

Code of Ethics TU Delft

Version 23 October 2012

1. Introduction

Modern universities of technology have a great impact upon society. Society expects universities of technology to be organisations where new generations of ethically responsible engineers are educated, and that this is accomplished in a context informed by the unfettered pursuit of knowledge and a dedication to scientific truth and impartiality.

TU Delft wants to engage in a process of constant critical reflection on its contributions to society, its own missions and responsibilities, in light of the new problems and challenges confronting us all.

Engineers act both in and upon the world, affecting the lives of people. TU Delft acknowledges this. Therefore, employees, students and guests¹ of TU Delft have an ethical duty to conduct themselves accordingly. This duty applies equally – in different forms – to all who form part of its academic community: academic staff, support staff, guests and students.

This Code of Ethics formulates the aspirations, responsibilities and rights that ought to inspire and guide all those working within our university in their various roles, as scientists, support staff, guests and students.

TU Delft strives to be articulate and explicit with respect to its ideals, values, principles and responsibilities and the means it utilises to implement its vision in day-to-day practices, procedures and operations.

The aim of this Code of Ethics is to state our aspirations unambiguously, in such a way that those who form part of our community can find inspiration and guidance in them and that those who collaborate with employees and students of TU Delft and those who are about to join its workforce and student body may better understand its aims and goals, as well as the ethical dilemmas involved in working towards achieving them.

¹ The guests referred to in this Code of Ethics are people to whom TU Delft provides hospitality by means of a so-called hospitality declaration. A hospitality declaration is used in cases where a person is not employed at TU Delft but who does have access to its facilities.

2. TU Delft - Vision, Ambition & Mission

2.1 Vision

In our strategic plan - *Roadmap TU Delft 2020* - the vision is stated that the increasing number of people on the planet and their drive to achieve ever-higher levels of prosperity raises some major questions for society. Technology is essential in answering these, as is the underlying scientific knowledge generated and disseminated by modern universities of technology.

The modern university of technology is a source of new scientific understanding and technological breakthroughs. It also trains scientists and engineers, and provides them with a broad academic grounding. As such, it is a catalyst of innovation and economic growth.

With their advanced expertise and know-how, engineers are vital to our society and economy. It is they who develop the science-based technological solutions which enhance many people's lives.

As one of the world's leading training grounds for these engineers, TU Delft views its role in society as supplying technological solutions that take us significantly further along the road towards sustainability and a flourishing economy. We position ourselves as an open academic community which, through its scientific personnel and graduates, is represented throughout the academic world and is rooted in our own regional and national, social and economic environment.

2.2 Ambition

In the context of this vision, TU Delft has the ambition to remain a university of technology with a leading global reputation. To do this, our aim is to maintain a full range of high-quality disciplines, courses and unique facilities in the engineering sciences. Collaboration is an essential part of this, on the basis of our strong identity and reputation. TU Delft wants to be a breeding ground for cutting-edge technological scientific developments to meet the great societal challenges of our age.

It is also our ambition to be viewed by the business community as a source of outstanding professional scientists and engineers, as a producer of excellent practical knowledge and as an innovative partner. In other words, as a university where new business activities are allowed to blossom and where the research and education have a significant impact on the competitive economic environment.

TU Delft wants to be a place where academics and students think in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary terms, and where science, design and engineering are the primary driving forces behind teaching and research. We wish to be an inspiring, progressive and gender-aware institution, attracting the world's best scientists and most gifted students in the knowledge that their talents will be allowed to develop to the full here.

2.3 Mission

TU Delft contributes to a sustainable society in the 21st century in a substantial way. It does this by carrying out world-class scientific research in the field of technology. It educates engineers and PhDs that engage with society, and helps to translate knowledge into technological innovations and activities with economic and social value.

3. Core Values

Universities thrive where intellectual and academic freedom, integrity, respect, the pursuit of knowledge and scientific expertise combine to produce new knowledge and disseminate it, introducing it to the wider world. Core values of TU Delft are: *respect, integrity, expertise, involvement* and *transparency*. In addition to this, an important principle is the avoidance of any semblance of conflict of interest.

Our modus operandi as an institution is trust – by which we mean that every member of our community is expected to comply with the core values, to draw inspiration from them and to feel responsible for upholding them. All at TU Delft should act with a sense of social responsibility and be aware of technology's value to and impact upon society.

Our staff, our students and our guests are all open about the roles they play and the activities they perform. Much of what the university does is situated on the interface between the public and private sectors. Avoiding any semblance of conflict of interests is therefore a key guiding principle for us. Ours is a learning organisation, with a culture in which drawing lessons from positive experiences elsewhere – as well as from “what went wrong” – comes as second nature.

