



## **Code of Conduct**

Etiquette at Utrecht University

*What principles underpin our behaviour?*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Code of Conduct provides the framework for behaviour and reflection for employees and students of Utrecht University. The Code describes the values that govern the way people work and study at the University. The Code enables these individuals to act independently in a responsible manner according to the University's values and standards and offers scope for calling others to account in this respect. The Code of Conduct also provides transparency to the public: our staff operate within a clear ethical framework and people know what they can expect in their dealings with our staff. Specific rules of conduct have been laid down in individual regulations. These regulations also provide complaint procedures and the scope for sanctions.

*How is Utrecht University different from other universities?*

*What do we wish to achieve?*

### **MISSION**

Utrecht University is a large and multidisciplinary knowledge centre offering teaching and research activities of international quality. Its ambitions are:

- to provide young people with an academic education;
- to train new generations of researchers;
- to train academics who are able to combine knowledge and professional skills;
- to carry out groundbreaking research;
- to contribute to solutions to social questions.

*What do we believe in?*

### **CORE VALUES**

*Inspiration, ambition, independence and commitment are the core values that define both the conduct and attitude of the students and employees of Utrecht University.*

#### **Inspiration**

Our staff and students are inspired and motivated in their work and studies. Staff and students also are an inspiration to each other. Lecturers and researchers act as role models for their students as well as for each other. Students set an example to their fellow students.

Being passionate and inspired, it follows that our staff and students are inquisitive and eager to learn, they are critical and investigative and open to new ideas, opinions and perspectives.

### **Ambition**

Our staff and students are very demanding of themselves. They appreciate a critical dialogue about the ambitions they set themselves. The various study programmes and research groups seek to reach the top. Support and administrative staff strive to continue developing their professionalism in order to optimally facilitate the primary processes of teaching and research. Initiative and entrepreneurship among staff and students are valued highly. Exceptional performances gain attention and recognition.

### **Independence**

The University creates ample opportunity for staff and students to nurture their talents. Independent thought is an essential feature of our academic community. The high level of freedom places considerable demands on the fair and responsible behaviour of staff and students: they are expected to be motivated, conscientious, trustworthy and morally responsible.

Integrity also requires an open and respectful interaction between staff and students.

### **Commitment**

Our University is a community of motivated scientists, lecturers, staff and students; they work together, learn together, and discover together. They encourage one other and share their knowledge. Staff and students feel jointly responsible for the achievement of the objectives of the University.

They are aware of their individual social responsibility and commitment. They contribute to the quality of our society through innovative and groundbreaking teaching and research.

Anyone working or studying at Utrecht University...

- ❖ Is inspired and motivated
- ❖ Sets ambitious challenges for themselves
- ❖ Enjoys ample opportunity for independent thought but respects the considerable demands of responsibility and integrity that go hand in hand with this freedom.
- ❖ Shows commitment and responsibility towards staff, students and society
- ❖ Is loyal to the organisation and prevents any harm being done to the University's reputation and interests.

## **THE UNIVERSITY**

*The degree of dedication that the University demands of its staff and students requires good work and study facilities. The University feels responsible for creating this working environment.*

### **Personal development**

The University is a continuously learning, innovative organisation. Everyone who works or studies at the University has the scope to nurture their talents and to continue developing their professionalism. The University appreciates independent thought and initiative. The University respects the privacy of its staff and students.

### **Cooperation**

In order to realise the shared objectives, the University strongly encourages cooperation, among staff, among students, and between staff and students. This cooperation extends

across disciplines and faculties. Social engagement and commitment to the local and global environment are further principles underpinning the University's teaching and research activities. Cooperation with social partners is sought.

### **Fair remuneration**

Utrecht University staff can be sure of a fair remuneration for their work; both financially and in terms of professional recognition and appreciation. Appointments and promotions are based on the principle of equal opportunities. The University attaches great value to creating sufficient training and development opportunities; university-wide, programmes have been set up that focus on developing talent.

### **Information and co-determination**

Staff and students are provided with clear information about their right to participate in decision-making. The University encourages the right to vote and stand in elections.

### **Safe and healthy environment**

The University ensures a safe and healthy working environment. The University periodically gauges the staff and students' perception of and satisfaction with their work and study. The University aspires to make its business operations sustainable.

The University offers its staff and students...

- ❖ Sufficient scope for personal development and cooperation
- ❖ Fair remuneration and appreciation
- ❖ Co-determination in important decisions
- ❖ A safe and healthy working environment

## **STAFF**

*An inspiring and innovative university; what demands does achieving this place on its supervisors, lecturers, scientific staff, and support and administrative staff?*

### **Everyone's input is recognised**

Academic and non-academic staff alike appreciate each other's activities. They treat one another in a respectful and honest way and aspire to use clear and open communication. They are prepared to help each other and work towards a healthy team spirit. Members of staff do not insult each other and refrain from discrimination and sexual intimidation. Staff members act conscientiously when making use of or managing any university resources such as budgets, equipment and the computer network.

