

Regarding the Establishment of the University of Tokyo Code for Maintenance of Ethics
by Academic and Administrative Staff

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The University of Tokyo (hereinafter referred to as “the University”) established the Investigation and Reform Committee on Social Cooperation Programs in response to incidents involving the Clinical Cannabinoid Research Social Cooperation Program, which were reported between 2024 and 2025. The Committee reviewed the state of the governance system for Social Cooperation Programs and similar activities, and compiled recommendations for reform measures.

Among the reform measures was the formulation of the University of Tokyo Code for Maintenance of Ethics by Academic and Administrative Staff (hereinafter referred to as “the Code”), which sets forth the mindset and considerations necessary for maintaining ethical standards as members of the University. To draft this Code, the Ethics Working Group under the Committee held discussions and established the Task Force for Formulating the Code of Ethics, comprising members of the Ethics Working Group, as well as faculty and staff with expertise in research ethics and labor law, and heads of educational divisions.

The Task Force subsequently deliberated extensively and prepared a draft of the Code, which was finalized after incorporating feedback from the University’s executive leadership and deans of graduate schools. We expect this Code to serve as a foundation for faculty and staff to proactively uphold high ethical standards and demonstrate a commitment to earning public trust.

The term “ethics” is used in various contexts, such as “research ethics” in the mindset of a scientist, “bioethics” in life sciences research, and “information ethics” as it relates to information systems. In the context of this Code, ethics refers to the dignity and integrity expected of faculty and staff of the University.

The background for establishing the Code lies in two key factors:

First, an inappropriate incident occurred at the University. The case involving the Clinical Cannabinoid Research Social Cooperation Program was a serious matter impacting the public trust of the University. In particular, repeated acceptance of lavish entertainment, including at sex

establishments, exposed a lack of ethical awareness among some faculty and staff, and drew severe criticism from the public. The University must demonstrate sincere remorse and work to restore public trust by raising the ethical standards among faculty and staff.

Second, although the University had previously established rules such as the University of Tokyo Regulations on Ethics for Academic and Administrative Staff, the University of Tokyo Hospital Regulations on Ethics for Academic and Administrative Staff, and the Institute of Medical Science, the University of Tokyo Regulations on Ethics for Academic and Administrative Staff (hereinafter referred to as “Ethics Regulations”), there was no overarching, comprehensive code of ethics. Furthermore, beyond the prohibited acts listed in the Ethics Regulations, there are other acts faculty and staff should avoid, and it became necessary to clarify the mindset that University faculty and staff should consistently maintain, including such peripheral aspects.

Based on this background, the Code is framed according to the following structure:

- (i) The Preface and “1. Principles of Ethical Conduct” lay down the premise of the Ethics Regulations.
- (ii) “2. Compliance with the University of Tokyo Regulations on Ethics for Academic and Administrative Staff” emphasizes the importance of understanding and avoiding the prohibited acts under the Ethics Regulations.
- (iii) “3. Ensuring Appropriate Conduct as University Faculty and Staff” addresses behaviors that, while not explicitly prohibited by the Ethics Regulations, are nonetheless inappropriate for faculty and staff.
- (iv) “4. Impact of Violations and Misconduct” notes that acts damaging the University’s honor or reputation, or misconduct disrupting order and discipline, may result in disciplinary action, and outlines the responsibilities of faculty and staff.

Needless to say, although not explicitly a prohibited act according to the Ethics Regulations, it would be considered inappropriate under this Code for University faculty and staff to visit sex establishments with individuals they are associated with through their work duties, as in the recent incident.

The incident that prompted the establishment of this Code undermined trust in the University and hindered the advancement of educational and research activities itself. Such conduct is absolutely unacceptable for University faculty and staff. This Code reflects the University’s deep regret for failing to prevent such circumstances from occurring and its commitment to sincere reflection. By collectively implementing the principles of this Code, faculty and staff must strive to regain public trust and advance educational, research, and clinical activities.

At the same time, this Code calls on current and future faculty and staff to act with high

aspirations, great pride, and a sense of responsibility as members of Japan's leading academic institution. The Task Force hopes that this Code will be widely shared among faculty and staff, serve as a foundation for fulfilling their mission and responsibilities, and become a catalyst to restore public trust.

List of Members of the Task Force for Formulating the Code of Ethics

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○ Yoshihiko Kakuta – Executive Vice President

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