



**Khazar University**

**Ethics Committee Regulations**

## **1. General provisions**

1.1 These Regulations define the guiding principles and procedural framework of the Khazar University Ethics Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”), which is established to consider and address ethical matters arising within the University’s governance system and workplace environment.

1.2 The Regulations are prepared in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the internal normative documents of Khazar University, including:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Human Rights and Modern Slavery Ethical Conduct Policy
- Student Disciplinary Regulations
- Ethical Employment Practices and the Internal Reporting Procedure.

1.3 In its activities, the Committee is guided by the principles of legality, equality, respect for human dignity, fairness, impartiality, confidentiality, and accountability, and ensures that ethical concerns are examined transparently and fairly.

1.4 The Committee considers breaches related to:

- professional conduct and workplace ethics;
- dignity, harassment, bullying, mobbing, intimidation;
- discrimination and unequal treatment in employment-related and in academic contexts;
- student disciplinary matters and academic misconduct;
- conflicts of interest, abuse of authority, misuse of University resources;
- other misconduct falling under Khazar University’s Code of Ethics and Conduct, Human Rights, Modern Slavery, Student Disciplinary Regulations, Ethical Employment Practices, and Internal Reporting Procedure;

1.5 The scope of the Committee does not include cases related to research ethics.

## **2. Members**

2.1 The Ethics Committee shall consist of members, appointed in accordance with the internal governance procedures of Khazar University, ensuring balanced representation, institutional competence, and independence in decision-making. Student Representative may be included in cases directly affecting students or student-related ethical issues, provided that such participation does not compromise confidentiality or procedural integrity. A member of the Committee shall recuse themselves from the consideration, discussion, and decision-making of a case where an actual or potential conflict of interest exists that may compromise their impartiality and independence.

2.2 Grounds for recusal may include, but are not limited to, situations in which the member:

- belongs to the same academic, administrative, or organizational unit as the reporting person (complainant) or respondent;
- has direct or indirect reporting, supervisory, or subordinate relationships with any party involved;
- maintains a close personal, family, or close relationship with any party to the case;
- has previously been involved in the events, decisions, or actions that are the subject of the complaint;
- has a financial, professional, academic, or other personal interest in the outcome of the case.

2.3 A member who identifies such a conflict shall declare it and refrain from participating in any stage of the proceedings related to the case, including access to case materials, deliberations, and voting. Where necessary, the Chair of the Committee may also require the recusal of a member.

### **3. Functions**

3.1 The Committee:

- receives and registers ethics reports/complaints via reporting channels;
- conducts preliminary assessment of the reported cases;
- requests for written explanations and relevant documents;
- invites parties and witnesses to meetings;
- issues recommendations (corrective actions, mediation, training, policy change, or referral for disciplinary action);
- refers matters for disciplinary measures in accordance with the Labor Code and internal rules and regulations.
- prepares an annual anonymized ethics report.

### **4. Meetings timeline**

4.1. The Committee shall hold regular meetings at least once per month in accordance with the meeting schedule.

4.2. Extraordinary meetings may be convened as needed to address urgent matters that cannot reasonably be postponed until the next regular meeting.

4.3. An extraordinary meeting shall be arranged by the Chair (or, in the Chair's absence, the Deputy Chair) upon:

- receipt of an urgent complaint or report under the Internal Reporting Procedure; or
- a written request from at least one-third of Committee members.

4.4. For extraordinary meetings, members shall be notified as soon as practicable. The Committee may set shortened notice periods for urgent cases, provided that due process and confidentiality requirements are maintained.

4.5. Where immediate arranging is not feasible, the Chair may initiate an online meeting or written consultation to ensure timely consideration, with the outcome recorded in the minutes.

## **5. Reporting channels**

5.1 Reporting of ethical concerns may be carried out through an online submission form available on the official website of Khazar University.

5.2 Also, reports may be submitted via channels specified in Khazar University's Ethical Employment Practices and Internal Reporting Procedure:

- Email: [report@khazar.org](mailto:report@khazar.org)
- Sealed letter to the Office of the Vice-Rector for Administration Affairs
- In-person report to the Dean's Office, Quality Assurance Center, HR.
- Anonymous suggestion/report boxes located on campus

5.3 All reports submitted through the online form shall be received, registered, and reviewed in accordance with the University's Internal Reporting Procedure, ensuring confidentiality, data protection, and protection against retaliation. Anonymous reporting is allowed, however, the Committee may be limited in follow-up if the evidence is insufficient. Anonymous reports shall be assessed based on the information provided and pursued to the extent that sufficient factual detail allows effective review and follow-up.

## **6. Procedure**

6.1 The Ethics Committee shall examine and resolve reported cases in a structured, fair, and timely manner, ensuring due process, impartiality, confidentiality, and respect for the rights of all parties involved. Within five (5) workdays of receipt of a report, the Committee shall conduct a preliminary review to determine admissibility and appropriate handling. Where the case proceeds beyond the preliminary review, the respondent shall be formally

notified of the existence and nature of the allegations. The Committee shall conduct an impartial and proportionate investigation aimed at establishing relevant facts. At the monthly meeting, the Committee shall reach a decision based on the evidence and formulate recommendations.

## **7. Rights**

7.1 The reporting person has the right:

- to be treated with respect and dignity and to be allowed to present information;
- to receive an acknowledgement of receipt of the report and status updates on the process, within the limits of confidentiality;
- to be protected against retaliation for reporting in good faith, in accordance with the Internal Reporting Procedure, applicable legislation, and University policies.

7.2 The respondent has the right:

- to be informed of the substance of the allegations in a timely manner, to the extent permitted by confidentiality and safeguarding requirements;
- to provide explanations and submit relevant information and evidence, and to identify witnesses;
- to request the recusal of any Committee member where there is a conflict of interest or a reasonable apprehension of bias;
- to receive written notification (or a written summary) of the outcome, subject to confidentiality and data protection requirements.

## **8. Reporting and prevention**

8.1. Annual anonymized reporting

8.2 The Committee shall prepare an annual anonymized report summarizing its activities and identifying trends. The report shall not contain personal data or information that could reasonably lead to the identification of any individual. At a minimum, it shall include:

- the total number of reports/cases received and processed during the reporting period;
- the types/categories of issues raised (e.g., harassment, discrimination, academic misconduct, conflicts of interest, misuse of resources), presented in aggregated form;
- case outcomes in aggregated form (e.g., closed after initial review, referred to another unit, resolved through recommendations/mediation), where applicable;
- the average handling time (from registration to closure), and, where relevant, factors affecting timeliness;

- identified systemic or recurring issues, risk areas, and root causes observed across cases;
- the Committee's recommendations for prevention, policy improvements, training, communication, and process enhancements.

8.3. Based on trends and systemic issues identified, the Committee may propose preventive measures, including updates to policies and procedures, targeted trainings, awareness campaigns, managerial guidance, and improvements to reporting channels and protections against retaliation.