Research Ethics Policy and Procedure

Promoting good practice and preventing misconduct

Updated August 2026

The Arts University Bournemouth is committed to the provision of a working and learning environment founded on dignity, respect and equity where unfair discrimination of any kind is treated with the upmost seriousness. It has developed and implemented an EDI Action Plan to guide work in this area. All the University's policies and practices are designed to meet principles of dignity, respect and fairness, and take account of the commitments set out in the EDI Action Plan. This Policy has been subject to an equality impact assessment to ensure consideration with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Date of last EIA review: 08/2026

The Arts University Bournemouth has based its Research Policy and Procedures on the Code of Practice issued by the UK Research Integrity Office. Copyright is retained by the UK Research Integrity Office, and this material may not be used for commercial gain without prior, written permission. For further information, visit the website at www.ukrio.org.

The Code of Practice also reflects the commitments of the *Concordat to support research integrity* published by Universities UK.

1.0 Scope

1.1 Research ethics are the moral principles that govern how researchers should carry out their work. All researchers should follow the regulations and principles as set out in the Research Ethics Policy.

1.2 This Policy governs the ethics of research across the university. It is applicable to all research activity at the University irrespective of funding or location of the research undertaken and applies to all researchers employed by, studying at, or supported through the University. It applies equally to staff and students (both postgraduate and undergraduate), and specifically forms part of the terms and conditions of service of all academic staff.

1.3 Researchers as defined above should refer to this Policy before undertaking any research project, whether as a sole researcher or as part of a collaboration. All applications for support for research (whether for a Research Fellowship, support for a research qualification, or financial support for a specific project), and all research student applications must be considered against the Policy before approval. All student project proposals must be considered against the Policy before their Learning Agreement or project plan is approved.

2.0 Purpose of the Policy

2.1 This Research Policy has been designed to nurture a research environment, encourage good conduct in research and help prevent misconduct, in order to assist researchers (staff and postgraduate research degree students) and taught students at postgraduate or undergraduate level) to conduct research of the highest quality. It provides general principles and standards for good practice in research, and must be referenced by any member of staff or student before planning a research project or research activity.

2.2 The Policy is organised in the following Sections:

a) Section A contains broad Principles and Standards which define the responsibilities and values in the conduct of research that individual researchers and research groups should comply with.

b) Section B describes the procedure for obtaining ethical approval at the University.

c) Section C defines what constitutes minimal and more than minimal risk, including exemplars.

d) A one-page Recommended Checklist for Researchers can be found at the back of this document. This is a non-technical checklist summarising the key points of good practice in research. The Checklist is based on the more detailed Standards given in section A

2.3.0 Research is defined by AUB as a process of investigation leading to new knowledge and insights effectively shared through practice, theory and AUB's maker culture.

2.3.1 It defines a series of research questions, issues or problems that will be addressed in the course of the research. It also defines its aims and objectives in terms of seeking to enhance knowledge and understanding relating to the questions, issues or problems to be addressed.

2.3.2 It specifies a research context for the questions, issues or problems to be addressed. Why is it important that these particular questions, issues or problems should be addressed? What other research is being or has been conducted in this area? And what particular contribution will this project make to the advancement of creativity, insights, knowledge and understanding in this area?

2.3.3 It specifies the research methods and methodologies for addressing and answering the research questions, issues or problems. How, in the course of the research project, will these questions be answered, or the problems solved? What is the rationale for the chosen research methods and why are they the most appropriate means by which to address the research questions, issues or problems?

2.3.4 This is consistent with the AUB definition of the UK funding bodies' definition, used in the Research Excellence Framework 2014.

2.4.0 Similarly, for the purposes of this Policy, "researchers" refers to any person who conducts research, including but not limited to: as an employee including those who are not contracted as researchers, but undertake research as part of their work; an independent contractor or consultant; a research student; a taught postgraduate or undergraduate student; a visiting or emeritus member of staff; or a member of staff on a joint honorary contract.

