

UNITAR Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy

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Introduction

1. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) conducts activities with many stakeholders around the world. It is in the direct interest of UNITAR to ensure that any ethical misconduct, such as fraud and corruption, is absent from these activities. Furthermore, as a part of the UN system and in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), UNITAR proactively supports the prevention of all fraud and corruption and has zero tolerance for such practices.
2. Any act of fraud and corruption in UNITAR's activities depletes funds, assets and other resources necessary to fulfil UNITAR's mandate. Fraudulent and corrupt practices can also seriously damage UNITAR's reputation and diminish donors' trust in its ability to deliver results in an accountable and transparent manner. Furthermore, it may affect staff and personnel effectiveness, motivation and morale, and impact on UNITAR's ability to attract and retain a talented work force.
3. UNITAR will rigorously pursue disciplinary and other actions against perpetrators of fraud and corruption, including recovery of financial loss suffered by UNITAR.
4. UNITAR is committed to preventing, detecting and addressing all cases of suspected misconduct in breach of [the UN Charter](#) and [Standards of conduct in the International Civil Service](#), including acts of fraud and corruption, through raising awareness of fraud risks, implementing controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud and corruption, and enforcing this Policy.

Rational

5. The present Policy further expands on existing integrity and ethics oversight mechanisms by taking into account the administrative circular dated 22 May 2007 on the application of [the Policy on Financial Disclosure, Declaration of Interest, and Impartiality Statements](#) (AC/UNITAR/2007/5), the administrative circular dated 25 March 2009 establishing [the Integrity and Ethics Oversight policy and appointing a new Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee \(IEOC\)](#) (AC/UNITAR/2009/02), and the administrative circular dated 24 April 2012 promulgating [the Guidelines applying to preliminary fact-finding administrative investigations reported to the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee \(IEOC\)](#) (AC/UNITATR/2012/06).
6. The Secretary-General's Bulletin related to [the United Nations system-wide application of ethics: separately administered organs and programmes](#) (ST/SGB/2007/11) applies to

UNITAR. Until such time as the Institute designates an ethics officer, UNITAR has accepted to delegate some ethics oversight functions to the Ethics Office of the UN Secretariat, including, but not limited to, (a) administering the financial disclosure programme; (b) undertaking the responsibilities assigned to the Ethics Office under the Organization's policy for the protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations; and (c) providing confidential advice and guidance to staff on ethical issues.

Definition

7. The concept of integrity enshrined in *[the Charter of the United Nations](#)* includes all aspects of behaviour of an international civil servant, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility.
8. For the purpose of the Policy, the term “fraudulent acts” in UNITAR is intended to include both “fraud”, which encompasses any act or omission whereby an individual or entity knowingly misrepresents or conceals a material fact in order to obtain an undue benefit or advantage for himself, herself, itself or a third party, or to cause another to act to his or her detriment; and “corruption”, which encompasses any act or omission that misuses official authority or that seeks to influence the misuse of official authority in order to obtain an undue benefit for oneself or a third party¹.

Examples of fraudulent acts may include, but are not limited to, the following acts, which are listed below for illustrative purposes:

- Submitting falsified documentation;
- Improperly creating and using a document that purportedly authorizes a staff member or a third party to remove property belonging to the Institute;
- Misrepresenting educational qualifications;
- Making material omissions or false inclusions in personal history profiles (PHPs);
- Knowingly submitting an education grant, a medical, travel or other entitlement claim and documentation containing false information;
- Knowingly including false information in movement-related documentation submitted to the Institute;
- Declaring private telecommunications charges to be official;
- Improperly assisting a person external to the Institute to secure UNITAR employment in exchange for money or other favours;

¹ Definition similar to the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat ST/IC/2016/25 III. Definitions

