



## **Ethics Policy**

### **1. Context**

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, hereafter referred to as Trinity, is committed to upholding standards of ethical conduct. This Ethics Policy sets out Trinity's values and ethical principles. These are critical to the University's reputation and are embedded in how the business of the University, our teaching and research and all other activities, is conducted. The Policy and principles therein are in accordance with the legislative context within which Trinity operates which is circumscribed by its Charter and Letters Patents presented in the 2010 Consolidated Statutes of the University, the government legislation described in the Universities Act 1997 as amended by the Higher Education Authority Act 2022, and by the private legislation relating to the University: the Trinity College, Dublin (Charters and Letters Patent Amendment) Act (2000), as well as by the general legislative context in Ireland. The autonomy of the institution is provided for within this context of accountability.

Trinity is fully committed to adherence to the standards set out in the Ethics in Public Office Acts.

Trinity has a written Code of Governance for members of the Board and employees. The Code was revised and approved by the Board in 2021 to align it to the IUA Code of Governance for Irish Universities 2019, taking into account the implications of all the relevant provisions of the Universities Act 1997 as well as the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act 2001.

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to define the standards of ethical conduct that the University upholds. Adhering to these standards will ensure that the University conducts its business in compliance with national, European and all applicable international legislation, agreements, treaties and protocols. It will also ensure that the University and its suppliers conduct their affairs to the highest ethical standards in keeping with the University's commitment to the principles of natural justice, due process and to the protection of civil and human rights, and to sustainability.

### **3. Scope**

The Ethics Policy applies to all Trinity employees, and students involved in teaching and assessment.



## **4. Principles**

The University shall conduct its business in accordance with the values enshrined in its Strategic Plan and with the following principles:

### **4.1 Public interest**

Decisions shall be made solely in terms of the public interest, in the context of University policies, without any intention of financial or other material benefit for employees, their family or their friends.

### **4.2 Integrity**

All members of the University community shall be mindful, in soliciting or receiving any form of financial or other assistance towards the performance of their scholarly, administrative or other duties, of the necessity to avoid placing themselves under any improper influence or obligations which could compromise the integrity of their activities and shall, as appropriate, declare all potential conflicts of interest.

All members of the University community shall uphold the principles set out in the Council-approved Statement of Principles on Integrity<sup>1</sup>.

### **4.3 Objectivity**

In carrying out University business, including making appointments and awarding contracts, choices shall be made on merit.

### **4.4 Accountability**

University employees shall be accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and shall submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **4.5 Openness**

University employees shall be as open as possible about all decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

### **4.6 Honesty**

University employees shall declare any private interests relating to their University duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-affairs/academic-integrity/>



## 5. Policy

### 5.1 Conduct of University Affairs

#### 5.1.1 Compliance

The University shall conduct its business in compliance with national, European and all applicable international legislation, agreements, treaties and protocols. University employees shall familiarise themselves with any legal obligation arising out of activities undertaken by or on behalf of the University. All University policies shall be written and enforced in keeping with the University's legislative obligations.

#### 5.1.2 Ethical Standards

The University is committed to engaging in business only with suppliers and subcontractors whose work practices comply with national and international legislation and standards. The University shall conduct its business in accordance with the principles set out in section 4.

#### 5.1.3 Funding

The University shall not knowingly receive funding from organisations/institutions whose activities include practices which directly pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or groups or whose activities are inconsistent with the mission and values of the University.

#### 5.1.4 Fraud

The University's Fraud Policy addresses the responsibility of employees and management in the detection and reporting of fraud or suspected fraud.

#### 5.1.5 Confidential Information

The University shall deal with confidential information in an appropriate and professional manner. University employees who have access to confidential information shall not make any unauthorised use or disclosure of such information, either during or after employment.

#### 5.1.6 Data Protection

The University, as a controller of personal data, shall ensure that personal data processing is administered in compliance with University Data Protection and Information Security Policies and data protection legislation, specifically the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and Data Protection Acts 1988-2018, in order to safeguard the privacy and data protection rights of individuals.



### **5.1.7 Freedom of Expression**

The University promotes an environment of freedom of expression and intellectual enquiry and is committed to ensuring it is exercised in such a way as shall not interfere with the rights of others, or breach legislation.

### **5.1.8 Teaching and Assessment**

The University is committed to ensuring all teaching and assessment is delivered ethically and with integrity.

### **5.1.9 Research**

Research activities undertaken by staff and students of the University and by others in collaboration with the University shall adhere to the University's Policy on Good Research Practice.

### **5.1.10 Sustainability**

The University is committed to achieving the goals of its Sustainability Strategy, and embedding sustainable practices in education, research, operations and community engagement.

### **5.1.11 Business Relationships**

The University is committed to engaging in business only with suppliers and subcontractors whose work practices comply with national and international legislation and standards.

## **6. Responsibility and Implementation**

The Secretary to the College is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy at an institutional level. Heads of School/Unit/Division or Directors of Trinity Research Institutes are responsible for local implementation of the policy.

## **7. Related Documents**

- [Trinity College Dublin Code of Governance 2021](#) (including Code of Conduct)
- [Statement of Principles on Integrity](#)

Related Policies and Procedures:

- [Fraud Policy](#)
- [Policy on Good Research Practice](#)
- [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)
- [Investment Policy Statement for Trinity Endowment Fund](#)
- [Procurement Policy and Procedures](#)



## **8. Document/version Control for New Policies**

The Secretary to the College is responsible for reviewing this policy at least once every three years.

Approved by: Board

Date policy approved: 11 November 2009

Date of next review: 2028-29

Officer responsible for review: Secretary to the College

### **Document Control for Revised Policies**

8.1 Date of initial approval: 11 November 2009

8.2 Date revised policy approved: 22 May 2024

8.3 Date policy effective from: 22 May 2024

8.4 Date of next review: Academic Year 2028-2029