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*Erasmus+KA2 project DEFEP
Distance education for Future: best EU practices in response
to the requests of modern higher education seekers and labor market*



MODEL STANDARD OF COMMUNICATION ETHICS (in the distance form of higher education)



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PREAMBLE

- The Model Standard is not an original text and the compilers do not claim authorship and original source.
 - The Model Standard was developed within the framework of the Erasmus+KA2 DEFEP project "Distance Education for Future: best EU practices in response to the requests of modern higher education seekers and labor market".
 - The Model Standard was created on the basis of existing European and domestic practices, regulatory documents, methodological developments of individual institutions of higher education, as well as materials and cases of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, etc.
 - The Model Standard takes into account the experience of partner universities in the DEFEP project from Ukraine, Moldova, Germany, Spain, Italy, the results of a sociological survey, an analytical report and a monograph carried out within the framework of the project.
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- The Model Standard is applicable to distance higher education.
 - The Model Standard takes into account the peculiarities related to digital technologies and the distance format of the educational process in the distance form. At the same time, the basic rules and norms of behavior for students, science-pedagogical staff and other participants of the educational process, described in the Model Standard, are universal for all forms of higher education.
 - On the basis of the Model Standard, a higher education institution develops its own Communication Ethics Standard (hereinafter referred to as the Standard) or implements the provisions of the Model Standard relating to distance learning into the relevant provisions of the higher education institution.

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1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. ***Purpose of the Communication Ethics Standard.*** The purpose of this Communication Ethics Standard (hereinafter referred to as the Standard) is to establish clear rules and norms of behavior for students, scientific-pedagogical staff and other participants involved in distance learning. The tasks of implementing the main provisions of the Standard are:

- creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in the online environment;
- ensuring effective and productive communication between participants of the learning process;
- protecting the rights and interests of all participants of the distance learning process;
- promoting academic integrity;
- maintaining a supportive, inclusive and safe environment for distance learning.

1.2. ***Target audience of the Standard.*** This Standard is intended for:

- students studying distantly;
- scientific-pedagogical staff who teach distantly;
- other participants of the educational process, such as administrators, technical specialists, coaches and tutors who ensure the implementation of the distance education process.

1.3. ***Field of application of the Standard.*** This Standard applies to all forms of communication of participants of the educational process, as well as to all forms and tools of distance learning, including distance learning platforms, online courses, webinars, virtual seminars, distance discussions, e-mail, channels and chats in messengers, virtual chat rooms, other online platforms that ensure the implementation of the distance education process and are used for communication of students, scientific-pedagogical staff and other participants of the distance education process.

1.4. This Standard is in addition to the rules and regulations that already exist in the higher education institution.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION ETHICS

2.1. Honesty, dignity, good faith and fairness, respect and trust, equality and tolerance, responsibility and culture of behavior, professional competence and non-discrimination are unconditional and fundamental principles of relations between participants of the educational process.

2.2. ***The principle of justice, equality and non-discrimination:*** all participants of the educational process recognize and respect the personality of each person, regardless of their social, scientific or public status, age, gender, race or ethnicity, are equal in their rights and act fairly within the norms of behavior accepted in society. Fairness in teaching, assessment of educational achievements of seekers, research, career

advancement of staff, and the receipt of any awards, honors, or degrees should be based on legal, transparent, fair, predictable, consistent, impartial, and objective criteria.

2.3. *The principle of honesty, dignity and good faith:* in their activities, all participants of the educational process strive for knowledge, awareness and best practices of honest behavior, decent behavior in society and good faith compliance with the requirements of laws, internal organizational and administrative acts, procedures and quality standards, are responsible for the results of their activities, fulfilling their obligations in good faith, which promotes transparency, accountability and free expression. Each participant of the educational process must personally adhere to the principle of honesty, dignity and good faith, and only then encourage other participants of the educational process to refrain from lying, deception, fraud, theft and other forms of dishonest and shameful behavior that undermine confidence in the quality of education and science.

2.4. *The principle of respect, courtesy, trust and tolerance:* all participants of the educational process base their relationships on mutual trust and respect for themselves, others, the educational process and research, and recognize the diversity and multifaceted nature of performance of each person, promoting the free exchange of information and ideas, engaging in cooperation, creativity and individual development. The free exchange of ideas and freedom of expression are based on mutual respect shared by all participants of the educational process, regardless of age, gender, or place in the educational and scientific hierarchy. All participants of the educational process treat others, their opinions, views, beliefs, etc. with respect, courtesy and kindness.