2.4.1 Throughout this guidance, "researchers" is used to mean any individual or group undertaking research, where at least one of the researchers is employed by, studying at or supported by the Arts University Bournemouth.

3.0 Principles

3.1 The guiding principles of the Research Ethics Policy are non-maleficence and beneficence, indicating a systematic regard for the rights and interests of others in the full range of academic relationships and activities.

3.2 Non-maleficence is the principle of doing, or permitting, no foreseeable harm including infringement of rights as a consequence of the research. It is the principle of doing no harm in the widest sense. Beneficence is the requirement to serve the interests and well-being of others, including respect for their rights. It is the principle of doing good in the widest sense.

3.3 The University sets out the following principles for good practice in research:

- Honesty
- Rigour
- Transparency and open communication
- Care and respect
- Accountability

The University and its researchers will be guided by these principles when implementing and complying with the core Standards described in 4.0.

3.3.4 All researchers should adhere to these Principles, which set out the responsibilities and values relevant to research. While some elements may seem self-evident, and there is some overlap, these Principles aim to encourage all involved in research to consider the wider consequences of their work and to engage critically with the practical, ethical and intellectual challenges that are inherent in the conduct of high quality research. Each of the Principles is elucidated below.

3.3.5 • **honesty** in all aspects of research, including in the presentation of research goals, intentions and findings; in reporting on research methods and procedures; in gathering data; in using and acknowledging the work of other researchers; and in conveying valid interpretations and making justifiable claims based on research findings

3.3.6 • **rigour,** in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards, and in performing research and using appropriate methods; in adhering to an agreed protocol where appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the research; and in communicating the results

3.3.7 • **transparency and open communication** in declaring potential competing interests; in the reporting of research data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; in making research findings widely available, which includes publishing or otherwise sharing negative or null results to recognise their value as part of the research process; and in presenting the work to other researchers and to the public

3.3.8 • **care and respect** for researchers and all participants in research, and for the subjects, users and beneficiaries of research, including humans, animals, the environment and cultural objects. Those engaged with research must also show care and respect for the integrity of the research record.

3.3.9 • **accountability** of funders, employers and researchers to collectively create a research environment in which individuals and organisations are empowered and enabled to own the research process. Those engaged with research must also ensure that individuals and organisations are held to account when behaviour falls short of the standards set by this concordat

3..3.10 • **Support for new researchers**

The University aims to provide opportunities for development for researchers, and the necessary resources to enable them to conduct research to the required standards. Mentoring for new researchers is available from members of the Professoriate. Researchers should ensure that they have the necessary skills, training and resources to carry out research, in whatever form this takes including autonomous work, working as part of a research team or through collaboration with specialists in relevant fields, and report and resolve any unmet needs identified. Students who are undertaking research for the first time will be introduced to the concepts of research, and the principles outlined above, to support them as they commence research activity.

4.0 Standards for organisations and researchers

4.0.1 Researchers must not compromise the overriding principles of non-maleficence and beneficence, legal obligations and any pre-existing rights in the conduct of research.

4.0.2 All researchers must comply with all legal and ethical requirements and other guidelines that apply to their research. This includes ensuring that their project has research ethics approval (for staff, by submitting research proposal for ethics review by the Research Ethics Advisor in their School in the first instance and abiding by the outcome of that review, and for students through discussion with their Unit Leader). They should also ensure that research projects are approved by all applicable bodies, ethical, regulatory or otherwise.

4.1.0 The University will:

a) ensure that good practice in research forms an integral part of its research strategy or policy;

b) provide training, resources and support to postgraduate researchers and taught students to ensure that they are aware of the Research Ethics Policy;

c) encourage its researchers to consider good practice in research as a routine part of their work.

4.1.1 Researchers must:

a) recognise their responsibility to conduct research of high ethical standards;

b) be aware of the University's policies and procedures on good practice in research, including the provisions of this Policy;

c) make sure that their research complies with these policies and procedures, and seek guidance when necessary;

d) work with the University to ensure that they have the necessary training, resources and support to carry out their research; and

e) suggest to the University how guidance on good practice in research might be developed or revised.

