

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Code of Ethics

Preamble

The aim of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary is to promote scientific and social cooperation between Protestant communities at European level, and to enhance the participation of Hungarian Reformed Christians in intellectual and scientific public life. In order to achieve this goal, the University strives to educate young people with up-to-date knowledge and a conscious commitment to universal Christian moral and spiritual values.

The University is committed to respecting human dignity and personality rights, the right to freedom of expression, study and education, freedom of learning, teaching and research and equal treatment, and the prohibition of discrimination of any kind.

Therefore, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary considers it necessary to define the ethical requirements that express the spirit of the University and contribute to the education of intellectuals who are true to traditional European, Christian-conservative values.

Regarding this, the Senate of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, in accordance with Act CCIV of 2011 on national higher education, the relevant guidelines of ESG 2015 (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area), the experiences of national and international higher education institutions, the Founding Charter issued by the Reformed Church in Hungary, which founded and maintains the University, and Article 7 of Act V of 2014 on higher education of the Reformed Church in Hungary, has adopted the following Code of Ethics, which the University has set as a community goal to follow.

Part I
General Provisions

Scope of the Code of Ethics

Article 1

- 1) ¹The scope of the Code of Ethics (hereinafter referred to as the Code) of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary (hereinafter referred to as the University) applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff of the University, regardless of the nature of their employment relationship.
- 2) The Code applies to all students of the University.

Article 2

- 1) ²The scope of the Code extends to all conduct of the University's staff and students (hereinafter jointly referred to as university citizens) in connection with their university activities.
- 2) The scope of the Code also covers the activities of university citizens outside the University that affect the University's social image.

Ethical requirements

Article 3³

General requirements:

- a) The University provides higher education in the spirit of the mission of the Reformed Church in Hungary, and as such is committed to the Holy Scriptures, Christian values and faith, and strives to deepen these in its teaching, research and educational activities.
- b) The University expects all its citizens to lead a moderate life in accordance with Christian norms and values. It is the moral duty of every university citizen to avoid any situation in life in which his/her esteem, personal dignity and, through this, the good reputation of the University and the Reformed Church in Hungary may be damaged in the eyes of the social and ecclesiastical public.
- c) The University expects all its citizens to respect the Christian, Reformed Christian spirits, Christian values, beliefs and traditions of the University.
- d) The University ensures and expects its citizens to respect human dignity and personal rights, to comply with the requirements of equal treatment and non-discrimination, while respecting the beliefs of others, but at the same time not tolerating anti-Christianity.
- e) University citizens shall exercise their personal rights in a way that does not violate the personal rights of others.
- f) It is the moral duty of every university citizen to contribute to the implementation of the University's tasks as defined in the Founding Charter, Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, and to represent the interests of the University.
- g) University citizens should strive to help each other in their university tasks.
- h) Citizens of the University shall show loyalty and solidarity towards the citizens, bodies and organization of the University.
- i) University citizens should also follow the standards of behaviour in accordance with the Code outside the University, and refrain from any behaviour or expressions that may have a negative impact on the social image of the University.
- j) University citizens should refrain from any public communication or rumour which deliberately states a false statement or misrepresents a true fact, in particular if it accuses the University or any of its organizational units or citizens of ethically unacceptable behaviour or of having committed such an act.

¹ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

² Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

³ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

- k) Within the institutional framework of the University, every university citizen has the right to express objective criticism of the University's management, bodies, measures and practices in a civilised manner. It is prohibited to threaten a person exercising this right with retorsion, or to take or to promise sanctions against him/her.
- l) If a university citizen believes that his/her complaint has not been heard or has not been assessed on the merits within the University, he/she should primarily address his/her complaint to the Maintainer of the University, in the interest of the University's good reputation.
- m) University students, with the exception of elected student representatives, must not be informed about conflicts and internal disputes within the University outside official forums.
- n) University citizens may not carry out party-political activities and party-political agitation within the institution, and may not engage in propaganda of such content and may not distribute propaganda material. During lessons, lecturers and students should refrain from making party-political statements not related to the curriculum. When engaging in politics, the university citizen should take care
 - na) to keep his/her political activity clearly separated in time and space from his/her teaching or research activities,
 - nb) not to give the impression that the University is committed to a particular party or political orientation,
 - nc) not to join, in his or her capacity as a university citizen, any group, trend or movement whose purpose or activities are contrary to the University's mission statement, goals and interests.
- o) All university citizens should strive to set a good example of social solidarity in their everyday activities.

