



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Ethics Framework and Code of Practice

Effective from 31 July 2026

Issued by the University Secretary's Office

V1.0

PURPOSE

The Charter prescribes ‘the objects of the University shall be to advance education and knowledge by teaching and research, and in doing so to foster an academic environment which is enterprising and applied to business and the professions, for the benefit of society at large,’ [Section 3].

Council is the supreme governing body of the University, and through its standing committees, is accountable for ensuring a culture of ethical behaviour and compliance.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to define ethics through a set of universal standards related to the University’s objects (the ‘**ethical principles**’), and to describe the responsibilities of governance and management regarding ethical values, behaviours, and decision-making at the University (the appended ‘**ethical framework**’).

It fosters a principled approach and provides guidance and direction through the University’s regulations, policies, terms of reference for committees and procedures to ensure ethical considerations are evidenced in the decisions and activities of the University, including that the University is not brought into disrepute.

1.0 Definition

Ethics can be defined as a system of moral beliefs or values that shape behaviour, and guide decisions about what is fair, right and responsible.

2.0 Scope

The Code of Practice applies to the whole University, including colleagues, students, and members of Council.

3.0 Ethical Principles

The undernoted ethical principles have been written with due regard to:

- the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#);
- [the Office for Students’ public interest governance principles](#);
- the University’s [governing instruments](#).

Principle 1. Accountability and responsibility

We will be responsible for our decision-making.

We will ensure that our governance and delegations make accountability and responsibility for decisions clear and transparent.

Principle 2. Integrity

We will be honest and truthful.

We will act in accordance with the law and the University's regulations and policies.

We will declare interests and manage conflicts appropriately.

We will be transparent and consistent in decision-making.

We will be impartial and act in the interests of the University and its community.

Principle 3. Intellectual freedom

We will protect academic freedom and uphold the principles of freedom of speech within the law, to further knowledge and learning through debate and research.

Principle 4. Equity of opportunity

We will put accessibility, inclusivity and belonging at the heart of our decision-making.

We will advance equity and an inclusive culture, ensuring that anti-discriminatory approaches are applied consistently in our policies and practice.

Principle 5. Sustainability

We will embed sustainability into all aspects of University life and apply sustainable approaches consistently in our policies and practice.

4.0 The Ethical Principles in Practice

The University through Council, Senate, and University Leadership Team applies the ethical principles when setting the overall strategy and underlying delivery plans, and in approving material regulations and policies. Relevant external ethical guidance and/or references are considered at this point, and members of the University's community can take assurance from this thoroughness.

However, everyone is encouraged to question ethical matters in their work and academic endeavours and to always consider who else may be affected, the impact of their actions on the University's reputation, or whose interests are being served.

Sometimes this process is through personal assessment, but it is more likely through recorded assessments, for example a risk assessment, an equality impact assessment, or a due diligence process, or in a resolution recorded in the minutes of a committee authorised through delegation to make a decision. Where a risk register has been written for an area or project, ethical decisions may already have been established through an agreed appetite to risk.

The ethical principles are to guide the exercise of judgement in all instances, either in an individual or collective capacity.

Example questions in applying the ethical principles to decision-making include:

- Is what you/the University plan to do compatible with these principles? (You may find further guidance in policies listed in Section 4.2).
- How would you explain your/the University's actions if you had to justify them to your family and friends, or if they were a news headline?
- How would you feel about asking someone else to undertake the action or decision you/the University are considering?
- How might it impact on the reputation of the University?
- How might you/the University explain a decision to our student community?

Where possible, please keep a record of your decision making, the reasoning behind it, how you have considered the principles. Ensure you consider and record any conflicts of interest.

4.2 The Ethical Framework

The ethical principles inform University regulations, policy, procedures, and committee terms of reference such that institutional and local-level ethical decisions can be made.

The infographic in Appendix A is not exhaustive but describes the current framework.

If you are still unsure about an ethics issue, the University expects you to ask for advice. Students should contact their Programme Leader or Research Supervisor for advice. Academic and professional colleagues should contact the University Secretary's Office for advice (unisecoffice@salford.ac.uk).

5.0 What happens when the ethical principles are not followed?

Adherence to this Code of Practice, and to the terms of reference, policies and procedures referred to within it, is necessary to protect the University from causing unintentional harm and from financial, regulatory, and reputational risk. Knowingly failing to comply could result in sanctions as outlined in the following documents:

- University Ordinances for the Removal of Chancellor, Pro-Chancellors, Members of Council; Vice-Chancellor
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Academic Misconduct Procedure / Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Where internal complaints procedures have been exhausted, members of the University community may also have recourse to the University's Whistleblowing Policy. Where a whistleblowing report is upheld, the above sanctions may also be applicable.

