



ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY DIRECTIVE

SECTION ONE

Purpose, Scope, Legal Basis, and Definitions

1. Short Title

“Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD) Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy Directive.”

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Directive, the following terms shall have the meanings set forth below:

- a) University: Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD),
- b) Rector: The Rector of ARUCAD,
- c) Unit: The relevant Faculty, Institute, School, or Vocational School of the University,
- d) Discrimination: Unequal treatment of an individual based on sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, religion, language, disability, age, socioeconomic status, or other protected characteristics,
- e) Harassment: Any unwelcome conduct that violates an individual’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment,
- f) Sexual Harassment: Any non-consensual verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature,
- g) Psychological Harassment / Mobbing: Systematic, continuous, and intentional behaviors aimed at excluding, discrediting, or intimidating an individual,
- h) Bullying: Repeated and persistent verbal, behavioral, or written acts by an individual or group against another person that undermine self-confidence, demean, or lead to social exclusion,
- i) Toxicity: Behaviors and environments that harm individuals’ emotional and psychological well-being, including lack of respect, persistent negativity, manipulation, or excessive competition,
- j) Humiliation: Expressions or actions that may generate hatred, severe contempt, ridicule, or hostility toward a specific individual or group in a public manner,
- k) Retaliation: Punitive or adverse actions taken against a person for submitting a complaint or report.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this Directive is to affirm the commitment of Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design to providing an **equitable, safe, respectful, and inclusive** learning, teaching, and working environment for all students, academic and administrative staff, members of the University community, and stakeholders. The University adopts a **zero-tolerance** policy toward all forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, psychological harassment, bullying, toxicity, humiliation, and retaliation.

4. Scope

This Directive applies to all academic and administrative staff, students, stakeholders, and business partners of Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design. The policies set forth herein are applicable on campus, on online platforms, during university-related events, and in all contexts where the University is represented.

SECTION TWO

Protected Characteristics and Fundamental Principles

5. Protected Characteristics

Within the scope of this Policy, the characteristics guaranteed protection against discrimination and harassment are as follows:

- (1) Sex,
- (2) Gender identity and gender expression,
- (3) Sexual orientation,
- (4) Race, color, and ethnic origin,
- (5) Language,
- (6) Religion, belief, or worldview,
- (7) Disability status,
- (8) Age,
- (9) Socioeconomic status,
- (10) Marital status and family responsibilities,
- (11) Citizenship or immigration/refugee status,
- (12) Political opinion or affiliation.

6. Fundamental Principles

Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD) adopts the following fundamental principles in alignment with **the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**:

- (1) **Equality and Justice:** All students and academic and administrative staff have equal rights. No individual shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, religion, language, age, socioeconomic status, refugee status, or any similar characteristic. Inclusive language, accessible spaces, and structures enabling equal participation for all shall be developed within the campus environment.
- (2) **Inclusivity and Participation:** The University encourages the admission and participation of groups that are underrepresented in higher education, including but not limited to women in STEM fields, ethnic minorities, low-income students, and migrant students.
- (3) **Gender Equality:** Increasing the representation of women and all individuals who may be subject to gender-based discrimination in academic and administrative staff, leadership positions, and educational activities is a strategic priority. Gender-based discrimination, harassment, or inequality of opportunity is strictly prohibited.
- (1) **Diversity and Excellence:** Academic and administrative processes shall be structured by taking into account the diverse perspectives and characteristics of all stakeholders of the University. Diversity is recognized as an enriching element, and excellence is upheld as a fundamental principle in all areas.

- (2) **Student Rights:** Equal opportunities for students are guaranteed in admission, enrollment, education, assessment, access to support services, participation in campus life, and graduation processes.
- (3) **Staff Rights:** Fairness and equality shall be observed for academic and administrative staff in recruitment, promotion, remuneration, professional development, and working conditions.
- (4) **Academic Freedom:** Diversity of thought and academic freedom are safeguarded. These freedoms shall not be restricted under the pretext of harassment, threat, or discrimination.
- (5) **Zero Tolerance:** All forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying, exclusionary behavior, and actions that create victimization are strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary sanctions.
- (6) **Individual and Institutional Responsibility:** Every member of the University community is obliged to refrain from behaviors that may lead to discrimination or harassment. The University not only adopts these principles but also enforces them through education, reporting, and sanction mechanisms.
- (7) **Complaint and Protection:** The reporting of policy violations is encouraged. Individuals who submit reports are guaranteed confidentiality and are protected against retaliation. Complaints shall be handled in a fair, sensitive, timely, and confidential manner.