4.2 Leadership and supervision

4.2.1 The University endeavours to promote and maintain an environment which fosters and supports research of high ethical standards, mutual co-operation, professionalism and the open and honest exchange of ideas. Researchers should foster a culture where good conduct in research is promoted and inappropriate conduct is identified and addressed.

4.2.2. The University will provide direction and supervision of research and researchers, setting out clear lines of accountability for the organisation and management of research. It will support supervisors and researchers in meeting the legal and ethical requirements of conducting research. It endorses the *Researcher Development Statement*, encourages the career development of researchers and provides mentoring for new researchers. It will also offer support to those charged with the supervision and development of other researchers. It supports the principles of the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*.

4.2.3 Researchers involved in the supervision and development of other researchers should be aware of their responsibilities and ensure that they have the necessary training, time and resources to carry out that role, and request support if necessary.

4.2.4 The University has designated the Director of Research and Development as the first point of contact for queries regarding research integrity and early career researchers. Others who are developing their research careers can seek advice from the Research Office when required.

4.3 Research design

4.3.1 When designing research projects, the University and its researchers will seek to ensure that

a) the proposed research addresses pertinent question(s) and is designed either to add to existing knowledge / understanding of the subject in question or to develop methods for research into it;

b) the design of the study is appropriate for the question(s) being asked and addresses the most important potential sources of bias;

c) the design and conduct of the study, including how data will be gathered, analysed and managed, are set out in detail in a pre-specified research plan or protocol;

d) all necessary skills and experience will be available to carry out the proposed research, in the proposed research team or through collaboration with specialists in relevant fields;

e) sufficient resources will be available to carry out the proposed research and that these resources meet all relevant standards; and

f) any issues relating to the above are resolved as far as possible prior to the start of the research.

4.3.2 The University (where appropriate) and its researchers will conduct a risk assessment of the planned study to determine:

a) whether there are any ethical issues and whether ethics review is required;

b) the potential for risks to the organisation, the research, or the health, safety and well-being of researchers and research participants.

4.3.3 Where the design of a study has been approved by ethics, regulatory or peer review, the University and its researchers will ensure that any subsequent alterations to the design are subject to appropriate review to determine that they will not compromise the integrity of the research or any terms of consent previously given.

4.3.4 The University will set up systems to ensure that when there are risks that proposed research or its results may be misused for purposes that are illegal or harmful, those risks are identified and addressed. Whilst acknowledging that this would be unusual in its primary subject areas, the institution will endeavour to make these systems known to researchers and provide guidance and support to researchers on projects where such risks are identified.

4.3.5 Researchers should try to anticipate any risks that the proposed research might produce that could be misused for purposes that are illegal or harmful. Researchers should refer any articulated risks in the first instance to the Research Ethics Advisor in their School and take relevant action to minimise those risks.

4.4 Collaborative working

4.4.1 The University and its researchers will pay particular attention to projects which include participants from different countries or where work will be carried out in another country due to the additional legal and ethical requirements and other guidelines that may apply (see also section 4.1). Research must be carried out in accordance with any relevant requirements in the country in which it takes place AND should meet the ethical standards required by AUB and by UK academic research ethics standards in general.
Permission to travel must be considered as part of ethical approval but the decision should be made through AUB management structures.

4.4.2 The University aims to work with partner organisations to ensure the agreement of, and compliance with, common standards and procedures for the conduct of collaborative research, including the resolution of any issues or problems that might arise and the investigation of any allegations of misconduct in research if they occur.

4.4.3 Researchers should be aware of the standards and procedures for the conduct of research followed by any organisations involved in collaborative research that they are undertaking. They should also be aware of any contractual requirements involving partner organisations, seeking guidance and assistance where necessary and reporting any concerns or irregularities to the appropriate person(s) as soon as they become aware of them.

