

# **Code of Conduct – Department of Archaeology, Bilkent University**

## **1. Purpose and Scope**

This Code of Conduct establishes professional and ethical guidelines for all participants in archaeological field projects affiliated with the Department of Archaeology at Bilkent University, including faculty members, researchers, staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, interns, volunteers, and collaborators.

It applies to all interactions in field settings, including surveys, excavations, laboratory work, study visits, travel, accommodation, and associated research activities.

Archaeological fieldwork is a core component of archaeological training and professional practice. Its distinctive conditions – distance from institutional support systems, intensive academic and social interaction, physically demanding environments, and operation within diverse legal and cultural contexts – require heightened attention to professional conduct and mutual responsibility.

All participants share responsibility for ensuring that field environments remain safe, respectful, inclusive, and compliant with institutional, legal, and professional standards.

The rules and standards of Bilkent University, as well as those of collaborating institutions and local authorities, apply fully in field settings. Participants are also expected to align their conduct with internationally recognized professional and ethical guidelines emphasizing respect, non-discrimination, safety, accountability, and prevention of misconduct.

## **2. Core Principles**

All participants are expected to uphold the following principles:

### **Respect and Dignity**

Treat all participants, local collaborators, workers, and community members with fairness, professionalism, and respect regardless of academic level, gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, or any other protected characteristic.

### **Integrity**

Maintain high standards of academic, professional, and personal honesty.

### **Responsibility**

Contribute to a safe, inclusive, productive, and respectful learning and working environment.

### **Accountability**

Recognize the responsibilities and power dynamics that may arise in fieldwork settings and act ethically at all times.

### **Collaboration**

Promote teamwork, constructive communication, and mutual support among all participants.

### **3. Responsibilities of Faculty Members and Supervisors**

Faculty members and supervisory staff are expected to:

- Maintain clear professional boundaries with students and team members at all times.
- Avoid relationships or interactions that may create conflicts of interest, favouritism, coercion, or perceptions of bias.
- Refrain from romantic or sexual relationships with students under direct or indirect supervision.
- Provide clear expectations regarding roles, responsibilities, schedules, safety procedures, and evaluation criteria.
- Offer constructive feedback respectfully and in a timely manner.
- Support students' academic and professional development.
- Ensure students are not placed in exploitative labour roles beyond reasonable educational expectations.
- Ensure equitable access to training opportunities, field responsibilities, and professional development.
- Intervene promptly and appropriately in cases of misconduct, harassment, discrimination, bullying, or unsafe behaviour.
- Respect students' autonomy and their right to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.
- Avoid assigning personal or non-academic tasks unrelated to legitimate fieldwork responsibilities.
- Foster an atmosphere in which students feel safe asking questions, reporting concerns, and participating fully.

### **4. Responsibilities of Students and Participants**

Students and all non-supervisory participants are expected to:

- Conduct themselves professionally and respectfully toward faculty members, peers, local workers, community members, and collaborators.
- Follow project rules, safety procedures, local laws, and instructions provided by supervisors and organizers.
- Participate responsibly in fieldwork activities and contribute to a cooperative team environment.
- Respect professional boundaries with faculty members, staff, peers, and local collaborators.
- Refrain from harassment, bullying, intimidation, discrimination, violence, or disruptive behaviour.
- Avoid behaviour that compromises the safety, dignity, well-being, or participation of others.

- Communicate concerns, conflicts, injuries, safety risks, or incidents promptly to appropriate supervisors or designated contacts.
- Respect accommodation arrangements, shared spaces, equipment, and project resources.
- Respect cultural, religious, and social norms in host communities.
- Use social media responsibly and avoid sharing confidential, sensitive, or inappropriate material related to the project, participants, sites, or local communities.
- Refrain from unauthorized removal, handling, or misuse of archaeological materials, data, or equipment.
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption or substance use that may endanger themselves or others.
- Recognize that misconduct outside formal work hours may still affect the safety and integrity of the field environment.

Graduate students and senior student participants who supervise others are expected to uphold the same professional standards expected of faculty members within the scope of their responsibilities.

## **5. Equity and Inclusion**

All participants share responsibility for promoting equal access to learning opportunities, training, participation, and professional development.

Participants must not discriminate on the basis of gender (including gender identity), sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, religion, language, national origin, age, disability, socioeconomic status, or familial status (including pregnancy and caregiving responsibilities).

Fieldwork responsibilities and opportunities should be allocated equitably, except where constrained by local regulations, safety concerns, or project-specific requirements.

Participants should:

- Avoid reinforcing gendered or exclusionary divisions of labour.
- Respect diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences.
- Be attentive to cultural sensitivities and diverse participant needs.
- Support inclusive participation whenever reasonably feasible.
- Avoid exclusionary language, jokes, or behaviour.

## **6. Health, Safety, and Well-being**

The physical and mental well-being of all participants is a priority.

Faculty members and organizers must:

- Take all reasonable steps to minimize risks and hazards.

- Communicate safety procedures, emergency protocols, and contingency plans clearly.
- Monitor local conditions and maintain communication with relevant authorities and institutions.
- Provide participants with relevant information regarding environmental, political, medical, and logistical risks.

