**Code of Conduct**

# **1. Purpose**

Our team is committed to fostering a **safe, inclusive, and collaborative environment** where every member can contribute effectively. We believe that respect, open communication, and teamwork are fundamental to the success of our **Software Engineering Group Project**.

We welcome participation from all members, regardless of:

* Background
* Family status
* Marital status
* Age
* Ability or disability
* Race and/or ethnicity
* National origin
* Socioeconomic status
* Religion or belief system
* Geographic location

Diversity strengthens our work. These guidelines exist to ensure that all team members can **interact, collaborate, and contribute in a supportive and professional manner**.

# **2. When and How This Code Applies**

This Code of Conduct applies to all project-related activities, including but not limited to:

* **Team meetings** (in-person or virtual)
* **Online communication** (GitHub, email, messaging apps, discussion forums)
* **Project contributions** (code commits, documentation, reviews, discussions)
* **Collaborative spaces** (pair programming, stand-ups, group work sessions)
* **Class presentations and discussions** related to the project

# **3. Expected Behaviour**

All team members are expected to:

**Be Respectful**

* Treat teammates with kindness and professionalism.
* Be open to feedback and differing perspectives.
* Address disagreements constructively and focus on problem-solving rather than personal criticism.
* Give credit where it is due and acknowledge the contributions of others.

**Communicate Openly and Professionally**

* Use clear, respectful, and inclusive language in all discussions.
* Ensure that feedback is constructive and aimed at improving the project.
* Actively listen and avoid interrupting others.
* If there is a conflict, approach the situation calmly and respectfully.

**Be Inclusive**

* Ensure everyone has a voice in discussions and decision-making.
* Support teammates who may have different communication styles or needs.
* Encourage participation from all team members, including those who may be less vocal.
* Accommodate different learning styles, time zones, and commitments where possible.

**Take Responsibility**

* Complete assigned tasks within the agreed deadlines.
* Keep the team informed of progress and any blockers.
* Ask for help when needed and offer support to teammates when possible.
* Use version control best practices to track changes and contributions properly.

# **4. Unacceptable Behaviour**

The following behaviours are not acceptable and will not be tolerated:

**Harassment and Discrimination**

Harassment includes offensive comments related to **gender, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or other personal characteristics**. It also includes deliberate intimidation, stalking, sustained disruption of discussions, and unwelcome physical contact.

**Personal Attacks and Toxic Behaviour**

* Insults, threats, or personal attacks against other team members.
* Dismissing or belittling the contributions of others.
* Public or private harassment in any form.
* Repeatedly interrupting or talking over others.

**Exclusionary Behaviour**

* Deliberately excluding teammates from discussions or decision-making.
* Dismissing feedback without consideration.
* Making participation difficult for others through uncooperative behaviour.

**Unethical Conduct**

* Plagiarism or presenting someone else’s work as your own.
* Failing to properly attribute contributions.
* Submitting misleading or falsified information.
* Violating academic integrity policies.

# **5. Collaboration and Technical Best Practices**

To ensure smooth collaboration, we follow these principles:

**GitHub Workflow and Version Control**

* Use **GitFlow** for structured development.
* Make **frequent, meaningful commits** with clear commit messages.
* Use **pull requests** and peer reviews before merging code.
* Resolve merge conflicts respectfully and collaboratively.

**Meetings and Decision-Making**

* Attend all scheduled meetings or provide prior notice if unable to attend.
* Use structured agendas and take meeting notes.
* Strive for consensus when making decisions but respect the majority if necessary.
* Assign clear action points after each meeting.

# **6. Addressing Challenges and Resolving Disagreements**

Conflicts may arise, and our goal is to resolve them in a fair and professional manner.

1. **Direct Resolution:** Discuss concerns openly and respectfully with the person involved.
2. **Team Discussion:** If needed, involve the whole team to find a fair resolution.
3. **Instructor Mediation:** If an issue remains unresolved, seek guidance from the lecturer.

Our focus is always on **finding solutions and maintaining a positive team environment**.

# **7. Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct**

We adhere to **university policies on academic integrity** and ensure that:

* All work submitted is **original** and properly cited.
* **Plagiarism, collusion, and academic misconduct** are avoided.
* If unsure about citation practices, team members should **ask for clarification** rather than risk misconduct.

# **8. Reporting Issues and Seeking Support**

If a team member experiences or witnesses a **breach of this Code of Conduct**, they should:

* Speak privately with the individuals involved (if comfortable doing so).
* Bring the issue to the team for discussion and resolution.
* If needed, escalate the concern to the lecturer for support.

Reports will be handled with confidentiality and respect.

# **9. Continuous Improvement**

This Code of Conduct is a living document. If any member identifies areas for improvement, they are encouraged to propose changes. Updates will be discussed and agreed upon as a team.

# **10. Agreement and Commitment**

By participating in this project, each team member **agrees to uphold these principles** and contribute to a **respectful, professional, and effective** team environment.