4.4.4 Researchers should try to anticipate any issues that might arise as a result of working collaboratively and agree jointly in advance how they might be addressed, communicating any decisions to all members of the research team. In particular, agreement should be sought on the specific roles of the researchers involved in the project and on issues relating to intellectual property, publication, and the attribution of authorship, recognising that, subject to legal and ethical requirements, roles and contributions may change during the time span of the research.

4.4.5 When conducting, or collaborating in, research in other countries, AUB researchers should comply with the legal and ethical requirements existing in the UK and in the countries where the research is conducted. Similarly, co-researchers based abroad who participate in UK-hosted research projects should comply with the legal and ethical requirements existing in the UK as well as those of their own country.

4.5 Conflicts of interest

4.5.1 The University and its researchers recognise that conflicts of interest (i.e personal or institutional considerations, including but not limited to financial matters) can inappropriately affect research. Conflicts of interest must be declared to the

Research Ethics Advisor in the first instance and the line manager must be notified in order to avoid poor practice in research or potential misconduct.

4.5.2 When addressing a conflict of interest, it must be decided whether it is of a type and severity that poses a risk of compromising the validity or integrity of the research, in which case researchers should not proceed with the research, or whether it can be adequately addressed through declarations and/or special safeguards, relating to the conduct and report of the research.

4.5.3 Researchers should agree to abide by any direction given by the University and/or the Research Ethics Committee and/or the Research Ethics Advisor in relation to a conflict of interest.

4.6 Research involving human participants, human material, animals or personal data

4.6.1 The University and its researchers should make sure that any research involving human participants, human material, animals or personal data complies with all legal and ethical requirements, as expressed in this Policy.

4.6.2 The University will make sure that its researchers are aware of all of the above processes and have access to all relevant guidance and legal and ethical frameworks.

4.6.3 Researchers should submit research projects involving human participants, human material, animals or personal data for review by the Research Ethics Advisor in the first instance, who may refer the matter to the Research Ethics Committee. Researchers must abide by the outcome of those reviews.

4.6.4 Researchers should inform research participants that data gathered during the course of research may be disseminated not only in a report but also in different forms for academic or other subsequent publications and meetings, albeit not in an identifiable form, unless previously agreed to, and subject to limitations imposed by legislation or any applicable bodies, ethical, regulatory or otherwise.

4.6.5 People volunteering to participate in research may be paid for their inconvenience and time. Financial payments might, for example, cover reimbursement for travel expenses and/or time.

4.7 Autonomy and consent

The physical and personal autonomy of all human participants should be respected. Participants should not be misrepresented, by action or implication, or their rights in other ways infringed.

4.7.1 Active participants in the research (that is, where the individual can be identified through name, image or other personal information) must give informed consent and their right to privacy should be guaranteed. Where possible, written consent should be secured. (Please refer to the separate guidance on participant information and consent forms, available on the Intranet).

4.7.2 Informed consent includes ensuring that the subject is aware of the nature, purpose and intentions of the research.

4.7.3 Equally, the means by which participants are recruited should be carefully assessed in relation to possible rewards for participation

4.7.4 Children, young persons and vulnerable adults cannot normally give informed consent. Parents are required to give consent for any research involving children under 18. Disabled adults may be permitted to give consent for certain types of research, but in some cases informed consent may be given by a guardian or carer. In exceptional circumstances, the permission of the courts may be required.

4.7.5 Where participants are not identified as individuals, consideration should be given to their human rights (including the right not to be misrepresented).

4.7.6 Where there are third parties marginally involved, in the research, for example as members of the public in an observer capacity, or where groups of people are involved, informal consent might be more appropriate than formal consent.

4.7.7 Where the nature of the research is such that informing participants before the work is carried out might render the results invalid, for example within aspects of the social and cognitive sciences such as perception, there must be appropriate explanations following the study. In these circumstances, justification for this course of action is required to be submitted for approval to the Research Ethics Committee. Researchers must provide convincing reasons why such research should proceed without the necessary informed consent. Researchers should not mislead participants if it is thought that prior permission will not be obtained.