3.1 Respect

Employees and students of TU Delft respect each other's individual qualities. Freedom to excel is all-important, both for the academic and the support staff. Respect implies that people are never treated merely as means towards the attainment of personal or organisational goals. It implies that employees will not demean, humiliate or manipulate others. They respect the freedom of others and will not intentionally harm others or TU Delft as an organisation. Employees and students accept others as they are and will not insult, discriminate against or (sexually) intimidate others.

3.2 Integrity

Integrity means being independent, honest and sincere. A person of integrity acts according to norms and values, even if that means that the interests of society, the university and others override personal interests. Integrity enables people to evaluate ethical issues, which often occurs on the basis of previous experience.

Members of staff and students of TU Delft respect privacy and confidential information, and are prepared to take responsibility for their own actions. These actions should be focused on realising the goals of the university, while taking into account the values, interests and needs of others.

Integrity is primarily a personal quality that cannot be taken for granted, and therefore those in managerial positions and roles have a responsibility to ensure that people act with integrity.

3.3 Expertise

In order to provide the excellent education and research that affords TU Delft its place among the top universities of technology in the world, many demands are made on its employees. It is a combination of expertise, excellent personal skills and professionalism that makes it possible for TU Delft to achieve its goals of excellence in research and teaching. The university asks of all of its staff that they do their utmost to ensure that they are well informed in terms of their field and function. Employees of TU Delft want to be in the forefront of knowledge production and cutting-edge research, provide inspiring education and support each other optimally. This is all in the interest of our university as a whole.

3.4 Involvement

TU Delft strives to make a significant contribution to the development of responsible solutions to urgent problems in society, both on a national and global scale. A key part of this vision consists in realising world-class multidisciplinary research with a view to sustainability. Students as well as employees are responsible for achieving the goals of the university. They translate the social responsibility of TU Delft into its educational programmes, research, design, student projects and within the activities of the support staff. They show an active interest in university policies; an interest that expresses itself in participation in representative organs for employees and students, work councils, other committees and in the attendance of university gatherings.

In addition to the involvement that our staff and students have for society, our involvement is also expressed in the way we relate to each other. We inspire each other and are prepared to offer and receive constructive criticism, thus improving the quality of work and education.

3.5 Transparency

TU Delft is an open academic community. It creates an environment where employees, students and guests communicate with each other openly. This openness ensures that the education, research and valorisation as well as the administrative and decision-making processes are verifiable at all levels of the university.

Employees and students of our university are accountable for their actions. They are able and willing to disclose their concerns and choices with each other and the outside world, not as opportunities for self-justification, but as opportunities to develop greater mutual understanding. Those in managerial positions and roles are responsible for creating a safe environment in which employees and students feel responsible and accountable. They encourage their employees to be open to criticism and willing to offer criticism when necessary.

3.6 Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest arise when one's duties to the university and either personal or professional outside interests are at odds. All members of the university community must take care to avoid any semblance of conflicts of interest. All staff, students and guests are open about their various roles and how they are carried out. This also means that they act with caution when taking on various roles and always weigh up the public interests and those of TU Delft in this against the benefits of their participation. If, for instance, in the course of normal university business, a decision is unduly influenced by the potential for personal gain, there may be a conflict of interest that raises ethical concerns. The best approach is generally to maintain transparency and report potential conflicts of interest to the management.

People who work or study at TU Delft:

- Have respect for others
- Carry out their duties with commitment, transparency and integrity
- Contribute to an inspiring work and study environment by utilising their expertise
- Trust each other and avoid conflicts of interest.

4. Roles & Parties

Section 3 formulated the core values that ought to guide the behaviour of everyone who forms part of the TU Delft community. This section applies these core values to the organisation of TU Delft, its members of staff and the students of our university.

4.1 TU Delft

TU Delft is responsible for the conditions under which employees and students work and bear responsibilities. In order to fulfil that responsibility, the university must be proactive and aware of the fact that the policies and incentive structures it puts in place are essential to stimulating the desired behaviour.

In order to encourage the aspirations, responsibilities and rights formulated in this Code of Ethics TU Delft puts in place an 'ethical infrastructure'. It also establishes and maintains a website that provides a clear overview of this ethical infrastructure, i.e. its values, principles, codes, normative policies and the institutional mechanisms which aim to implement them.

Furthermore, the following values are among the most prominent ones to which the university is committed.

4.1.1 Personal development

Every person working or studying at TU Delft is offered the opportunity to keep their skills and competencies up-to-date in a dynamic environment, by means of training and personal development. The university respects the autonomy and privacy of employees and students as it believes that these are resources that aid self-reflection, self-assessment and personal growth.