Article 4⁴

All employees of the University are required, in addition to fulfilling their obligations set out in the University's rules and regulations,

- a) to arrive at their place of work on time and in a condition suitable for work;
- b) to maintain exemplary work place discipline in the performance of their duties, in their conduct, in their cultured, neat and restrained appearance and in their respectful speech towards others.
- c) to exercise due care in the performance of their duties, to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities, in a professional manner, in cooperation with all concerned, in mutual support;
- d) to avoid unnecessary conflict situations at work, show restraint in such situations and treat other's person, behaviour and actions fairly;
- e) to use appropriate tone and courtesy when communicating orally or in writing with colleagues, students and external persons;
- f) keeping in mind the University's financial situation, to use the assets owned and used by the University sparingly and carefully, to use the University's infrastructure exclusively for the performance of the University's basic tasks, to attend meetings held for the employees of the relevant organizational unit and the University.

Article 5⁵

The University expects all its lecturers

- a) to strive to educate young people who consciously embrace universal Christian moral and spiritual values in the spirit of the Holy Scriptures, for Hungarians within and beyond the borders, including first and utmost the Reformed Christian institutions and communities, and to transmit these values to foreign, non-Hungarian students;

⁴ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

⁵ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

- b) to perform their teaching and research activities in the light of universal Christian moral and spiritual values, thus helping students to learn about the Christian way of life and, through it, the spirit of the University.
- c) to set an example in the moral and human education of their students, in their behaviour and communication;
- d) to strive to develop a comprehensive and systematic scientific approach in the disciplines related to the studies, thereby preparing students to apply scientific knowledge;
- e) to contribute to the preparation of students for a carrier as intellectuals through the transmission, cultivation and development of national and universal culture and arts, and through the teaching and development of mother tongue and foreign language skills;
- f) to ensure the objectivity and fairness of exams;
- g) to strive to teach up-to-date knowledge in their field of study;
- h) to respect the requirements of conflict of interest and confidentiality when evaluating applications;
- i) from a scientific ethical point of view, the Scientific Code of Ethics⁶ issued by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences should be the guiding principle.

Article 6⁷

The University expects its non-teaching staff

- a) to carry out their work and duties in respect for the Reformed Christian spirit of the University;
- b) to handle students' matters with patience, helpfulness and efficiency, and with due regard for the requirement of equal treatment;
- c) act in a respectful manner, not offending the dignity of others, in all communications with lecturers, non-teaching staff and students.

Article 7⁸

The University expects all students

- a) to cooperate with their lecturers and help their fellow students in the performance of their academic duties during the studies;
- b) to perform their obligations in compliance with the provisions of the Academic and Exam Regulation;
- c) from a scientific ethical point of view, the Scientific Code of Ethics issued by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences should be the guiding principle.

PART II

Procedural rules

The ethics offense

Article 8⁹

A university citizen who intentionally fails to comply with the requirements set out in this Code commits an ethical offense.

⁶ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.
https://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/hatteranyagok/tudomanyetikai_bizottsag/tudomanyetikai_kodex_kgy_20100504.pdf

⁷ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

⁸ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

⁹ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

The Ethics Committee

Article 9¹⁰

- 1) Ethical issues are handled by the University's Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee is a standing committee established by the Senate with university-wide powers, consisting of a chairperson and fifteen permanent members.
- 2) The chairperson of the Ethics Committee is appointed by the Rector and elected by the Senate for a three-year term.
- 3) Two members of the Ethics Committee per faculty are designated by the deans of the faculties from among the employed lecturers and elected by the Senate for a three-year term.
- 4) The two, non-teaching staff members of the Ethics Committee are appointed by the Rector and elected by the Senate for a three-year term.
- 5) Three student members of the Ethics Committee are delegated by the Students' Union for a one-year term.
- 6) The term of office of the chairperson and the members shall end
 - a) at the end of the fixed term,
 - b) upon resignation,
 - c) upon their death,
 - d) by termination of their legal relationship,
 - e) by recall.
- 7) The chairperson and the members may resign from their mandate at any time without giving reasons.
- 8) The chairperson and the members may be re-elected an unlimited number of times.
- 9) The Ethics Committee acts on individual cases in a board of five members. The chairperson of the board shall be the chairperson of the Ethics Committee, and the members of the board shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Ethics Committee depending on the circumstances of the case. A lawyer employed by or under contract with the University, appointed by the Rector, shall participate at the meeting of the board, in an advisory capacity. With regard to the nature of the ethical offense, the chairperson of the board may also invite a chaplain employed by the University to participate in the work of the Ethics Committee in an advisory capacity.
- 10) The composition of the board should ensure that
 - a) if the ethics complaint is lodged against a lecturer, at least one member of the board is a lecturer from the faculty concerned,
 - b) if the ethics complaint is lodged against a non-teaching staff member, at least one member is a non-teaching employee,
 - c) if the ethics complaint is lodged against or by a student, at least two members shall be students,
 - d) a student may not be the chairperson of the board,
 - e) the impartiality of the ethics procedure is not compromised.

