The Rector, José Antonio Mayoral Murillo