4.1.2 Cooperation

In order to achieve collective goals and synergy between different parts of the organisation, the university encourages cooperation among its employees and between employees and students. Knowledge thrives in an atmosphere of openness and cooperative inquiry. Science, engineering and design are, in important respects, social and collective endeavours, in which trust, collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and information are essential to achieving excellence.

4.1.3 Being a good employer

Employees are challenged to develop themselves, to professionalise and to improve their competencies. Result & Development interviews (appraisals) serve as an important tool for providing a fair insight in their performance and prospects. Employees are rewarded fairly by way of payment and professional attention for their work. The board of the university is committed to providing equal opportunities for job advancement, and in those cases where equality is not yet the norm, for instance in the case of representation of women in academic positions, affirmative action will be taken.

4.1.4 Being a good teacher

TU Delft offers its students high-quality education rooted in leading scientific research. We train our students to think critically, take initiative, act independently, and work in multidisciplinary project teams. During their studies, students develop an insight into ethical and social developments and relationships. Teachers challenge, motivate and encourage curiosity in their students. Information on the curricula and facilities of TU Delft is clear, complete and easily accessible.

4.1.5 Information and participation

TU Delft provides its employees and students with clear information and opportunities to stand up and be heard. It informs them in a timely manner so that they can fulfil their responsibilities and achieve their legitimate goals.

4.1.6 Facilities

TU Delft is responsible for providing suitable workplaces and study environments. Sustainable solutions are the preferred option.

The university provides its students and employees with:

- Equal opportunities for personal development and cooperation
- A sustainable working environment and a stimulating study environment
- Involvement and a right to be heard in decision-making processes.

4.2 Employees

We consider a fair and critical appreciation of each other's work to be an aspect of civilised behaviour. To treat each other fairly and with respect, to make an effort to communicate clearly and openly, to help each other and to strive for a healthy team spirit are highly valued qualities. All employees will set an example for their colleagues, students and guests of TU Delft, with regards to open communication, calling each other to account on behaviour and dealing responsibly with ethical aspects of professional practice and study.

- Employees see the concerns of other people and anticipate those concerns
- Employees work actively to inform others; employees get involved and help where necessary
- Employees aim for high quality and improvement at all times
- Employees are enterprising and encourage entrepreneurship
- Employees are proactive, are open to criticism and willing to offer criticism when necessary

These qualities make an important contribution towards creating an inspiring and innovating university environment.

4.2.1 Managerial positions and roles

Those in managerial positions and roles have an exemplary function when it comes to their conduct. They set clear goals, they encourage employees to perform well, they create an environment for inspiring cooperation in teams and they admonish employees who conduct themselves in unacceptable ways. They welcome criticism and suggestions from employees.

4.2.2 Academic staff

Academic staff apply the core values in their role as researcher as well as in their interaction with their students and colleagues. They strive to present excellent and innovative contributions to their field and bring those to the attention of their peers and of a larger audience. They are aware of dilemmas and the social dimensions of work in their field and take care to execute their research meticulously. They strive to avoid potential conflicts of interest, and bring such conflicts to the attention of the university if these come to their attention.

Academic freedom is guaranteed within the national legal framework, strategies, research programs, and curriculum. Integrity and open inquiry are essential for the reputation of science, and the researcher will act accordingly.

In their role as educators, members of the academic staff strive to ensure the high quality of course content as well as good didactic skills. Students attach great importance to the quality of the teaching

and the enthusiasm of the teacher. In response, teachers strive to improve themselves. Teachers treat students respectfully. They clearly state what is expected of students, and they admonish students when their behaviour is unacceptable.

Teachers will make sure that assignments and exams are in line with the objectives of the course and that students are assessed conscientiously. They prevent students from unfairly benefiting from others' efforts as much as possible. They stick to their lecture schedules, keep their appointments, welcome constructive criticism and make themselves available to students personally and via e-mail during reasonable hours.

Our academic staff is familiar with The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice, other professional codes that may apply to their discipline or field of research and the general ethical infrastructure of TU Delft as it has been published and disseminated on the website and in relevant publications. The principles outlined therein may be interpreted as general guidelines that indicate what the exemplary practice of science entails, and the need for scientific proceedings to be transparent.

4.2.3 Support staff

Individual development and personal motivation is coupled with a constant alertness to opportunities for improvement, for promoting efficiency and for developing a results-oriented approach. This focus on the core values is characterised by expertise within their field, customer satisfaction, service-orientation and helpfulness.

4.2.4 University resources

Employees are careful and efficient in using, keeping and maintaining university resources, such as budgets, computers and networks (see also TU Delft Regulations for the use of Computer and Network Facilities). The same applies to confidential information.

