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**Mentors'
Code of Ethics**



This deliverable refers to the EACEA.A – Erasmus+ Programme

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and has been developed by the partner

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Table of Contents

The Mentors' Code of Ethics	4
1. Ethical Principle: Respect	5
<i>General Respect Standard.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Privacy and Confidentiality Protection Standard.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Informed Consent Standard</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Self-Determination Standard.....</i>	<i>6</i>
2. Ethical Principle: COMPETENCE	7
<i>Standard for Awareness of Professional Ethical Principles.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Standard for Ethical Decision-Making.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Standard for Recognizing the Limits of Competence.....</i>	<i>8</i>
3. Ethical Principle: RESPONSIBILITY	9
<i>Standards for General Responsibility</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Standards for Ending the Mentoring Relationship</i>	<i>9</i>
4. Ethical Principle: INTEGRITY	10
<i>Standards of Honesty and Accuracy.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Standards for Avoiding Exploitation and Conflicts of Interest.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Standards for Maintaining Personal Boundaries.....</i>	<i>11</i>

The Mentors' Code of Ethics

The Code is based on four ethical principles. These principles represent the main areas of responsibility through which ethical and deontological issues are examined. These areas are:

- Respect
- Competence
- Responsibility
- Integrity

Each ethical principle is described in a value statement that reflects the dominant beliefs guiding every ethical reasoning, decision-making, and behavior.

Each one of the above ethical principles is associated with a set of standards that define ethical conduct.

1. Ethical Principle: Respect

General Respect Standard

Mentors are required to:

- Respect individual, cultural differences, and differences in roles, including (but not limited to) those related to age, disability, educational level, nationality, gender, language, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, family, and socioeconomic status.
- Respect the knowledge, insight, experience, and expertise of mentees, relevant third parties, and members of the broader public.
- Avoid unfair practices or practices characterized by bias.
- Be willing to explain the principles/tools they follow when making an ethical *decision*.

Privacy and Confidentiality Protection Standard

Mentors are required to:

- Maintain appropriate records.
- Ensure, from the very first contact, that mentees understand the limitations of confidentiality.
- When confidential information is disclosed directly to a mentee, mentors must protect confidential information about other individuals and provide adequate assistance to the mentee in understanding the nature and content of the disclosed information.
- Create auditory, visual, or photographic material of mentees only if prior clear consent is obtained from them, who are considered legally competent, or after receiving permission from duly authorized representatives.

Issues of Protection of Sensitive Personal Data

Special attention should be given to issues concerning the protection of personal data, as it is understood that the details of the discussions between the counselor/mentor and the mentee are personal and often sensitive. For this reason, the counselor/mentor must be able to safeguard them and not share the content of the discussions with third parties. This means that the counselor/mentor is obligated to maintain confidentiality, which means not revealing information that was said by the individual during the counseling process. Specifically, there

should be no written reports containing sensitive personal data, even if such data is discussed during Educational Counseling. Additionally, it is not allowed to make nominative references to individuals or/and companies.

Informed Consent Standard

Mentors are required to:

- Seek consent from each mentee to whom professional services are provided (commitment from both parties).
- Maintain adequate records indicating when, how, and by whom consent was given.
- Be vigilant about the possibility that individuals who are about to receive professional services may lack the capacity to give their consent.
- Avoid deliberately misleading mentees.

Self-Determination Standard

Mentors are required to:

- Strive to support the self-determination of mentees while being alert to potential limitations imposed by personal characteristics or externally imposed circumstances on achieving self-determination.
- Ensure, from the very first contact, that mentees are aware of their right to withdraw at any time.
- Comply with the request of clients who withdraw from the program to destroy all data that could identify them, including records concerning their identity.

2. Ethical Principle: COMPETENCE

- Mentors place significant value on continuous development and the maintenance of high standards of their professional competence. Equally important is their ability to function optimally within the recognized limits of their knowledge, skills, education, and experience.

Standard for Awareness of Professional Ethical Principles

Mentors are required to:

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive awareness of professional ethical principles, including familiarity with the current Code.
- Incorporate ethical assessments into their professional practice as a demonstration of their ongoing professional development.

