

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OTHER STAFF**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the code of conduct is to define and promote crucial ethical principles important and relevant to the organization whereby it identifies the best practices and disallows aspects of behavior that summons legal liability. The code of conduct and the roles and responsibilities of other staff of the Vels Institute of Science, Technology, and Advanced Studies (VISTAS), Chennai, are to be adhered by all the other staff to uphold the vision and mission of the university.

### **OTHER STAFF**

The other staff personnel is the staff that is required to cater to the needs of the students as well as to complement teachers' professional roles and responsibilities. The roles dawned by other staff personnel range in various forms depending on individuals' roles and students' specific needs. A professionally effective relationship between teaching and other staff personnel are essential to meet the diverse needs in the best interest of the students' community. For today's students, our approach should be moulded professionally. If we fail in satisfying the students' needs, the message carried by them may deteriorate the standard of the university.

### **1. CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

There are five major codes of ethics to be strictly adhered to by any employee. They are 1) integrity, 2) objectivity, 3) professional competence, 4) confidentiality and 5) professional behavior.

#### **1.1. Be Inclusive**

University and in turn the university personnel shall welcome, accept and mentor people from all walks of life not barring demography, socio-class, economic status, culture, nationality, educational level, colour, immigrant status, sex, age, physical features, family status, political ideology, religion, mental and physical prowess, and ability.

#### **1.2. Be Considerate**

The stakeholders depend on each other to produce the best talented students in a university. Wrong decisions will affect colleagues and all others, and one must keep in mind and take into account all those consequences when making crucial decisions.

### **1.3. Be Respectful**

It is fruitful to find a respectful fashion or attitude to deal with disagreement that ensues from frustration from time to time. Disagreement must not be allowed to transform into personal attacks in any circumstances. For people to be productive and creative a professional ambiance that people feel comfortable and safe in is essential. The university deemed temple of education shall hence provide such an ambiance.

### **1.4. Choose Your Words**

Carefully kind words do not cost much yet they accomplish much. Usage of words that potentiates suppression must be averted in all circumstances since their implications are unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Threats of violence.
- ✓ Insubordination.
- ✓ Discriminatory jokes and language.
- ✓ Sharing sexually explicit or violent material via electronic devices or other means.
- ✓ Personal insults, especially those using racist or sexist terms.
- ✓ Unwelcome sexual attention.
- ✓ Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior.

### **1.5. Don't Harass Any body**

Differences of opinion and disagreements in most instances are unavoidable. What is important is that one should resolve the disagreements and differing views constructively. In general, if one is asked by someone to stop something, then one should stop. When one disagrees, one should try to understand why and reason it out.

### **1.6. Make Differences into Strengths**

Academic strength is multi-faceted and multi-layered. Every individual from the differing and dissimilar path offers something unique and if culminated can potentially lead to all-encompassing solutions. Hence, barring someone's views and opinions due to a lack of openness is a lost opportunity. As well, blame games and pointing others is a serious lack of professionalism. Work environment code of conduct in a university includes providing equal opportunity, avoiding discrimination and harassment, maintain safety, prevent substance abuse, stop gambling, and maintain privacy and good manners.

### **1.7. Avoid Conflicts of Interest**

The reputation of the university is built upon the reputations of all its stakeholders and thus showcasing integrity is essentially the cornerstone of the university. Conflict of interests, however prevalent must be harnessed through open discussion that contributes to aforesaid integrity.

### **1.8. Protecting the Assets of the University**

The resources of the university in all its facets must be secured and kept fully functional by the stakeholders for the benefit of the stakeholders. Resources include physical, intellectual, electronic or digital, information, ICT systems, and IPRs.

