

UNIVERSAL AI UNIVERSITY, KARJAT**Whistleblower Policy**

This Policy applies to all stakeholders of Universal AI University, including members of the Governing Body, statutory authorities, faculty, staff, students, researchers, consultants, contractual employees, vendors, service providers, alumni, collaborators, visitors, and any other individual or organization associated with the University.

1. Introduction

Universal AI University is committed to fostering a culture of integrity, transparency, accountability, and ethical governance. The University believes that every stakeholder has a responsibility to uphold these values and contribute to maintaining a fair, honest, and responsible academic and administrative environment.

This Policy establishes a formal mechanism through which genuine concerns regarding unethical conduct, misconduct, fraud, corruption, abuse of authority, or any violation of applicable laws and University policies may be reported without fear of retaliation. The University encourages responsible reporting made in good faith and is committed to ensuring that all disclosures are handled fairly, confidentially, and promptly.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- i) Encourage stakeholders to report genuine concerns in the public interest.
- ii) Promote transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct across the University.
- iii) Provide a secure and confidential mechanism for reporting serious misconduct.
- iv) Ensure that disclosures are reviewed and investigated objectively and fairly.
- v) Protect whistleblowers from retaliation when disclosures are made in good faith.
- vi) Strengthen institutional governance and public confidence in the University's administration.

3. Guiding Principles

The implementation of this Policy shall be guided by the following principles:

a) Good Faith Reporting: Stakeholders are encouraged to report genuine concerns honestly and with reasonable belief that the information provided is true and in the best interests of the University.

b) Fairness and Natural Justice: All disclosures shall be examined objectively, impartially, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice, ensuring that all concerned parties are treated fairly.

c) Confidentiality: The identity of the whistleblower and all related information shall be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible and disclosed only where necessary for investigation or as required by law.

d) Protection Against Retaliation: No whistleblower making a disclosure in good faith shall face retaliation, harassment, discrimination, victimization, or any adverse academic or employment action. Any retaliatory conduct shall invite appropriate disciplinary action.

e) Accountability: Stakeholders shall cooperate with investigations conducted under this Policy. False, malicious, or knowingly misleading complaints may result in disciplinary action.

f) Transparency: All disclosures shall be handled in a fair, timely, and transparent manner while preserving the integrity of the investigation process.

4. Matters that may be Reported

A disclosure under this Policy may relate to any actual or suspected serious misconduct affecting the University, including but not limited to:

- i) Fraud, corruption, bribery, or financial irregularities.
- ii) Academic or research misconduct.
- iii) Examination malpractice or manipulation of academic records.
- iv) Abuse of authority or misuse of official position.
- v) Misappropriation or misuse of University funds, assets, or resources.
- vi) Violation of University Statutes, Regulations, Ordinances, Policies, or Code of Conduct.
- vii) Criminal offences or unlawful activities.
- viii) Conflict of interest affecting official decisions.
- ix) Breach of confidentiality or intellectual property rights.
- x) Deliberate falsification or destruction of records.
- xi) Any act endangering the health, safety, security, or reputation of the University.
- xii) Any attempt to conceal the above misconduct.

This Policy shall not be used for routine service matters, personal grievances, examination appeals, or interpersonal disputes, which shall be addressed through the respective grievance redressal mechanisms of the University.

5. Reporting a Concern

Any stakeholder who has reasonable grounds to believe that a serious violation has occurred or is likely to occur may make a disclosure under this Policy.

The disclosure should:

- i) Be made honestly and in good faith.
- ii) Contain relevant facts and supporting information, wherever available.
- iii) Be submitted as soon as reasonably possible after becoming aware of the matter.

Disclosures may be submitted in writing or through the designated University email to the **Registrar**, who shall function as the Nodal Officer for receiving whistleblower complaints. Where the disclosure concerns the Registrar, it may be submitted directly to the **Vice-Chancellor**.

Anonymous complaints may be considered only where they contain credible and verifiable information sufficient to warrant an inquiry.

6. Review and Investigation

Upon receipt of a disclosure, the University shall undertake a preliminary assessment to determine whether the matter falls within the scope of this Policy.

Where necessary, the Vice-Chancellor may constitute an appropriate committee or authorize the competent authority to conduct an independent inquiry.

Investigations shall be carried out fairly, objectively, and confidentially. Based on the findings, the University may initiate appropriate corrective, disciplinary, administrative, or legal action in accordance with applicable laws and University regulations.

7. Responsibilities

Every stakeholder of the University shall:

- i) Act with honesty, integrity, and professionalism.
- ii) Report genuine concerns responsibly and in good faith.
- iii) Cooperate during any inquiry or investigation.
- iv) Maintain confidentiality relating to the investigation process.
- v) Refrain from making false or malicious allegations.

The Registrar shall facilitate the implementation of this Policy, maintain confidential records, and coordinate with the Competent Authority for appropriate action.

8. Record Keeping

All disclosures, investigation reports, findings, and actions taken under this Policy shall be maintained confidentially by the University in accordance with its Record Retention Policy and applicable legal requirements. Access to such records shall be restricted to authorized officials only.

9. Review of the Policy

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically, or whenever required, to ensure its continued effectiveness and alignment with applicable laws, regulatory requirements, and best governance practices.

Universal AI University is committed to creating an environment where ethical conduct is encouraged and genuine concerns can be raised without fear. Every stakeholder shares the responsibility of safeguarding the University's values by reporting serious misconduct honestly and responsibly, thereby contributing to a transparent, accountable, and trustworthy institutional ecosystem.

