



**University of Western Macedonia**

**CODE OF ETHICS AND GOOD PRACTICE  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA**

**September 2021**

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## **Message from the Rector of the University of Western Macedonia**

Dear colleagues, professors, students, and members of the academic and research community,

With a profound sense of duty and responsibility toward society, our University recognises the essential need and significance of upholding ethical values in every aspect of educational, research, and daily academic functions while also fostering a culture of integrity.

As a state-funded university, we are entrusted with financial resources requiring accountability and transparency in fulfilling our mission. Commitment to ethical principles and implementation of necessary oversight mechanisms safeguard the university's credibility and reinforce its role as a centre of academic excellence and research as well as a cultural and social institution which shapes values and promotes social responsibility.

The Code of Ethics and Good Practice functions as a fundamental guide, establishing the **minimum acceptable standards of conduct** for all individuals who are part of or collaborate with the University.

Adhering to this Code and ensuring the University's integrity is both a personal and collective responsibility. Remarkably, the concept of compliance includes both the substantive adherence to ethical and academic integrity rules and maintaining a proper and professional appearance.

Respectfully,

Professor Theodoros Theodoulidis  
Rector of the University of Western Macedonia

## Message from the Chair of the Ethics Committee

Dear colleagues,

The Ethics Committee, established by decision No. 3822/21-1-2018 of the University Senate, is responsible for ensuring that all University members adhere to and apply ethical standards.

As part of our continuous efforts to improve University functions and under Law 4485/4-8-2017, the mission of the Ethics Committee includes the following:

- a) Ensuring compliance with and application of ethical standards by all University members and identifying possible violations.
- b) Drawing up an annual general report on compliance with and implementation of ethical standards, or the potential need for revisions, which is submitted to the Rector and communicated to the Senate at the beginning of each academic year.
- c) Investigating, independently or following a written report-complaint filed by the University students, academic staff members, Special Laboratory Teaching staff, Special Technical staff, researchers, visiting professors, and administrative staff, any issues within its competence to determine violations of ethical standards. The Committee may also investigate such matters upon the Rector's request.
- d) Updating the Code of Ethics and Good Practice at the end of each academic year, as appropriate.

Within its competence and in light of the University's accreditation process, the Committee considered updating the Code as follows:

- The new Code is based on principles rather than specific regulations, thus highlighting general applicability, and where appropriate, enabling further specification.
- It offers explicit guidelines and facilitates compliance by all those involved, providing the option for written inquiries ([ethics@uowm.gr](mailto:ethics@uowm.gr)).
- It extends the adoption of the specific principles to non-university individuals or entities who wish to collaborate.
- It enables submission of anonymous reports, ensuring that violations of the Code or the Law can be reported without threatening complainants' safety.
- It involves internal auditing:
  - a) as a consulting and quality assurance function
  - b) as a tool for data investigation, collection, and analysis.
- It further specifies the principles based on best practices.
- It enhances efficiency by providing an English version and an audio file format of the Code.

Collaboration and commitment from all of us to the principles of the Code of Ethics and Best Practices are essential requisites for meeting society's expectations and fulfilling the University's mission.

Respectfully,

Professor Malamati Louta,  
Chair of the Ethics Committee of the University of Western Macedonia, Vice-Rector for  
Administrative and Financial Affairs

### **Ethics Committee: Members**

The Ethics Committee of the University of Western Macedonia was reorganized following a Rector's act (Act No. D1/SD39/20-02-2025), under Law 4957/2022, Article 217, as amended by Law 5094/2024, Article 87. It is comprised of the following members:

1. **Malamati Louta**,  
Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Vice-Rector for Administrative and Financial Affairs, University of Western Macedonia, Chair.
2. **Theodoros Zygidis**,  
Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, member.
3. **Sofia Anastasiadou**,  
Professor, Department of Midwifery, member.
4. **Vasiliki Pliogkou**,  
Associate Professor, Department of Early Childhood Education, member.
5. **Evangelos Saprikis**,  
Associate Professor, Department of Management Science and Technology, member.