SECTION THREE

Reporting and Protection Mechanism, Review and Disciplinary Process

7. Reporting and Protection Mechanism

- (1) All suspicions or concerns related to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, mobbing, exclusionary behaviors, or actions that create victimization within the University may be reported through a secure, confidential, and accessible reporting system.
- (2) Reports may be submitted in written form, through online channels (grievance@arucad.edu.tr), or via anonymous reporting mechanisms. This system is open to use by students, academic and administrative staff, suppliers, and all stakeholders affiliated with the University.
- (3) The identities of individuals submitting reports shall be protected under a strict principle of confidentiality. Information shall be processed solely by authorized bodies and only for the purposes of the investigation process.
- (4) Individuals who submit reports shall not, under any circumstances, be subjected to retaliation, pressure, discrimination, or any loss of rights. This protection applies to students, academic and administrative staff, and all parties connected with the University.
- (5) An independent committee shall be appointed by the Rectorate within the University for the receipt, assessment, and resolution of reports.
- (6) The examination, verification, and finalization of reports are under the responsibility of the Rectorate and/or the Board of Trustees.

8. Review and Disciplinary Process

- (1) All complaints of discrimination and harassment submitted to the University shall be examined by the appointed Committee in a prompt, fair, impartial, and confidentiality-based manner.
- (2) The complaint shall first be formally accepted and recorded. Subsequently, a preliminary assessment shall be conducted to determine the seriousness, scope, and the parties involved. Where deemed necessary, temporary protective measures may be implemented to ensure the safety of the parties and the proper conduct of the process.
- (3) Within this scope, statements of the parties and witnesses shall be taken; existing documents and digital records shall be examined; and evidence shall be collected. During the investigation

process, the parties shall be granted equal opportunity to be heard, and the process shall be conducted in accordance with the principle of confidentiality.

- (4) Upon completion of the investigation, the Committee shall render a decision regarding the nature of the violation and submit a report to the Rectorate. Depending on the severity of the violation, different sanctions may be imposed. For students, such sanctions may include a warning, reprimand, temporary suspension, prohibition from campus activities, cancellation of scholarships or special privileges, or dismissal from the University. For personnel, sanctions may include a warning, reprimand, temporary suspension from duty, removal from academic or administrative duties, or termination of the employment contract. In cases involving third parties, sanctions such as termination of business relations or prohibition of access to the campus may be imposed.

9. Notification and Appeal

- (1) Decisions taken shall be communicated to the parties in writing, together with their justifications. The parties shall have the right to appeal against the decisions. Appeals shall be submitted to the Rectorate within three (3) business days following the notification of the decision and shall be reviewed in a prompt, fair, and impartial manner. The decision rendered at the conclusion of the appeal process shall be final and binding, and no further administrative remedy shall be available within the University.

10. Record-Keeping and Reporting

- (1) All review and disciplinary processes shall be documented in accordance with the principle of transparency. Personal data shall be protected in compliance with confidentiality requirements. Summary data related to these processes (such as the number of complaints and resolution rates) shall be included in the annual report prepared and submitted to the Rectorate. Where necessary, this report may also be shared with the public.

11. Monitoring and Review

- (1) The University shall regularly monitor the implementation of policies related to combating discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, mobbing, and bullying.
- (2) The effectiveness of the Policy shall be evaluated at regular intervals and, where necessary, updated and improved.
- (3) Feedback received from students, academic and administrative staff, business partners, and other stakeholders shall be incorporated into the evaluation process.

12. Training and Awareness

- (1) The University shall conduct regular training and awareness-raising activities to ensure that all academic and administrative staff and students are informed about issues related to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, mobbing, exclusionary behaviors, and actions that create victimization.
- (2) These activities shall be integrated into orientation programs, in-service training, seminars, and online informational materials.
- (3) The University may organize joint activities involving its stakeholders (including the business community, civil society organizations, and public institutions).
- (4) The content of the training programs shall encompass national legislation, international standards, academic ethics, and principles of good governance.

SECTION FOUR

Other Provisions

13. Matters Not Regulated

In cases not expressly regulated by this Directive, the relevant provisions of the applicable legislation of Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design, as well as the decisions of the Board of Trustees, the Senate, or the relevant Administrative Board, shall apply.

14. Entry into Force

This Directive shall enter into force as of the date on which it is approved by the Senate of Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design.

15. Authority for Implementation

The provisions of this Directive shall be executed by the Rector of Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design.