Standard for Ethical Decision-Making

Mentors are required to:

- Recognize that ethical dilemmas will inevitably arise during their professional practice.
- Accept responsibility for attempting to resolve these ethical dilemmas with the appropriate combination of reflection, supervision, and consultation.
- Commit to the requirements of the current Code of Ethics.
- Engage in an ethical decision-making process that includes:
 - Recognition of relevant issues.
 - Reflection on established principles, values, and standards.
 - Seeking supervision and evaluation from peers.
 - Utilizing the Code of Ethics and Conduct to identify principles, which includes:
 1. Developing alternative courses of action in light of contextual factors.
 2. Analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of various actions for individuals who may be affected, allowing space for different perspectives and cultures.
 3. Choosing a course of action.
 4. Evaluating the outcomes in a way that provides information suitable for future ethical decision-making.
- Be able to justify their actions based on ethical rules.

- Maintain awareness that the process of ethical decision-making must be conducted sensitively, despite time pressures that may exist.

Standard for Recognizing the Limits of Competence

Mentors are required to:

- Operate within the limits of their capabilities.
- Ensure continuous professional development.
- Stay informed about scientific, ethical, and legal innovations related to their professional activities, with heightened sensitivity to ongoing developments within the broader social, political, and organizational contexts in which they work.
- Seek consultation and supervision when appropriate, especially when circumstances begin to challenge their scientific or professional expertise.
- Participate in additional areas of professional activity only after acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, training, education, and experience required for sufficient functionality.
- Remain knowledgeable and recognize the limits of their methods, as well as the boundaries of conclusions that can arise from such methods under different circumstances and for various reasons.

3. Ethical Principle: RESPONSIBILITY

- Mentors place particular value on their responsibilities toward mentees, the broader public, their role, as well as on avoiding harm and preventing the misuse or abuse of their contributions to society.

Standards for General Responsibility

Mentors are required to:

- Ensure that they do not harm mentees, while recognizing that the interests of different clients may conflict.
- Weigh these interests and the potential harm caused by alternative actions or inaction.
- Be responsible for being cautious about any potential risks to themselves.

Standards for Ending the Mentoring Relationship

Mentors are required to:

- Make clear, from the very first contact or at the first opportunity, the conditions under which voluntary services may be terminated.
- Seek advice when there is ambiguity regarding the continuation of providing relevant services.
- Terminate the provision of relevant services when mentees do not seem to be benefiting or when no further benefit appears to arise from the process in the future.
- Refer mentees to alternative sources of support, when necessary, facilitating the transfer and continuation of care through good collaboration with other professionals

4. Ethical Principle: INTEGRITY

- Mentors place particular value on honesty, accuracy, clarity, and fairness in their interactions with all individuals, and strive to promote integrity in all aspects of specialized knowledge or scientific efforts in connection with their professional endeavors.

Standards of Honesty and Accuracy

Mentors are required to:

- Be honest and accurate in representing matters related to their professional relationships and qualifications, including issues concerning knowledge, skills, training, education, and experience.
- Take appropriate measures to ensure that their qualifications and capabilities have not been distorted by others, and correct any false statements or distortions identified.
- Be honest and accurate in communicating professional conclusions, opinions, and research findings, recognizing potential limitations.
- Be honest and accurate in presenting facts and other parameters related to their training, employment, and other contractual relationships.
- Be honest and accurate in advertising professional services to avoid encouraging unrealistic expectations or misleading the public, particularly regarding voluntary contributions.

Standards for Avoiding Exploitation and Conflicts of Interest

Mentors are required to:

- Clarify to mentees and other interested parties their professional role and any potential conflicts of interest that could arise.
- Refrain from exploiting professional relationships to promote their personal, financial, or other interests.

Standards for Maintaining Personal Boundaries

Mentors are required to:

- Recognize any unwanted verbal or physical behavior, including sexual harassment, as harassment when:
 - Such behavior interferes with another individual's work or creates a coercive, hostile, or offensive work environment.
 - The submission to such behavior becomes directly or indirectly a condition for education, employment, or access to resources.
- Recognize that harassment may consist of a single serious act or multiple persistent or pervasive acts, and it may involve behaviors such as ridicule, belittling, or exploitation of an individual.