



**ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA**

**ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN**

Autonomous - NAAC Re-Accredited), O.U. Campus, Hyderabad – 500 007



## **CODE OF ETHICS**

### **Introduction**

The College believes in a judicious combination of teaching and research for the benefit of the student community at large. The Institution envisages innovation and technological development through its R&D cell. It has plans to cultivate academic and research collaborations with national and international universities, government agencies and industries to meet the immediate needs of society and the industry. The Institution has a focused research policy and the research facilities are updated using the funds received from Government and Private Agencies.

Code of Ethics in Research sets for the general principles of ethical conduct to guide scholars towards the ideas of scholarly Research. The principles represent goals and standards that should direct Researchers to an ethical course of action. They are consonant with the vision, mission and values of the Institution. Further, the Ethics in Research applies to all members of the Institution, thus the principles are stated broadly in order to apply to all scholars in various disciplines using various methods of inquiry, and their specific application may vary with the context of the Researcher.

The Research and Development cell of the institution functions based on the following objectives.

- To enhance the research awareness among faculty by organizing discussions with eminent researchers and conducting national and international conferences, seminars, symposia, faculty development programmes and workshops on research methodology, IPR and patenting.
- To motivate faculty to pursue doctoral and post-doctoral assignments at various national and international universities and organizations of repute.
- To encourage faculty to undertake research projects in thrust areas in science and engineering funded by various national and



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international agencies.

- To explore new horizons of knowledge and ensure its practical implementation through collective efforts and quality research work.
- To provide a creative atmosphere, complemented by adequate facilities and resources in which higher studies and research interests may thrive amongst the faculty and students.
- To establish Centers of Excellence in thrust areas.
- To set up the Incubation Centers to motivate innovations and start-ups.
- To mentor the academic and industry-based research projects.
- To encourage faculty to publish the research works in renowned journals through suitable appraisal policy.
- To motivate and mentor students to participate in various Hackathons and International contests.
- To develop products and file Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).
- To provide the faculty members with Seed Money for research activities in-order to enable them to obtain research projects from various government bodies.

## Academic Research

### A. Academic Freedom, Integrity and Responsibility

Academic freedom is the freedom to teach, study and pursue knowledge and research without unreasonable interference or restriction from law, institutional regulations or public pressure. Its basic elements include the freedom of scholars to inquire into any subject that evokes intellectual concern, to present findings, to publish data and conclusions without control or censorship and to teach in the manner they consider professionally appropriate.

At the same time, integrity, accountability and responsibility in conducting academic research form the cornerstone of any academic enterprise and violations of widely-recognized academic research standards represent serious offences to the entire academic community at the Institution and are considered injurious for its credibility and authority



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as an institution that promotes excellence in academic research in India.

Academic integrity requires that academic research follows elevated professional standards, including appropriate research design and frameworks, adheres to high levels of research ethics and abides by the requirements set out by professional and regulatory research guidance and research ethics frameworks issued in appropriate areas.

### **Principles and Values of Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is defined in terms of the commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, legality and dissemination.

**Honesty:** The Institution should advance the quest for truth, knowledge, scholarship and understanding by requiring Intellectual knowledge.

**Trust:** The Institution should foster a climate of mutual trust to encourage the free exchange of ideas and enable all to reach their highest potential.

**Fairness:** The Institution should seek to ensure fairness in institutional standards, practices and procedures as well as fairness in interactions between members of the community.

**Respect:** The Institution should promote respect among students, staff and faculty: respect for self, for others, for scholarship and research, for the educational process and intellectual heritage.

**Responsibility:** The Institution should uphold high standards of conduct in learning, teaching and research by requiring shared responsibility for promoting academic integrity among all members of the community.

**Legality:** The Institution should observe valid legal norms related to the conduct and publication of research particularly in relations to copyright, the intellectual property rights of third parties, the terms and conditions regulating access to research resources and the laws of libel.

**Communication:** The Institution should seek to make the results of its research as widely and as freely available as possible.

### **B. Institutional Responsibilities**

The Principal, Dean for Research and Development, the Heads of



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Departments, together with the teaching faculty members, are responsible for promoting and endorsing a transparent academic environment conducive to the application of the high professional and ethical criteria of good practice for academic research. Faculty are expected to create and sustain a climate of mutual co-operation that facilitates the open exchange of ideas and researchers, in accordance with the nature of the individual academic discipline and associated mode of research.

The Institution is committed to the provision of appropriate direction of research and supervision for researchers. Research supervisors are expected to adhere to the Code of Practice for Doctoral Supervision, which delineates the supervisory relationship, the assessment of research progress, and the procedures to resolve problems in the supervisory relationship.

### **C. Training**

The Academic Departments should ensure that all researchers undertake appropriate training in research design, methodology, regulatory and ethics approvals and consents, equipment use, confidentiality, data management, record keeping, data protection and publication, the appropriate use of licensed research resources and respect for the intellectual property rights of third parties.