### **2. Function of the Ethics Committee**

According to Law 4485/4-8-2017, Article 47, the Ethics Committee:

- a) ensures that all University members comply with ethical standards, uphold their implementation, and identify any possible violations.
- b) prepares an annual report on the adherence to, implementation of, and potential need for revision of ethical standards, which is submitted to the Rector and presented to the Senate at the beginning of each academic year.
- c) investigates cases, either proactively or upon receiving a formal written report or complaint from students, academic staff members, Special Laboratory Teaching staff, Special Technical staff, researchers, visiting professors, and administrative staff, within the committee's competence to determine whether ethical violations have occurred; it also examines relevant incidents upon the Rector's request. In case of violations of ethical rules or disciplinary offences, a report is submitted to the Rector, who examines the case and takes the necessary legal measures.
- d) updates the current Code of Ethics and Good Practice at the end of each academic year, if appropriate.

### **3. Scope**

The Code of Ethics and Good Practice applies to all members of the Academic Community, including Professors, Lecturers, Special Laboratory Teaching Staff, Special Teaching Staff, and other categories of teaching staff, as well as Special Technical Staff, administrative and technical staff, researchers, seconded staff, and students in all academic study cycles. In addition, it applies to visiting professors and students from other partner universities in student exchange programmes (ERASMUS). It is also implemented by all university external and scientific collaborators, whose contracts incorporate the Code online address, the obligation to comply with it, and the legal consequences of any violations.

### **4. Fundamental Principles**

The University fundamental principles include:

1. Respect for Human Rights
2. Meritocracy and Equal Opportunities
3. Academic Excellence
4. Protection of Intellectual Property

5. Integrity, Transparency, Efficiency, and Accountability in the Use of Public Resources, and Protection of the University Assets
6. Promotion of a Culture of Ethical Behaviour and Ethical Standards

#### **4.1. Respect for Human Rights**

Respect for human rights is integrated into all University activities and functions, with continuous efforts to ensure their protection. Human rights are defined as the “commonly recognised undeniable fundamental rights to which all individuals are entitled from birth, simply by virtue of being human”.

#### **4.2. Meritocracy and Equal Opportunities**

The principles of meritocracy and equal opportunities ensure that the University's administration, academic, and administrative staff act impartially, without bias or discrimination based on their position within the University, gender, origin, or other aspects, and avoid actions that imply such biases. All members of the academic community are required to strictly adhere to the law and remain committed to the principles of justice and fairness.

#### **4.3. Academic Excellence**

Academic excellence is vital to ethical behaviour, and, combined with meritocracy and justice, upholds the academic community's commitment to society. It is further specified through the following principles:

- a) Commitment to the quality of educational practice
- b) Commitment to research quality and dissemination of scientific knowledge
- c) Freedom of research in the arts and sciences
- d) Commitment to the ethics of the arts and sciences

##### **4.3.1. Commitment to Educational Practice Quality**

Teaching staff members are expected to continuously improve teaching quality, maintaining high educational standards, which reflect the latest scientific advancements. They are encouraged to participate in conferences, working groups, and other initiatives, which advance the University's mission and align with its academic objectives and quality assurance policies.

Finally, teaching staff members are required to promptly provide any required details or data requested by the University Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and adhere to any internal evaluation recommendations.

##### **4.3.2. Commitment to Research Quality and Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge**

The University teaching and research staff are responsible for continuously improving research output. They must adhere to scientific ethics, actively contribute to research development and its dissemination and support and engage with initiatives complying with the University quality policy and strategic objectives while avoiding any actions that could undermine its reputation or credibility.

Both the University academic and administrative staff have a shared responsibility to accurately and distinctly promote and advocate University work and functions. They must also avoid endorsing any deceptive, misleading, or incomplete statements.

