

CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH

Approved by the Governing Council at its meeting on June 21, 2023, and by the Board of Trustees at its meeting on July 15, 2023.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Code of Good Research Practices of the Universidad San Pablo-CEU is conceived as a set of rules, principles and commitments that seek to promote quality and contribute to rigor, respect, and responsibility in the development of research activity.

In the preparation of this Code, the following legal regulations in force have been taken into account: the provisions of the European Charter for research personnel and the 2005 Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers; Organic Law 3/2007, of March 22, for the Effective Equality of Women and Men; Royal Decree Law 6/2019, of March 1, on urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities between women and men in employment and occupation; Law 15/2022, of July 12, 2002, on equal treatment and non-discrimination; and Law 3/2022, of February 24, 2002, on university coexistence. Likewise, this Code is adapted to the provisions of the Equality Plan of the FUNDACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA SAN PABLO CEU, approved on July 9, 2020.

In 2005, the European Commission adopted a European Charter for Research Staff and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, known jointly as the "Charter and Code". It contains 40 principles to be complied with by researchers and employing entities. These principles are organized in four groups:

- Ethical and professional aspects, such as freedom of research, ethical principles, or good research practices.
- Issues related to recruitment and selection.
- Working conditions and social security, such as job stability and permanence, financing and salaries, and gender balance.
- Training and development.

On June 1, 2018, Universidad San Pablo-CEU signed the "Letter of Adherence", as a first recognition of the principles and obligations of the Charter and Code. Subsequently, on December 9, 2021, the University obtained the "Seal of Excellence in Human Resources for Research" ("HRS4R"), awarded by the European Commission to those institutions that have made progress in aligning their human resources policies with the principles defined in the Charter and Code. Institutions awarded the seal stand out for their commitment to implementing fair and transparent recruitment and performance evaluation of their researchers.

This Code, in pursuit of these purposes, shall be applicable to teaching and research personnel, administration and services personnel, students or personnel who collaborate in research tasks or in any of the activities included in this document.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO RESEARCHERS

1. Freedom of research

Researchers will act at all times in full compliance with the internal rules of Universidad San Pablo-CEU, directing their work to the enhancement and expansion of scientific knowledge, for the common good.

In any case, they shall enjoy freedom of thought and expression, as well as freedom to determine the methods of problem solving, within the framework of commonly recognized ethical principles and practices.

However, these freedoms may be limited under certain research circumstances (supervision, guidance, or management activities), or operational constraints, such as budgetary or infrastructure reasons, or for reasons of intellectual property protection, as the case may be. These limitations may not contravene recognized ethical principles and practices that researchers are obliged to observe.

2. Ethical principles

Researchers must observe the recognized ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles corresponding to their disciplines, as well as the standards set forth in the national, sectorial, or institutional codes of ethics applicable to the subject matter.

3. Professional Responsibility

Researchers should make every effort to ensure that their work is relevant to society and does not duplicate work previously done by others. They should avoid any kind of plagiarism and respect industrial and intellectual property rights, which will be joint when the work is done in collaboration with other researchers.

When delegating any aspect of their work, researchers must ensure that the person to whom they delegate is qualified to carry it out.

4. Professional attitude

Researchers must be aware of their field of activity and the possible funding mechanisms available, being obliged to request all necessary permissions and approvals before starting their work or accessing the resources provided. They must likewise inform the funding agencies, the University, or the bodies they supervise when their research project is delayed, redefined or completed, as well as when, for whatever reason, it must be abandoned or suspended ahead of schedule.

5. Contractual and legal obligations

Researchers at all levels should be aware of the national, sectoral, or institutional regulations governing the conditions for the development of their research. This includes regulations on industrial and intellectual property rights, as well as the requirements and conditions of potential funding entities. Researchers must comply with these regulations by delivering the required results, such as theses, patents, publications, or reports, as stipulated in the agreement or equivalent document.

6. Research involving human beings

The dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of the participants should be the paramount consideration in any research study. Research should be initiated and conducted only if the expected benefits justify the risks involved.

When the research to be carried out involves the use of human beings and samples, animals, genetically modified organisms or personal data, the legislation in force and the reports, permissions and supervision corresponding to the Ethics Committee of Universidad San Pablo-CEU and any other committees supervising these scientific practices in their respective fields will be complied with.

