



## University of Saint Joseph

### Code of Ethics in Academic Research

To safeguard academic freedom and enhance academic integrity, the University of Saint Joseph (hereinafter the “University”) has introduced this Code of Ethics in Academic Research (hereinafter the “Code”) and made it applicable to researchers and all other members of the University, that includes, but is not limited to, representatives of the title holder of the University, senior management team members, professors, administrative and supporting staff, undergraduate and graduate students, contracted or voluntary researchers, research assistants, service providers and participants. The Code applies to research in all academic fields, research projects and research activities.

#### 1. Basic Principles of Ethics in Research

##### 1.1 - Academic freedom

The University guarantees that everyone in or affiliated with the University community should enjoy academic freedom, which is entrenched in Article 37 of the Basic Law of Macau and includes the freedom to pursue knowledge, inquire into any subject of academic study, access research data and information, develop and publish research findings without unlawful or unreasonable interference, censorship or restriction.

##### 1.2 - Academic Integrity

Everyone should uphold the fundamental value of academic integrity, promote and safeguard an honest and trustworthy research environment.

Researchers should endeavor to ensure that:

- (1) the required expertise is available and appropriate research method is selected to serve the particular needs of the research;
- (2) the research outputs are consistent with the standard of factual accuracy and the requirement of timely submission of deliverables of the highest possible quality;



- (3) in principle and whenever it is appropriate, research findings are open for peer review and are published in due course;
- (4) any debts to previous research as a source of knowledge, data, concepts and methodology are fully acknowledged in all outputs;
- (5) any actual or potential conflict of interest is properly disclosed; and
- (6) the research will not infringe upon public interest and the interest of the University or the rights of others.

### 1.3 - Beneficence and non-maleficance

The aims of any research should both benefit society and minimize social harm.

- (1) Researchers should fully respect human dignity and the rights of others, appropriately address the concerns of relevant stakeholders and user groups, and be aware of the cultural context and possible sensitivity in the particular environment where the research is conducted.
- (2) Researchers should obtain informed consent from potential or actual research participants, minimize the risk of harm to them, protect their anonymity and confidentiality, avoid using deceptive or coercive practices and respect their rights to refuse to participate and withdraw from any research activity.

### 1.4 - Vulnerable people

- (1) Anyone who develops, commissions or conducts research should submit a report to the Ethics Committee of the University in advance if it is anticipated that the research will involve vulnerable people.
- (2) If the research requires external funding, the research proposal should be assessed and approved by the Ethics Committee before it is submitted to the external funding agency.
- (3) In the case of participants whose age, intellectual capability or other vulnerable circumstance may limit the extent to which they can be expected to understand or agree voluntarily to undertake their role, researchers must fully explore alternative ways in which they can be enabled to make authentic responses.



### 1.5 - Individual responsibilities

- (1)** Researchers should be aware and ensure the fulfillment of their responsibilities to other participants, the University, the sponsors, the profession, the community and the general public.
- (2)** Researchers should be aware of the specific obligations under the law, the rules of their profession, employment contract, and university policies and regulations.
- (3)** No one should violate the applicable laws, professional standards, contractual obligations, policies and guidelines of the University. Ignorance of the law and other relevant rules is not an excuse.
- (4)** Plagiarism, theft of intellectual property, misrepresentation of data and other fraudulent behaviors, discriminative or exploitative conducts, undue delays in completing research projects, waste of public resources, activities damaging the interest of the University, activities threatening environmental safety and other types of misconduct are prohibited.

### 1.6 - Institutional responsibilities

- (1)** The University and its title holder as legal persons are responsible for promoting and endorsing a free, honest, transparent and healthy academic environment supportive to the implementation of high ethical standards for academic research. As legal persons, both the University and its title holder have legal, contractual and managerial responsibilities for the timely delivery of high quality outputs in externally funded research projects. The senior management of both entities should be aware of such responsibilities, practice due diligence in the prevention of misconduct and support the implementation of the Code in all research activities involving members of the University.
- (2)** All faculties and research institute(s) in the University are responsible for the promotion, compliance and implementation of the Code and their own guidelines of professional ethics through the research conducted by their members and students. They should endeavor to engage their members and students to ensure full compliance and effective implementation of the Code and their own guidelines of research ethics.

Application of the above principles should be carefully prepared on a case by case basis.



## 2 Guidelines of Professional Research Ethics

**2.1.** - The Scientific Council of every faculty or research institute in the University should formulate its own guidelines of professional research ethics in accordance with the general principles above. These guidelines should serve the specific needs of research ethics in the faculty or research institute.

**2.2.** - When it is appropriate, the Scientific Council of a faculty or research institute may adopt and apply a code of professional research ethics that is widely recognized in the profession or in an academic institution of prestigious status.

