



**UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY**

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POLICY ON PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

Adopted by the UNU Council at its 75th session in June 2021.

I. Introduction and Scope of Application

1. The United Nations University (UNU), in light of its mandates and purposes, promotes universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, including the right to privacy, and recognises the importance of data protection policies, strategies and international standards that ensure the respect of those rights and freedoms.
2. UNU handles some degree of personal data of varying confidentiality or sensitivity in carrying out its diverse activities which arise from mandates enshrined in the UNU Charter, as well as from administrative processes necessary for their implementation.
3. Personal data collected by UNU shall be processed in a manner which respects the rights, including the right to privacy and other human rights, of individuals and groups, in a manner that takes into account all forms of diversity, is consistent with the United Nations Personal Data Protection and Privacy Principles, and conforms to appropriate organizational and technical safeguards.
4. The purpose of this Policy is to define key principles in personal data processing, outline the roles and responsibilities of UNU and UNU personnel in the development and management of procedures that address the critical needs of UNU, set standards for protection that are appropriate and proportionate to the risks and sensitivity of personal data processing within UNU, and facilitate accountable processing of personal data for the purposes of implementing the mandates of UNU.
5. This Policy shall apply to all personal data, contained in any form and processed in any manner, relating to an identified or identifiable natural person processed by UNU and its institutes, offices and units in carrying out their mandated activities, including personal data of UNU personnel.
6. All UNU personnel shall be responsible for applying and complying with this Policy. Selected UNU personnel will have additional responsibilities and specific roles to ensure that the processing of personal data is in accordance with this Policy and any relevant procedures, standards or guidelines. In particular, selected personnel will be responsible for making a prior assessment of the potential impact of personal data processing on the basis of the principles of this Policy, so as to identify any risks and corresponding mitigating measures (Impact Assessment).
7. The implementation of this Policy shall be without prejudice to the privileges and immunities accorded to UNU under international law.

II. Key Principles

Legitimate and Fair Processing

8. UNU shall process personal data in a legitimate and fair manner in accordance with its mandates and governing instruments, and in a non-discriminatory, gender sensitive manner, with due regard to the human rights of data subjects, including the right to privacy, taking also into account the balancing of the interests of UNU with the relevant rights, freedoms and interests, on the basis of any of the following:
 - (a) To enable UNU to advance research, carry out postgraduate training, promote dissemination of knowledge, or carry out any other activity within its mandates;
 - (b) To protect the vital interests of data subjects, or their best interest if they are a child;

- (c) To comply with public legal obligations to which UNU is subject, to ensure the exercise or defence of legal claims, or for accountability of UNU;
 - (d) To prepare or perform contracts with data subjects, including employment contracts, or with third parties for the benefit of data subjects;
 - (e) To satisfy other overriding legitimate interests of UNU; or
 - (f) By virtue of consent by data subjects.
9. When personal data is processed on the basis of consent by data subjects in accordance with paragraph 8(f) above, such consent should be obtained at the time of collection or as soon as it is reasonably practicable, and in a manner that is transparent to data subjects in accordance with paragraph 11 and paragraphs 20-21 below.
10. UNU shall protect the dignity and safety of data subjects, taking into account all forms of diversity, and in compliance with applicable UNU policies and administrative issuances, including the UNU Policy on Research Involving Human Subjects.

Purpose Specification

11. Personal data shall be processed for specified and legitimate purposes that are consistent with the mandates of UNU, taking also into account the balancing of the interests of UNU with the relevant rights, freedoms, and interests.

Proportionality and Necessity (Data Minimisation)

12. The processing of personal data shall be relevant, limited and adequate to what is necessary in relation to the specified purposes of personal data processing. UNU shall ensure that personal data collected neither exceeds that which is necessary for the purposes for which they are collected nor is retained beyond the necessary duration in accordance with paragraphs 13-14 below.

Retention

13. Personal data shall only be retained for the necessary period of time to achieve the specified purposes, without prejudice to the retention of records to be permanently or temporarily preserved for their administrative, fiscal, legal, scientific, historical or informational value.
14. UNU shall ensure that personal data is erased, returned or permanently anonymised once the specified purposes have been fulfilled, provided that no other legitimate and fair basis of data processing under paragraph 8 above persist, and without prejudice to the retention of records to be permanently or temporarily preserved for their administrative, fiscal, legal, scientific, historical or informational value.