In any case in which human beings and samples, animals, genetically modified organisms, or personal data are used in research, the following rules shall apply:

- Universidad San Pablo-CEU and its research staff must ensure that any research involving human subjects, material of human origin and/or personal data complies with all legal and ethical requirements, as well as any other applicable guidelines, paying special attention in the event that it involves groups considered especially vulnerable.
- Universidad San Pablo-CEU and its research staff must guarantee the confidentiality and security of the data relating to both the research participants and the human material used.
- Research personnel will not transfer data or samples of human material to other projects or research personnel without the authorization of the participants and/or the Ethics Committee.
- Personnel conducting research involving human subjects should ensure that participants receive all the information they need to be able to give fully informed consent, taking particular care when working with vulnerable groups.
- If in the course of their work the research personnel detect that the human participants in the research are subject to unjustified risk or harm or that the human

samples are not being treated or stored appropriately, they must inform the responsible body of Universidad San Pablo-CEU, even if the research has been reported favorably by the competent body.

- In the event that a project foresees the participation of Universidad San Pablo-CEU students as research or study subjects, the responsible research personnel must ensure that adequate procedures are in place to minimize the possibility of undue influence in obtaining the consent of students and to avoid any form of coercion in their recruitment and subsequent participation.

7. Accountability

Researchers who receive public or private funds for research are responsible for their effective use. They must observe the principles of sound, transparent and effective financial management and cooperate with any authorized audit of their research, whether undertaken by the funding agencies or by an Ethics Committee that has approved the project.

Researchers must be aware that they are accountable to the agencies that employ or fund them or other related public or private agencies, as well as, for ethical reasons, to society as a whole. Publicly funded researchers are also accountable for the effective use of taxpayers' money.

8. Best practices in research

Researchers must at all times follow safe working practices, in accordance with national legislation and Universidad San Pablo-CEU regulations, taking the necessary precautions in terms of health and safety and computer accident recovery, preparing, for example, appropriate backup strategies. They must also be aware of the national legal requirements in force regarding data protection and confidentiality and take the necessary measures to comply with them.

9. Dissemination and exploitation of results

All researchers must ensure that the results of their research are transmitted and used through communications, transfer to other areas of research, commercialization, and dissemination in scientific publications of interest. Research must be transparent and researchers must be in a position to give an account of their work, given the importance of the opinion of their peers for the evaluation of discoveries and the social impact of scientific activity.

9.1 Publication in peer-reviewed journals

Researchers shall ensure that the results of their work are made known through, among other means, the publication of articles in peer-reviewed journals. The results of scientific research, in any area, should always be subject to scrutiny by peers, so they should be published in journals or other media with peer review systems, as well as in internationally indexed journals with a high impact index.

9.2 Protection of results of potential commercial interest

If the results obtained in a research project may lead to inventions or applications potentially susceptible to be protected due to their commercial interest, the person responsible for the research project must communicate this to Universidad San Pablo-CEU and manage the publication of the results taking into account this circumstance.

9.3 Unpublished result

Non-publication of research results or excessive delay are incompatible with the proper use of resources. The publication of the results of studies in which people have participated as experimental subjects is an ethical imperative.

9.4 Repeated publication

Duplicate or redundant publication is considered an unacceptable practice.

9.5 Bibliographic references to third parties

In publications as well as in patent files or utility models, it is necessary to include the reference of works directly related to the research, avoiding, at the same time, honorific or unjustified references.

9.6 Institutional loans and grants

Both in communications to congresses or other types of previous presentations and in the final publication of the results of the research, the institutions, or centers to which the authors belong or belonged, where the research was carried out and the details of the subsidies, grants or financial sponsorship received must be explicitly stated.

10. Engagement with society and presentation in the media

Researchers should ensure that their research activities are made known to society in general. The presentation of results through the media should include an explanation of an informative nature, adapted to non-specialized audiences, and thus improve the

public's understanding of science. In this type of presentation, the name of the authors should be associated with that of their institutions and, whenever possible, mention should be made of the subsidies and grants received.

Communication and dissemination of research results to the media prior to peer review, i.e., prior to acceptance for publication or presentation at congresses after peer review, is not considered acceptable.

11. Relationship with supervisors

Researchers in training must maintain a continuous relationship with their supervisors, with those responsible for the school or department to which they belong and, in particular, with the person in charge of their line of research. They must keep a record of the results and findings of their research, according to the agreed timetables and the objectives set.

12. Supervision and management tasks

Expert researchers should pay special attention to their work as trainers, mentors, or communicators in scientific matters, performing these tasks according to the highest professional standards. They should create a constructive and positive relationship with junior researchers in order to establish the necessary conditions for an effective and transparent transfer of knowledge and for the future successful development of their careers.

13. Continuous professional development

Researchers, at any professional stage, should strive for continuous improvement and expansion of their knowledge and skills through formal training, seminars, and conferences, as well as e-learning.