4.2.5 Secondary employment

Employees who take on other paid and unpaid duties and receive remunerations ensure that these are not at the expense of or at variance with their professional duties at TU Delft, and that they do not compromise their impartiality and independence. Secondary employment may not adversely affect the scientific or business interests of the university. Procedures for obtaining permission for various types of ancillary work are part of the publicised regulations and procedures of TU Delft (TU Delft Regulations on Secondary Employment).

4.2.6 Whistle-blowing

There are accepted and established procedures for ensuring that serious violations of ethical rules are properly handled (TU Delft Regulations for Whistle-blowing). These are part of the publicised regulations and procedures of TU Delft. These procedures are not at variance with the principle and practice of mutual trust, but are put in place to address injustices and violations of law, regulations, codes of conduct and this Code of Ethics that may otherwise go undetected. These mechanisms are meant to protect both the person who is taking steps in response to this violation and the person who is alleged to have violated ethical rules. Autonomy and integrity of the grievance process requires that those suspected of wrongdoing be regarded as innocent until proven otherwise and be treated with respect, and the grievance and inquiry procedure be kept confidential, until a formal response occurs. Everyone will abide by the formal process and propagate the ethical guidelines, both in their informal, day-to-day application and through formal inquiry and adjudication procedures.

TU Delft employees:

- Behave fairly and respectfully towards each other and towards students
- Aim for high quality and for improvement at all times

- Treat university resources with care.

4.3 Students

Those who study at TU Delft are preparing for a career and a responsible position in society. This requires intellectual curiosity, active participation in courses and extracurricular activities, and an optimal effort to obtain good results in their studies.

4.3.1 *Autonomy*

Students choose their own path through the available curricula, and make sure they know what is expected of them. Students learn to work independently, to solve problems, and to be meticulous in gathering information. Students at all levels are familiar with the publicised policies on plagiarism and cheating at the university. They prepare for exams with due care. With group assignments they have an active and cooperative attitude and share the work equally. When students become aware individuals profiting unfairly from others' efforts, they will challenge them about this. PhD candidates are taught the standards of scientific integrity and are expected to apply these in their work.

4.3.2 *Active participation*

Students actively participate in their studies. By asking analytical questions and conducting well-argued discussions, they stimulate each other and their teachers. This requires a thorough preparation for seminars. Students actively contribute to a sustainable society.

4.3.3 *Pro-social attitude*

Respect is paramount in communications between students and employees. This is expressed in the style, tone and form of e-mails and direct contacts. Students are willing to help each other without risking unfair assessment of others. They refrain from behaving in such a way that it hampers fellow students or impedes the quality of the course. They respect each other's property and refrain from psychological and physical violence, discrimination and harassment.

4.3.4 *Educational resources*

Students treat university resources, such as computers, the library, lecture halls etc., with care. See also TU Delft Management Regulations for the Use of Educational ICT Facilities by Students and TU Delft Regulations for the Use of Buildings, Premises and Facilities by Students and Visitors ('House Rules').

TU Delft students:

- Behave fairly and respectfully to each other and to university employees
- Get the best out of themselves by actively participating in their education and extracurricular activities
- Stimulate each other and their teachers by asking analytical questions and conducting well-argued discussions
- Respect each other's and university property and resources.

5. Additional Codes

In addition to this code, TU Delft is bound to a number of other specific Codes that have been established by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). This Code of Ethics is complementary to these.

The Codes that apply are:

- Code of good governance (June, 2012)
- International students in Dutch higher education (February, 2006)
- Use of personal data in scientific research (December, 2005)
- The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice (January, 2005, with amendments from 2012)
- Intimidation (either sexual or not), aggression and discrimination, ex article 2, collective labour agreement of Dutch universities (January, 2000).

Other relevant TU Delft Regulations are:

- TU Delft Regulations for Complaints concerning Undesirable Behaviour
- TU Delft Regulations for Whistle-blowing
- TU Delft Regulations on Secondary Employment
- TU Delft Regulations for the Use of Computer and Network Facilities
- TU Delft Management Regulations for the Use of Educational ICT Facilities by Students
- TU Delft Regulations for the Use of Buildings, Premises and Facilities by Students and Visitors ('House Rules').

Furthermore, additional codes exist in various fields of science, like biotechnology, to which the employees of TU Delft are also bound.

This Code of Ethics should be interpreted as the standard of behaviour for members of the TU Delft community.

An 'Integrity Website' has been constructed, which explains all the relevant regulations, points out the coherence between them and refers to relevant committees and contact persons.

www.integrity.tudelft.nl