- Improperly assisting a vendor in a procurement process;
 - Manipulating a procurement or recruitment process to ensure a certain outcome;
 - Misusing UNITAR resources to benefit oneself or a third party;
 - Soliciting or accepting bribes;
 - Revealing internal confidential information in order to obtain a benefit for oneself or a third party;
 - Participating in the recruitment process of a family member or a person with respect to whom one has an undisclosed conflict of interest;
 - Participating in a procurement and/or contract management process involving a person or entity with whom/which one has an undisclosed conflict of interest;
 - Manipulating administrative processes to disburse payments to benefit oneself or a third party, such as by creating fake contracts, fake third-party beneficiaries or ghost employees;
 - Improperly altering the labelling on the salary envelopes of individual contractors and removing cash from the envelopes, all without authorization;
 - Taking property of UNITAR without authorization.
9. Established “fraudulent acts” in UNITAR are considered to be “misconduct”, and article X of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, “Disciplinary measures”, and staff rules 10.1 and 10.2 clearly state the actions that the United Nations takes with regard to staff who engage in this type of behaviour.

Scope and application

10. This Policy applies to all programming and operations activities of UNITAR, including projects and programmes funded by UNITAR as well as those implemented by UNITAR. This policy aims to prevent, detect and address acts of fraud and corruption involving:
- Regular staff members (fixed-term contract, temporary contract) holding a UNITAR letter of appointment (“regular staff members”);
 - Non-staff personnel, including remunerated and non-remunerated fellows, individual contractors, consultants, interns, trainees and collaborators (collectively “non-staff personnel”);
 - Implementing partners and responsible parties engaged/contracted by UNITAR for a UNITAR-funded project (“implementing partners” and “responsible parties”, respectively).

11. UNITAR vendors, including actual or potential contractors of suppliers of goods and services (collectively “vendors”) are expected to adopt and enforce robust policies

combatting fraud and corruption. UNITAR is committed to ensure that all vendors are aware of UNITAR's policy on zero tolerance for fraudulent and corrupt practices.

Preventive measures

Building fraud and corruption prevention into project design

12. When developing a new project, it is important to ensure that fraud and corruption risks are fully considered in the project design and processes. This is especially important for high risk projects, such as those that are complex or operate in high risk environments. The project risk management plan is incorporated into [the UNITAR Project Document Template](#), and a risk management plan is compulsory for projects budgeted at US\$1 million and above, and is discretionary, though recommended, for other projects.

13. Programme managers are responsible for ensuring that the risk of fraud and corruption is identified during the project design phase. They are to consider how easily fraudulent acts might occur and be replicated in day-to-day operations.

Training and awareness

14. Managers must ensure that all regular staff members and remunerated personnel take and obtain a certificate on the mandatory online ethics training "[Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations](#)", available on Inspira in both French and English.

15. Regular staff members and non-staff personnel are requested to attend any ethics training that may be organized by the Human Resources Section.

16. The ethics training aims to explain the ethical expectations that UNITAR has set for its regular staff members and non-staff personnel, raise awareness of the policies, regulations and rules within the UNITAR workplace, to help make informed decisions, to promote an ethical culture throughout the Institute, and to prevent misconduct.

17. All documents related to policies, regulations and rules as well as all training materials shall be posted or linked to on [the Institute's intranet](#) for easy reference.

18. Vendors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs), are made aware of and accept that they are subject to [the UN Supplier Code of Conduct](#), through the instructions on fraud and corruption issued within standard bidding documents and their signed bid submission.

Adherence to standards and code of conduct

19. Each regular staff member must realize that fraud and corruption, whatever its extent and form, is contrary to the standards of conduct expected of international civil servants prescribed in [*the UN Charter, the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations*](#) (ST/SGB/2017/1), [*the ICSC Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service*](#), and [*the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of United Nations Staff Members*](#) (ST/SGB/2002/13). These standards have been summarized in a user-friendly guide: [*Putting Ethics to Work*](#).

20. Non-staff personnel are also expected to uphold the standard of conduct set forth in [*the Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials, and Experts on Mission*](#) (ST/SGB/2002/9), and the provisions contained in their respective contracts and applicable Terms and Conditions.

