**MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY**

**ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

**UNIVERSITY ETHICS COMMITTEE ETH/08/07**

**Ethics 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 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 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 Working Together Code of Conduct <http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/Assets/HR_working_together.pdf>

**The University Ethics Committee**

The Committee has an oversight of all aspects of ethical matters at the University. It will monitor and review the activities and resources used to support, implement and embed ethics into our practices. This will include providing guidance and advice to Schools and Services and individual members of staff, collaborative partners, visiting academics and honorary researchers on activities carried out in the name of Middlesex University that may have ethical implications e.g., arising from teaching, research and institutional practice.

The Committee will monitor and review on a regular basis a range of related policies that impinge on the work of the University Ethics Committee to ensure adherence to ethical principles. They will also make available, in a central place, reference material on ethical guidelines produced by professional bodies, funding councils and other national bodies for appropriate implementation, and organize appropriate training on ethical issues. This will include recommendations about specialist ethical guidelines to be adopted to cover specific areas of academic activity and professional practice.

Finally the Committee will consider issues concerning ethics referred to the University Ethics Committee by any other university body and to advise on wider aspects of University life/activities that may have ethical implications (internal or external).

**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[[1]](#footnote-1).

The University 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 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’ 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 and 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 at all times, having regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the University, (its mission and core values) and the rights and interests of colleagues and students.

**Governance**

In order for the University Ethics Committee to fulfill its remit, all Schools and Services should have established mechanisms to undertake ethical scrutiny. In Schools there is a requirement to have the facility to scrutinise ethical matters with regard to research and teaching, and report on these matters to the University Ethics Committee.

* The University Ethics Committee reports to the Assurance Committee on ethical matters within the University.
* Key University policies and related documents (i.e., people policies A-Z, financial and purchasing policies, IT policies, copyright, data protection, intellectual property, research policies, security policies and ethical matters) can be found on the intranet at: <http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/working-here/policies/index.aspx>
* TC/May 2014
* ***This Framework Statement was approved by the Assurance Committee July 2014. It is due for review in July 2019.***
1. These are: Integrity, objectivity, openness, selflessness, accountability, honesty, and leadership. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)