### **1.9. Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption**

The reputation of the university lies in the trustworthiness of all its stakeholders in upholding the integrity in all spectra of functionality. Employees should always do their work fairly, honestly, and legally. University employees should avoid accepting bribes and corrupt practices. Kickbacks and gifts in exchange for favors are also considered as indirect methods of corrupt practices. University personnel shall abhor from

- ✓ Facilitating selling agents or canvass for publishing business enterprise or traders.
- ✓ Asking for or accepting any contribution or otherwise associating himself with the raising of any fund or making any other collections, whether in cash or kind, in pursuance of any object whatsoever, except subscription from the members of any association of teachers.
- ✓ Financial acquaintances with students or custodian.
- ✓ Influencing for personal gains or coordinating matters that incur debt beyond means to repay.
- ✓ Facilitating acceptance by any member of his family or societal comrade of his behalf to receive or demand gifts and the like from any student or his custodian or any person with whom he has come into a contract under his position in the university.

## **2. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Reporting to the office on time and avoiding absenteeism is habitually good. This implies that every employee should be arriving well before time in the office, be ready to work beyond office hours during essential periods, and even on holidays. Absenteeism and tardiness by an employee will burden other employees and the university too. Other staff must

- ✓ Report at least 15 minutes before the commencement of office hours.

- ✓ Must be present at the campus and on the job during the entirety of working hours unless duties are assigned elsewhere by the hierarchical authority.
- ✓ Obtain written permission for reporting to duty beyond schedule or leaving early before schedule.
- ✓ Abhor from seeking permission during the allotted schedule of class.

### **2.1. Absence Without Notice**

Staff members who are unable to work due to illness or an accident should notify their superiors. This allows the superiors to make alternate arrangements for covering the work allotment of the person who is absent and facilitate others to continue the academic work in their absence.

### **2.2. General Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

The university diligently facilitates a work culture free from any kind of discrimination and harassment. Explicit expressions or comments on an individual or community on basis of legally protected characteristics or traits are forbidden and hence not tolerated by the university.

### **2.3. Restricted Cell Phone Use at Work**

Personal cell phone usage during work hours, official meetings, seminars, council meetings, is fully discouraged, except in extreme cases such as an emergency or offer service during hazards and disasters.

### **2.4. Dress Code**

A professional appearance and outlook are very important for all the university personnel who work with the students and the public. All the employees of the university should be well-groomed and dressed appropriately for their dignified position.

### **2.5. Substance Abuse**

The university prohibits the possession, sale, manufacture, distribution, or purchase of controlled substances as well as being or working under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on life is prohibited.

### **2.6. Tobacco Products**

The use of tobacco products within and outside the campus areas is explicitly prohibited.

### **2.7. Internet use at Work**

University personnel may use the internet when appropriate to access the academic

information needed to conduct classes and carry out research. The use of the internet must not disrupt or injure the computer network of the university. The use of the internet must not interfere with any other employee's productivity or the university's progress.

### **2.7. Professional Integrity**

It is the practice of maintaining ethical behavior at an expected level and showcasing adherence to moral and ethical principles and values of honesty, honor, dependability, and trustworthiness. The personnel of the university shall;

- ✓ Not entice or be enticed through the pros and cons that exist between professional and private practice.
- ✓ Respect confidentiality of all information about university exams as well as matters of students and colleagues unless legally or legitimately demanded.
- ✓ Keep away from exhibiting personnel differences if any, that could hinder the repute of the university.

### **3. COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL VALUES**

Professional values are those that set apart a professional from a layman. Those that garner repute and honor in one's profession. Some additional aspects of professional values besides those mentioned in this code are politeness, mutual admiration, discretion, focus on continuing professional development, and so on. Commitment to these values renders repute and growth of an individual and in turn the university. Therefore, the personnel of the university shall;

- ✓ Function efficiently and diligently always conforming to rules and regulations.
- ✓ Uphold the decorum of the established hierarchy in accepting honorary work.
- ✓ Abhor from criminal activities and in case of any such legal proceedings, diligently notify the authority.
- ✓ Abhor from politicizing under any circumstances for individual benefits or gains; as well keep away from associating with any activities/movements of any such agencies/parties or individual.
- ✓ Keep away from anti-secular inclinations and consequential participation as well as the enticement of any person in such activity that may disrupt the harmony and that which may cause damage to human dignity.
- ✓ Abhor from indulging in criticizing and validating the policies of the government.