##### **4.3.3. Freedom of research in the arts and sciences**

The freedom of scientific research involves the unrestricted expression and dissemination of scientific views. Science, art, research, and teaching are protected and promoted as fundamental liberties, the advancement of which is the responsibility of the State. Academic freedom and the freedom of teaching do not exempt individuals from their duty to abide by the Constitution (Article 16).

##### **4.3.4. Commitment to the ethics of the arts and sciences**

Research staff members are required to adhere to legal provisions, fundamental principles of scientific and artistic research, and any specific ethical standards applicable to their discipline. University Schools are responsible for formulating and updating their code of ethics for research in the arts or sciences. Violations must be promptly reported to the Ethics Committee for further investigation.

#### **4.4. Protection of intellectual property**

Throughout their studies, students are required to complete, either individually or in groups, original assignments, which must comply with applicable legal provisions and be exclusively written by them. Remarkably, intellectual property infringement is a civil and criminal offence; thus, penalties are enforced under the relevant provisions of the present Code.

#### **4.5. Integrity, transparency, responsibility, effectiveness, and accountability in managing public resources and safeguarding institutional assets**

Universities are primarily funded through the State Budget. Thus, ensuring the effective management of financial resources, transparency in financial transactions, adherence to relevant laws, and preservation of university assets are crucial, however not restrictive, as other actions or omissions negatively impacting the University may also be considered Code violations. Overall, the rational use of resources is both an individual and shared responsibility.

##### **4.5.1. Integrity**

Academic integrity implies that all academic community members:

- act with honesty and ensure that all their transactions and statements related to the University are truthful and sincere
- avoid making statements that are false, deceptive, or significantly incomplete
- ensure that the information provided to the University services for oversight and assessment purposes is correct and accurate, avoiding any actions that would intentionally alter data integrity
- fully comply with applicable legislation
- avoid conflicts of interest
- uphold independence in external transactions
- respect the intellectual property rights of others
- maintain the confidentiality of privileged information and ensure it is not exploited for unethical activities
- avoid using their role or relationship with the University for personal financial or professional advantage
- do not engage in bribery and corruption practices
- report, in good faith, any instances of non-compliance with the Code and applicable legislation.

##### **4.5.2. Transparency**

Transparency is closely associated with the proper use and management of University resources. The University Administration and the financial services must adhere to legal frameworks in preparing and overseeing the budget and other obligations related to public disclosure.

##### **4.5.3. Resource Efficiency**

The University Administration is committed to ensuring that resources are managed efficiently in compliance with the applicable legislation. All members of the academic community, as well as the administrative staff and external collaborators, must maintain consistency in task performance, follow their superiors' instructions, and contribute to continuous improvement for the benefit of the University.

##### **4.5.4. Protection of the University Assets**

The University entrusts its academic and administrative staff, and occasionally students, with its property and assets, such as computers and laboratory equipment. Thus, all University members are required to:

3. make proper use of the University equipment
4. promptly report any damages or malfunctions to the technical service
5. be always willing to verify the physical existence and condition of the University assets upon request.

#### **4.6. Dissemination of Ethical Behaviour and Code of Conduct**

Members of the teaching and research staff should commit to upholding the legislation and the University's ethical principles, both in their academic work and personal appearance, thereby setting a strong example of professionalism and ethics. In addition, in several cases, as the



disciplines and professional careers pursued by students often require more specific regulations, University Departments must ensure that these are incorporated and, accordingly, adjusted in curricula.

