

Assurance Committee: July 2024

RKE Committee: April 2023

## **MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

### **UNIVERSITY ETHICS COMMITTEE**

#### **Ethics Policy Framework Statement**

##### **Introduction**

The University is committed to operating in an ethical way in every area to ensure the highest possible standards of decision-making and accountability. This statement provides the context of a range of policies, regulations and codes that cover specific issues with an ethical dimension. These are available on the intranet and a link is provided below. Additionally, staff members are required to adhere to any relevant legislation including that, which is specific to their area of responsibility.

The Ethics Policy Framework Statement sets out the role and responsibilities of the University Ethics Committee, the guiding principles and values, and the system of governance. The principles of public life have been adapted from those found in the Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life to be applicable to staff, governors and students of the University, its global campus network, collaborative partners, and to those providing a service to the University. It relates these principles and values to the personal and professional behaviour expected of its staff as specified in the [Middlesex University Values and Valued Ways of Working](#) Framework.

This framework outlines the professional behaviours expected of all staff irrespective of role. Our Middlesex values and valued ways of working guide our decision making; how we work together; with our students; and how we collaborate with partners and other stakeholders.

##### **The University Ethics Committee**

The purpose of the University's Ethics Committee (UEC) is to oversee and review ethical issues, particularly those relating to human subjects, human materials and other data, as they pertain to programmes of research, postgraduate research ethics, and the ethical implications of project proposals for undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses. The Committee will receive and review reports and decisions from the four Faculty Ethics committees and ensure rigour, standards and consistency of judgements, identifying good practices and areas of concern.

##### **Guiding Principles and Values**

The University recognises that it must earn and maintain a reputation for integrity that includes, but is not limited to, compliance with laws and regulations and its contractual obligations. In many areas of activity, there are no relevant laws or regulations. In these cases, as in all others, the University will operate within a framework established by the Seven Principles of Public Life<sup>1</sup>.

The University Ethics Committee has an agreed set of core behavioural values that all staff should demonstrate in all they do:

##### **Honesty and integrity**

This is more than observing professional standards: it is about being open, truthful and demonstrating considered and sound judgment. In all our work we will act ethically and avoid conflicts of interest or

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file46965.pdf>

take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves. To this end we will declare and resolve any interests and relationships and be honest and offer constructive feedback.

### **Mutual support**

In all our working relationships we treat others with consideration, dignity and respect and build a strong ethos of sharing and consultation. For example, consult and involve others in decisions and try to understand each other's points of view.

### **Strong personal commitment to colleagues and students**

We aim to understand people's needs and to see things from our students', colleagues', partners and customers' perspectives. We seek and listen to others' feedback, show them that we care and deliver what we say we will.

### **Taking personal responsibility**

We demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility to students, colleagues, partners and to the University. We are flexible, where appropriate, and challenge ourselves to do better. All staff members are expected to act honestly, conscientiously, fairly, reasonably, and in good faith having regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the University, (its mission and core values) and the rights and interests of colleagues, students and partners.

### **Governance**

The University Ethics Committee reports to the Assurance Committee and to the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee on ethical matters within the University.

Our public policy statements including those related to academic quality, concerns and complaints, data protection, employability, the environment, equal opportunities, estates and security, ethics policies and statements related to research, teaching and practice, freedom of speech, health and safety, information law and policy, including the MU whistleblowing/confidential reporting policy and procedure, widening access and working with our partners and friends etc, can be found [HERE](#). Statements and policies related to research integrity can be found [HERE](#).

Our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated, and follow specific reporting arrangements, and may be subject to auditing as determined by the University Audit Committee. Non-compliance with policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action.

TC: May 2014

***This Framework Statement was approved by the Assurance Committee July 2014. It is due for review in July 2019.***

TC/UEC: Updated April 2019

***This Policy Framework Statement was approved by the Assurance Committee May 2019.***

***This policy and the associated Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the University Ethics Committee and the Faculty Ethics Committees was updated in March 2023 and approved by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee in April 2023 and confirmed by Assurance Committee in July 2024.***

**Appendix 1: Current reporting Structure for the University Ethics Committee and its Ethics Committees**

