AZERBAIJAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Holistic Ethical Policy

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1. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Ethical conduct is a foundational element of Azerbaijan Technical University (hereinafter “AzTU”) as a public institution responsible for education, research, and applied technological development. As a technical and engineering-focused university, AzTU recognises that its academic and operational activities carry responsibilities that extend beyond the campus, influencing industry practice, public safety, and societal trust.

AzTU understands ethics as a framework for responsible judgement in teaching, research, governance, and external engagement. Ethical considerations inform how authority is exercised, how decisions are taken, and how academic freedom is balanced with professional and societal responsibility, particularly in fields related to engineering, technology, and applied sciences.

The purpose of this Holistic Ethical Policy (hereinafter the “Policy”) is to establish a shared ethical foundation for the AzTU community. Specifically, the Policy aims to:

- articulate core ethical values and principles guiding institutional conduct;
- support consistent and responsible decision-making across academic, administrative, and leadership functions;
- reinforce a culture of integrity, professionalism, and public accountability; and
- provide an overarching ethical reference that complements more specific conduct-related policies.

Matters relating to misconduct, discrimination, or breaches of law are governed by dedicated policies (see Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy) and applicable legal frameworks, which operate alongside and in alignment with this ethical framework.

2. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following terms are used to establish a shared understanding of ethical principles and expectations at AzTU:

Ethics: The set of values and principles that guide responsible behaviour, judgement, and decision-making in academic, professional, and institutional contexts;

Integrity: The consistent application of honesty, transparency, and fairness in actions and decisions, including the responsible exercise of authority and avoidance of improper influence;

Professional Responsibility: The obligation to apply knowledge, skills, and expertise in a manner that prioritises safety, quality, accountability, and the public interest, particularly in technical and engineering disciplines;

Academic Freedom: The freedom to teach, learn, research, and express ideas within the bounds of ethical responsibility, professional standards, and respect for others;

Ethical Decision-Making: A structured and reflective approach to making choices that considers values, potential impacts, responsibilities, and long-term consequences;

Public Trust: Confidence placed by society, stakeholders, and partners in AzTU’s integrity, competence, and responsible conduct as a public institution.

3. APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies across AzTU and establishes ethical expectations for conduct, decision-making, and institutional behaviour in all AzTU-related activities.

The Policy applies to:

- **students:** in the context of learning, research participation, academic conduct, and engagement in AzTU activities;
- **staff:** including academic, administrative, managerial, and support personnel, regardless of contract type or seniority;
- **leadership and governance bodies:** involved in strategic, academic, financial, and operational decision-making;
- **research, innovation, and external engagement activities:** including partnerships, collaborations, and knowledge transfer involving AzTU.

The Policy applies to conduct occurring on campus, in AzTU-related activities conducted off campus, and in external interactions carried out in the name of or on behalf of AzTU.

This Policy operates as an overarching ethical framework and does not replace specific rules or procedures governing academic integrity, employment matters, complaints, or disciplinary action, which are addressed through dedicated instruments.

4. GOVERNANCE

Governance of ethical standards at AzTU is exercised through institutional leadership and academic oversight structures that set ethical expectations, promote responsible conduct, and ensure alignment between values and decision-making:

Rectorate: Sets the ethical tone at institutional level, endorses this Policy and its revisions, and ensures that ethical considerations are embedded into strategic and major institutional decisions.

Academic Council: Provides oversight of ethical principles related to teaching, research, and academic standards, and ensures that academic freedom is exercised in a manner consistent with professional and societal responsibility (see Academic Integrity Policy, if applicable).

Vice-Rectors: Promote application of ethical principles within their respective areas of responsibility and ensure that institutional practices reflect the values set out in this Policy.

Heads of Units: Support ethical conduct within faculties, departments, and administrative units by reinforcing expectations, modelling ethical behaviour, and escalating material ethical concerns through established channels.

Governance under this Policy focuses on ethical leadership, institutional culture, and principled decision-making. Investigation of misconduct, complaint handling, and disciplinary action are governed by dedicated policies and legal frameworks rather than this Policy (see Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy).

5. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

This section sets out the core ethical principles that guide conduct, judgement, and decision-making at AzTU. These principles apply across academic, administrative, leadership, and external engagement contexts and reflect the responsibilities of a technical university operating in the public interest.

5.1. Integrity and Honesty

AzTU expects all members of the AzTU community to act with integrity and honesty in their academic, professional, and institutional roles. Decisions and actions should be transparent, truthful, and free from deception or improper influence.

Integrity is understood not only as compliance with rules, but as a commitment to ethical judgement, particularly in situations where formal guidance may be limited or discretion is exercised.

5.2. Respect, Dignity, and Fair Treatment

Ethical conduct at AzTU is grounded in respect for the dignity of individuals and recognition of the value of diverse perspectives. Interactions within the AzTU community are expected to be respectful, inclusive, and free from behaviour that undermines trust or mutual respect.

This principle informs how authority is exercised, how disagreements are handled, and how institutional power is balanced with responsibility.

5.3. Academic and Professional Responsibility

As a technical and engineering-focused institution, AzTU places particular emphasis on professional responsibility in teaching, research, and applied activity. Knowledge and expertise are expected to be applied conscientiously, with due regard for safety, quality, and societal impact.

Academic freedom is exercised within a framework of ethical responsibility, professional standards, and accountability to students, partners, and the wider public.

5.4. Responsible Use of Knowledge and Technology

AzTU recognises that technological and scientific advancements can carry significant ethical implications. AzTU promotes responsible development and application of knowledge, taking into account potential risks, unintended consequences, and long-term impacts.

Ethical reflection is encouraged in research design, innovation activities, and external collaborations, particularly where technologies may affect public welfare, infrastructure, or the environment.

5.5. Institutional Accountability and Public Trust

AzTU acknowledges its responsibility as a public institution to maintain public confidence through ethical governance and responsible conduct. Decisions are expected to withstand external scrutiny and reflect AzTU’s commitment to serving society with professionalism and integrity.

Institutional accountability includes learning from ethical challenges and using experience to strengthen ethical awareness and judgement across AzTU.

6. MONITORING AND INSTITUTIONAL REFLECTION

Monitoring under this Policy focuses on ethical culture, leadership awareness, and institutional reflection rather than quantitative indicators or case-level oversight. AzTU reviews how ethical principles are understood, communicated, and applied across academic, administrative, and governance contexts.

Institutional reflection draws on leadership discussions, academic forums, internal reviews, and experience gained through the application of related policies and frameworks. The purpose of monitoring is to identify emerging ethical challenges, areas requiring greater awareness, and opportunities to strengthen ethical judgement at institutional level.

Insights from monitoring inform leadership consideration, internal dialogue, and alignment of supporting policies and practices, reinforcing ethics as a living component of institutional culture.

7. POLICY EVOLUTION

This Policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant, coherent, and aligned with AzTU's mission, institutional values, and external expectations. Reviews consider institutional experience, developments in higher education ethics, and evolving societal and professional standards.

The Policy is reviewed every two years or earlier if significant institutional or contextual changes arise. Any revisions are approved by the Rectorate. Updates to procedures or operational mechanisms are addressed through separate instruments and do not form part of this Policy.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



