



AHSU

AFRICA HEALTH
SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

AHSU Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy



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Policy Owner: Student Welfare Directorate, DCME Office

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1. Purpose

AHSU is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive, ethical, and professionally grounded. This Policy sets out the standards of personal, academic, clinical, research, and professional conduct expected of all students, and establishes fair procedures for reporting, reviewing, and resolving misconduct.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all AHSU students, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and clinical training programmes across all disciplines.

The Policy governs conduct arising:

- On AHSU campuses, affiliated teaching hospitals, or clinical training sites;
- During University-sponsored academic, clinical, research, professional, or student activities;
- Online or through digital platforms, where such conduct affects the learning environment, professional standards, patient safety, or the reputation and operations of AHSU or its affiliates; and
- Off campus, where the conduct has a direct connection to AHSU responsibilities or significantly affects the University community or its partner institutions.

3. Definitions

Student: Any person formally registered in an academic, clinical, research, or professional training programme at AHSU.

Academic misconduct: Any act that undermines academic integrity, including cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, collusion, impersonation, or unauthorized access to academic material.

Digital Misconduct: Any use of digital platforms, including social media or AI tools, that violates University standards, harms others, negatively affects the learning environment, patient safety, or professional integrity.

Professional misconduct: Conduct that breaches the ethical, professional, clinical, or behavioural standards expected of a student in academic or training settings.

Serious misconduct: Conduct that creates significant risk to another person, patient, the University, or a partner institution, including violence, sexual misconduct, criminal behaviour, substance misuse affecting performance, or serious breaches of confidentiality, safety, or ethics.

Clinical setting: Any teaching hospital, health facility, laboratory, outreach site, or other environment where students provide, observe, or support patient care or professional training.

4. Guiding principles

- Respect for the dignity, rights, and safety of all persons;
- Academic honesty and professional integrity;
- Fairness, confidentiality, and due process in handling complaints;
- Proportionate corrective and disciplinary action;

- Protection of patients, learners, staff, and institutional reputation; and
- Opportunities for correction, remediation, and growth where appropriate.

5. Standards of conduct

5.1 Professional and Ethical conduct

- Students shall act with integrity, responsibility, and respect in all academic, clinical, and professional settings.
- Students shall uphold confidentiality, informed consent, professional boundaries, and patient dignity.
- Students shall provide safe, respectful, and compassionate care where clinical contact applies.
- Students shall maintain constructive and respectful relationships with peers, faculty, staff, patients, and community members.

5.2 Academic responsibility

- Students shall produce honest and independent academic work and properly acknowledge all sources.
- Students shall accurately report attendance, academic progress, clinical activities, logbooks, and research information.
- Students shall comply with examination rules, assessment requirements, programme regulations, and institutional procedures.
- Students shall not engage in dishonest, deceptive, or misleading academic practices.

5.3 Respect, Inclusion, and Safety

- Students shall contribute to a learning environment that is safe, inclusive, and free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or retaliation.
- Students shall respect diversity of background, gender, profession, religion, nationality, and opinion.
- Students shall avoid conduct that places others at physical, emotional, academic, or professional risk.

5.4 Compliance with University and clinical obligations

- Students shall comply with schedules, curricular requirements, placement rules, safety protocols, reporting duties, and lawful instructions given by authorised academic or clinical supervisors.
- Students shall use University and clinical-site resources responsibly and only for approved purposes.

5.5 Digital and Public conduct

- Students shall use social media and digital platforms responsibly and shall not publish false, abusive, defamatory, discriminatory, or confidential information.
- Online conduct may be addressed under this Policy where it affects AHSU, its students, staff, patients, partner institutions, or the learning environment.

6. Classification of misconduct

6.1 Minor Misconduct Isolated or low-impact breaches such as lateness, failure to follow routine instruction, minor disruption, incomplete records, or first-time administrative non-compliance.

6.2 Major Misconduct Repeated non-compliance, academic dishonesty, unprofessional behaviour, misuse of resources, breaches of confidentiality, harassment, insubordination, or conduct that significantly disrupts learning or training.

6.3 Severe Misconduct Violence, threats, sexual misconduct, criminal acts, fraud, substance misuse affecting performance, serious ethical breaches, serious patient safety violations, or any conduct that seriously harms another person or the institution.

7. Illustrative misconduct and possible measures

The table below provides guidance on common forms of misconduct and the range of measures that may be applied. Sanctions shall depend on the seriousness, impact, intent, previous conduct, and the student's response during review.

