



# Regent Ghana Academic Policy

## Section D Code of Conduct for Staff and Students

**Category:** Academic  
**Last Modified:** July 2006  
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**Approved By:** Senate  
**Contact Person:** Provost

*Note: This is an interim policy until January 2007. Policy implementation will be monitored throughout 2007 and reviewed in October/November.*

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Regent University College of Science and Technology follows various "guiding principles" in pursuit of its objectives, most importantly consideration and support for the professional development, and intellectual and cultural needs of the staff and the student body.

1.2 The University is accountable to its staff, students, the public and the state. It is in the interests of all members of the University to maintain the highest possible ethical standards including accuracy, honesty, cooperation, tolerance and adherence to obligations as well as rights.

1.3 The Code of Conduct is a formulation of policies, rules or guidelines that define the specific actions or procedures applicable to members of Regent University College of Science and Technology in respect of a range of specific ethical issues.

1.4 This Code applies to all staff and students of the University. The purpose of the Code is to ensure high standards of integrity in the conduct of the University's business, and to avoid both impropriety and any appearance of impropriety. Contractors, their employees and representatives, and visitors engaging in any university-related activity are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with this Code.

1.5 The Code does not supersede other policies or agreements that the Regent University College of Science and Technology has in place. Members of this University should be familiar with the responsibilities which are part of their employment, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached. These sanctions may include counselling, suspension, dismissal, laying criminal charges or taking civil action against the offending party.

**1.6 Compliance** - Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that within their Department the Code is followed and a record of outside interests and employment is kept. It may be an misconduct under the University's Disciplinary Rules for Members of Staff for any staff to fail to comply with the Code.

**1.7 Disclosure** - All those to whom the Code applies should declare any perceived or potential conflict of interest between their private affairs and those of the University, arising in the course of their duties, to their Head of Department, Dean, Academic Registrar, the Vice Presidents, the Provost or the President as appropriate.

The Regent University College of Science and Technology has adopted four ethical principles. These are:

## **2 Equity and Justice**

### **2.1 Equity of access to employment and programs**

The University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and encourages staff to pursue equity in all aspects of their activities.

## **2.2 Discrimination and Harassment**

2.2.1 The Regent University College of Science and Technology is committed to maintaining an environment within the University that is free from harassment. Harassment in such forms as sexism, racism or bullying is inconsistent with the University's Equal Opportunity Policy and denies respect for the rights of staff and students to fair treatment. Harassment is unlawful and can also be harmful to organisational effectiveness.

2.1.2 Employees of the University must not discriminate against or harass colleagues, students or members of the public on any grounds including sex, marital status, pregnancy, age, race, ethnic or national origin, physical or intellectual impairment and HIV/AIDS. In addition, employees must not harass or discriminate on the grounds of political or religious conviction.

## **2.3 Grievances**

Staff and students of this University are entitled to fair and equitable grievance procedures.

## **2.4 Lawful Obedience**

All members of the University must comply with any legislative and industrial requirements, as well as the rules and regulations of the University, upholding the principle of equal opportunities for all.

## **2.5 Occupational Health and Safety**

2.5.1 The University is committed to the provision of a safe and healthy working environment for staff, students and visitors. In consequence, the University encourages all members of the community to regard accident prevention and working safely as a collective and individual responsibility.

2.5.2 Managers have a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all on campus and a duty to provide and maintain so far as is practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.

1.5.3 Staff who are involved in teaching, research or assisting in laboratories must dispose of hazardous and dangerous materials in an appropriate fashion.

# **3 Respect for People**

## **3.1 Conflicts of Interest**

3.1.1 The potential for a conflict of interest arises when an employee is placed in a situation where private interests could influence or appear to influence judgments made during the course of his/her professional duty to the University.

3.1.2 Staff members should take suitable measures to avoid, or appropriately deal with any situation in which they may have, or be seen to have, a conflict of interest that could, directly or indirectly, compromise the performance of their duties. When staff members

become aware of such a situation they should take appropriate steps to disclose the conflict. Failure to do so and continuation of such a conflict of interest may lead to disciplinary action.

3.1.3 Examples of relationships that may cause conflicts of interest are positive and negative emotional relationships (including all sexual relationships and antagonisms) and financial relationships, etc.

### **3.2 Outside Employment and Private Practice**

3.2.1 Members of the academic staff of the University are encouraged to undertake contract research, consultancy and other similar professional external jobs, provided that this is not done in a way which would conflict with the interests of the University and should be of a standard which would enhance the name and image of the University and the professional reputations of the staff involved.

3.2.2 Academic staff may undertake private consultancies provided this does not interfere with the time commitment of duties and responsibilities associated with the staff member's employment with the University. It must be clearly understood that the University accepts no responsibility for the consultancy work of staff members when they are acting in a private capacity.

3.2.3 For academic staff, participation in consultancy work, be it University or private, or contract research, whether University based or private, requires the approval of the Dean on the advice or recommendation of the Head of Unit.

### **3.3 Register of Interests**

3.3.1 The Provost will maintain a Register of Interests, which may be consulted for good reason by senior members of staff.

3.3.2 It applies to heads of academic Departments, Directors of Research Centres, Professors, Divisional Heads in the University and other members of the academic and related senior staff, who should give written details to the Provost for inclusion in the Register of the following:

- Remunerated employment outside the University
- Relevant directorships, trusteeships or similar positions
- Positions of authority within any other organisation whose decisions may have an impact on the University
- Other relevant interests

### **3.4 Confidentiality**

3.4.1 All staff of the University must adhere to the principles of confidentiality as outlined in the University's Privacy Policy and have a duty to maintain the confidentiality and security of any personal information for which they are responsible, including computerised data.