III. GENERAL PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO UNIVERSIDAD SAN PABLO-CEU

Article 96 of the Organization and Functioning Rules of Universidad San Pablo-CEU establishes as one of its essential objectives the development of quality scientific, technical and artistic research, and the training of researchers, promoting the social transfer of knowledge and technology and attending to both basic and applied research. To this end, it will promote cooperation with the productive sector, promoting the joint development of research programs and projects that enable the transfer of knowledge and the mobility of teaching and research staff.

In the area of research, Universidad San Pablo-CEU, in accordance with the provisions

of Article 4 of Norms of Organization and Functioning Rules, orients its mission on the principles of the study of the truth of things, the search for the integration of knowledge, the dialogue between faith and reason, the specific concern for the moral implications of the methods and results of scientific and technical research, and the recognition of the irreplaceable sapiential role that corresponds to Catholic theology.

In matters of research, Universidad San Pablo-CEU will adjust its actions to the following principles, in accordance with the provisions of the European Charter for research personnel and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers:

1. Non-discrimination

Researchers shall not be discriminated against on the basis of sex, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinions, and social or economic status.

2. Gender balance

The University will ensure a representative balance between the sexes at all levels, through measures to promote equal opportunities in the hiring of personnel and in subsequent professional stages, without such measures being detrimental to the criteria of quality and competence. In this matter, the Equality Plan of FUNDACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA SAN PABLO CEU will be applicable, approved on July 9, 2020 and which is framed in the current legislation, in particular, in the provisions of Organic Law 3/2007, of March 22 for the Effective Equality of Women and Men, as well as in Royal Decree Law 6/2019, of March 1, of urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities between women and men in employment and occupation. Likewise, the University will comply with the provisions of Law 15/2022, of July 12, comprehensive for equal treatment and non-discrimination and Law 3/2022, of February 24, on university coexistence, which specifically proclaim the obligation to guarantee and promote the right to equal treatment, non-discrimination, and tolerance in the educational environment.

3. Value of mobility

The University recognizes the value of geographic, intersectoral, interdisciplinary and virtual mobility, as well as mobility between the public and private sectors, as a means of strengthening scientific knowledge and professional development at any stage of a research career. The University will incorporate mobility into the training and professional development strategy.

4. Intellectual and industrial property rights

The University will ensure that researchers benefit, at any stage of their career, from the eventual exploitation of their R&D&I results through adequate legal protection of their intellectual and industrial property rights.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, with regard to intellectual and industrial property rights, the provisions of Title III, articles 11 to 14 of the Regulations for the Management of Research Projects of Universidad San Pablo-CEU, approved by the Board of Trustees of the University at its meeting of May 21, 2011, shall be applicable.

5. Authorship of scientific papers, publications, and patents

The status of author does not depend on belonging to a profession or hierarchical position, nor on the nature of the employment relationship, but on the contribution to research.

To have the full status of author of a publication or patent, it is necessary:

- a) Have made a substantial contribution to the creative process, that is, to the conception and design of the creative process, or to the analysis and interpretation of the data.
- b) To have contributed to the preparation of the resulting communications, reports, or publications, and
- c) Be able to present in detail the personal contribution to the research and to discuss the main aspects of the research as a whole.

Mere participation in obtaining resources or in data collection, such as the provision of experimental subjects, does not necessarily justify authorship, although they should be acknowledged in the acknowledgements section. In those investigations in which it is planned to use samples, analyses or opinions made by third parties, a procedure should be established beforehand that takes into account the potential intellectual contribution to the project, as well as any other dimension related to copyrights.

6. Co-authorship

The University will value co-authorship positively, as it demonstrates a constructive approach to research practice, and will develop strategies, practices and procedures that provide researchers, including those at the beginning of their careers, with the conditions necessary for them to enjoy the right to be recognized, mentioned and/or cited, within their actual contributions, as co-authors of reports, patents, etc. or to publish the results of their own research.

7. Recognition of the profession

All researchers pursuing a research career should be recognized as professionals and treated accordingly. This should start at the beginning of their careers, i.e., at the graduate level, and should include all levels regardless of their classification at the national level (e.g., employee, graduate student, doctoral candidate, postdoctoral fellow, civil servant).

8. Working conditions

The University will ensure that the working conditions of researchers, including those with disabilities, provide the necessary flexibility to ensure research performance in accordance with current national legislation and national or sectoral collective bargaining agreements. They should also seek to provide working conditions that allow both male and female researchers to combine family life and work, children, and career. Special attention should be paid, inter alia, to flexible working hours, part-time work, teleworking and sabbatical periods, as well as to the necessary economic and administrative arrangements governing these arrangements.