Article 10¹¹

- 1) During the ethical procedure, a person who, because of his/her direct or indirect involvement in the subject matter of the case, cannot be expected to judge the case objectively or is otherwise biased may not act as a member of the ethics board.
- 2) Members of the board are obliged to report on a conflict of interest to the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee. The person subject to the procedure may submit a justified objection of bias in writing at any time during the procedure. The Ethics Committee shall decide on the exclusion of the person concerned by decision.

¹⁰ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

¹¹ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

Article 11¹²

- 1) The members of the Ethics Committee are independent in their activities.
- 2) Members of the Ethics Committee and participants in the meetings of the ethical board are bound by an obligation of confidentiality, without time limitation, concerning the information obtained in the context of the ethics procedure. Information on an ongoing case may be given only to the persons concerned (notifier, injured party, person complained against).
- 3) All university citizens are obliged to cooperate with the Ethics Committee, to appear at its request and to provide any information available to them in connection with the case, apart for the information incriminating them.

Article 12¹³

If the complaint is lodged by or against a non-Hungarian citizen, the University shall provide an interpreter upon his/her request during the procedure.

Initiation of the ethics procedure

Article 13¹⁴

- 1) An ethics procedure can be initiated by a university citizen by lodging an ethics complaint within 30 days of becoming aware of the conduct complained of. No ethics procedure may be initiated more than 3 months after the conduct complained of. In the case of continuous behaviour, the deadline shall be calculated from the end of the situation leading to the ethical misconduct.
- 2) The ethics complaint shall be submitted to the Rector in writing. The Rector shall forward the complaint to the chairperson of the Ethics Committee without delay, after filing.
- 3) The ethics complaint shall contain
 - a) data clearly identifying the person concerned;
 - b) a precise description of the behaviour constituting ethical misconduct, in particular the date on which it occurred;
 - c) evidence in support of the facts set out in the ethics complaint;
 - d) data of the person lodging the complaint;
 - e) the date of becoming aware of the complaint.
- 4) If the ethics complaint is anonymous, or the person lodging it cannot be identified, the ethics procedure cannot be carried out.
- 5) The Chairperson of the Ethics Committee shall examine the complaint without delay. If the complaint does not comply with the provisions of section (3), it shall be returned to the notifier to rectify the deficiencies within 8 days. The decision to rectify the complaint shall warn the notifier that if he/she fails to meet the deadline or if he/she submits an incomplete complaint again, the Ethics Committee will reject it or assess it on its incomplete content.
- 6) Within 8 days of the receipt of the ethics complaint, or the rectification of the deficiencies, the Chairperson of the Ethics Committee shall
 - a) appoint the ethics board to act; or
 - b) make a proposal to reject the ethics complaint.
- 7) The Ethics Committee shall reject the ethics complaint by decision, if
 - a) it does not fall within the competence of the Ethics Committee;
 - b) the ethics complaint is late;
 - c) the notifier has not complied with the request for rectification, or has not complied with it in accordance with the request;
 - d) the ethics misconduct has already been examined by the Ethics Committee on its merits;

¹² Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

¹³ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

¹⁴ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

- e) the ethics complaint is obviously unfounded;
 - f) the legal relationship of the complainant or the person complained against with the University has terminated before or during the ethics procedure;
 - g) the Ethics Committee becomes officially aware of the fact that the employer or, in the case of a student, the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Committee has already exercised its rights to impose sanctions on the person complained against for the behaviour which is subject to the complaint.
- 8) If the complaint is not rejected, the chairperson of the ethics board shall convene the meeting of the board within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint. At the same time as the meeting is convened, the chairperson shall invite the person subject to the procedure to set out his/her views on the ethics complaint in writing. The chairperson shall also inform him/her that he/she may be present at the meeting of the ethics board, but his/her absence does not prevent the meeting from being held.
- 9) The chairperson may invite any other person concerned to the meeting of the board.

Meeting of the ethics board

Article 14¹⁵

- 1) The meeting of the ethics board is chaired by the chairperson. The chairperson shall appoint a minute-taker. The minute-taker may be a person who is impartial, both personally and through lack of direct involvement.
- 2) The board holds its meeting with the personal presence of the members. If it is not possible, the chairperson may order the meeting to be held by electronic means.
- 3) After opening the meeting, the chairperson shall take the number of those present and establishes the quorum of the acting ethical board. The quorum shall exist when the chairperson and at least 2 members are present. If the quorum is not met, the chairperson shall adjourn the meeting and reconvene it for a further date within 8 days.

Article 15¹⁶

The meeting of the ethics board is not open to the public. The members of the board, the minute-taker, the person subject to the procedure and the persons invited by the chairperson may be present at the meeting.

