

“CODE OF CONDUCT”
(for members)

1. PREAMBLE

With regards to promoting of high quality Higher Education, on the basis of functional and regulatory experiences for the last two decades and the necessary as well as the expediency of a self-regulatory mechanism, the **FICCI-HEN (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry - Higher Education Network)**, hereby known as “**The Network**”, is established with the objective of sustained and healthy growth of the Higher Education Institutions (here by referred to as **HEIs**). Hence, it is voluntarily agreed by and among all the members of the FICCI-HEN to follow this **Code of Conduct (COC)**.

2. DEFINITIONS:

Member:

The term “member“ includes any private or public Higher Educational Institutions committed to abide with the Code of Conduct and Disclosure Norms identified by The Network in an effort to improve the quality of education and curb exploitation in the sector.

Rules and Regulations:

The terms “rules” and “regulations” refer to a guideline specified in the “Code of Conduct” which details the appropriate procedures or conduct that must be followed by member educational institutions.

Higher Educational Institution:

The term “Higher Educational Institution” refers to any private or public institution imparting tertiary & doctoral education that leads to the award of a degree or diploma accredited by the appropriate regulatory authority i.e. NBA/NAAC

Higher Education:

Any tertiary and doctoral course or program leading to the award of a degree or diploma accredited by the appropriate regulatory authority. The course will have a theoretical underpinning and will be at a level, which would qualify the student to work in a professional field. The course will usually be taught in an environment that also includes advanced research activity.

Admission Policy:

The term “Admission Policy” refers to written procedures identified by a higher educational institution through which the institution assesses applications. The admissions policy should also fulfill the following criteria:

- i) Enable the University to achieve its main Aims and the following objectives:
 - a. To ensure the admission of students with academic competence and potentialities of high quality so that its alumni may be able to play their role in the process of national construction and social change in a meaningful manner, and
 - b. To ensure that an adequate number of students from the under-privileged and socially handicapped sections of our society are admitted to the University.
- ii) Specify criteria against which they will assess applicants;
- iii) Indicate how different criteria will be weighted;
- iv) Indicate the process for considering forms and assessing candidates;

- v) Arrangements for joint courses;
- vi) Arrangements for cross-departmental admissions; and
- vii) The offer range and criteria for differential offers

3. OBJECTIVES

- a. To ensure a self regulatory mechanism for the Higher Education Sector (HES) **initially focusing on the Private sector and later expanding to Public sector** to promote a disciplined and healthy growth in the sector.
- b. To ensure that each member functions effectively as part of the higher educational system and welcomes Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Higher Education system.
- c. To assist the Government in formulating policies & implementing action plans towards achieving national goals in HE
- d. To assist the regulators in the policy formation and monitoring of the sector.
- e. To create knowledge networks with research institutions/corporate bodies to promote local & global knowledge society.
- f. To promote India as a destination for quality Higher Education.
- g. To provide proper protection to the parent/students and employers.
- h. To redress individual grievances of members of The Network.
- i. To achieve effective co-ordination amongst the members in matters of common interest.
- j. To improve the image and enhance the credibility of the sector in order to infuse confidence in the minds of users and the regulators
- h. To ensure financial sustainability and viability of the network.

4. EDUCATION DELIVERY PRACTICES

Members shall:

- a. Define norms for the network desirable to meet needs of social responsibilities.
- b. Create quality benchmarks that are both minimal & aspirational and gradually upgrade the quality of service delivery to global best practices.
- c. Impart education meticulously, complying with all relevant laws, rules and regulations for the time being in force.
- d. Exercise due diligence and independent professional judgment/decisions.
- e. Maintain integrity and act in a bonafide manner to ensure the promotion of high quality higher education system in the country.

- f. Accept responsibility for their conduct and the implications thereof.
- g. Honour their commitment in its letter and spirit and respect the rights and privileges of the students as well as others concerned with the higher education system in the country.
- h.
 - i. Appoint appropriate qualified teaching personnel and provide research and skill upgradation opportunities.
 - ii. Link research output of the teaching personnel to recruitment and promotion.
 - iii and in general, develop high quality manpower relevant to the global requirement.
- i. Extend mutual co-operation and assistance to other members.
- j. Meticulously follow the COC and any other norms and guidelines formulated from time to time by The Network.

5. ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Members shall:

- a. Strictly follow the prudent accounting policies, disclosure practices and norms of corporate governance applicable to (not for profit) organisations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- b. Follow, the uniform presentation of accounts adopted in the sector in all respect.
- c. Use the commonly accepted terminology in the sector uniformly.
- d. Ensure transparency in all its accounting practices in accordance with the Right to Information Act.

6. RELATIONSHIP WITH REGULATORS

Members endeavour to:

- a. Maintain a good rapport with the regulators.
 - i. Ensure meticulous and timely compliance with all the regulatory requirements.
 - ii. Submit in time all reports/returns/statements with all the particulars required by the regulators.
- b. Not suppress material information, even if such disclosure reveals an irregularity.

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STUDENT/PARENTS & EMPLOYERS

Members shall:

- a. Maintain high standards of integrity in all their dealings and ensure that the personnel deployed also follow the same.
- b. Maintain free, fair and transparent admission and examination procedures in accordance with standards that are uniformly spread across the network.

- c. Have transparency in determination of the fee to avoid exploitation.
- d. Disclose and inform all the relevant information regarding admissions, fees, employment prospects etc. and also role and responsibilities of the Institute on the website.
- e. Avoid making unjustified claims about the Institutions.
- f. Provide detailed information to the students/parents, especially when requested for.
- g. Have a proper complaint-redressal mechanism for timely and unbiased redressal of complaints.

8. RELATIONSHIP AMONGST MEMBERS

Members endeavour to:

- a. Treat the other members as an integral part of the sector which is useful and necessary for the benefit of all the concerned.
- b. Share relevant information as and when required, discreetly without any bias or ulterior motive.
- c. Encourage healthy competition.
- d. Extend any help, assistance and guidance, especially when the other member is either in distress or in need in operational matters.
- e. Define norms of migration of teaching staff from one HEI to the other HEI.
- f. Disclose discreetly information about any employee engaged in any deplorable activities to the members in an effort to avoid any repetition of malpractice in the member institutions.
- g. Avoid confrontation or litigation but adopt consensus either through formal or informal arbitrator in respect of disputes between the members.

9. RELATIONSHIP WITH “THE NETWORK”

Members shall:

- a. Disseminate the COC and ensure proper implementation by itself, as well as by all its employees.
- b. Establish internal control of compliance mechanism to ensure the due observance of COC in the organization as a whole.
- c. Comply with and send all the information/report/returns as defined in the disclosure norms to the secretariat of “The Network” promptly, disclosing true and correct facts and circumstances at all times and at any time required.

- d. Seek, wherever necessary, assistance/guidance/co-operation of “The Network”, on any issue of generic nature and follow the same so as to achieve a uniform practice in the sector as a whole.
- e. Volunteer, to assist “The Network”, in case of need, to meet any situation faced by any other member or the sector as a whole.

10. DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

“The Network” endeavours to establish a **Disciplinary Committee** (Standing Committee) to deal with any violation or default of the COC committed by any member.

- a. “The Network” shall refer any violation or default of COC to the Disciplinary Committee for examination and to propose the course of action in that regard.
 - The Disciplinary Committee shall objectively examine the issue in detail and form an opinion for consideration by “The Network”.
 - There upon, after due deliberation, “The Network” shall decide the further course of action either by dropping the issue or to direct the Disciplinary Committee to proceed with the disciplinary proceeding against the concerned.
- b. After evaluation of the issue involved objectively, by adopting such procedure as it deems fit, the Disciplinary Committee shall recommend the findings and give a warning to the member. Disciplinary Committee may also impose suitable fine that will be decided by the members of “The Network” in consensus.
- c. The concerned member shall voluntarily submit to any disciplinary process of “The Network” in respect of any violation of the COC by the member and desist from any unhealthy practice in that regard.
- d. “The Network” should also ensure that any disciplinary process against any member is without any bias and with the bonafide intention of rectifying the fault and also to establish a good image of the sector as a whole.
- e. During the process, the concerned member should be given proper opportunity of being heard, as and when it is required.