
/// cases
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/ vision
Dear Reader,

The updated version of Budapest Business School’s Code of Ethics was approved by the University’s Senate on 29th June 2018. Prepared through the involvement of the University’s community to the largest possible extent, BBS’s Code of Ethics summarises the basic principles guiding the behaviour of BBS’s students and staff as part of the University’s community. Providing guidance and supporting cooperation, the Code of Ethics has been prepared with the intension of offering a commonly accepted point of orientation in the everyday life of BBS’s community. The Code of Ethics and the Ethics Committee’s rules of procedure entered into force on 1st September 2018. BBS deems transparency, the development of ethical organisational culture and the prevention of future ethical problems important, and for this reason every year BBS publishes – exclusively in an anonymous manner – its position concerning the lessons learnt in the actual reporting period.

It is hoped that this report – just like the Code of Ethics itself – will be received with openness and confidence by all University students and staff, and it is likewise anticipated that this community will help the University achieve its strategic goals through their commitment to this Code, thereby bolstering the University’s good reputation.
What happened in the past year?

sensitisation & education

In the past year, the Code of Ethics and the principles laid down therein were publicized in as many channels and in as many ways as possible. In the scope of this activity, a short film was produced, there was a special game with the newly-admitted university students in this year's freshmen's camp, and on the BBS Day there were events where, in observance of these mutually-held values, people cooked and talked together, and there was also a photo session. In addition, all related materials have been prepared in English translation so that this information becomes available also for BBS's international students. All this was done to encourage everybody to familiarise themselves with the Code of Ethics. The goal behind these communication-purpose activities is to create a context where it is possible to have open discussions about ethical dilemmas and questions arising in the University's community, as well as to defend the rights of this community and those of others.

Let us take this opportunity to thank all colleagues and students for their contribution to BBS's related communication activities.

management of appeals & suggestions

In the past year, the Ethics Committee received 9 appeals: these were either questions or complaints. Naturally, the Committee addressed these issues in each case. In line with this, the Committee responded to these questions by issuing position statements. Concerning complaints, the Committee either rejected the complaints or initiated an investigation, as suited to the nature of the complaint in question. Out of the 5 appeals, 4 cases resulted in investigations: 3 cases concluded in the ethical misconduct of the Code of Ethics, and 1 investigation is still in progress. Upon the ethical misconduct, the Committee either suggested the issuance of written warnings or drew the attention of those concerned to the norm. However, the most important benefit is that, based on these issues and the related experience, the Committee made recommendations and initiated the development of an e-learning material focusing on the Code of Ethics. The Committee did so having realised that it is BBS's shared goal to make the Code of Ethics familiar to BBS's entire community and to create opportunities for the community to revise, from time to time, their existing knowledge concerning the Code of Ethics.

types of cases & lessons learnt

Since the entering into force of the Code, the Committee has received appeals concerning numerous issues. Reviewing and responding to such issues have resulted in the identification of very important learning points. The issues described in the following are actual appeals. As such, lessons learnt concerning these appeals are summarised below with the intention of helping our readers to understand what kind of ethical dilemmas exist, what type of issues merit appeals to the Ethical Committee, and what type of problems are the ones that need to be addressed elsewhere.

Click here for the Code of Ethics!

Click for the video!
What are the responsibilities of the Ethics Committee?

Typical ethical case:
The Committee received three appeals about publicly available writings and posts (available on social media sites or in the form of scholarly publications) exhibiting a critical or even a cynical tone: these communications were not only offensive to the members of BBS’s community but also endangered the University’s good reputation. Such cases are ethical issues and have drawn attention to the need for describing ethical expectations concerning communication or publication-related activities in a more detailed way so that all University students and staff can form a unanimous interpretation of such policies.

Typical ethical question:
An appeal was concerned with the question whether instructors can include their own publications as compulsory literature at their courses and if so, what guidelines are they supposed to follow. It is to be emphasised: instructors can include their own publications as compulsory literature and can also request reimbursement for their intellectual products but only on condition this happens with the consent of the programme leader concerned. An important principle is that the purchase of this publication cannot be made compulsory, and that the price of this publication must be lower than that of the printed course book.

Generally non-ethical issue:
Certainly, there were appeals concerning exams and the assessment of students’ performance. It can generally be stated that such questions do not belong to ethical issues. The Committee is not in the position to judge, for example, the quality of an earlier student presentation. Therefore, if there is no tangible, explicit ethical proof that some ethical violation has taken place, the Ethical Committee shall not question or review the assessment or the awarded grade contested.

Source of questions

Who was the most active?

If you have any questions, please send your request to etika@uni-bge.hu and ask for assistance: BBS’s team will be ready to help you.
In focus: principles guiding the communication and publication-related activities of BBS’s community

Social media
When producing posts, comments and likes in social media and acting in one’s capacity as BBS’s students or staff, care must be taken to observe BBS’s Code of Ethics even when posting private communication. Posted opinions should not be discriminative or offensive and should not discredit BBS.

Media publicity
In our capacity as BBS’s leaders, teaching staff or non-teaching staff members, we should communicate only about those areas concerning BBS that we know thoroughly and that belong to our responsibility and competence. Such communication should be in line with the Code of Ethics and its spirit, should contain true and real information, should not be discriminative or offensive, and should protect BBS’s good reputation.

Article 35 of BBS’s Organisational and Operational Rules provides detailed regulations concerning communication in the media, and for that reason it is important to be familiar with these instructions.

Scholarly publications
When publishing research results concerning BBS, the approval of the leader responsible for the research area in question must be sought. Publication of research results should be carried out in a responsible manner: such publications shall not violate personal rights, one’s honour or good reputation. Any research conducted among BBS’s students, teaching and non-teaching staff shall take place on a voluntary basis, with the awareness and consent of the participants, protecting all personal data. Prior to commencing any research, the head of the organisational unit concerned must be notified of such intention in writing.

- In the scope of the research, rules on science ethics shall be observed in line with the Hungarian Academy of Science’s Science Ethics Code.
- Concerning the protection of personal rights and the management of personal data, rules stipulated under Title “General Rules and Certain Personality Rights” contained in Act V of 2013 on the Civil Code as well as regulations set out in Budapest Business School’s Data Management Policy shall be observed throughout the entire research activity.

According to its principle of partnership & respect, the University’s Code of Ethics states that there is cooperation within the University and also with external partners, which activity is governed by mutual respect, help and loyalty. The community esteems collectiveness in the community, collegiality as well as mutual support and solidarity.