### **Model behaviour**

Utrecht University supervisors act as role models to others. They set clear objectives, encourage their staff to perform well, create the conditions for inspiring team cooperation, and call to account any colleague whose behaviour is unacceptable. Supervisors are open to criticism and suggestions made by members of staff. The annual Assessment & Development interviews lay the foundation for a clear understanding between supervisor and staff.

### **Quality and enthusiasm**

Lecturers work hard to guarantee a high level of teaching and educational quality and the sound supervision of students. They continue to develop their skills and keep working towards improvement, which enables them to provide high-quality teaching in various forms that motivate students. Lecturers treat their students with respect. They set clear expectations and call to account any student whose behaviour is unacceptable and detrimental to the teaching

activities and/or other students. Lecturers make sure that the assignments and exams are appropriate to the objectives of the course and see to it that these are carefully assessed. They are aware of the larger context of which their courses are separate elements. A fair assessment requires that the lecturer prevents any student from taking credit for a fellow-student's achievement. Utrecht University lecturers adhere to the agreements made and the lecture hours set, they are open to positive criticism, and make sure their students can easily contact them, both in person during and after lectures and via e-mail.

### **Professionalism**

Integrity, conscientiousness and expertise are the foundations of the professionalism of academic staff, with regard to both research and teaching and their cooperation with colleagues. They strive to make excellent and innovative contributions to their fields of expertise and to bring these to the attention of their colleagues in the field and – where relevant – to the wider public. They are aware of their social role. When carrying out their scientific work they are aware of dilemmas and take responsibility for performing their research activities meticulously. Scientific members of staff are familiar with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice.

### **Ancillary activities**

Members of staff who carry out ancillary activities in addition to their university positions make sure that these activities do not conflict with and are not detrimental to their main task. They are able to keep their business and personal interests clearly separate and refrain from activities that may harm the interests or reputation of the University. Members of staff are transparent about their ancillary functions. They ask their supervisor's permission and state their ancillary activities on their individual pages on the university website.<sup>1</sup>

Staff at Utrecht University...

- ❖ Behave honestly and respectfully towards each other and towards their students
- ❖ Work enthusiastically to ensure the professionalism of teaching and research
- ❖ Show an active interest in the new developments and achievements of their faculty or service department and of the University
- ❖ Make conscientious use of the university facilities
- ❖ Are able to keep their university and personal interests clearly separate and are open about their ancillary activities

## **STUDENTS**

*Students at Utrecht University are preparing for careers and responsible positions in society. This requires intellectual curiosity, active participation in the study programme and extra-curricular activities, and the effort necessary to achieve good grades.*

### **Ambition**

Students at Utrecht University wish to perform to the best of their abilities. They choose their own programmes to suit their talents and ambitions and they make sure they are aware of the course requirements. As they are training to become academics, students learn to work independently, to communicate effectively, to meticulously gather information meticulously, and to solve problems. When preparing for their exams, assignments or tests, students work very conscientiously. When working in groups, they are cooperative and do not take credit for the achievements of their fellows. If they see others doing this, they raise the matter.

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<sup>1</sup> As yet this only applies to professors.

**Commitment**

Students actively participate during lectures. They stimulate each other and their lecturers with critical questions and well-substantiated discussion; this requires sound preparation. In addition to their studies, students attach great importance to being active in student organisations and student committees as another way of being trained academically and learning to work with others. Anyone studying at the University is expected to show an interest in social developments and the role of scientists in the public debate.

**Respect**

Respect is a key concept in the contacts between students and staff of the University. This is evident in, among other things, the style, tone and form of address in e-mails and direct contacts. Students, too, show one another respect. Students are prepared to help each other without risking the other's independence and fair assessment. They refrain from behaviour that may harm their fellow-students or the quality of their education. They respect each other's possessions and refrain from verbal and physical violence, discrimination and intimidation.

**Conscientiousness**

Students are very conscientious when making use of the University's resources such as equipment, the computer network, the library, lecture halls, and any other communal facilities.

Students at Utrecht University...

- ❖ Behave honestly and respectfully towards each other and towards members of staff
- ❖ Perform to the best of their abilities by actively participating in teaching and extra-curricular activities
- ❖ Respect each other's possessions and are careful when making use of university facilities
- ❖ Enable lecturers and students to teach and learn under optimal conditions

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

Utrecht University has laid down a number of specific rules of conduct in separate regulations. Some of these regulations include complaint procedures and sanctions. For more information, please check the Utrecht University teaching regulations (<http://www.uu.nl/EN/informationfor/students/regulations/regulations/Pages/default.aspx>) and the terms of employment (<http://www.uu.nl/EN/informationfor/intstaffandvisitors/staffemployed/termsofemployment/Pages/default.aspx>).