**2.3.** - To assure consistency in ethical standards, all faculty or institute based guidelines or codes of ethics are subject to review and monitoring by the University's Ethics Committee.

## 3. The Ethics Committee

### 3.1. - Roles and functions

The University's Ethics Committee is set up by the Executive Council to perform the following functions:

- (1) provide guidance on the compliance and implementation of the Code in the University;
- (2) review and assess the development of more detailed ethics guidelines in faculties and institutes that are applicable to research in their academic fields and to monitor their implementation in practice;
- (3) To promote the discussion of the Code and raise awareness amongst professors, researchers, staff, students and other members of the University community;
- (4) Review and provide response to inquiries submitted by researchers and/or their faculties or research institute in relation research ethics.
- (5) Coordinate and monitor the assessment of ethical issues in research projects and other research activities funded by external entities and other activities involving external entities.
- (6) Conduct the investigation into any dispute or alleged violation of academic ethics.
- (7) Take disciplinary action or make recommendations to the relevant authority in the University for disciplinary action.
- (8) Advise the Rector and Executive Council upon their request on ethical issues involving the University.



### **3.2. - Appointment and composition**

The Ethics Committee is appointed by the Executive Council upon nomination by the Rector. The Committee should be composed of the Chair and four voting members. Their mandate is for two years and is renewable by the Executive Council. The Chair should coordinate the meetings of the Committee and should only vote when the voting members fail to make a decision by majority votes.

### **3.3. - Expert advisers**

With authorization of the Rector, the Ethics Committee may recommend to appoint expert advisers with particular competence to deal with highly specialized ethical issues in certain research areas. The terms and conditions of the appointment should be specified by the University based on the needs in addressing such issues.

### **3.4. - Conflict of interest**

In case of conflict of interests the member(s) concerned should be temporarily replaced by the Executive Council upon nomination by the Rector.

## **4. Misconduct and Disciplinary Actions**

### **4.1. - Research misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:**

- (1)** Plagiarism;
- (2)** Piracy;
- (3)** Violation of intellectual property rights;
- (4)** Breach of terms and conditions of licensed research resources;
- (5)** Defamation, libel and slander;
- (6)** Deliberate misinterpretation of the ideas or work of others;
- (7)** Fabrication of qualifications, data, information or citation;
- (8)** Sabotage the work of others;
- (9)** Exploitation of others;
- (10)** Arbitrary denial of access to information or research materials;
- (11)** Misuse of research funds or resources provided by the University or an external sponsor;
- (12)** Improper collection, use or disclosure of personal data;
- (13)** Abuse of an animal;



- (14) Discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language or culture;
- (15) Infringement of laws on national security or public order in Macau;
- (16) Violation of an applicable code of professional ethics.

**4.2.** - Misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretation or judgment in evaluating research methods or results.

**4.3.** - Anyone has the right to report an alleged misconduct to the Ethics Committee when he or she becomes aware of it. The Committee should conduct a preliminary review of the report and provide an opinion to the Rector. If the Rector decides to set up an investigation committee, the Ethics Committee should recommend its members to the Rector to form or join an Investigative Committee.

**4.4.** - The Rules on Filing and Settlement of Complaints and Disputes of the University should apply in the handling of reported incidents. However, the limitation defined under Article 2.3 of the Rules may be extended by the Ethics Committee.

**4.5.** - When the alleged misconduct is considered as an incident of discrimination or harassment, the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy of the University should apply.

**4.6.** - Upon completion of investigation, the Ethics Committee should decide whether or not to take or recommend disciplinary action(s).

**4.7.** - In a case of minor misconduct, the Ethics Committee is authorized to issue a Notice of Warning to, or demand a Letter of Apology from the individual responsible for the misconduct.

**4.8.** - In a case of serious misconduct, the Ethics Committee should decide whether or not to recommend sanctions. The sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Resubmission of an assignment or academic work;
- (2) A failing grade for the examination, assignment or course;
- (3) A letter of reprimand issued by the Rector which may or may not be recorded in the personal file of the individual;
- (4) Suspension of grant/contract;
- (5) Deduction from salary or addition to payment of fees;
- (6) Suspension from the programme or dismissal from the University;



- (7) Revocation of a degree or certificate;
- (8) Termination of employment or consultancy contract.

## 5. Legal remedy

5.1. - Everyone has the right to seek appropriate legal remedies in a court of law.

5.2. - Serious misconduct of the nature of criminal offence shall be reported to the police authority.

5.3. - During the police investigation or legal proceedings, the University may decide whether or not to undertake, suspend or resume its own investigation and take disciplinary action.

The right to interpret the provisions hereof rests with the Executive Council of the university. The Executive Council may give authorization to the Ethics Committee to interpret the provisions on its behalf as well.