



“Nudging to Increase Digital Skills in Higher Education Institutions” / Nudging 360



Nudging Ethics Council

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Glossary

Nudge:

Thaler and Sunstein defined their concept of nudge as “any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives”

Disciplinary Committee:

Representatives of the NUDGIN 360. The disciplinary committee takes action according to the suggested sanctions communicated by the Ethics Council.

General Assembly:

The general meeting of all of the members of the Council.

Associate Member:

Representative from one of the organizations of the consortium (ACEEU), which is in charge of establishing the best practices and ethical guidelines of the Council.

STATUTE OF THE NUDGING ETHICAL COUNCIL IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Chapter 1. Name

Article 1 – Name

The Nudging Ethical Council in Higher Education Institutions, from here on referred to as the Ethical Council, is a non-profit initiative established for a period of **limited** duration. The Council is a needed committee for the development of the NUDGIGN 360 project, and an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships Program co-funded by the European Commission.

Chapter 2. Aims and Activities of the Council

Article 2 – Aims

- Ensure ethical considerations are observed, identified and properly handled during the development of the nudge interventions or practices in Higher Education Institutions.
- Act as a consultative body for any matter concerning ethics and conduct in the creation and implementations of nudging practices
- Monitor nudging processes in Higher Education Institutions.

Article 3 – Activities

The Council shall achieve its aims by developing and engaging in different types of activities, including:

- Creating a definition of misconduct in nudging practice and sanctions that might be applied. They should identify levels of violation. Some of the misconducts claimed in nudging are: Violation of freedom of choice, undermine volitional autonomy, and undermine rational agency.
- Review process or nudges proposed by the NUDGING 360 consortium representatives within defined timeframes and appropriate analysis of risk.
- Design the application forms for review: clear, easy to complete, with guidance and template examples
- Document and communicate the deliberation and outcome of ethical issues

Chapter 3. Mission, and Values of the Council

Article 4 – Mission

- Safeguard and help Higher Education Institutions attain ethical clearance of nudging practices

Article 5 – Values



The council defines and adapts its values according to Ethical Guidelines for Nudging in digital contexts (Renaud and Zimmermann, 2018; Meske and Amojó, 2020)

- **Autonomy:** Advocating for individuals' freedom of choice; therefore, the council ensures that interventions end users must be able to decide to ignore the option the nudge is perusing them.
- **Transparency:** Prioritising the transparent creation and implementation of nudges. People should be aware of the nudge presence.

Chapter 4. Involvement of the Council

Article 6 – Composition of the Council

- The Council consist of 5 members, one nudge expert, one HEI administrator, two HE educators, and an ethics expert. They should be able to understand the principles of nudging, the project context, and the practicalities of carrying out project
- The Council consists of members who are holders of a PhD degree or a Master's degree.
- The council is gender balanced, reflects the social and cultural diversity. It is preferable that 5 council members will live in, work in, or come from 5 different countries.
- The members elect the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chairpersons leader the Council meetings, represents the Council before the project consortium, ensure timely response to applications,

Article 7 – Eligibility

- NUDGING 360 consortium representatives propose candidate members for the Ethic Council based on the following criteria (the criteria should first be discussed and finally defined by the partners):
 - o Nudge expert: at least two years of demonstrated experience developing or researching nudging strategies in academic contexts.
 - o Ethics expert: at least two years of demonstrated experience in ethical reviewing in digital and in person context.
 - o Two Higher Educators: Preferably educators interested or involved in the digital agenda or initiatives in their institutions
 - o Higher Education Administrator: either academic or administrative staff from a HEI
- Selected representative leaders of the consortium appoint the members of the Council.
- Before becoming a Council member, candidates sign a declaration confirming that they will treat all information regarding the nudging reviewing with the proper care, integrity and confidentiality



Article 8 – Rights and Obligations

- Be involved in the Council activities
- Document the deliberation and outcome of ethical issues
- Report the suggested sanction and communicate it to the Disciplinary Committee

Article 9 – Loss of membership

Membership of the Council is lost through:

- a. Written resignation by means of a simple letter or an e-mail to the Disciplinary Committee
- b. the death of the natural person or the dissolution of the legal person
- c. Breach of the present statute, or in the event of any action which is likely to cause prejudice to the Council's reputation or effectiveness. The final decision on the loss of membership will be decided by the Council Chair.

Chapter 5. Involvement of the Council

Article 10 - The Council Core Stakeholders

The governance of the council consists of:

- Council Chair
- Council Vice-Chairs
- Administrator
- Members (with voting rights)
- Associate Member (without voting rights, a representative from the NUDGING 360 consortium)

Article 11- Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities of the Council Core Stakeholders include, but not limited to:

- a. Chair and Vice-Chair
 - Representing the Council to the consortium
 - Chairing Council meetings (General Assembly)
 - Ensures Timely response to the ethical review applications
 - Communicates any suggested sanction it to the Disciplinary Committee
 - Preparing the Council's annual activity report
- b. Administrator
 - Documents the Council meetings and the deliberations and outcome of ethical issues in the ethical review application
- c. Other Members
 - Attending council meetings (with voting rights)
 - Voting on ethical reviews
- d. Associate Member
 - Will conduct at least 4 regular meetings with the council members to establish best practices and ethics guidelines.

Article 12 – Operation

- a. Meeting with the associate member:



- The Ethical Council meets for the first time with the associate member to overview the council framework, establish best practices and ethics guidelines. During the first and second meeting they should construct a definition of misconduct in nudging practice according to the objectives and needs of NUDGING 360, and sanctions that might be applied.
- On the third meeting it should be designed the application forms for ethical review: clear, easy to complete, with guidance and template examples. Likewise, it should be defined how the format of the document used by the Council to document and communicate the deliberation and outcome of ethical issues to the consortium
- Other meetings are going to be arranged to monitor the practices of the Council.
- The Ethical Council convenes in principal after receiving ethical review applications from the consortium representatives.
- Proposed application is reviewed by at least four Council members
- The consortium representatives will receive a response on the proposed nudge not later than 10 working days after the meeting of the Council.

Chapter 6. Submitting proposed ethical review application

Article 13 – Methods and procedure

- The Council will provide a checklist that will allow representatives to determine whether their Nudge should be presented to the committee for an ethical review. If the checklist indicates that there are ethical issues, the representative is obliged to present this research to the Committee.
- The Council will share an application form that applicants should use when presenting their research to the Council.
- Ethical clearance needs to be obtained before implementing the nudge.

References

Meske, C., & Amojo, I. (2020). Ethical guidelines for the construction of digital nudges. *Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.24251/hicss.2020.480>



Renaud, K., and Zimmermann V., Ethical Guidelines for Nudging in Information Security & Privacy, International Journal of Human-Computer Studies (2018), doi:
10.1016/j.ijhcs.2018.05.011