

SAFEGUARDING AT SEARRP

CODE OF CONDUCT

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We regularly update our safeguarding framework, policies and guidelines. Please enquire for the latest versions of all documents.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of our safeguarding framework please contact SEARRP's Safeguarding Officer – Katie King: katie@searrp.org

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CODE OF CONDUCT¹

COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

SEARRP is committed to creating and maintaining a safeguarded environment for the people and partners who work with us, including any children or vulnerable adults with whom we may engage. We actively promote a safe, caring, tolerant and rewarding environment for all of our staff and scientists, students, interns and volunteers - including those of partner organisations who work with and visit our programme.

The *Code of Conduct* forms an essential component of our safeguarding framework, which includes a *Sexual Harassment Policy*, *Whistle-blower Policy*, *Cultural Guidance* for visiting scientists and students and *Complaints and Investigations Procedures*. These policies and procedures are intended to ensure that everyone is treated professionally and respectfully, in line with our duty-of-care to protect the safety and welfare of our staff and the people with whom we engage.

SCOPE

This Code of Conduct applies to all SEARRP employees irrespective of employment status (i.e. includes full-time, part-time and daily-paid) [hereafter “**employees**”] and all “scientists, students, non-SEARRP research assistants, interns, volunteers, consultants and representatives, including Trustees and members of boards (in the UK and Malaysia) and advisors” engaged with SEARRP [hereafter “**associates**”].

1. PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

1.1 SEARRP requires its employees and associates to observe high standards of professional and ethical conduct in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

1.2 This means ensuring:

a. **QUALITY.**

Delivering results of high quality with promptness, diligence and in a professional manner and at a level of proficiency to be expected of an employee or associate of SEARRP. This includes engaging in collaborative processes and responding constructively to challenging circumstances.

b. **HEALTH AND SAFETY.**

Providing a safe and healthy work environment across the programme, including taking a proactive approach to preventing accidents and injury to health, and to protect the health and welfare of all employees, associates and people with whom we engage.

c. **ZERO-TOLERANCE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND ABUSE.**

Everyone is to be treated with respect and dignity, and no person shall be subject to any discrimination or harm in any aspect of their employment and interaction with SEARRP. This includes monitoring compliance to SEARRP’s *Sexual Harassment Policy*.

¹ This document is available in English and Bahasa Malaysia versions. For the avoidance of doubt, the English version shall prevail.

d. **INTEGRITY AND COMMUNITY.**

Behaving honestly, fairly and transparently, treating others in a professional and respectful manner, and working collaboratively to create and maintain a caring, tolerant and rewarding environment for all of the people who work and visit with our programme.

e. **COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW.**

This refers to all applicable laws, regulations and guidelines of the jurisdiction in which SEARRP is operating. When differences or inconsistencies arise across standards, employees and associates are expected to comply with the highest standard that is the most consistent with SEARRP's commitment to safeguarding.

- 1.3 SEARRP is an equal opportunities employer and recruits and manages its employees on the basis of merit regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, special needs or otherwise.
- 1.4 SEARRP encourages any employee who feels that they have been unfairly treated and/or subjected to misconduct to raise their concerns or make a report using SEARRP's complaints procedures or our whistleblowing complaints procedure.

2. MINOR AND MAJOR MISCONDUCT

- 2.1. Upon due investigation, any employee or associate found in violation of this Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary actions outlined herein.
- 2.2. The following is a non-exhaustive list outlining examples of misconduct.

Minor misconduct²

Discipline

1. Refusal to carry out the day-to-day duties or tasks that have been assigned within the lawful and reasonable remit of the individual's job description.
2. Wilful insubordination or disobedience, whether alone or in combination with others, to any lawful and reasonable instruction issued by a supervising or senior officer.
3. Sleeping while on duty. Claims of illness shall not be accepted as an excuse, unless the illness is of an acute and unexpected nature.
4. Wilful slowing down of work or inciting others to do so.
5. Repeated failure to meet the established standard of work.
6. Drunkenness or found under the influence of alcohol while on duty.
7. Habitual violation of camp/field site rules.

Working hours

8. Habitually ceasing work before the stipulated closing hour without permission, reason or cause.
9. Habitually reporting for work late without permission, reason or cause.
10. Frequently absent from duty or leaving work repeatedly during the normal hours of work without permission, reason or cause.

² Repeated or aggravated minor issues may be considered as major misconduct.

Leave

11. Taking unapproved leave. Not obtaining approval from his/her superior or not submitting the leave request form.
12. Extending approved leave without sufficient grounds or reasonable notice to his/her superior.
13. Habitually absent without leave, without prior permission, reason or cause.
14. Obtaining or attempting to obtain permission for leave by false pretence.

Equipment and property

15. Not taking proper care or not reporting any damage or problems with equipment (e.g. tools, spares, First Aid Kit, etc.) or property belonging to SEARRP or any of SEARRP's associates.
16. Not putting equipment back in their original place at the end of the day.
17. Unauthorised use of equipment, vehicles, machines or fire appliances.
18. Stealing or vandalising equipment or property.
19. Deliberate misuse of the First Aid Kit (e.g. taking medicines from the Kit and not restocking, etc.).

