



## ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY 2020-21

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- 1.0 Arts University Bournemouth remains strongly committed to ensuring the highest standards in the conduct of all research undertaken in our name including research undertaken by staff and students.
- 2.0 In this, the University recognises its obligations to the wider research community, to the funders of research and to society as a whole to uphold the integrity of academic research, and to comply with the revised Concordat to Support Research Integrity, published by Universities UK in 2019. The Concordat recommends that institutions should provide an annual statement on research integrity which is made publicly available. Also, that a senior member of staff is named on the institutional website as being responsible for overseeing research integrity. This annual statement provides details of activities undertaken to enhance research integrity within the University.
- 3.0 Summary of actions and activities undertaken to support research integrity 2020/21**
- 3.1 Research Ethics Committee**
- 3.1.1 A strong commitment to research integrity is embedded within our institutional systems. Research Ethics Committee considers all matters of research integrity and governance, reporting to Academic Board via Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. The Committee met twice during the year. Chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Committee comprised members of both academic and professional services staff, drawn from across the University.
- 3.2 Institutional Policy Framework**
- 3.2.1 The institutional policy framework includes a Research Ethics Policy and Procedure, which provides guiding principles and standards of best practice in research across all of our creative disciplines. The Research Misconduct Procedure sets out the definition of research misconduct and the procedure for reporting and investigating allegations. Support for staff and research students concerning all matters of research integrity is provided by the Research Office, based in the Graduate School and Research. Consideration of ethics also worked in tandem with other University Policies, specifically the University statement, Academic Freedom: Principles and Guidance.
- 3.3 Research degrees**
- 3.3.1 AUB is in partnership with University of the Arts London (UAL) for the delivery of its research degrees (MPhil/PhD). Research ethics pertaining to research degrees is considered by AUB's Research Degrees Committee. UAL's Research Ethics Sub-Committee monitors all post registration ethics applications and approves any that

represent more than minimal risk. UAL provided guidance on research ethics in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. All research degree students continued to review their projects under supervisory guidance putting in place appropriate measures to safeguard participants and researchers as required. UAL also provided training to first year students on research integrity.

#### **4.0 UK Research Integrity Office Guidelines on Ethical Review**

4.1 In 2020, the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) and the Association of Research Manager and Administrators (ARMA) devised new guidance to support ethical review in research organisations. This was reviewed by Research Ethics Committee who considered, that in general, the processes in place at AUB were in line with the guidance but that these would be kept under review.

#### **5.0 Process for dealing with allegations of research misconduct**

5.1 A Research Misconduct Policy was drawn up and approved by Academic Board in 2020. Informal advice on research integrity was available through the Research Office in the Graduate School and formal reporting of allegations of misconduct made directly to the Dean Graduate School and Research or Deputy Vice Chancellor as appropriate. The names of staff responsible for overseeing research integrity were listed onto the University website.

5.2 In line with other HR procedures, AUB adopted a two-staged process for the investigation of complaints comprising an initial consideration and then a formal panel. An independent member, with appropriate experience in this type of investigation and specifically within the arts and humanities, would always be included on the formal panel.

#### **6.0 Training and awareness raising**

6.1 AUB has continued to raise awareness of research ethics across the university. A suite of customizable forms, designed in-house, are available to support both staff and students. These include a flow chart setting out the process and timescale for gaining ethical approval and permission forms covering interviews and images. An ethics training module, devised in-house, highlights particular ethical considerations for creative projects. This was designed to be undertaken within course teams or delivered centrally through ethics refresher workshops, which allow new and established staff an opportunity to update their knowledge.

6.2 The Research Manager attended meetings of all three Academic School Executive Team meetings to remind them of the process for seeking ethical approval for staff and student projects. The School Advisor for Graduate School and Research led a session on ethics to postgraduate taught students.

#### **7.0 Guidance and support for researchers**

Each academic school at the University has a School Ethics Advisor who provides local advice and guidance on ethics, reporting back at each meeting of Research Ethics Committee. The Advisor for the Graduate School and Research also has responsibility for reviewing ethics applications from Professional Services staff. Over the year, Advisors worked with course teams to consider how teaching on ethics could be woven more effectively into projects. In particular they advised on adaptations to research projects in light of Covid-19, as many projects moved on-line.

## **8.0 Summary of investigations**

There had been no formal investigations of research misconduct by a research student or a member of staff during 2020/21.