Academic Freedom and Scholarly Responsibility Policy

Item	Details
Proposed Document Code	IMC-THE-POL-10
Version	1.1
Policy Owner	College Deanship in coordination with the Scientific Council
Approving Authority	College Board of Directors
Issue Date	December 2025 15
Review Cycle	Every three years or as needed, including when relevant legislation or regulations are amended or introduced
Indicator	THE 16.2.6

Revision History

Date and Status	Revision	Rationale
December 2024 16 Version 1.0	First version of the Academic Freedom and Scholarly Responsibility .Policy	Documented the institutional commitment to freedom of research and teaching. Approval and effective dates are verified against .institutional records
December 2025 15 Version 1.1	,Clarified safeguards for research teaching and scholarly expression .and protection from retaliation Proposed description for comparison .with the archived version	Explained that safeguards apply to early-career and senior academics and identified the .protection and grievance routes
	Defined implementation and grievance responsibilities, updated references and documented .publication and review	Facilitated verification of coverage and public .accessibility

1. Purpose and Scope

Imam Malik College for Sharia and Law protects freedom of research, teaching and scholarly expression and the independence of academic judgement. It defines responsibilities for scholarly practice and .routes for protection and grievances

The policy protects faculty and researchers at all ranks and career stages, including early-career and senior academics, regardless of contract type or reporting line. Teaching freedom is exercised within the .scope of the academic assignment

2. Academic Freedom Safeguards

- Research freedom for early-career academics. They may choose their research areas, questions and methods, publish their findings and speak publicly in their fields of research. Academic guidance is provided in a manner that preserves independent research judgement.
- Research freedom for senior academics. They may choose their research areas, questions and methods, publish their findings and speak publicly in their fields of research, including presenting findings that challenge prevailing views.
- Teaching freedom for early-career academics. They may choose teaching methods and supplementary materials and lead scholarly discussions within the approved course specifications and learning outcomes. They may teach and speak publicly in their fields of research.
- Teaching freedom for senior academics. They may choose teaching methods and supplementary materials and lead scholarly discussions within the approved course specifications and learning outcomes. They may teach and speak publicly in their fields of research.

3. Scholarly Responsibility and Independent Judgement

,Academics exercise these freedoms in accordance with applicable legislation, academic integrity .research ethics, intellectual property rights, participant protection and data privacy and confidentiality .They distinguish their scholarly views from official statements made on behalf of the College

The College prohibits interference to impose or suppress a research finding for the benefit of a funder or partner. Agreements specify safeguards for independence, publication and information protection appropriate to the project. The College protects legitimate scholarly criticism from adverse effects on .assessment, promotion, assignments or funding

4. Restrictions, Reporting and Grievances

Any restriction on academic practice must have a basis in an applicable law or regulation within its scope and be applied only to the extent necessary to achieve its purpose. The competent body notifies the .affected person in writing of the decision, basis, reasons, scope and grievance route and deadlines .Anyone who imposed the restriction or has an interest in it is excluded from its review

Affected persons submit confidential requests for protection or complaints to the Deanship. If the Deanship is a party, the request goes directly to the competent higher authority under delegated ,powers. The request is referred to a competent body free of conflicts of interest. The parties are heard .the reasoned decision and corrective action are recorded, and implementation is followed up

The College prohibits retaliation for exercising academic freedom, filing a good-faith complaint or cooperating with an inquiry. Employment complaints and grievances follow statutory routes and deadlines, including the Government of Dubai Disciplinary, Grievances and Complaints Code and the .Central Grievance Committee route where applicable. Access to case records is restricted

5. Applicable References and Regulations

The policy relates to Article (30) of the UAE Constitution, Federal Decree-Law No. (31) of 2025 Concerning Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Articles (13) and (14) of Law No. (10) of Establishing the College. Due regard is given to applicable provisions of Dubai Law No. (8) of 2018 2011 on government human resources, Executive Council Resolution No. (4) of 2019 and Decree No. (12) of .on the Central Grievance Committee 2021

The policy applies alongside the Internal Regulations (QMS-GS01), particularly the Scientific Research Implementing Regulations and the rules on peer review, publication and promotion, as well as approved course specifications, the information governance framework and the Anti-Harassment and Protection .from Retaliation Policy (IMC-THE-POL-05) within its scope

6. Publication, Review and Indicator Evidence

The approved version is published in the Knowledge Management System archive accessible to all employees and on the College website through a direct public link. The policy is reviewed every three .years or earlier as needed, including when relevant legislation or regulations are amended or introduced

The competent office retains the version in force before 2025 and evidence of its approval and effective dates, the record of creation or review in 2022–2026, and the public link to the approved version. The THE 16.2.6 evidence file identifies the four safeguards in the document. Implementation, grievance and corrective action records are kept with restricted access, and aggregate findings are made available as needed.

7. Responsibilities

Responsible Unit	Responsibility
College Deanship	Implement the policy, receive protection requests, coordinate referral .to the competent body and follow up on corrective action
Scientific Council and Scientific Research and Publications Unit	Safeguard research and publication independence and apply peer- .review and research ethics rules within their remit
Heads of Academic Departments	Safeguard freedom of teaching within approved course specifications .and inform faculty of the safeguards
Human Resources and Competent Grievance Bodies	Apply employment procedures and deadlines, follow up on retaliation .allegations and protect record confidentiality
Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning	Monitor publication and review and document indicator evidence .with the Deanship and publishing unit