POSITION ON THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

(ACADEMIC INTEGRITY LEAGUE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE)

# General Provisions

1.1. This Regulation on the Research Ethics Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) defines the tasks, composition, and organization of the Committee's work within the framework of the Academic Integrity League.

1.2. The Committee operates in accordance with the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as the principles of the Academic Integrity League and this Regulation.

# Committee Tasks

2.1. The main role of the Committee is to review and evaluate scientific research, dissertations, projects, and publications of staff and students (undergraduates/graduates/Ph.D. candidates) from member universities of the League or any other scientific or academic institution (upon request), as well as teams formed by them. In the case of a request from a scientific or academic institution that is not a member of the League, the Committee reserves the right to reject the request and not consider it.

2.2. When reviewing and evaluating research papers, dissertations, and research projects, the primary role of the Committee is to ensure that the research adheres to ethical norms of conducting research, principles of academic integrity, and standards of quality and reliability.

2.3. The Committee is also responsible for resolving conflicts related to ethics in scientific research.

2.4. In addition to reviewing and evaluating research papers, the Committee can also participate in broader policy initiatives, discuss systemic issues related to research and science, and make decisions on new initiatives or regulatory principles in science, such as initiating the implementation of Open Science principles in Kazakhstan or seeking new solutions to specific problems.

# Composition of the Committee

3.1. The composition of the Committee is approved by the decision of the League Council and includes a list of individuals nominated as representatives of the League members, based on the submissions of the League members.

3.2. The Committee must consist of no fewer than 9 members. Two of these members must serve as the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee.

3.2. Members should be appointed for a three-year term with the possibility of renewal for a maximum of two terms.

3.3. The Committee must ensure proper gender and language balance (Kazakh, English, Russian) and have at least two members with documented expertise and competence in the following areas:

3.3.1. Research methodology.

3.3.2. Research ethics.

3.4. Committee members must have an impeccable scholarly reputation. This means that a Committee member should not have publications in academic journals with a questionable reputation or be involved in incidents related to academic integrity violations, nor should they have been legally found guilty of committing criminal offenses.

3.5. The Committee cannot include individuals who may potentially have conflicts of interest when making decisions.

# Organization of the Committee’s work

4.1. Committee meetings are convened and organized based on the number of inquiries received by the Committee and the reasonable time required for their review.

4.2. To avoid delays, the Committee ensures that a meeting is held within three weeks after receiving the inquiry, materials, submission, or request for consideration.

4.3. A Committee meeting is deemed valid if at least two-thirds of the total number of Committee members and the Chairperson are present at the meeting.

4.4. Non-committee members who have expertise in specific areas or are directly supervising the work of an employee or student whose work is being discussed at the Committee meeting may participate in the meetings by mutual agreement.

4.5. In the event of a conflict of interest involving a Committee member regarding the subject under consideration, that member cannot participate in the meeting.

# Evaluation of Research Papers and Decision-making by the Committee

5.1. The Committee reviews all research papers and materials it receives for plagiarism or other ethical violations, such as improper citation of sources, excessive self-citation, data falsification in research, various text manipulations, etc.

5.2. The Committee also checks whether the research papers include sensitive issues that may cause harm or lead to discrimination, stigmatization, legal persecution, or accusations against research subjects.

5.3. The Committee should adopt structured approaches to the review, based on relevant moral theory. The Committee should always justify its opinion by providing clear and reasonable explanations.

5.4. Committee members must make decisions conscientiously and honestly. In the event of a violation of scientific ethics or academic integrity by any Committee member, they are excluded from the Committee by a decision of the League Council.

5.5. The Committee makes decisions through open voting. If a majority of the Committee members present at the meeting vote in favor of a specific decision, that decision becomes final and binding.

5.6. After a decision is made, it must be documented in the form of meeting minutes and/or an extract from it, which are signed by the Committee members and kept for 5 years by the League Secretariat.

# Responsibilities of the Parties

6.1. Committee members and individuals participating in its meetings are not allowed to disclose confidential information about any scientific inquiry, materials, requests, or researchers that they become aware of during their work, and they bear personal responsibility for violating this prohibition.

6.2. Committee members are responsible for adhering to the principles of the League and the principles outlined in this regulation.

1. **Final Provisions**

7.1. Committee members are expected to actively engage in the Committee's activities, identifying issues and making suggestions to improve the quality of the Committee's work.

7.2. In the event of identifying a problem that requires regulatory resolution within this Regulation or during its implementation, Committee members may propose amendments to this Regulation with the aim of improving its quality.