## **5. Regulations for the Teaching Staff**

### **5.1. General Guidelines for Academic Ethics**

All members of the academic community including the academic staff, Special Laboratory Teaching staff, Special Technical staff, Special Teaching staff, adjunct staff, emeriti, and honorary professors, as well as the administrative staff, are expected to commit to and assume responsibility in their academic and professional duties, as well as in any other activities related to their role. They are engaged in adhering to the following general academic ethics:

- a. ensuring high research and teaching standards
- b. respecting academic freedom and promoting discussions on science and art issues, partnerships, and group research efforts
- c. avoiding actions to hinder academic freedom, competencies, and rights of other academic community members
- d. adhering to the code of ethics and professional conduct for public sector employees, and fulfilling administrative duties
- e. maintaining appropriate conduct within and outside the University, and avoiding using their academic titles, positions, or roles for personal advantage or gain
- f. preventing the impact of staff leave requests on the University functions.

### **5.2. Teaching Staff Relationships**

All teaching staff members are required to:

- a. respect their colleagues and students, without compromising their right to express objective scientific or artistic judgment and avoid derogatory or offensive language about their colleagues' scientific and educational work. Any form of workplace-related or sexual harassment or the exploitation of one's position or role, especially of one's academic rank or position, to force other members of the academic community into specific actions, omissions, judgments, or votes, is a serious disciplinary violation.
- b. be impartial and adhere to the principles of meritocracy, equality, and equal opportunities, particularly when judging students, and junior professors, and in every instance of judgment they make, whether as teachers, examiners, researchers, or members of University collective bodies or academic staff evaluation committees or as members of committees, in which they participate due to their position as university professors or scholars. In addition, they must provide a reasoned justification for their judgment.
- c. avoid any actions where a conflict of interest may arise.

### **5.3. Collective Behaviour**

All University staff members are required to actively participate in the University collective bodies as specified by law and in any committees formed as applicable, and are expected to contribute to the organisation and proper function of educational, research, and administrative activities of University Schools, Departments, or units.

When participating in University bodies, they must follow chairpersons' instructions, speak only when given the floor, and avoid interrupting other speakers or leaving meetings without a sound reason. They should also not disrupt or hinder procedures and must express their opinions moderately, impartially, and briefly, avoiding offensive or derogatory language toward other people's views.

### **5.4. Relationships with students**

All teaching staff members must ensure fair and respectful treatment of all students without discrimination based on gender, nationality, religious beliefs, or other personal views. More specifically, they are expected to spend sufficient time to provide individual support and guidance, thus prioritising students' best interests and academic growth. Assigning students to perform non-academic tasks, particularly for personal benefit, is considered a serious disciplinary offence.

### **5.5. Relationships with administrative staff**

All teaching staff members are expected to treat the administrative staff with respect, ensuring that they do not compromise their dignity or assign tasks beyond their scope of responsibilities. They should avoid requesting preferential treatment for personal matters which may interfere with the efficient operation of the university. Any form of harassment or intimidation (verbal, electronic, etc.) towards the administrative staff is unacceptable and will be thoroughly investigated by the Ethics Committee.

### **5.6. Use of University facilities**

When conducting externally funded research using university facilities, equipment, or staff, it is essential to request the official consent of the competent University authority. This ensures that the research does not disrupt the University's main educational and operational functions. In addition, following the relevant legal provisions, a necessary condition for the use of UoWM's facilities is that scientific supervisors must be members of the University teaching staff, or emeritus professors, provided they engage in the educational processes of the respective Schools.

In case of any conflicts during research, these will be resolved under the applicable legislation. Researchers must also adhere strictly to safety regulations, particularly in laboratory research. The use of UoWM's facilities or equipment, as well as the provision of services by other staff members, requires that the research (if funded through external sources) be managed by the UoWM Research Committee.

### **5.7. Behaviour outside the University**

All teaching staff members are expected to uphold the integrity of their role as public servants and must not misuse their academic affiliation for personal gain or to undermine the university's reputation.

When engaging with the media or using the Internet, they should act with discretion and professionalism, and when relevant, they must use their official titles and specify their School or Department affiliation.

In the case of public statements, it should be explicitly stated whether these represent personal opinions or are made in their capacity as academic community members.

