

Code of Conduct

HL-R01-E

Carinthia UAS

Version 2
1 Dec. 2021

<i>Version</i>	<i>Pages changed</i>	<i>Type of change</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Release</i>
1	-	New release	9 Dec. 2015	VS HL
2	All	Update and broadening of the scope of application to include students	1 Dec. 2021	HL

1 Introduction – For Responsible Cooperation

This Code of Conduct establishes a framework upon which all employees and students of Carinthia UAS (hereinafter jointly referred to as Members of Carinthia UAS) should base their conduct. It defines and explains the standards, rules and expectations for responsible and ethical behaviour that are to be upheld by all Carinthia UAS employees (academic and non-academic staff on all organisational levels) as well as all students.

With its Code of Conduct, Carinthia UAS outlines its principles of conduct, values and standards, which serve as an orientation for Members of Carinthia UAS in the context of their varied relationships, not only within Carinthia UAS itself, but also with external partners and the general public. They serve as guidelines on how to treat each other in an appreciative and responsible way.

The laws and regulations relating to universities of applied sciences (e.g. the University of Applied Sciences Act [*Fachhochschulgesetz*], special service regulations such as the Labour Constitution Act [*Arbeitsverfassungsgesetz*], the Salaried Employees Act [*Angestelltengesetz*] and/or company agreements or provisions in employment agreements, learning agreements and also the RE-Ro4 guidelines on merit-based scholarships and grants at Carinthia UAS) remain unaffected by this Code and apply to staff and students of Carinthia UAS.

Moreover, at this point, we refer explicitly to the RE-R14 guidelines on the rules of good scientific practice of Carinthia UAS, which also deal with signs of possible academic misconduct.

2 Basic Standards of Integrity

While we respect the unconditional validity of the freedom of expression principle, Members of Carinthia UAS refrain from making defamatory statements or false factual allegations concerning Carinthia UAS or individuals within or outside of Carinthia UAS.

In the light of freedom of research and teaching, Members of Carinthia UAS adhere to the principles of scientific integrity and academic work. Members of Carinthia UAS carry out their work based on recognised scientific standards, and perform their academic activities according to legal regulations, ethical norms and the current state of science in their particular subject or discipline. This rules out plagiarism, fraud or the falsification of research results. In the case of joint publications, it must be made very clear which co-author wrote which part of the paper (see also RE-14 “Good scientific practice” at Carinthia UAS).

As teachers, we are committed to encouraging and supporting our students while recognizing the principle of freedom in teaching. This includes that the teachers fulfil their obligations to impart skills and qualifications, and their obligation to provide quality teaching and to conduct examinations correctly.

The employees of Carinthia UAS are aware of the extraordinary responsibility that comes with working for Carinthia UAS. They carry out their work to the best of their knowledge and belief and fulfil the responsibilities and tasks assigned to them by demonstrating great commitment and loyalty. These standards essentially include the Mission Statement of Carinthia UAS, which has been included below:

Mission Statement of Carinthia UAS:

- We are a university for applied sciences with an international orientation.
- Through our teaching, research and science transfer activities we contribute significantly to the further development of our students and our partners in academia, business and society. We thereby contribute to Carinthia’s regional development.

- We secure the further development of our university by learning from each other and with each other.
- We are deeply committed to making continuous improvements to our services. Achieving the highest quality in teaching, research and knowledge transfer is our goal.
- We strive for transparency and frank communication, internally and externally, with a clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities.
- We respect our diversity, harness its potential and work together for the benefit of our university.
- We believe in equal opportunities, fairness and performance.

The students of Carinthia UAS adhere to the mission statement of their university too and are distinguished by commitment and loyalty, which they continue to demonstrate as graduates of Carinthia UAS.

3 Relations between Members of Carinthia UAS and with External Partners

3.1 Principles

As staff and students, we treat each other, as well as partners from outside Carinthia UAS, with consideration and show respect for each other's personal integrity.

Carinthia UAS acknowledges the diversity of its staff and students. Carinthia UAS regards the diversity of its staff and students as a potential and tolerates no discrimination based on ethnic background, religious faith or world view, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability (see specifically also Section 4).

3.2 Management and staff relations

Staff are entitled to the greatest possible degree of loyalty and the best possible support from their superiors. This also means that management personnel are obliged to help their employees in problem situations and provide adequate conditions for a positive working environment (duty of care). In the event of conflicts, both management personnel and employees work together to find practical solutions in a constructive atmosphere. Mediation is available in cooperation with Human Resources in exceptionally difficult cases.

Management staff are entitled to the greatest possible degree of loyalty and the best possible performance from the employees assigned to them. Their instructions, standards and guidelines are to be followed as long as these are within legal limits.