3.4.2 Staff members who have access to official University documentation and information must take care to maintain the integrity, confidentiality and privacy of such

information to protect any individual concerned. Members of the University should also undertake to maintain the privacy of oral communications where that has been requested.

3.4.3 Staff must take care to respect the confidentiality and privacy of students and only provide information when authorised by the Registrar's Office or for legitimate academic purposes.

3.4.4 Within the University, no staff member shall have access to information about any individual, without that individual's consent unless a responsible officer of the University is satisfied that the staff member is acting in the course of his or her duties and that the information is relevant for the purpose for which it is being sought.

3.4.5 No computerised data about any individual should be accessed for other than institutional purposes without the full, written authority of that person. Access of personal, student or staff records without a specific, job-related purpose constitutes a breach of the Privacy Policy.

3.4.6 Personal information about staff or students will generally not be released to a third party unless the subject is informed of the reason for its collection and provides a full written approval other than in special circumstances where the disclosure may prevent a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of the individual concerned or of another person. However, the University is legally obliged to respond to any request for information in the form of a police warrant, subpoena, summons or other court order.

### **3.5 Acceptance of Gifts or Benefits**

3.6.1 The University acknowledges that relationships can develop between service providers and staff and students and staff and would not seek to unduly interfere with such relationships.

3.6.2 Staff members should however not solicit, encourage or accept gifts or benefits if they could be reasonably seen as an inducement to act in a particular way or to place staff members under an obligation that may either directly or indirectly compromise or influence them in their official capacity. Receipt of gifts may be perceived as an inducement by others, thus creating a potential conflict of interest. This code requires staff to avoid actual as well as potential conflicts of interest.

3.6.3 Gifts of a nominal value (under ø500, 000) in accordance with social or cultural practices are acceptable. All gifts of substantial value must be declared in writing to the Registrar/Vice-President (Finance & Administration) who will decide whether the gift can be kept or should be given to the University.

### **3.6 Intellectual Property**

Intellectual Property is recognized by this University and stipulates that the benefits should provide equitable returns to the originators of intellectual property, both as an incentive and reward, as well as to the University.

### **3.7 Copyright**

Staff members should ensure that any work for which they claim authorship is original and that where it includes the works of another party, the work is appropriately acknowledged.

## **4 Personal and Professional Responsibility**

### **4.1 Personal Development**

4.1.1 All staff must maintain and develop knowledge and understanding of their area of expertise or professional field. They should continuously seek to improve work performance with an emphasis on quality skills.

4.1.2 All staff should actively seek out ways to bring about quality improvements in their workplaces.

### **4.2 Public Comment**

4.2.1 Public comment includes public speaking engagements, comments on radio, television or online and expressing views in letters to newspapers or in books, journals or notices or where it might be expected that the publication or circulation of the comment may spread to the community at large.

4.2.2 Staff members are encouraged to comment publicly. When staff members are representing the University the highest ethical and professional standards are expected of them primarily due to the sensitivity of some issues within the community.

4.2.3 Members of the University in their capacity as private citizens have a right to make public comments. If staff members are publicly commenting on issues not within their professional expertise, the member must make it clear that the comment is being made in a private capacity and not necessarily that of the University.

4.2.4 Views which are attributed to the University as a corporate body can only be made public by officers of the University duly designated by Council to act on behalf of the University or by staff members designated by Council, or their delegate, to represent the University's position on specific issues.

### **4.3 Use of University Facilities and Equipment**

Members of the University are expected to use all University facilities and equipment efficiently, carefully and honestly. Resources should be used economically, and secured against theft or misuse and waste is to be avoided. These resources should not be used for private purposes unless express permission has been granted.

### **4.4 Ethical Conduct of Research**

The University expects all those engaged in research to observe high ethical standards in the conduct of their research and, when relevant, to comply with the obligations imposed by the codes of practice as outlined by the relevant funding bodies. Ethical clearances must be gained where appropriate.

## **5 Reporting Conduct and Complaints**

### **5.1 Reporting Corrupt Conduct, Maladministration and Serious and Substantial Waste of Public Resources**

5.1.1 Employees are urged to report suspicions of a corrupt conduct, maladministration and serious and substantial waste of University resources.

5.1.2 When an employee of the University suspects corrupt conduct, the employee may report the allegation in confidence to the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) who is the University's disclosure coordinator. The employee may also discuss the allegation with his/her supervisor. Any such allegations will be treated in strict confidence and investigated appropriately.

5.1.3 If an employee does not consider it appropriate to disclose an allegation of suspected corrupt conduct to his/her supervisor, disclosure should be made directly to the President.

## **5.2 The University's Approach to Complaints**

5.2.1 The University treats all complaints seriously and makes every effort to investigate them expeditiously. Staff should make every effort to direct their complaints through the proper channels.

5.2.2 The University applies the principles of natural justice in investigating complaints. The University acknowledges that there are multiple ways of dealing with complaints. It is useful, prior to making a complaint, to consult with appropriate persons to identify the best way to proceed. These could include the Vice Presidents and the Dean of Societies and Students Development. Employees are encouraged to consider all potential complaints carefully and should refrain from making frivolous, malicious or vexatious complaints.

**Responsibility for Policy:** Vice President (Administration and Finance)

**Approving Authority:** President

**Approved:** January 2006