2.5. *The principle of competence and professionalism:* all participants of the educational process at University are obliged to execute their activities at a high professional level, to constantly improve their scientific and educational level - "from education for whole life to lifelong education".

2.6. *The principle of responsibility for one's words and actions:* defined as the obligation of distance learning participants to comply with the requirements of responsibility: for their words, including attention to the words they express; for their actions, including attention to their actions, impartiality in assessing the consequences of their actions; for the consequences of their actions, including attention to the consequences of their words and actions, as well as avoidance of false information.

2.7. *The principle of confidentiality and protection of personal data:* defined as the obligation of all participants of the educational process to comply with the requirements for the protection of personal data and confidential information. This principle stipulates that all participants in distance learning must comply with the requirements for the protection of personal data of participants, including seekers, scientific-pedagogical staff and administration. All participants of distance learning must comply with the requirements of confidentiality in communication, in particular, not to disseminate confidential information without the permission of its owner. Adherence to the principle of "Confidentiality and Protection of Personal Data" contributes to building trust and openness in distance education, ensuring a high standard of quality of education and research.

3. REGULATIONS ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNICATION ETHICS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

3.1. *Culture of behavior of seekers, scientific-pedagogical staff, and other participants:*

3.1.1. Seekers are obliged to fulfill the requirements of the educational program (individual curriculum, if any), adhering to the principle of academic integrity, and achieve the learning outcomes provided by the educational standard for the relevant level of education.

3.1.2. Scientific-pedagogical staff are obliged to adhere to academic integrity and to encourage and monitor compliance with it by seekers of the educational process and research activities.

3.1.3. Seekers and scientific-pedagogical staff should behave tactfully, with restraint, maintain self-control and self-control, monitor their own appearance, avoiding negative emotional reactions that degrade human honor and dignity.

3.1.4. All participants of the educational process should be polite and correct, adhere to the norms of etiquette in every situation, avoiding conflicts and any actions that offend the personality, profanity, obscene language, rude and offensive phrases.

3.1.5. Scientific-pedagogical staff should have a sense of proportion and tact, avoiding authoritarianism and categoricity, threats, coercion or violence. Instead, they should constantly take care of the culture of language and communication.

3.2. ***Ethical rules of communication for seekers.*** These ethical rules will contribute to the creation of a positive and productive learning environment where seekers will demonstrate a high level of professionalism, ethics and respect for each other:

3.2.1. Punctuality and responsibility means seekers must adhere to the schedule of sessions, submitting work and completing assignments on time. They must be responsible for their obligations and meet deadlines.

3.2.2. Active participation in the learning process means seekers must actively participate in discussions, complete assignments, and ask questions to improve their understanding of the material.

3.2.3. Polite and constructive communication with other seekers as it is important for students to communicate with other participants in the learning process in a polite, respectful and constructive manner, contributing to a positive climate in the group.

3.2.4. Adherence to the rules of academic integrity means seekers should adhere to the principles of honesty, not copy other people's work or present other people's intellectual contribution as their own.

3.2.5. Respect for copyright and intellectual property: seekers should respect copyrights, not copy or use without permission the materials of other authors, and use intellectual property in accordance with the rules and legislation.

3.3. ***Ethical rules of communication for scientific-pedagogical staff.*** These ethical rules will help build trusting relationships between scientific-pedagogical staff and seekers, contributing to the quality of the educational process and the development of a culture of communication in the learning environment:

3.3.1. Creating a positive and supportive atmosphere for learning means scientific-pedagogical staff should create a friendly and supportive atmosphere in the classroom, which contributes to the effective learning and development of seekers.

3.3.2. Clear and understandable communication with seekers, meaning an important requirement is that scientific-pedagogical staff be clear and accessible in explaining materials, listen to questions of seekers and provide comprehensive answers.

3.3.3. Objective and impartial assessment of knowledge and skills of seekers means scientific-pedagogical staff should evaluate work of seekers objectively, without prejudice or subjective judgment, based only on academic criteria.

