



Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2019/20

- 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.
- 1.1 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, 2019. The Concordat recommends that institutions should provide an annual statement on research integrity which is made publicly available. This annual statement provides details of activities undertaken to enhance research integrity within the University during 2019/20.

Summary of actions and activities undertaken to support research integrity 2019/20

2.0 Research Ethics Committee

- 2.1 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 four times during the year but also convened twice at short notice to consider urgent matters. Chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, the Committee comprised members of both academic and professional services staff drawn from across the University.
- 2.2 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 disciplines. A new *Research Misconduct Procedure* was introduced which set 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 was provided by the Research Office, based in the Graduate School and Research.

3.0 Research degrees

- 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 (RESC) 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 reviewed their projects with guidance from their supervisory teams in light of the pandemic and a summary was sent to RESC.

4.0 Revised Concordat to support research integrity

- 4.1 In 2019, Universities UK published the revised *Concordat to support research integrity*. The majority of the changes focused on research misconduct, requiring a more explicit approach to identifying and dealing with misconduct. This included the requirement to provide the name of a senior member of staff on the website as being responsible for overseeing research integrity.
- 4.2 There was also a new requirement to provide the Board of Governors with an annual statement that gave assurance of compliance with the precepts of the Concordat. The annual statement would be displayed on the institution's website.
- 4.3 To ensure compliance, a sub-group from Research Ethics Committee mapped the revised Concordat to AUB's research ethics policies and suggested a number of changes, which were considered and approved by the Committee. Whilst these focused on identifying and dealing with research misconduct, the statement on environmental issues was also revised.

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 July 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 and has worked to provide resources to support both staff and students when seeking ethical approval. An ethics training module was devised in-house, highlighting particular ethical considerations that might arise when undertaking creative projects. The module was designed to be undertaken within course teams or delivered centrally as an ethics refresher workshop, to allow new and established staff an opportunity to update their knowledge. Alongside these, a flow chart that illustrated the process for gaining ethical approval was devised by a member of BA (Hons) Graphic Design. This proved particularly useful in setting out the timescales for gaining ethical approval.

7.0 Guidance and support for researchers

- 7.1 Each academic school at the university has a School Ethics Adviser who provides local advice and guidance on ethics, reporting back at each meeting of Research Ethics Committee. Advisers worked with course teams to consider how teaching on ethics could be woven more effectively into projects. A new Adviser was appointed during the year to provide support to members of professional services staff.

8.0 Summary of investigations

- 8.1 There were no formal investigations of research misconduct by a research student or a member of staff during 2019/20.