Category	Examples	How It May Be Addressed	Possible Measures
Minor administrative non-compliance	Repeated lateness, incomplete forms, failure to attend required meetings or orientation	Review by programme office or Student Affairs; written reminder and follow-up	Verbal reminder, written caution, directive to comply within a set period
Academic misconduct	Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsification, unauthorized access to exam material	Academic review under applicable procedures; student given notice and chance to respond	Nullification of work or exam, formal warning, remediation, probation, suspension where serious
Unprofessional conduct	Abusive language, disrespectful behaviour, refusal to follow lawful instruction, disorderly conduct	Review by relevant office and supervisor input	Written warning, apology, re-orientation, probation, restriction from specific activities
Breach of confidentiality	Improper sharing of patient, student, or institutional information	Formal review; immediate steps may be taken to limit harm	Warning, remediation, role restriction, suspension, referral to disciplinary process
Harassment, discrimination, bullying, or intimidation	Targeting or mistreating others in person or online	Handled through formal institutional channels	Warning, mandatory corrective action, probation, suspension, dismissal in serious cases
Unsafe or unethical clinical conduct	Acts or omissions that risk patient safety,	Immediate escalation to academic/clinical leadership	Removal from clinical duties, remediation,

Category	Examples	How It May Be Addressed	Possible Measures
	dignity, or professional standards		probation, suspension, dismissal
Substance misuse affecting performance	Use of alcohol or drugs that impairs academic or clinical functioning	Urgent review with safety measures where required	Mandatory assessment/support, restriction from duties, probation, suspension
Serious misconduct	Violence, sexual misconduct, criminal acts, fraud, serious threats, repeated grave breaches	Formal disciplinary review with due process	Suspension, dismissal, referral to legal or regulatory authorities where applicable

8. Reporting and Review process

8.1 Submission of Complaints: Concerns may be submitted in writing to the relevant program office, the Welfare Directorate, the PGME Office, the Dean's Office, or any designated AHSU reporting channel (**Anonymous reporting is permitted to ensure students feel safe raising sensitive issues**). Urgent matters involving safety, patient harm, violence, or legal concerns shall be escalated immediately.

8.2 Initial Review The receiving office shall conduct an initial assessment to determine the nature, seriousness, and urgency of the allegation, the need for interim measures, and the appropriate review pathway.

8.3 Notice and Opportunity to Respond The student concerned shall be informed of the allegation and given a reasonable opportunity to respond, present evidence, and be heard before a final decision is made, except where urgent temporary action is necessary to protect safety or institutional integrity.

8.4 Formal Review Where required, a designated disciplinary or academic body shall conduct a fair review, taking into account the available evidence, the seriousness of the matter, and any relevant professional or clinical context.

8.5 Outcome and Communication A written outcome shall be issued, setting out the findings reached, the basis of the decision, any measures imposed, and the timeline for compliance where applicable.

9. Interim Measures

Where necessary to protect safety, patient care, evidence, or the integrity of the review process, AHSU may impose interim measures pending final determination. Such measures may include temporary restriction from classes, clinical sites, laboratories, residence, digital platforms, or other University activities.

10. Disciplinary measures

Depending on the findings, one or more of the following measures may be applied:

- Verbal or written caution;

- Formal warning;
- Academic or behavioural probation;
- Required remediation, counselling, coaching, or re-orientation;
- Restitution, correction, or completion of outstanding obligations;
- Restriction from specified activities, services, leadership roles, or clinical duties;
- Suspension from studies or clinical activities for a defined period; and
- Dismissal from the University.

Disciplinary measures shall be proportionate to the misconduct and shall take account of the seriousness of the breach, prior conduct, harm caused, risk to others, and the potential for corrective action.

11. Students' rights and appeals

Students are entitled to:

- Be informed of allegations made against them;
- Respond to concerns and present relevant information or evidence;
- Be treated fairly and respectfully throughout the process;
- Have matters handled confidentially, subject to institutional or legal requirements; and
- Appeal decisions through established University mechanisms within the timelines set by AHSU.

12. Confidentiality

All proceedings and records under this Policy shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality and disclosed only to persons or bodies with a legitimate institutional role, or where disclosure is required by law, patient safety, accreditation, or regulatory obligations.

13. Records management

Conduct records shall be maintained securely by the Office of Student Welfare or another authorised office designated by AHSU. Records shall be retained, accessed, and released only in accordance with University requirements and applicable law.

14. Policy review

This Policy shall be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary, to ensure continued alignment with legal, regulatory, and accreditation requirements, as well as institutional needs and good practice in health professions education

15. Approvals

This Policy shall take effect on the date of approval by the competent AHSU authority and shall remain in force until revised or replaced.

Names	Role	Signature	Date
Dr Belise S Uwurukundo	Registrar		13 December 2024
Dr. Edgar Kalimba	Dean of the School of Medicine		15 December 2024
Dr. Zerihun Abebe	Vice Chancellor		16 December 2024