Accuracy

15. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, up to date to fulfil the specified purposes.

Confidentiality

16. Personal data shall be classified in accordance with the UNU Data Classification Guideline and other

applicable UNU policies and administrative issuances. The confidentiality of personal data shall be respected by UNU and UNU personnel at all times.

Security

17. UNU shall ensure the implementation of appropriate organizational, administrative, physical and technical safeguards and procedures in order to protect the security of personal data processed by UNU, including against or from unauthorized or accidental access, damage, loss or other risks presented by personal data processing (Data Breaches).
18. Events of suspected or actual Data Breaches shall be notified to the personnel indicated in paragraph 25 below as soon as practicable. The severity of such events shall be assessed and appropriate measures aimed at protecting affected data subjects, including mitigating or resolving possible adverse impacts, shall be taken without undue delay in accordance with internal procedures.
19. Having regard to available technology, safeguards and procedures shall be reasonable and appropriate to the risks presented by the nature and processing of personal data and its level of sensitivity.

Transparency

20. Insofar as the specified purposes for which personal data is processed is not frustrated, UNU shall process personal data in a transparent manner, as appropriate and whenever possible, by providing data subjects with information about the processing of their personal data, including whether personal data may be transferred to third parties, as well as information on how to request access, verification, rectification and/or deletion of their personal data.
21. Where such requests are manifestly abusive, fraudulent, or too onerous to comply with given existing resources, UNU would generally decline to fulfil such request.

Transfers

22. In carrying out its mandated activities, UNU may transfer personal data to third parties such as other United Nations entities, cooperating partners or UNU donors (Outbound Data), provided that:
 - (a) Under the circumstances, third parties afford an appropriate level of security and protection for personal data in light of the principles of this Policy;
 - (b) Transfers of personal data are limited to the minimum necessary to fulfil the specified and legitimate purposes;
 - (c) Appropriate measures are in place to safeguard the transmission of personal data; and
 - (d) The method of transmission is proportionate to the nature and sensitivity of personal data.
23. UNU may receive personal data from third parties (Inbound Data):
 - (a) In cases where UNU engages third parties to collect personal data on UNU's behalf. Such third party shall afford an appropriate level of security and protection for personal data in light of the principles of this Policy when collecting personal data;
 - (b) In cases where UNU receives personal data from third parties that are not acting on behalf of UNU, UNU should take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that such personal data has been

lawfully collected.

Accountability

24. In order to ensure accountability for the processing of personal data and adequate implementation of this Policy, UNU shall have in place procedures, standards, guidelines and trainings, as well as appropriate governance structure to ensure oversight of the processing of personal data, and redress mechanisms to handle requests and complaints from data subjects.
25. UNU shall appoint personnel who shall be responsible for the implementation and control of organisational and security measures and procedures.

Annex 1 - Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

Personal Data means information, in any form, relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. Although the definition of what constitutes personal data may vary due to enhancements in technology and methods for identifying individuals, personal data includes biographical data such as name, gender, marital status, date and place of birth, country of origin, individual registration number, digital and online trackers, occupation, religion, ethnicity, biometric data such as a photograph, fingerprint, facial or iris image, as well as any expression of opinion about the individual, such as assessments of status and/or specific needs.

Process or Processing means any operation or set of operations that is performed either manually or by automated means on personal data or sets of personal data such as collection, registering, recording, organization, structuring, storage, adaption or alteration, cleaning, filing, retrieval, consultation, use, transfer, sharing, dissemination or otherwise making available, correction, erasure or destruction.

Data Subject means an individual whose personal data is subject to processing.

Consent means any freely given, specific and informed indication of an agreement given by a data subject or, if the data subject lacks mental capacity, by their representative to the processing of their personal data.

UNU personnel means UNU academic and administrative members of UNU staff as respectively defined in Sections 2.1.A.2 and 2.1.B.2 of the UNU Personnel Policy, and UNU academic and administrative members of UNU staff as respectively defined in Sections 2.1.A.3, 2.1.B.3, and 2.1.C of the UNU Personnel Policy, such as Personnel Service Agreement holders (PSA), and Consultants and Individual Contractors (CTC/CIC), including individuals engaged by UNU under different contractual modalities such as fellows, trainees, interns and gratis personnel.