

Brunel University Ethical Framework

CORE VALUES PRINCIPLES AND STATEMENTS

Brunel University's Mission Statement:

To create knowledge and advance understanding, and equip versatile graduates with the confidence to apply what they have learnt for the benefit of society.

The University expects all staff and students, along with all other stakeholders, to act in accordance with the values and principles and standards in the endeavour to meet the aspirations of the Mission Statement, and to assume personal and collective responsibility for assuring that these are embedded within the culture of the University.

Core Ethical Principles

In the endeavour to achieve its mission, the University is determined to honour a set of core values based upon the fundamental ethical principles of:

- Respect for the innate humanity, uniqueness and dignity of others in their identity and their ideas
- Freedom of speech, thought, and intellectual inquiry
- Enabling all staff and students to reach their full potential
- Acting responsibly in our approach to the environment, our social responsibilities and on sustainable development

as underpinned by the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Core Values of the University

- **Quality** – Excellence prevails in the education we offer, in the research that we conduct and in the services that we provide
- **Ideas** – Creativity, invention, innovation and a general spirit of discovery are fostered in all aspects of our work
- **Integrity** – We act with integrity, treat each other with dignity and respect and are committed to fairness in our practices, policies and procedures
- **Clarity** – Openness and clarity of purpose are key to how we communicate with each other and the outside world
- **Empowerment** – We encourage, support and empower members of our community to achieve individual and collective goals
- **Community** – We have a shared responsibility for developing our University and we want everyone to feel that they can contribute to our success
- **Partnership** – Collaborations within the University, as well as between the University and external partners, are enriching and rewarding
- **Sustainability** – Planned sustainable development (financially, socially and environmentally) is crucially important to securing our future
- **Self-determination** – We have the confidence to be the architects of our own future and to be proactive in improving our professional environment

In addition, the University seeks in all its endeavours to value pluralism and diversity, to actively assist in managing the work/life balance of its employees and to be universally transparent in its decision-making.

The University recognises that respect for the ideas of others requires that ideas be expressed and presented in an intellectually responsible manner and that intellectual discourse concerns itself solely with the ideas and not the person expressing them.

Core Standards of Professional Conduct

The University is committed to highest standards of professional conduct, as determined by the Nolan Principles of:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership.

Application

These core principles, values and standards should be addressed in all circumstances and in all activities of the University.

These are the standards of ethical behaviour adopted by Council, Senate and SMG through inter alia agreeing the strategic plan which all members of the University are expected to follow.

The University and its governing body are committed to entering into, and maintaining, ethical practice with all staff, students, and all other stakeholders on a reciprocal basis.

All members of the University bear a responsibility to follow the Ethical Framework. Where issues are not explicitly expressed in the Framework, members should use it as a guide and act accordingly. This Framework should inform the drafting and implementation of all University codes.

The Framework was produced by the Ethical Framework Working Group and all constituencies of the University were consulted during the process. The University is committed to engaging in regular reviews of the Framework to ensure that it maintains the highest standards in all its activities and relationships, subject to annual review.

FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

In all relationships the University, its members and stakeholders will:

- treat people fairly and with respect
- act with tolerance towards cultural, racial, ideological and religious differences
- ensure confidentiality of personal information and ensure that records are appropriately maintained and up-to-date
- not accept or encourage inducements
- strive for environmentally friendly policies
- support intellectual and academic freedom
- respect the intellectual property rights of others
- strive to act positively and to promote basic human rights in relation to people, businesses and organisations

In all relationships the University, its members will:

- respond to complaints professionally and seriously
- fulfil its responsibilities to all staff, students, partners, clients and local communities
- strive to seek funding from ethically suitable sources
- undertake ethical research that seeks to enhance the human condition

In all relationships the University will:

- communicate its policies to all staff, students, partners, clients and local communities, where appropriate
- facilitate representation of trade union members by their unions
- exert appropriate financial control

EMPLOYEES

The University values and respects its staff. It seeks to meet the needs of employees at all times.

The University will:

- provide clear and fair terms of employment
- provide a clear and transparent remuneration policy, which is fair and suitable across the University
- ensure fair and equal opportunities for all staff, irrespective of any condition or state, other than the ability to carry out duties effectively
- provide a clean and safe environment for all staff to carry out their duties

- not tolerate harassment or intimidating behaviour towards any member of staff
- be open and honest with employees
- encourage staff to develop skills

STUDENTS

The University values and respects its students. It seeks to meet the needs of students at all times.

The University will:

- provide inclusive quality teaching and learning opportunities that will provide inclusive teaching and access
- provide fair, transparent, anonymous and timely assessment where appropriate
- provide appropriate resources to enable learning
- provide assistance and respect in regard to disability
- provide students with fair and appropriate support, both in terms of academic and personal welfare

STAKEHOLDERS

The University values and respects its stakeholders. It seeks to meet the needs of these groups.

The University will:

- ensure that all public material is appropriately maintained and accurate
- seek to provide standards of agreed service at all times
- ensure that reports, training and other services provided are of high quality

LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The University values and respects its local communities. It seeks to meet the needs of these communities.

The University will:

- strive to be sensitive to community needs
- demonstrate sensitivity to conflict between the University and local communities, and between students and local communities
- embed itself in local initiatives where appropriate
- encourage local students to apply to the University
- strive to protect, and enhance the local environment

The University advocates ethical working practice and requires no less of its members and those associated with its activities.

Appendix 1: Brunel University Policies linked to the Ethical Framework

- Acceptance of Donations Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-bribery Policy
- Computer, Network and Email Acceptable Use policies
- Complaints Procedures
- Data Protection Policies
 - Data Protection
 - Film and Photography Policy
 - Handling Student Personal Data
 - Handling Staff Personal Data
- Dignity at Study Policy
- Environmental Policy and Action Plan
- Equality and Diversity
- Fairtrade Policy
- Freedom of Information
- Freedom of Speech
- Health and Safety
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Code of Research Ethics
- Good Research Practice Policy
- Safeguarding Children
- Social Media Policy
- Student Support

These are supplemented by the Council Ordinances and Senate Regulations governing particular aspects of how the University conducts its business and by Staff Conditions of Service which deal with issues such as Whistleblowing and Conflicts of Interest.

It is recommended that these policies be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are both framed and applied in line with the principles outlined in the Ethical Framework.

The following areas represent key areas of the University's business and governance framework which are covered by the Ethical Framework and the policies above. This list is intended to be monitored and added to over time:

- Research Ethics
- Acceptance of Donations
- Prevention of bribery and facilitation payments
- Gifts and entertainment
- Conflicts of interest
- Use of University assets
- Safeguarding important information
- Political involvement and contributions
- The application of human rights standards in our business
- Relations with staff, students and other stakeholders
- Environmental responsibilities
- Payment of suppliers
- Whistleblowing