### **5.8. Protection of University assets**

Safeguarding university property and maintaining the integrity of its spaces and facilities are fundamental for all teaching staff members, researchers, students, and administrative staff. It is the responsibility of all members of the university community to safeguard university property or report any damage to the competent authorities.

### **5.9. Teaching**

All teaching staff members are expected to offer their expertise and knowledge to their students, considering that their primary responsibility lies in the educational process; their role as university professors is their foremost professional responsibility.

They are also required to personally and consistently fulfil their teaching duties. Delegation of teaching duties to third parties is allowed only as an exception and always with the approval of the relevant departmental authorities, never on a regular basis. In addition, they must frequently meet with students to address educational and research issues.

All teaching staff members are required to submit timely information about course content, lecture or laboratory topics, assessment methods, and relevant course material. The specific information is published in Department Course Guides, on the e-Class platform, and on the University Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) webpage.

If they wish to upload third-party material such as texts, exercises, and examples for student use, they must ensure that access is restricted only to their students. In all cases, reproduction must be accompanied by proper attribution, including the source, the creator's name, and the publisher's name, if such information is available in the source.

### **5.10. Examinations and grading**

All teaching staff members must ensure that students are given a fair opportunity to be assessed on the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Grading should be impartial and transparent.

To maintain grading reliability and validity, the following conditions should be met:

- a) Instructors should use a variety of assessment methods.
- b) Tests or exams should be based on the relevant course syllabus.
- c) Grades should derive from a combination of various test components, such as assignments, progress tests, and multiple-choice questions.
- d) Grades should be closely associated with achieving learning objectives.
- e) Assessment methods must be clearly outlined in course syllabi and course guides.
- f) Grades should be promptly communicated to the competent Department Administration Services and students.

## **6. Special regulations for students**

Students (undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral candidates) are considered equal members of the academic community and are expected to be diligent, punctual, and responsible when engaging in their academic tasks. Their behaviour should comply with the standards upheld by the university staff.

### **6.1. Rights and responsibilities**

Students are entitled and required to:

- a) follow teaching and exam processes according to curricula and the Department/School internal regulations.
- b) respect University property and facilities and adhere to safety regulations.
- c) complete assignments independently and avoid presenting others' intellectual work as their own.
- d) sit exams only by presenting their student ID or any other relevant document when requested by examiners and avoid fraudulent practices.
- e) meet the teaching staff during scheduled office hours.
- f) request a review of their written exams and ask for an explanation regarding their grades, according to School internal regulations and study programme.
- g) use School and University administration services during scheduled office hours, exercising their lawful rights as adults.
- h) periodically contribute to teaching staff and University function evaluations to enhance academic quality.

### **6.2. Disciplinary offences**

Students' disciplinary offences include:

- a) using means or methods that compromise the integrity of examinations, failure to personally complete an assessment intended to evaluate students' knowledge and skills, any form of cheating or unauthorised collaboration with third parties during examinations, or the use of aids or notes without the instructor's permission; these are serious disciplinary offences subject to sanctions
- b) deliberately damaging University assets
- c) intentionally hindering University functions and services
- d) any form of intimidation
- e) plagiarism, which involves
  - presenting work or ideas from another source as one's own, without full acknowledgment when they are required to meet academic or research requirements
  - submitting assignments completed in collaboration with other students as solely individual work
  - resubmitting a previously completed assignment, in whole or in part, originally prepared for a different academic or research purpose, in an attempt to meet the requirements of a new academic undertaking.

## **7. Special regulations for the administrative staff**

The University administrative staff is expected to fulfil duties primarily aimed at effectively supporting academic processes, research, knowledge dissemination, and teaching. In addition, they are responsible for promptly reporting all possible violations of legal provisions or internal regulations. Their specific roles and responsibilities are explicitly defined in their employment contracts.

