UZBEKISTAN STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY

Policy on Academic Freedom

Approved September 2021 | Revised January 2025

Policy status	Date
Approved	September 2021
Reviewed	Annually by the Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs and Innovation
Revised	January 2025
Next full revision	January 2028

1. Purpose

This policy affirms and protects academic freedom at Uzbekistan State World Languages University (UzSWLU), so that academic staff, researchers and students can engage in scholarly work without undue restriction. Academic freedom is essential to intellectual growth, innovation, critical inquiry and the advancement of knowledge.

2. Legal and normative basis

- Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" No. ZRU-637 of 23 September 2020;
- the Charter of Uzbekistan State World Languages University, which gives teaching staff and researchers the right to choose methods and means of instruction, to conduct research, to take part in discussions of University activities and to publish the results of their work;
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997);
- the UzSWLU Code of Conduct.

3. Scope

The policy applies to all members of the UzSWLU academic community: professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, assistants and trainee teachers, research staff, doctoral researchers and students. It covers all academic and research activities, both within the University and in external engagements connected with academic work.

4. Equal application to senior and junior academic staff

The freedoms set out in this policy apply equally to senior academic staff (professors, associate professors, heads of departments and senior researchers) and to junior and early-career academic staff (senior lecturers, lecturers, assistants, trainee teachers, junior researchers and doctoral researchers), regardless of their contract type or length of service. No member of staff may be denied these freedoms, or disadvantaged in appointment, contract renewal, promotion or workload, because of their seniority or because of the lawful exercise of academic freedom.

5. Principles of academic freedom

- Freedom of research: academic staff and researchers have the right to choose their research topics and methods and to publish their findings without censorship, in line with ethical standards and the law. This includes the freedom to collaborate with national and international institutions without undue interference.
- Freedom of teaching: teaching staff may present their subject in the way they consider academically appropriate, choose teaching methods and materials, and foster critical inquiry and open discussion in the classroom.
- Freedom of expression on academic matters: members of the academic community may express their views on academic matters inside and outside the University, including by speaking publicly about their field of research, taking part in public debates and academic conferences, and engaging with the media about their research, without fear of institutional reprisal.
- Protection against external pressure: the University protects academic freedom from political, commercial and other external pressure to ensure a safe and supportive environment for research and teaching.

6. Responsibilities

- Ethics and integrity: academic freedom is exercised in line with ethical standards, respect for the rights of others and the highest standards of academic integrity.
- Accuracy: scholars maintain accuracy in research and teaching, acknowledge limitations, cite sources properly and are transparent about their methods.
- Respect for diversity: academic freedom is exercised with respect for diverse perspectives, and differing viewpoints are welcomed and debated constructively.

7. Implementation and protection

- Responsibility: the Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs and Innovation oversees the implementation of this policy, supported by the deans and heads of departments.
- Complaints: any member of the academic community who believes their academic freedom has been infringed may submit a complaint to the Rector. Complaints are reviewed by a commission formed by order of the Rector, which includes representatives of the teaching staff and the Trade Union of the Teaching Staff and Employees, and excludes anyone involved in the matter complained of. The outcome is communicated to the complainant in writing.
- Non-retaliation: no one may be subjected to disciplinary action, loss of position or any other adverse treatment for the lawful exercise of academic freedom or for submitting a complaint in good faith.
- Training and awareness: the University holds workshops and seminars for staff, researchers and students on their rights and responsibilities regarding academic freedom, and introduces new academic staff to this policy on appointment.

8. Monitoring and review

The University monitors the effectiveness of this policy through indicators that include the number of complaints received, the share resolved and feedback from staff and students on their experience of academic freedom. The policy is reviewed annually and fully revised every three years, or earlier if legislation or international good practice changes. Staff and students are consulted during each revision.

9. Commitment

By adopting this policy, UzSWLU reaffirms its commitment to an environment in which academic freedom is respected and protected, recognizing its essential role in the pursuit of knowledge, the advancement of society and the promotion of intellectual diversity.