### **3.1. Professional Collaboration**

Collaboration is exhibiting interdependence and accountability for one's learning while encouraging the learning of others. Collaborative learning could benefit the university as the team is better than an individual. Therefore, the personnel must;

- ✓ Refrain from lodging unsubstantiated allegations against their colleagues to satisfy vested interests.
- ✓ Discharge their responsibilities following the established rules outlined by the higher authorities and adhere to the conditions of the contract.
- ✓ Refrain from responding to unnecessary political motivations as these ruin the sanctity and smooth progress of a university.
- ✓ Should accord the same respect and treatment to the other staff as they do to their fellow teachers.

## **4. FRIENDLY AND CO-OPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP**

The efficacy of a team in a participative environment bears many fruitful results than individualism. Upholding professionalism in all aspects could be even more effective through cooperation and harmonious ambiance. The personnel of the university shall therefore uphold professionalism and harmonious conduct with all the concerned.

### **4.1. Maintaining a Good Relationship with Students**

The personnel of the university regardless of the cadre are expected to facilitate the greater exhibition of knowledge and professionalism, especially with the student community. There lies at the heart of the relationship the aspects like mutual trust and respect, impartiality, human dignity, and the right to equity and knowledge. This relationship is beneficial to both the parties in the wholesomeness of education. Therefore, personnel of the university shall deal with students diligently and impartially barring all socio-economic classes, sectors, and characteristics; meet the individual needs of the students not abstracted by students abilities; facilitate improvement in a student attainment, develop personalities, in turn, contribute to society; inculcate scientific temper, the spirit of inquiry, ideals of democracy, patriotism, social justice, environmental protection and peace; develop an understanding of our national heritage and national goals; and refrain from inciting students against other students, colleagues or university administration.

## **4.2. Maintaining Cordial Relationships with Others**

An ambiance of cordial culture that potentiates lifelong constructive association is at the very core of the university. Hence, teachers are expected to

- ✓ Treat and interact with each other cordially and respectfully.
- ✓ Refrain from making unsubstantiated allegations against colleagues to higher authorities.
- ✓ Refrain from allowing considerations of caste, creed, religion, race or sex in their professional endeavor.

## **5. ACTS OF MISCONDUCT**

Any personnel of the university must manifest inspirational conduct to be a role model for other stakeholders and misconduct of any kind, therefore, is never acceptable under any circumstances, if exhibited by teaching personnel. Shortfalls will constitute misconduct not limited to the following situations and actions:

- ✓ Conscious failure to carry out the academic/technical/administrative/other activities and duties assigned.
- ✓ Victimization and discrimination of students, colleagues, and other staff.
- ✓ Provocating any stakeholders that may disrupt the functionality of the university.
- ✓ Raising questions of caste, creed, religion, race, or sex in his/her relationships with students, colleagues, and other staff, to further prospects for self-gain and selfish agendas.
- ✓ Refusal to accept/carry out the decisions/directions of superiors, competent authorities/bodies, and officers of the university in the due exercise of their rights in the functional hierarchy.

### **5.1. Compliance with the Code of Conduct and Ethics**

It is the responsibility of all personnel of the university to comply with this code and in the process, uphold the reputation and honor of the university and the noble profession of education.

### **5.2. Disciplinary Action**

Other -compliance and violation of the regular duties, service rules and the code of conduct and ethics will invite punishment either in the form of censure or deferment of increment or suspension or termination from service after a due inquiry by the discretion of the university

authorities. The authorities of the VISTAS, Chennai appeal to all staff members to work as a team in university-building and in upgrading the reputation of the university into one of the best universities of excellence in higher education in India.