



BAKU  
SLAVIC  
UNIVERSITY



## ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESEARCH AUTONOMY POLICY



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## SECTION 1.

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Baku Slavic University (BSU), founded in 1946 as one of the oldest institutions of higher education in Azerbaijan, affirms that academic freedom is indispensable to the advancement of knowledge, the quality of teaching, and the integrity of research. The University recognises that intellectual progress depends on the free pursuit of truth and the unrestricted exchange of ideas. BSU therefore commits to safeguarding an environment where scholars, researchers, and students may explore complex questions, challenge established views, and contribute to scientific and social development without interference, censorship, or pressure from any internal or external authority.

In its mission to contribute to national and global academic life, BSU aligns this policy with internationally accepted principles, including the Magna Charta Universitatum, UNESCO standards on higher education, and the legal framework of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Academic freedom at BSU functions not only as a legal right but also as a core ethical value that supports the University's vision for responsible scholarship and intercultural dialogue.



## SECTION 2.

### 2.1. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy outlines BSU's institutional commitment to protecting the freedom to teach, research, publish, and participate in public academic discourse. Its aim is to guarantee that academic staff and students can engage in intellectual inquiry openly, make evidence-based arguments, and contribute to the development of science, humanities, education, linguistics, psychology and interdisciplinary fields without fear of administrative pressure or procedural barriers. The policy also defines the principles that regulate academic responsibilities, ethical conduct, and respectful academic culture across all faculties and research units.

## SECTION 3.

### 3.1. ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN TEACHING

Teaching at BSU is grounded in autonomy, innovation, and the academic judgment of faculty members. Academic staff are free to design course content, select teaching materials, determine appropriate pedagogical approaches, and present competing scholarly viewpoints relevant to their discipline. They may introduce new knowledge, international research trends, interdisciplinary connections, and critical analysis into their courses. BSU ensures that no external body or internal administrative structure dictates the academic substance of teaching, except where required by national standards or institutional quality assurance, acknowledging that high-quality teaching depends on the intellectual independence of educators and their ability to guide students toward critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning.



## SECTION 4.

### 4.1. RESEARCH AUTONOMY

Research autonomy is a fundamental element of BSU's academic identity. Researchers and faculty members have the freedom to select their research topics, develop methodologies, engage in interdisciplinary work, form national and international collaborations, analyse findings independently, and publish their results in peer-reviewed journals without obstruction. BSU protects the right of scholars to pursue innovative, unconventional, or emerging areas of inquiry, including climate-related linguistics, digital pedagogy, sustainable education, translation technologies, behavioural sciences, and other interfaculty research themes. The University guarantees that research shall not be influenced by political, commercial, ideological or administrative pressure and that scientific integrity must guide all stages of the research process.

Academic and student researchers are encouraged to seek grants, participate in international conferences, and contribute to global academic networks. BSU supports access to research resources, digital libraries, databases, and methodological tools that enable high-quality scholarship.



## SECTION 5.

### 5.1. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

BSU affirms the right of academics and students to express scholarly opinions in classrooms, academic discussions, scientific events, university platforms, and public forums. Scholars may participate in debates, present arguments, publish commentaries, and communicate research findings through media outlets, provided such communication respects academic ethics and does not claim to represent the institutional position unless officially authorised. The University protects academic community members from retaliation, discrimination, or disciplinary action related to lawful academic expression.

Freedom of expression includes the right to critique academic ideas, engage with sensitive or controversial subjects, and promote open dialogue while maintaining respect, professionalism, and tolerance toward diverse viewpoints. BSU considers mutual respect and academic ethics as central to sustaining a healthy intellectual environment.



## SECTION 6.

### 6.1. INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

BSU bears institutional responsibility for creating conditions in which academic freedom can be exercised safely and meaningfully. This includes providing transparent and fair recruitment and promotion procedures based solely on academic merit, supporting participation in scientific activities, ensuring access to resources and research infrastructure, and offering administrative assistance for academic projects. The University commits to protecting members of the academic community against unjust external interference and to investigating concerns related to violations of academic freedom.

Additionally, BSU promotes interdisciplinary cooperation between faculties and encourages research initiatives that bring together expertise from linguistics, social sciences, education, psychology, philology, translation studies, and regional studies. The University ensures that academic freedom is not only protected but actively supported through institutional culture, academic services, research partnerships, and governance structures.



## SECTION 7.

### 7.1. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND STUDENTS

With academic freedom comes academic responsibility. Faculty members, researchers, and students must adhere to the principles of academic honesty, objectivity, and scientific integrity. They must avoid plagiarism, fabrication of data, unethical research practices, or misuse of academic platforms. Academic freedom requires respect for the rights, dignity, and intellectual contributions of others. Students and staff must engage in debate constructively and uphold the standards of professional conduct expected in higher education.

## SECTION 8.

### 8.1. CONCLUSION

BSU ensures the continuous protection of academic freedom through oversight by the Rectorate and the Academic Council. These bodies monitor the implementation of this policy, address relevant cases when needed, and guide faculties on emerging academic and ethical issues. The University remains committed to aligning its practices with national legislation and international academic standards. This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required by institutional or legal developments.

**Issued by: Higher Education Center of BSU**

**Issued Date: 29 November, 2024**

**Next Review: 21 November, 2026**