The Institution is also committed to preparing its administrative and support staff involved in record keeping and the implementation of Data Protection Policy and expects them to fully respect the principles and rules of the Code of Ethics in Academic Research.

### **D. Publication Practice and Authorship**

The Institution encourages the publication and dissemination of results of high-quality research. It also expects that researchers will engage in the process of publishing and dissemination of their work responsibly and with an awareness of the consequences of any such dissemination in the wider media. Results should be published in a form appropriate to the academic discipline. The Institution requires that all individuals listed as authors accept responsibility for the contents of



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the publication and can identify their contribution to it.

## **The Ethics Committee**

### **A. Tasks of the Ethics Committee**

- To provide advice and guidance to the academic community on all matters pertaining to academic research ethics.
- To approve the doctoral thesis of research scholars who are due for submission to university after checking plagiarism level.
- To provide guidance and academic support to scholars on ethical issues with respect to teaching, research and other academic activities. On an entirely voluntary basis, researchers may ask the Ethics Committee for consultation on ethical aspects of their research.
- To confirm to external parties on behalf of the Institution compliance with ethical standards with respect to research projects undertaken at the Institution. The Committee is only convened at the explicit request of scholars needing an assessment of the ethical dimensions of a research project.
- To act as an investigative/consultative body for any disputed matter concerning research ethics and conduct
- To make recommendations to the Internal Disciplinary Committee on what action, if any, should be taken as a result of the investigations.

### **B. Appointment and Composition of the Ethics Committee**

The Ethics Committee is appointed by the Principal. The nomination of faculty members of the Committee should comprise of faculty from all the disciplines of the Institution.



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## **Misconduct in Academic Research**

### **A. Misconduct in Research**

Misconduct in academic research implies (and is not limited to) fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of research and deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviations from accepted practice in carrying out research. It includes failure to follow an agreed protocol if and when this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to persons, the environment, and when it facilitates misconduct in research by collusion in, or concealment of, such actions by others.

Misconduct also includes any plan or attempt to do any of these things. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretation or judgment in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct unrelated to research processes.

Misconduct includes (and is not limited to) the following acts:

**Plagiarism:** The deliberate copying of ideas, text, data or other work (or any combination thereof) without proper permission and acknowledgement.

**Privacy:** The deliberate exploitation of ideas from others without proper acknowledgement

**Abuse of Intellectual Property Rights:** Failure to observe legal norms of copyright and the moral rights of authors.

**Abuse of Research Resources:** Failure to observe the terms and conditions of institutionally licensed research resources.

**Defamation:** Failure to observe relevant legal norms governing libel and slander.

**Misinterpretation:** The deliberate attempt to represent falsely or failed to understand or interpret something correctly.

**Personation:** The situation where someone other than the person who has submitted any academic work has prepared (parts of) the work;

**Fabrication and Fraud:** The falsification or invention of qualifications, data, information or citations in any formal academic exercise.

**Sabotage:** Acting to prevent others from completing their work.



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This includes stealing or cutting pages out of library books or otherwise damaging them; or willfully disrupting the experiments of others; or endangering institutional access to licensed research resources by willfully failing to observe their terms and conditions.

**Professorial misconduct:** Professorial acts those are arbitrary, biased or exploitative.

**Denying access to information or material:** To deny others access arbitrarily to scholarly resources or to deliberately and groundlessly impede their progress.

**Misconduct in formal examinations:** Includes having access, or attempting to gain access during an examination, to any books, memoranda, notes, unauthorized electronic devices or any other material, except such as may have been supplied by the invigilator or authorized by the Academic Department.

#### **B. Identifying levels of violations of good academic practice:**

Two levels of violations of good academic practice can be distinguished.

##### **1. Minor Violations:**

Minor violations may occur because of inexperience or lack of knowledge of the principles of academic integrity and are often characterized by the absence of dishonest intent on the part of the person committing the violation.

They may result from:

- a. weak procedures and methods which may jeopardise the integrity of the research but are not undertaken deliberately or recklessly
- b. weaknesses which present no major risks to either subjects or policies which they may influence

On the whole, these minor violations can be seen as failings which may reflect only poor, rather than unacceptable practices and therefore mainly require further training and development rather than any formal disciplinary action.



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Examples of minor violations include:

- Minor plagiarism defined as a small amount of paraphrasing, quotation or use of diagrams, charts etc. without adequate citation. Minor plagiarism may result from poor scholarship (i.e. when a student, through inexperience or carelessness, fails to reference appropriately or adequately identify the source of the material which they use).
- inaccurate claims to experience, qualifications or contributions in a context where the person committing the violation cannot expect major benefits (such as winning a competition for a prize or job).
- inaccurate representation of findings without deliberate distortion.
- lack of diligence in declaring relevant conflicts of interest.

Such violations may present no risks to subjects, the wider community or the environment, but they may warrant some penalty or sanction at Institutional level.

## **2. Major Violations:**

Major violations are breaches of academic integrity that are more serious in nature or that affect a more significant aspect or portion of the academic work compared with minor violations.