Students and participants must:

- Follow safety instructions and emergency procedures.
- Use equipment responsibly.
- Inform supervisors of injuries, illnesses, unsafe conditions, or emergencies.
- Respect limitations imposed for safety reasons.
- Refrain from behaviour that endangers themselves or others.

All participants have the right to reassess or withdraw from participation because of legitimate safety concerns without intimidation or retaliation.

## **7. Harassment, Discrimination, and Misconduct**

No participant may engage in any form of harassment, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, abuse, retaliation, or violence.

Harassment includes conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or educational performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, comments, jokes, requests, gestures, physical contact, or other conduct of a sexual nature.

Examples of prohibited behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted physical contact.
- Offensive or discriminatory comments.
- Sexual jokes, remarks, or pressure.
- Intimidation, humiliation, or threats.
- Deliberate exclusion from opportunities or activities.
- Abuse of authority or seniority.
- Online harassment or inappropriate digital communication.
- Retaliation against individuals who report concerns.

Participants who witness misconduct are encouraged to report concerns promptly.

Faculty members and supervisors must not tolerate misconduct and are expected to respond appropriately when concerns arise.

## **8. Prevention, Training, and Reporting**

Faculty members and organizers must ensure that all participants are informed before and during fieldwork about:

- Expected standards of conduct.
- Examples of unacceptable behaviour.
- Safety procedures and emergency contacts.
- Reporting procedures.
- Possible consequences of violations.

Clear reporting structures with multiple points of contact should be established whenever possible.

Participants are encouraged to report concerns, misconduct, discrimination, safety issues, or violations of this Code without fear of retaliation.

All complaints should be treated seriously, respectfully, and in accordance with university procedures and applicable legal frameworks.

Confidentiality should be protected to the greatest extent possible.

## **9. Alcohol and Substance Use**

All participants are expected to exercise moderation, sound judgment, and professionalism regarding alcohol consumption and substance use in field settings.

Participants must not:

- Pressure others to consume alcohol or substances.
- Exclude individuals who choose not to participate in such activities.
- Engage in behaviour that compromises safety, consent, inclusion, or professional conduct.
- Participate in fieldwork activities while impaired.

Organizers may impose additional restrictions where required by safety, local law, or project conditions.

## **10. Communication and Conduct in the Field**

Participants are expected to foster open, respectful, and professional communication.

All participants should:

- Communicate respectfully, even in stressful situations.
- Avoid humiliating, intimidating, dismissive, or aggressive behaviour.
- Address disagreements constructively.

- Respect privacy and personal boundaries.
- Be mindful that fieldwork often involves shared living and working environments.

Faculty members and student leaders should make reasonable efforts to resolve conflicts fairly and privately when appropriate.

## **11. Evaluation and Academic Fairness**

Assessment, evaluation, recommendations, authorship, and allocation of opportunities must be based on transparent, fair, and objective criteria.

Faculty members and supervisors must:

- Assess student performance according to clearly communicated academic and professional standards.
- Avoid favouritism, bias, discrimination, or retaliation in grading, evaluations, recommendations, or assignment of responsibilities.
- Provide students with appropriate opportunities to receive feedback and discuss their performance.
- Ensure that expectations regarding attendance, participation, conduct, and academic work are communicated clearly.
- Recognize that unequal treatment or exclusion from opportunities may have long-term academic and professional consequences.

Students are expected to:

- Complete assigned work honestly, responsibly, and to the best of their ability.
- Respect intellectual property, collaborative work, and data ownership.
- Avoid plagiarism, falsification, fabrication, or unauthorized use of research materials or data.
- Participate fairly and responsibly in shared field and laboratory tasks.

All participants must comply with legal and ethical standards concerning archaeological heritage, research data, and cultural property.

## **12. Use of Authority**

No participant may misuse authority, status, seniority, expertise, or social influence to pressure, manipulate, intimidate, exploit, or disadvantage others.

Faculty members, supervisors, graduate assistants, trench supervisors, and student leaders must:

- Exercise authority responsibly, fairly, and professionally.
- Avoid coercive behaviour or abuse of power.

- Refrain from assigning personal, degrading, or non-academic tasks unrelated to legitimate fieldwork responsibilities.
- Respect participants' autonomy, dignity, and right to express concerns.
- Avoid creating situations in which students or junior participants may feel pressured to comply with inappropriate requests.
- Ensure that disciplinary or supervisory actions are proportionate, fair, and consistent.

Students and junior participants are also expected to treat peers respectfully and not misuse informal authority, social influence, or seniority within the team.

All participants share responsibility for maintaining a safe, respectful, and ethical field environment.

### **13. Compliance and Professional Responsibility**

All participants are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct, Bilkent University policies, applicable laws, and relevant professional standards.

Violations of this Code may result in disciplinary measures, removal from fieldwork activities, referral to university procedures, or other appropriate actions.

Faculty members, students, supervisors, and organizers are encouraged to actively promote awareness of these standards and contribute to a fieldwork culture grounded in safety, inclusion, mutual respect, and ethical responsibility.

This document is intended to support a respectful, safe, inclusive, and academically enriching environment for all participants in archaeological fieldwork and related activities.

**Any member of the Department – student or faculty member – may contact the Department Chair regarding any questions or possible violations of this Code.**