21. Similarly, vendors, as well as NGOs and CSOs participating in a procurement process, accept to abide by the UN Supplier Code of Conduct. They are required to ensure actively that their management processes and business operations align with UN principles, including, but not limited to its standards of ethical conduct regarding fraud and corruption, conflict of interest, gifts and hospitality, and post-employment restrictions. They are required to report any instances of wrongdoing.

Due diligence in recruitment, promotion and awarding contracts

22. Integrity is a paramount consideration in the recruitment or promotion of regular staff members as well as the contracting of non-staff personnel. In this context, the UNITAR hiring manager should ensure that the Institute is recruiting or promoting individuals that meet the standards of conduct expected of regular staff members and non-staff personnel. This can be achieved, for instance, by asking a specific question for integrity in reference checks for short-listed candidates, professional experience and academic checks. In addition to this, the standard application, through the P11 form, requires the disclosure of information about the possible existence of family relationships of direct relevance to their work at UNITAR.

23. UNITAR requires all of its vendors to be qualified, as well as eligible. UNITAR shall not award a contract to any vendor, including NGOs or CSOs (as a responsible party, implementing partner or as a vendor), that has been debarred by UNITAR or any other UN agency, fund or programme, as indicated on [*the UN Ineligibility list*](#)². Awarding a contract to an ineligible vendor may only occur if the vendor is in the process of rehabilitation.

² Registration is available to those with valid UN email addresses.

Responsibility

24. UNITAR regular staff members, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties must be aware of their responsibility to prevent fraud and corruption. In this regard, managers are to raise awareness of this Policy, and reiterate the duty of all personnel to report instances of fraud and corruption. Managers are also required to make regular staff members, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties and vendors contracted/engaged by their respective offices aware of this Policy.
25. Managers are expected to act as role models and through their actions and behaviours set the tone for the rest of the Institute. They should foster a culture of zero tolerance for fraud and corruption, and ensure that any practices not aligned with this Policy are dealt with expeditiously.
26. Regarding financial responsibility of regular staff members, *[Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations](#)* (ST/SGB/2013/4) Rule 101.2 stipulates that all United Nations staff members who contravene the Financial Regulations and Rules or corresponding administrative instructions to be held personally accountable and financially liable for their actions.

Reporting procedures

27. Individual with information regarding fraud or other corrupt practices or misconduct against UNITAR or involving UNITAR staff, non-staff personnel, implementing partners and responsible parties, is expected to report this information. All incidents of fraud and corruption are to be reported, and will be assessed and, investigated by the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee, or other external enforcement offices, as appropriate.
28. Allegations of suspected misconduct or breach in integrity and ethical conduct may be made to the Executive Director, supervisors, members of the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee in case of specific issues, by any regular staff member or non-staff personnel of the Institute. In addition, a hotline (hotline@unitar.org) is available to all regular staff and non-staff personnel for them to report any suspicions about a fraudulent or corrupt activity or a failure to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant. All emails sent to the hotline are sent only to the current Chair of the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee at the time of the report.
29. Regular staff members and non-staff personnel may submit reports of fraud or ethical misconduct anonymously, in which case it is recommended, for the effectiveness of

investigative follow-up, that the persons submitting a report be as specific as possible and include detailed information listed below. For anonymous reports, a report number and code are used to allow the individual making a complaint to follow up and to check if the assessing officer has requested further information. However, anonymous allegations are often more difficult to pursue as there may be no way for IEOC to clarify the information provided or to ask questions. If the reporter chooses to remain anonymous, the reporter may consider providing IEOC with a means to contact him or her if further information or clarification is needed – for example, the reporter may provide a free web-based email address (e.g. hotmail, yahoo or gmail) with an assumed name or alias that will allow him or her to retain his or her anonymity. Anonymous reports can be submitted through an online form available on the UNITAR intranet.

30. In order for investigations to be successful, complaints should be as specific as possible.

To the extent possible, they should include details such as:

- The type of alleged wrongdoing;
- When, where and how the wrongdoing occurred; and
- Who was involved and may have knowledge of the matters being reported.