3.3.4. Availability and readiness to assist seekers means scientific-pedagogical staff should be available for consultations, assistance and support to seekers at the time specified in the schedule to facilitate their success and development.

3.3.5. Respect for the personality and opinion of each seeker means scientific-pedagogical staff should respect the individuality of each applicant, their right to their own opinion and expression, stimulating interaction based on mutual respect.

4. RESOLVING CONFLICT SITUATIONS

4.1. Preventing conflicts — to avoid conflicts, it is important to create a favorable atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect, promote open communication, resolve minor misunderstandings at an early stage, and strive for constructive dialogue.

4.2. Algorithm of actions in case of a conflict situation — it is important for participants to remain calm and objective, listen carefully to all parties to the conflict, carefully analyze the causes of the conflict and identify key issues, try to find a compromise and ways to resolve the conflict where all parties are satisfied. If the conflict situation is successfully resolved, the parties should conclude an agreement and action plan to avoid similar situations in the future.

4.3. In case the conflict cannot be resolved directly by the parties, the relevant provisions of the University shall be followed.

5. TYPES OF VIOLATIONS OF THE STANDARD AND LIABILITY OF THE PARTIES

5.1. *Types of violations of the Standard:*

Violations of the Ethical Communication Standard in Education, including the use of electronic technologies, may include, but are not limited to, the following types:

- non-compliance with the schedule and deadlines — late completion of assignments, untimely participation in sessions by seekers;
- incorrect communication — offensive, aggressive or inadequate communication with other seekers of the educational process;
- violation of confidentiality rules, dissemination of false information — illegal disclosure of personal information or data of other participants, including dissemination of false information about them or the educational process;
- incorrect or improper use of electronic means of communication — may lead to non-compliance with confidentiality and personal data protection requirements, negatively affect the effectiveness of communication and reduce the quality of distance learning;
- violations of academic integrity, including academic fraud, copying works without permission, presenting other people's materials as one's own, and other types of violations provided for in the Academic Integrity Standard;
- dissemination of inaccurate information among participants of the educational process can lead to distortion of knowledge and a decrease in the quality of the learning process;
- failure to take responsibility for one's words and actions can lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, and a deterioration in the perception of information among participants of the educational process;
- uncertainty of the rules can lead to a lack of openness in training, which can affect the interaction between participants and the administration, affect motivation, and reduce the quality of the learning process.

5.2. *Sanctions for violation of the Standard*

In case of violations of Ethics Communication Standard in Education, the following measures may be applied:

- warning and explanation of the rules of behavior;
- discrediting and publicizing the violation and its consequences;
- deprivation of previously granted or promising personal awards or the opportunity to participate in educational events;
- exclusion from the educational process for a certain period or complete termination of participation;
- other decisions provided for by the current regulatory framework of the educational institution.

6. ANTI-CORRUPTION WARNINGS

6.1. Participants of the educational process fully adhere to the fundamental principles of corruption prevention, ensure regular assessment of corruption risks in their activities, take appropriate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest and corrupt actions that may arise in the performance of their duties.

6.2. Participants of the educational process are obliged to comply with the requirements of the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption".

6.3. Participants of the educational process are strictly prohibited from directly or indirectly using their official powers or opportunities related to them to receive an unlawful benefit or accepting such a benefit or accepting a promise/offer of such a benefit for themselves or other persons or make promises/offers or an unlawful benefit to a person, specified in the first part of Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption", or at their request to other individuals or legal entities with the aim of inducing this person to unlawfully use the official powers granted to them or related opportunities.

6.4. For the commission of corruption or corruption-related offenses, participants of the educational process are subject to criminal, administrative, civil and disciplinary liability in accordance with the procedure established by law.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

7.1. The Standard is approved by the Academic Council of the University and put into effect by order of the Rector of the University or a person authorized to perform his/her duties.

7.2. The Standard comes into force from the moment it is published and communicated to all participants of distance learning. All participants of distance learning are obliged to comply with the Ethics Communication Standard in Distance Learning and be responsible for their behavior.

7.3. The Standard may be updated and revised as necessary to meet new challenges and requirements. The Standard should be updated based on changes in legislation, changes in the educational process and changes in the needs of distance learning participants.

7.4. Changes and / or additions to the Regulation are considered and approved by the University Academic Council and enter into force by the order of the rector of the University or a person authorized to perform his/her duties.