In the event of student disciplinary offences, penalties are imposed according to the nature and

severity of offence, according to the Internal Regulation provisions. Typically, penalties include written warnings, restrictions on the use of university facilities or equipment, suspension of student status, and other disciplinary actions.

## **8. Disciplinary offences**

Disciplinary offences for the UoWM academic staff members, Special Laboratory Teaching staff, Special Technical Staff, and Special Teaching Staff, as well as the undergraduate, postgraduate students, and doctoral candidates, are specified under the Presidential Decree No. 160/3-11-2008, Article 23 (Disciplinary offences), Article 24 (Disciplinary penalties), Article 25 (Disciplinary bodies), Article 26 (Disciplinary process), and Article 27 (Statute of limitations on disciplinary offences). These are violations of the applicable provisions of the law for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), breaches of decisions made by the University authorities, and violations of conduct standards for academic community members. The specific provisions aim at preventing undermining the University democratic functions and the reputation of the University of Western Macedonia (UoWM) and its members.

Disciplinary offences include, but are not limited to:

- a) deliberately omitting the direct or indirect contributions of others to the subject of one's academic research and teaching
- b) failing to disclose any conflict of interest regarding the outcomes of specific research processes
- c) using the University spaces, facilities, and infrastructure in a way which contradicts their intended purpose and the regulations governing their operation, or without the legal authorisation of the University competent body
- d) demonstrating behaviour which is specified as a disciplinary offence for public servants, as outlined in Article 107 of the Civil Service Code, as applicable
- e) failing to inform members of collective bodies about pending criminal prosecutions or legal proceedings that directly involve them.

## **9. Special regulations for research in the arts and sciences**

### **9.1. Research Integrity**

Research must be conducted with full respect of bioethics, as well as the physical and mental integrity of individuals and the natural environment. Researchers are bound by the following generally recognised principles: value of human life and protection of human rights, freedom, and equality, safeguarding public health, protection of children and vulnerable groups, personal data protection, and preservation of biodiversity.

In detail, researchers are required to:

- comply with applicable laws and be informed about research guidelines
- hold personal responsibility for their actions following current legislation and international declarations on bioethics and human rights
- obtain informed consent from all participants before engaging in research, ensuring that participants retain the right to freely waive or withdraw at any time
- ensure the protection of personal data by respecting participants' racial, gender, religious, political, and cultural features
- avoid any influence from social, political, or economic agents on their actions or research outcomes
- never conceal or alter research outcomes, but maintain complete research progress records, keeping full records for verification purposes, ensuring the protection of intellectual property rights (see Chapter 9.3). Any individual gaining official or unofficial knowledge of the research progress or outcome must uphold confidentiality and avoid actions against taking advantage of research outcomes for personal gain
- adhere to the University general and special safety regulations for research sites and follow sound, transparent, and effective financial management principles
- avoid consenting to funding agreement terms compromising their freedom, and University integrity and interests during design, execution, and publication of research
- mention their affiliated institution in every publication, citing the full Greek and foreign-language name of the University
- use the official names of the Departments, Schools, laboratories, or units after submitting a relevant request to the General Assembly and receiving the necessary approval of the

- competent body
- as reviewers, avoid making decisions where there is a conflict of interest or breach of ethical standards.

With regard to research involving children and adolescents, the following issues should be considered:

- children and adolescents may have different cognitive abilities, perceptions, and reference frameworks compared to adults
- children and adolescents are generally more susceptible to exploitation when interacting with adults, who have a special responsibility towards their well-being and safety
- there is an inherent imbalance in the power relationship between adult researchers and child/adolescent participants
- researchers should not claim to be competent to draw diagnostic conclusions in the discussion of research findings or to be capable of counselling, and disclose confidential information obtained from child/adolescent research participants
- ethical guidelines about participation and consent of both child/adolescent participants and parents must be adhered to without exception (e.g., avoiding any harm, protecting children/adolescents, ensuring that children/adolescents' experiences are not overlooked by excluding them from the research).