Key examples are:

- a. Deliberate, reckless or grossly negligent conduct which would clearly pose a significant risk in one form or another to the integrity of the research.
- b. Conduct that may pose risks to subjects, the wider community, the environment, or to the research reputation of the institution and research in general.
- c. Major plagiarism is defined as:
  - Extensive paraphrasing or quoting without proper citation of the source;
  - Lifting directly from a text or other academic source without reference;
  - The use of papers (or parts thereof) from essay banks, either





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downloaded from the internet or obtained from other sources;

- Presenting another's designs or concepts as one's own;
- Continued instances of what was initially regarded as minor plagiarism despite warnings having been given.

The Institution is committed to fully investigate serious violations of academic misconduct by any academic member.

#### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism represents unethical scientific behavior which is never acceptable. Proper acknowledgement of the work of other used in a research work must always be given. Further, it is the obligatory on part of each author to provide prompt corrections or errors in published work.

#### **Degrees of Plagiarism:**

1. Invalid source
2. Secondary source
3. Duplication
4. Paraphrasing
5. Repetitive research
6. Replication
7. Misleading attribution
8. Unethical collaboration
9. Verbatim plagiarism
10. Complete plagiarism

#### **Possible nature of Ethical violations:**

- Conflict of Interest: Any action that may result in a conflict of interest must be fully disclosed. When impartiality and effectiveness cannot be maintained, the activity should be avoided or discontinued.
- Disputes about authorship: Proper authorship representation is usually a matter for the involved parties to resolve
- Duplicate Submission: Duplicate submission is unprofessional and unacceptable. It misuses the resources of all affected journals,



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including the valuable time of editors, reviewers and staff

- Fabrication of data or results: Any incidence of fabrication shall be considered to be an extremely serious breach of professional conduct, with potentially severe ethical and legal consequences. The institution checks the plagiarism of research thesis online sources.

Plagiarism Checker Software:

1. Quill Bot

Action/Penalty against defaulters:

Any violation of the rule and other issues, complaints regarding plagiarism attract disciplinary action to be imposed by committee within one month from the day of complaint. Depending on the type of acts and violation of code of ethics, suitable penalty or punishment against defaulters shall be recommended by the review committee.

### **C. Procedures for Investigation of Research Misconduct**

#### **1. Investigation of proceedings**

Without prejudice to the right and duty of Departments to address and assess issues of plagiarism in the course of the regular assessment of a paper presented by a researcher, any person may submit a complaint about academic misconduct to the Principal. Such complaints need to be supported by sufficient evidence.

The Principal will decide whether the allegation is serious enough to warrant an investigation by the Ethics Committee. If the allegation concerns a PhD researcher, the Principal may also delegate this task to the Head of the Department (s). The initiator of the allegation shall be asked to set out in writing the basis of the allegation.

The Ethics Committee may carry out:

- ❖ a preliminary investigation to ascertain whether there is sufficient substance to the allegation as to warrant a more thorough investigation;



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- ❖ a formal inquiry which may include the consultation or involvement of external experts when needed.

## **2. Investigation**

The investigation will include examination of all relevant documentation, including, but not limited to: relevant research data; laboratory notebooks; computer files; other materials; proposals; publications; correspondence; and memoranda, insofar as this is necessary for the investigation and compatible with the Institution Data Protection Policy.

The Chair of the Ethics Committee may invite internal or external experts who are not involved in the disputed matter and who are not members of the Committee to attend meetings.

Interviews shall be conducted with the complainant and the respondent. Other individuals involved in making the allegations and individuals who might have information regarding key aspects of the allegations may also be heard by the Committee.

The respondent has the right to be assisted or represented by a member of the Institution of his/her own choice. Details of the allegations and the investigation will be made available only to the Ethics Committee. All individuals interviewed during the investigation will be asked to respect the confidential nature of the investigation.

## **3. Investigation report and recommendations**

The Ethics Committee will produce a report stating: the procedures under which the formal investigation was conducted; how and, where appropriate, from whom information was obtained; the findings of the committee and the basis for these; a summary of the views of the respondent; and a description of any recommendations made by the committee.

The respondent will receive a copy of the investigation report and have an opportunity to comment on it. Comments may be submitted to the Ethics Committee and will be attached as an addendum to the investigation report. If disciplinary actions are recommended, the Ethics Committee will communicate to the internal Disciplinary Committee



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regarding what action, should be taken as a result of the investigation.

Based on the investigation report and recommendations of the Ethics Committee, the Disciplinary Committee may decide on sanction of further orders (when considered appropriate).

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions, as recommended by the Ethics Committee and as decided by the Disciplinary and/or Disciplinary Appeals Committee, may include (but are not limited to):

1. Resubmission of an assignment or academic work
2. A failing grade for the examination or specific assigned exercise; or a failing grade for the course as a whole, depending on the importance of the work to the overall course grade
3. A letter of reprimand, issued by the chair of the disciplinary committee, which may or may not be recorded on the scholar's file.



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