Relevant documents or other evidence should be included with the report or provided as soon as possible. However, the absence of any of the above details does not prevent investigation of allegations of fraud or corruption.

31. The identity of the parties, the suspicions which are reported, the status and results of the investigation will not be disclosed or discussed with anyone other than those who have a legitimate need to know, such as the Integrity and Ethics Oversight Committee.

32. Requests for confidentiality by persons making a report will be honoured to the extent possible within the legitimate needs of the investigation. All investigations undertaken are confidential. Information will only be disclosed as required by the legitimate needs of the investigation.

33. UNITAR does not tolerate any form of retaliation against whistle-blowers that have reported allegations of wrongdoing or cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation. The Secretary-General's bulletin [Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations](#) (ST/SGB/2017/2) applies to UNITAR.

Investigation of allegations

34. All allegations of fraud and corruption are taken seriously. Upon receipt of an allegation, IEOC will assess the case to determine if there is sufficient ground to warrant an investigation. If there is sufficient ground to warrant an investigation, IEOC will then decide if the case will be investigated internally by IEOC, or the case will be referred to external enforcement offices, such as the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).
35. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is the primary office charged with investigating high-risk, complex matters and serious criminal cases – including complex fraud and corruption cases – which it has classified as “category I”³ cases. The IEOC will refer any case that falls under “category I” cases to the OIOS for investigation.
36. In respect of cases considered to be of lower risk to the Institute – classified as “category II”⁴ cases by OIOS – IEOC may conduct investigations and/or administrative inquiries.
37. in addition, if IEOC receives any report on retaliatory action against individuals because they have reported misconduct or cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation, the case may be referred to the Ethics Office. The Ethics Office conducts “preliminary reviews” of retaliation complaints to ascertain whether a *prima facie* case of retaliation exists. Such a “preliminary review” is not considered to be an investigation. However, if the Ethics Office finds a *prima facie* case of retaliation, it then refers the matter to OIOS for a complete investigation.

³ [Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the investigation functions in the United Nations](#) (A/58/708), paragraph 26: OIOS has classified high-risk, complex matters and serious criminal cases as belonging to category I. Inquiries into such matters are best handled by independent, professionally trained and experienced investigators. When programme managers or others identify such cases, they should be brought to the attention of the professional investigators in the respective office’s oversight unit or to OIOS. Category I cases would normally include the following: *Serious or complex fraud; other serious criminal act or activity; abuse of authority or staff; conflict of interest; gross mismanagement; waste of substantial resources; all cases involving risk of loss of life to staff or to others, including witnesses; substantial violations of United Nations regulations, rules or administrative issuances; complex proactive investigations aimed at studying and reducing risk to life and/or United Nations property.*

⁴ The same document as above, paragraph 27: Cases of lower risk to the Organization are classified by OIOS as belonging to category II and include the following: *Personnel matters; traffic-related inquiries; simple thefts; contract disputes; office management disputes; basic misuse of equipment of staff; basic mismanagement issues infractions of regulations, rules or administrative issuances; simple entitlement fraud.*

Action based on investigations

38. Fraud and corruption, if committed by any member of personnel, constitutes misconduct for which a disciplinary measure may be imposed, including dismissal, in accordance with UNITAR policies.
39. The allegations, if substantiated by the investigation, may result in disciplinary and/or administrative actions or other actions taken by UNITAR, depending on the case. The outcomes may include the following measures:
 - a. For regular staff members, disciplinary and/or administrative actions;
 - b. For non-staff personnel, non-renewal or termination of their contract or other action as deemed necessary;
 - c. For vendors, implementing partners, NGOs and CSOs, termination of the contract and exclusion from doing business with UNITAR and/or other sanctions;
 - d. Referral to the national authorities of a member state for criminal investigation and prosecution; and
 - e. Recovery of financial loss and/or assets suffered by UNITAR, and to return funds recovered to the respective funding sources.

All resolved fraud and corruption cases should be considered, with appropriate care for confidentiality, for use as an example for regular staff members and non-staff personnel.