With regard to animal use in experiments, research must be conducted by considering that:

- it complies with the 3Rs Principle, namely, Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement, which suggests using alternatives to animal testing in scientific procedures. In case this is not possible, relative replacement should be adopted, in which the number of animals involved is minimised without challenging scientific validity. Finally, research must be conducted by ensuring that animal pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm are alleviated or minimised.
- proper animal husbandry practices and veterinary care are applied depending on the type of species, in accordance with the current legislation.
- experiments using endangered species are prohibited unless they are aimed at conservation or essential biomedical research for which these species are the only suitable subjects.
- research involving stray animals is strictly prohibited.

## **9.2. Relationships between researchers**

Mutual respect among researchers must be upheld at all times. Younger researchers are expected to acknowledge and respect their senior colleagues' expertise, whereas experienced researchers must, in turn, respect younger researchers, fairly assess their abilities, and mentor them in research methodology and ethics, thus fostering the advancement of research activities.

## **9.3. Intellectual property**

Intellectual property involves both the right to exploit research work (property right) and the right to protect personal connection to it (moral right), as outlined in Law 2121/1993, Articles 3 and 4 on "Intellectual Property, Related Rights, and Cultural Issues".

Researchers are responsible for avoiding infringing upon other people's intellectual property rights and ensuring proper attribution to the original creator. Any individual who, officially or not, gains access to information on research progress or findings before their public release is required to maintain strict confidentiality and avoid any actions aimed at exploiting the knowledge or research findings for personal or external gain.

UoWM researchers hold intellectual property rights over the subject and outcomes of their research, equivalent to their contribution, and the relevant software and research material, unless intellectual property arrangements are defined differently in research agreements between the university and external sponsors.

The manipulation or misrepresentation of research findings is a serious offence, which carries disciplinary consequences. In addition, claiming results obtained through the research efforts of

others as one's own is subject to scrutiny and sanctions under intellectual property protection regulations.

#### **9.4. Rights over research results**

The University of Western Macedonia gains rights over the research outcomes if the research is carried out within its facilities, funded by it, or carried out under its name. In case of research financial gains, researchers must inform the institution in writing and establish a joint agreement for their exploitation. In addition, researchers must be aware of and publicly disclose their funding sources. When entering into a funding agreement, they must not accept terms which undermine their independence in designing, conducting, or publishing their research.

#### **9.5. Researchers' written declaration**

When submitting research proposals, applications, or contracts, researchers are required to officially declare in writing to the Research Committee that they have read and understood the current code of conduct and assume the obligation to comply with and adhere to the terms and provisions stipulated within the code.

#### **9.6. Research promotion**

Posters, announcements, brochures, and other research promotional materials should be designed and used to provide information to the scientific community or the public rather than promoting individual research in an unfair or unprofessional manner. When referencing potential sponsors in research team activities or publications, careful consideration must be taken to prevent confusion about the research's funding source, avoid giving the impression of promoting a particular product, and prevent creating the idea of a lasting connection between the sponsor and the University.

### **10. Intellectual property rights**

#### **10.1. Overview**

Reproduction of entire or parts of intellectual works (i.e., books, articles, papers, visual or applied arts, etc.), including their translation, adaptation, fabrication, or replication, without the creator's permission, is prohibited by law regardless of the format (printed, electronic, photographic, etc.), and is considered both a civil and criminal offence and a serious disciplinary violation.

All research creators or contributors hold the right to be acknowledged and recognised as such and enjoy any intellectual property rights ensuing.

The omission of rightful contributors from a published work or, conversely, the inclusion of an individual as a creator or contributor when they have not contributed creatively is a serious disciplinary violation and may result in disciplinary action. In cases of multi-author research, authorship must be determined based on the significance of each individual's contribution.

The exploitation of industrial or intellectual property rights arising from works created using the resources, facilities, or funding of the University of Western Macedonia or other affiliated entities may be subject to specific restrictions.