3.3 Dealing with each other and with external partners

Members of Carinthia UAS treat each other and external partners in an appreciative and respectful way. To the best of their ability, Carinthia UAS staff and students are courteous, prompt and reliable when they act in each other's best interest and in the best interests of external partners. They always assure to deal with others' concerns in an appropriate manner.

4. Non-discrimination

Carinthia UAS, as a teaching institution and as an employer, regards it as a critical imperative to proactively shape and live by the principles of non-discrimination (equal treatment) and equal opportunities in all their facets. With the help of an active equal treatment policy, Carinthia UAS promotes fair treatment with and among its staff and students. To strengthen and continuously develop this topic further, the Committee for Equal Treatment Affairs was founded.

Equal opportunities at Carinthia UAS means equal and fair education and development opportunities for all Members of Carinthia UAS regardless of their origin, gender, colour of skin, religion, disability/chronic illness, age or sexual orientation. Any kind of biased preferential treatment or discrimination as well as its support or toleration, especially due to the abovementioned characteristics, is forbidden and shall not be tolerated at Carinthia UAS.

Members of Carinthia UAS refrain from any form of impermissible impairment of others. This includes insults as well as any other behavioural patterns (such as bullying) that would generally classify as harassment. Harassment is not tolerated at Carinthia UAS.

Sexual and gender-based harassment, i.e. any type of behaviour which violates a person's dignity and is unwelcome to the person concerned, is not tolerated at Carinthia UAS and can be prosecuted under criminal law and can also have disciplinary consequences and even lead to the termination of the employment contract or to the exclusion from the degree program.

The main topics covered in the area of equal treatment are family friendliness, gender mainstreaming and inclusion.

4.1 Family friendliness

Carinthia UAS works continuously on the enhancement of framework conditions, which enable all Members of Carinthia UAS to achieve a good balance between their personal and work life. This includes the integration of a family-friendly environment to make it easier for people to reconcile studying and having a family. With regard to family-friendliness, Carinthia UAS also has a "university and family audit" process in place, which is used to review and consequently implement processes and measures.

4.2 Gender mainstreaming

Carinthia UAS is committed to promoting gender and diversity competence at the university. This includes integrating the gender approach and the principle of gender equality in study and teaching, research and in the university's management structure.

Whenever positions are to be filled, or members of committees and bodies to be appointed, Carinthia UAS ensures gender balance.

Gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory language is a fundamental principle of how Members of Carinthia UAS communicate with each other, orally and in writing. In this respect, reference is made to the PV-R05 guidelines "*Geschlechtersensible diskriminierungsfreie Sprache*" ("Gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory language") of Carinthia UAS.

4.3 Inclusion

Work is continuously underway on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires the introduction of inclusive education at all levels; the underlying processes and measures are being implemented in accordance with the available resources and possibilities.

The university infrastructure and its organisational structures, procedures and processes will be established in a way that makes them accessible to all of the Members of Carinthia UAS. Carinthia UAS makes every effort to take into account the special needs of its students and staff with disabilities, and to implement the relevant measures to enable the best possible conditions for studying and working (see Federal Law on the Equality of Persons with Disabilities [*Bundesbehindertengleichstellungsgesetz – BGStG*] and the Austrian ÖNORM standard on accessibility in schools and educational institutions). At this point, reference is made to the RE-R15 guidelines "*Barrierefrei Studieren*" ("Accessibility and Studying") of Carinthia UAS.

Furthermore, work is underway on enabling participation in tertiary/academic education across all ages and social groups, and on the internationalisation of the university and the proactive integration and promotion of international students and scientists.

5 Confidentiality and Data Privacy

To fulfil its duties to the best of its abilities, Carinthia UAS must handle personal data and confidential information. The concerned persons (data subjects) can rely on Carinthia UAS to treat this data in an appropriate and law-abiding manner. Similarly, internal documents, information and data, as well as information discussed and processed in the various panels and committees, are generally to be treated confidentially. The employees attach great importance to data privacy and are obligated by law to maintain confidentiality. The students ensure compliance with all data privacy and copyright requirements and undertake to treat confidential any information they have or will become aware of from Members of Carinthia UAS or its partners, including any business or trade secrets, research and development activities or results.

Furthermore, a company Data Protection Committee has been established at Carinthia UAS. This Data Protection Committee mainly deals with matters resulting from the introduction, operation, interpretation and changes of information and communication technology and their systems, and is also responsible for advising on and devising regulations, recommendations and guidelines on data privacy policy at Carinthia UAS. It is also based on the company framework agreement on the use of the employees' personal data, which must be observed on all accounts. The company Data Protection Committee works closely with Carinthia UAS' external data protection representative.

All confidentiality and data privacy obligations shall remain in effect even after the end of the employment relationship or educational relationship with Carinthia UAS.