Article 16¹⁷

- 1) Minutes shall be taken of the meeting of the ethics board in which the following must be recorded:
 - a) the manner of holding the meeting;
 - b) if the meeting is held in person, its place;
 - c) the starting and ending time of the meeting;
 - d) the name of those present and their role in the procedure.
- 2) The minutes should briefly describe the facts established, the course of the meeting and what happened during it. If the exact wording of a phrase or statement is significant, it shall be recorded in the minutes verbatim. In particular, the minutes shall record the presentation of documents, the statements of witnesses and the opinions of experts.
- 3) Separate minutes shall be taken of the postponed meeting. If the meeting is continued or adjourned, it shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 4) The minutes may be supplemented and amended ex officio or with the chairperson's permission. Any text that has become unnecessary as a result of the amendment should be deleted so that the deleted text remains legible.

¹⁵ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

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¹⁷ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

- 5) The minutes and any amendments thereto shall be signed by the chairperson and the minute-taker. If the chairperson is hindered from signing the minutes, the minutes shall be signed in his/her place by a member of the board present, indicating his/her capacity as alternate.

Clarification of facts, decision, legal remedy

Article 17¹⁸

- 1) The ethics board will take evidence to clarify the facts. The means of evidence in ethics procedures are, in particular, witness statements, documents and other material evidence. The board may request the assistance of an expert if the case requires clarification of a technical issue in which the committee's permanent or ad hoc members have no expertise.
- 2) If necessary, the board may also order the presentation or production of evidence. To this end, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting. The time limit for providing evidence is 15 days.
- 3) If the person subject to the procedure is present at the meeting and wishes to make a statement, he/she shall be heard.

Article 18¹⁹

- 1) At its meeting, the ethics board shall assess the available evidence, both individually and as a whole. It shall state its position in the minutes, indicating and evaluating the evidence taken into account in establishing the facts:
 - a) whether an ethical offence was committed,
 - b) whether the ethical offence was committed by the person complained against,
 - c) what action it considers appropriate.

Article 19²⁰

At the end of the evidentiary procedure, the ethics board shall decide in closed session by majority vote.

Article 20²¹

- 1) The board establishes only the facts of the ethical offence, and may take the following actions:
 - a) if the ethics complaint is unfounded or cannot be assessed according to Article 13 (7), it shall reject it by decision,
 - b) terminate the procedure by decision if the ethical misconduct or the identity of the person who committed it cannot be established, if the conduct under examination has already been finally adjudicated by an authority or a court, or if the Ethics Committee, the employer or the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Committee has already taken a position on the matter,
 - c) if it establishes that an ethical offense has been committed, it shall take a decision to that effect and, together with a copy of the minutes,
 - ca) in the case of a student, it shall arrange for the Dean of the competent faculty to initiate a procedure in accordance with the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulation,
 - cb) in the case of an employee, it shall refer the matter to the employer for the determination of any disadvantageous legal consequences under the Labour Code.
 - d) where required by law, if the conditions set out therein are met, it shall initiate proceedings before the competent authority (investigating authority) instead of establishing an ethical misconduct.
- 2) The board shall send the minutes of the meeting or its rejecting or terminating decision to the persons referred to in section (1), to the person subject to the procedure and to the person who submitted the ethical complaint within 8 days.

¹⁸ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

¹⁹ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

²⁰ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

²¹ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

- 3) In the justification of the decision, the established facts should be briefly stated, together with the relevant evidence. Brief reference should be made to the circumstances which the board has taken as a guide in consideration of the evidence.
- 4) There is no separate right of appeal against a decision establishing an ethical offense. Students have the right of appeal under the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulation, and employees may take legal actions against the decision of the employer in court under the Labour Code.
- 5) Students subject to the procedure may appeal against the rejecting or terminating decision in accordance with the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulation. Employees subject to the procedure may appeal against the decision to reject or terminate the procedure to the employer which decision may not be challenged in court.

Closing and entry into force provisions

Article 21²²

The Code is part of the Organizational and Operational rules. The adopted Code will be published on the website of the University. For matters not covered by the Code, the Student Disciplinary and Compensation Regulation of the University (OOR, III.5) shall apply.

Article 22²³

The consolidated text of the Code, as amended, was discussed by the Senate at its meeting of 23 December 2021 and accepted by its decision No. 344/2021 (XII.23). The Code shall enter into force on 24 December 2021.

This Regulation shall be published on the University's public website which is the usual local publication.

Budapest, 23 December 2021.

Prof. Dr. Ágnes Czine
Acting Rector

²² Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.

²³ Amended by Senate Decision No. 344/2021 (XII. 23), effective from 24 December 2021.