#### **10.2. Intellectual property rights of Master's or Doctoral Theses**

The intellectual property rights of a Master's or doctoral thesis are vested in graduate or doctoral students and must be their original work. Failure to meet this requirement precludes awarding the relevant degree, as academic regulations mandate that such works demonstrate the original contribution of individuals to the field.

In subsequent publications derived from these theses, proper authorship attribution must be ensured, and, provided that supervising professors or other individuals have made a substantial creative contribution to the work, each contributor must be attributed according to their actual contribution.

#### **10.3. Intellectual property rights for research projects**

To ensure the protection of intellectual property rights for research projects carried out at the University of Western Macedonia (UoWM), clear agreements or protocols must be established before the commencement of each project and signed by UoWM or the project funding entity, the project leader, and all research team members.

UoWM gains rights over the research outcomes if the research is carried out within its facilities, funded by it, or carried out under its name. In case of research financial gains, the researchers must inform the institution in writing and establish a joint agreement for their exploitation.

#### **10.4. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism or the direct violation of obligations arising from intellectual property laws is a serious disciplinary offence, particularly when committed by academic community members, for works presented as original creations.

Plagiarism is a severe breach of academic ethics and integrity, undermining the fundamental qualities of academic scholars. As such, it must be addressed with exemplary disciplinary measures to prevent recurrence.

Complying with the European Charter for Researchers and in connection with the professional responsibility of academic staff members to prevent plagiarism, the University of Western Macedonia provides professors and other teaching staff with the ability to use appropriate software (<http://turnitin.com/>) and check all students' theses, including Master's and doctoral ones, as well as other academic papers.

#### **11. Publication of the Code of Ethics**

The present Code of Ethics is posted on the University of Western Macedonia's website ([www.uowm.gr](http://www.uowm.gr)) both in written and audio format to ensure maximum accessibility.

Its English version ensures availability for collaborating non-Greek-speaking members, such as ERASMUS students and visiting professors from other countries. University Departments and Schools are also required to provide specific sections of the Code translated into English.

#### **12. Inquiries**

For additional information or explanations, the members of the academic community may submit a written inquiry either to the Ethics Committee ([ethics@uowm.gr](mailto:ethics@uowm.gr)) or the University Administration.

#### **13. Reports**

Templates for formal reports are available on the University's official website ([www.uowm.gr](http://www.uowm.gr)). Anonymous reports can be submitted via email to the Ethics Committee at ([ethics@uowm.gr](mailto:ethics@uowm.gr)), the Student Ombudsman's Office ([synigorosfoititi@uowm.gr](mailto:synigorosfoititi@uowm.gr)), or the Rector's Office ([rector@uowm.gr](mailto:rector@uowm.gr)).

In all cases, anonymous reports should be sufficiently documented to permit further investigation and be based on objective and verifiable evidence. Notably, the University Administration encourages signed complaints to ensure additional information and clarifications, thereby facilitating further investigation.

All reports should be submitted in good faith and with full responsibility.

#### **14. References**

- 1.Code of Ethics and Best Practices, University of the Aegean, June 2018.
- 2.EURAXESS Guide ([https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/brochures/eur\\_21620\\_en-gr.pdf](https://cdn2.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/brochures/eur_21620_en-gr.pdf) )
- 3.Basic Principles of Ethics and Bioethics, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (2015).
- 4.Code of Ethics, University of Ioannina.
- 5.Special Committee for Research Ethics, University of Macedonia.
- 6.Collaboration Protocol, Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Western Greece and University of Patras.
- 7.Code of Ethics and Best Practices from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens.
- 8.Code of Ethics, University of Thessaly.
- 9.Law 4485/4-8-2017: Organisation and operation of higher education, regulations for

- research, and other provisions.
10. Presidential Decree 160/3-10-2008: Internal Operating Regulations of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).