9. Research environment

The University should ensure that it provides a stimulating working and training environment for researchers, including those with disabilities, that offers adequate facilities and equipment, within budgetary constraints, as well as possibilities such as remote collaboration through research networks. It will also ensure that national or sectoral regulations on health and safety in research are observed.

10. Stability and permanence in employment

The University will ensure that the performance of researchers is not undermined by the instability of employment contracts and must therefore commit itself, as far as possible, to improving the stability of researchers' working conditions, applying, and respecting the provisions and principles laid down in the Community Directive on fixed-term work.

11. Financing and salaries

The University shall ensure that researchers recruited by the University enjoy fair and attractive funding and/or salary conditions with adequate and equitable Social Security provisions (including sickness and parental benefits, pension rights and unemployment benefits), in accordance with applicable national legislation and national or sectoral collective bargaining agreements. This principle should apply to researchers at all stages of their career, including those in the initial phase, commensurate with their legal status,

performance, level of qualifications and/or responsibilities.

12. Professional development

The University will develop, preferably within the framework of its human resources management, a specific career development strategy for researchers, including fixed-term researchers, covering all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual status. The strategy should include the availability of mentors to provide support and guidance for the personal and professional development of the researchers, motivating them and thus helping to reduce the potential insecurity of their professional future.

All researchers should be informed of these measures and provisions.

13. Access to research training and continuous development

The University shall ensure that all researchers, at any stage of their career and regardless of their contractual status, have the opportunity to develop professionally and improve their employability by accessing measures for the continuous development of their skills and competencies. Such measures should be regularly evaluated for accessibility, use, and effectiveness in improving competencies, skills and employability.

It will also ensure that researchers can receive professional and employment guidance, either at the University itself or in collaboration with other structures.

Special consideration should be given to the provisions of Law 15/2022, of July 12, 2002, on equal treatment and non-discrimination, which guarantees equal treatment and non-discrimination in access, promotion, working conditions and job training.

14. Supervision

The University will ensure that a person is clearly identified to whom early career investigators can turn for consultation on matters related to the performance of their professional duties and should inform the investigators accordingly. The arrangements should clearly state that the proposed supervisors should have sufficient experience in supervising research work, and have the necessary time, knowledge, experience, expertise, technical aptitude, and dedication to be able to provide the trainee researcher with adequate support and to implement the necessary progress and review procedures, as well as the necessary feedback mechanisms.

15. Teaching

Teaching is fundamental for structuring and disseminating knowledge and should

therefore be considered a valuable option in the professional careers of researchers. However, teaching responsibilities should not be excessive and should not prevent researchers, especially at the beginning of their careers, from carrying out their research activities. The University will ensure that teaching responsibilities are remunerated and duly taken into account in the evaluation and assessment systems, and that the time devoted by more experienced staff to the training of junior researchers is counted as part of their teaching commitment. The provision of appropriate training for teaching and mentoring activities should form part of the professional development of researchers.

16. Evaluation and assessment systems

The University or, where appropriate, the funders, will apply evaluation and assessment systems to all researchers, including the most senior researchers, so that their professional performance is regularly and transparently evaluated by an independent (and, in the case of senior researchers, preferably international) committee. These evaluation and assessment procedures should take due account of the overall creativity of research work and results in the form of, for example, publications, patents, research management, teaching and lecturing, supervisory and mentoring work, national and international collaboration, administrative work, public awareness activities and mobility, and should be considered in the context of career development.

17. Claims and appeals

The University shall establish, in accordance with national regulations and standards, appropriate procedures, possibly through an impartial person (in the form of a researcher ombudsman), to deal with complaints and appeals from researchers, including those concerning conflicts between supervisors and early career researchers. These procedures should provide all research personnel with confidential and informal assistance in resolving employment conflicts, disputes, and grievances, with the aim of promoting fair and equitable treatment in the organization and improving the overall quality of the work environment.

18. Participation in decision-making bodies

The University will consider it legitimate, and indeed desirable, for researchers to be represented in the relevant information, consultation, and decision-making bodies of the Institution, in order to protect and defend their individual and collective professional interests and to contribute actively to its work.

19. Hiring

The University will ensure that the rules for access and admission of researchers,

particularly at the beginning of their careers, are clearly indicated and should also facilitate access for disadvantaged groups or researchers returning to research, including professors (at any level) returning to research work. When appointing or hiring researchers, the University shall observe the principles set out in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, as well as the provisions of Law 15/2022 of July 12, 2002, on equal treatment and non-discrimination, which proclaims equal treatment and non-discrimination as well as respect for the dignity of the individual in employment, both salaried and self-employed, including access, working conditions, including remuneration and dismissal, career advancement and training for employment.