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Academic matters				
Academic partnerships (new) NB. partnership review to follow the established processed for partnership monitoring and/or specific terms and conditions outlined in the Partnership Agreement.	Decision: business case – School Decision: partner - Partnerships Committee Decision: Partnership Agreement – University Leadership Team (Vice-Chancellor signatory for the University) NB. the establishment of academic business units is the decision of Council (guided by Senate)	Under policy approved by Senate Council	Academic Handbook: Section F Partnerships and Collaborative Provision (Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedure). Off-site collaborative provision – Financial Regulation Section D.12	Senate Council (via Senate)
Academic ethics: - Research ethics (staff and PGR) - Taught ethics (UGT, PGT, block approvals)	Decision: Supervisor Decision: Faculty Ethics Panel Decision: Faculty Ethics Approval Committee	Academic Ethics and Research Integrity Committee, a subcommittee of Research, Innovation and Ethics Committee.	Academic Ethics Policy Research Code of Practice Academic Regulations (Research) NB. see also wider academic ethics policy framework	As applicable: Senate Council (via Senate)

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Honorary awards (n.b.; also includes non-academic honorary awards)	Decision: Honorary Awards Committee	Jointly Senate and Council	Regulations for Honorary Awards Code of Practice for Honorary Awards	Report made to Senate and Council
Enterprise and employability				
Student employment opportunities (promotion of)	Decision: Student Careers and Enterprise Team	Student Careers and Enterprise Service	Advertising Opportunities and Information Policy	n/a
Consultancy (on behalf of the University)	Decision: Faculty Associate Dean, Enterprise / Director of professional service	[business area]	Consultancy Policy and Guidance Document / Business Innovation Services Financial Regulation Section D.11.2 (n.b.; see also material financial policies).	Human Resources Finance
Civic engagement				
Non-academic pledges and accreditations	Recommendation: business area Decision: Partnerships Committee	Under term of reference approved by Senate and University Leadership Team	As applicable	Senate University Leadership Team As applicable: Council

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Financial matters				
Non-academic partnerships (new)	Decision: business case – School / Professional Service Decision: partner - Partnerships Committee Decision: Partnership Agreement – University Leadership Team (Vice-Chancellor signatory for the University)	Under term of reference approved by Senate and University Leadership Team Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council Council	Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authority Policy	Senate University Leadership Team As applicable: Council (via Senate/ULT)
Research funding	Decision: as per the roles and bodies outlined in the Delegated Financial Authorities Policy	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authority Policy	As applicable: Senate Council
Enterprise funding	Decision: as per the roles and bodies outlined in the Delegated Financial Authorities Policy	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authority Policy	As applicable: Senate Council

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Gifts and donations	Decision: less than £500 – local Where no issues are raised following due diligence checks, the undernoted is applied: Decision: £500 to £100k - Head of Philanthropy, Alumni & Supporter Engagement Decision: £100k to £250k - Director of Marketing, Communications and External Relations & Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer Decision: £250k to £1m – University Leadership Team Decision £1m+ - Council (recommended by ULT) Where potential issues are raised following due diligence checks the gift or donation is considered by the Ethical Gift Acceptance Advisory Group (EGAAG) who have the authority to reject or recommend acceptance and the authorities outlined above are applied.	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Ethical Gift Acceptance and Fundraising Policy Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authority Policy (n.b.; see also material financial policies).	Quarterly report to the Ethical Gift Acceptance Advisory Group Annual report to University Leadership Team Oversight by Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, a standing committee of Council

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Fundraising	Decision: Head of Office of Philanthropy, Alumni & Supporter Engagement NB. the practice of co-signatory is applied – see the policy statements	Under policy approved by Council	Ethical Gift Acceptance and Fundraising Policy Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authorities (NB. see also material financial policies).	(funds generated will follow the reporting process detailed above).
Donations to other charities	Recommendation: Finance Team Decision: University Leadership Team	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Financial Regulations / Delegated Financial Authorities Policy	As applicable: Council
Financial investment	Decision: Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Treasury Management and Ethical Investment Policy Financial Regulations	As applicable: Finance and Resources Committee, standing committee of Council

	Responsibility	Accountability	Consult	Inform
Procurement	Decision: budget owners and as per the roles and bodies outlined in the Delegated Financial Authorities Policy	Under Financial Regulations and policy approved by Council	Purchasing Policy and Procedures Financial Regulations/ Delegated Financial Authority Policy (NB. see also material financial policies).	As applicable
Officers accepting gifts/hospitality	Decision: Employees / members of Council	Under policy approved by Council	Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy Financial Regulations	Annual report of gifts to Chair of Audit and Risk Committee, a standing committee of Council Oversight of policy regarding interests by Governance, Nominations and Ethics Committee, a standing committee of Council