6 Conflicts of Interest

6.1 Secondary employment

Any secondary employment held by Carinthia UAS employees must not conflict with the interests of Carinthia UAS. The employees are required, both by legal regulations and by contractual obligation, to report any secondary employment to the Human Resources department through the official channels or have this employment approved in advance if necessary. If secondary employment is considered to conflict with Carinthia UAS' vested interests, Carinthia UAS reserves the right to forbid the activity in question. A provision to this effect is also included in the employment contracts.

Unless commissioned to do so by Carinthia UAS, the employees or their companies do not provide any paid services to students of Carinthia UAS and are not involved in any such activities.

6.2 Part-time lecturers and contract awarding by Carinthia UAS

Any types of business relations, which part-time lecturers maintain outside their part-time activity for or with Carinthia UAS, and which might become a conflict of interest, must be requested in writing in advance and expressly approved by the management in written form.

Part-time lecturers who manage a business which is awarded contracts from Carinthia UAS must obtain a prior written approval from the management of Carinthia UAS ahead of any contract award. The transparent documentation requirement on the award of contracts in terms of the procurement guidelines as specified in the Federal Procurement Act (*Bundesvergabegesetz*) shall remain unaffected.

6.3 Accepting gifts and benefits

Pursuant to § 74 of the Criminal Code (*Strafgesetzbuch*, StGB), employees of Carinthia UAS are public office holders and shall not accept any financial benefits or valuable gifts from third parties, especially not from students, and shall not accept any promises in this respect.

Gifts that are symbolic in nature are not intended to influence the business relationship and are of insignificant value may be accepted. If there is any doubt about the acceptance of symbolic gifts, the management must be informed beforehand, and the process must always be carried out transparently.

This does not include the acceptance of appropriate remuneration for teaching and research activities (if not provided to Carinthia UAS students) or the acceptance of donations or other contributions made to Carinthia UAS. Contract research or third-party financed basic research / applied research also remains unaffected by this.

7 Management of Finances and Cost Awareness

Carinthia University of Applied Sciences uses all its budget resources solely for the purpose of maintaining its direct fields of activities, i.e. teaching, research and further training.

The employees perform their duties according to the principles of legality, efficiency, practicality, economy, and transparency, and always keep the public interest in mind. Cost awareness and responsible resource management are therefore of key importance.

Record keeping, accounting, cash management, reporting, document management, and taxation matters are always to be handled accurately and thoroughly, and documented in a clear and comprehensible manner.

All heads of organisational units and all executives are responsible for adhering to the budget resources allocated to them, both in terms of the amount and the type of use. Expenditures for entertainment and representation are permissible if they serve to fulfil the tasks of Carinthia UAS in connection with the following purposes:

- Public relations (e.g. press conferences, opening ceremonies for buildings and laboratories, inaugural lectures, etc.)
- Maintenance of external relations (e.g. partnerships with other universities)
- Maintenance of cooperation projects with businesses and their preparation

Host gifts for guest lecturers and instructors are permissible if the gifts are symbolic in nature (e.g. bunches of flowers, boxes of chocolates, UAS merchandising articles) and if they are not intended to influence the business relationship and are of insignificant value.

8 Use of Carinthia UAS Resources

Carinthia UAS resources are provided for use for UAS and study purposes only. Such resources include IT and telecommunication services, software and hardware, databases, rooms, and working hours and work input by employees and students of Carinthia UAS.

Private use

Carinthia UAS tolerates employees using devices and/or communication equipment for private purposes to a certain degree, provided that such use is limited in terms of duration and scope (this applies particularly to social media), and that it has no negative effect on job performance.

The same applies to the storage of private data and files in folders indicated to be private. Personal use is forbidden if it is abusive, impairs efficient working conditions or represents a risk to the security and performance capacity of the relevant infrastructure.

E-mails and files remain accessible to Carinthia UAS and may be viewed for forensic purposes. Carinthia UAS resources may be used for third-party financed contract research or basic research if the costs are reimbursed. It is expressly forbidden to use Carinthia UAS resources for the storage and distribution of pornographic, racist, violent or any otherwise offensive and unlawful materials.

Employees and students treat the property and resources of Carinthia UAS with care. They take complete responsibility for any equipment or materials they have borrowed from Carinthia UAS (e.g. notebooks or books, also for working from home).

9 Environmental Protection

All actions and processes are carried out with respect for the environment and natural resources. Any negative impact on the environment must be kept as small as possible. The principles of economy and sustainability must always be kept in mind and incorporated into all processes.

10 Procedure in Cases of Ambiguity

Not only the guidelines expressly laid down in this Code of Conduct, but also the spirit of ethical and professional conduct it is based upon should be the guiding principles for all Members of Carinthia UAS. In cases of ambiguity or doubt about the interpretation of the Code of Conduct, the employees can primarily turn to the body representing their interests, the relevant supervisors or the management; students can contact their relevant program directors or the Rectorate.