Major misconduct

Unlawful conduct

1. Convicted of a criminal offense or found guilty of a civil offense arising from wilful misconduct whilst employed with SEARRP.
2. In possession of unauthorised firearms or any unauthorised scheduled weapon, as defined under the *Arms Act 1960* and *Weapons Act 1958*.
3. In possession of narcotics or other illicit substances listed under the *Dangerous Drugs Act 1952*.
4. Hunting (including unauthorised trapping), consumption, or unauthorised collection of any totally protected species, or in the absence of a license for protected species, as listed under the *Wildlife Conservation Enactment 1997*.
5. Theft, fraud, or dishonesty including attempted theft, attempted fraud, or attempted dishonesty in relation to SEARRP's work or property, or that of any of SEARRP's associates.
6. Violence of any kind, including abuse or assault of a verbal, emotional, psychological, or physical nature, or threat thereof to any party at the workplace.

Discrimination

7. Discrimination of any kind towards any person or group of persons on the basis of their real or perceived ethnicity, gender, age, religion, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, or any other status protected by applicable law.

Sexual harassment

8. Sexual harassment in any form and to any degree towards any person or group of persons.

Acting in bad faith

9. Making allegations that are knowingly false, made maliciously or with vexatious intent.
10. Retaliates or threatens retaliation against any person who has, acting in good faith, raised concerns or reported misconduct to SEARRP.

Discipline

11. Habitual neglect of duties.
12. Deliberate slackness in the performance of duties.
13. Deliberate carelessness in data collection, falsifying data or jeopardising of records/data quality.
14. Deliberate withholding, theft, or destruction of research data and/or samples.
15. Riotous or disorderly behaviour.
16. Withholding overtime work to exert pressure on management.
17. Writing offensive notes, memos, messages, and letters, whether online or otherwise (including via social media), to other employees or associates.
18. Habitual violation of any of SEARRP's policies, rules or procedures.
19. Providing inaccurate information, including forging or defacing an official document, with the intention to cheat or deceive.
20. Striking at work, or inciting others to strike, in contravention of any Law or rule that has the force of Law.
21. Engaging in unauthorised financial transactions at the workplace.
22. Engaging in private work or trade which is directly or indirectly in conjunction with the work of SEARRP without prior permission.

Safety and health

23. Failure to obey safety rules or tampering with safety equipment or other safety device.
24. Failure to report an infectious or contagious disease.
25. Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
26. Reckless driving.

Equipment and property

27. Deliberate reckless handling of equipment or property.
28. Wilful damage, or allowing cause for damage to, the equipment or property.

Communications

29. Spreading false or defamatory information about SEARRP, its employees, or associates.
30. Acting in any manner that would affect the public image of SEARRP.
31. Disclosing confidential information without authorisation, including through social media or other online activity, except unless required by Law.

3. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

- 3.1. SEARRP shall take disciplinary action against any employee or associate who is, upon investigation, found to have committed misconduct or is in violation of this Code of Conduct or any of SEARRP's policies and guidelines, including and up to termination of their employment or, in the case of associates, engagement with SEARRP.
- 3.2. In cases involving associates or any other parties external to SEARRP, the SEARRP Director and Deputy Director may, at their discretion, determine to engage with the respective institutional authority of the external party/ies.
- 3.3. SEARRP retains the right to seek legal recourse against any employee or associate found in violation of this Code of Conduct or any of SEARRP's policies and guidelines and shall

not hesitate to refer such cases to the relevant authorities for action through legal, disciplinary or other appropriate measures.

In response to minor misconduct

- 3.3. **First minor offence:** Verbal warning issued by the Field Manager and a discussion with the offending employee conducted at the site-level. The Field Manager shall submit a record of the verbal warning and discussion to the Operations Manager.
- 3.4. **Second minor offence:** Written warning #1 issued by the Operations Manager and a discussion with the offending employee.
- 3.5. **Third minor offence:** Written warning #2 issued by the SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, and a discussion with the offending employee. The SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, may determine to impose other disciplinary actions as appropriate (e.g. suspension).
- 3.6. **Fourth minor offence:** Termination of the offending employee's contract with immediate effect. The SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, shall issue a termination letter that includes a written statement outlining the nature of the misconduct and consequences thereof that justify the termination of the offending person's contract with immediate effect.

In response to major misconduct

- 3.7. **First major offence:** Written warning issued by the SEARRP Director and a discussion with the offending employee. The SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, may determine to impose other disciplinary penalties as deemed appropriate (e.g. suspension).
- 3.8. **Second major offence:** Termination of the employee's contract with immediate effect. The SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, shall issue a termination letter that includes a written statement outlining the nature of the misconduct and consequences thereof that justify the termination of the offending person's contract with immediate effect.

Summary dismissal

- 3.9. In the event of egregious misconduct, SEARRP reserves the right to suspend or summarily dismiss the offending employee, or, in the case of associates, terminate engagement with SEARRP with immediate effect.
- 3.10. The SEARRP Director, in consultation with the Deputy Director, shall issue a termination letter that includes a written statement outlining the nature of the misconduct and consequences thereof that justify the termination of the offending person's contract/engagement with immediate effect.
- 3.11. Upon termination, the employee shall be entitled to receive *pro rata* payment for any work that has been carried out up to the date of the dismissal and that which remains

hitherto unpaid, which shall be issued as a final payment to the employee subject to any additional terms that may be set by the SEARRP Director.

- 3.12. Upon termination, the employee shall not be entitled to severance pay, and in the case of associates, the termination shall be at no liability to SEARRP.

4. APPEALS

- 4.1. Any employee or associate who wishes to contest any disciplinary action imposed on them, including disputes related to the handling of an internal investigation, may submit an appeal to the Chair of the SEARRP UK Board within 7 days of being informed of the action.
- 4.2. The appeals procedure is outlined in SEARRP's General Complaints and Investigation Procedure.