4.8 Additional legal and ethical considerations

4.8.1 Alongside the considerations outlined explicitly above, researchers must be aware of the environment in which their research is taking place. For example, if the research is conducted in public, the researcher must take due account of the laws of public decency; and must have due regard to religious and cultural sensitivities. Any issues should normally be explored fully in the proposal.

4.8.2 The researcher will need to balance the parameters of academic freedom and free speech with their responsibilities to the community. This includes taking due account of the Prevent duty, and the need to ensure that people are safeguarded from being drawn into terrorism. The Code of Practice on freedom of speech makes clear the University's expectations in this regard. If the researcher is in any doubt about how this might impact on his/her work, he/she should seek advice from the Dean, or the University Secretary."

4.8.3 Research into security-sensitive, radical or extreme material must include a risk assessment that has been reviewed and approval granted by the University before the research can commence. This should reference the storage, transmission and disposal of such material and reference Universities UK's Oversight of security-sensitive research material in UK universities: guidance.

4.8.4 Researchers should abide by the Code of Ethics of any professional body or subject association of which they are members. They should also be aware of any Research Ethics Policy or Code of Ethics which applies to potential and actual collaborators on the project and/or other participants. Where the location of the research is external to the University it is essential that the regulations, procedures, practices and guidelines which are relevant in these situations are taken into account.

4.9 Animals

4.9.1 Researchers are expected to show due respect to all sentient subjects of research (be they active or passive), and to avoid suffering of any kind. (Please refer to guidance in the appendix).

4.10 Data Protection

4.10.1 Participants' confidentiality and anonymity should be maintained, and their personal privacy protected. The identity of participants should not be revealed unless written permission is obtained prior to the research being carried out.

4.10.2 All data gathered as part of a research project must be kept securely, in accordance with the terms of data protection legislation. Appropriate steps must be taken to minimise the risk of individuals being identified through stored research information; on no account should any information be left accessible through a website interface; an open access terminal; or a hard drive.

4.11 Health and safety

4.11.1 The University will ensure that all research carried out under its auspices, or for which it is responsible, fulfils all requirements or health and safety legislation and good practice. The University and its researchers should bear in mind that certain types of research, for example social research in a conflict zone, can present particular issues of health and safety. They should ensure that all research which involves potentially hazardous or harmful material or which might cause harm to the environment complies with all legal requirements and other applicable guidelines.

4.11.2 In any research project, researchers must be aware of the University's health and safety policies and procedures, and must act in accordance with them. Where appropriate a risk assessment should be conducted at an early stage to ensure the protection of all participants in the research. Advice on health and safety matters can be sought from the Senior Health and Safety Officer and the website.

4.12 Insurance

4.12.1 In any research project, researchers must be aware of the limitations of the University's insurance policies, and must act in accordance with them. Advice on the coverage of insurance policies can be sought from the Facilities Manager. Researchers should ensure that all research projects have sufficient arrangements for insurance and indemnity prior to the research being conducted.

The Research Office will offer advice if the proposed activity may fall outside the current insurance arrangements.

4.13 Intellectual property

4.13.1 The University has an Intellectual Property Rights Policy – Staff and an Intellectual Property Rights Policy - Students, both of which set out the arrangements relating to any contracts or agreements relating to research, including provision for ownership and use of intellectual property. Intellectual property includes, but is not limited to: research data and other findings of research; ideas, processes, software, hardware, and artistic and literary works, including academic and scientific publications.

4.13.2 Researchers must ensure they are aware of, and comply with, the terms of the applicable Intellectual Property Rights Policy, which can be found on the Intranet. Queries can be addressed to ipr@aub.ac.uk

4.13.3 Joint ownership of work by students and supervisors should only occur when a substantive contribution has been made by the supervisor. Issues arising from industrial placements and the protection/registration of materials should also be considered.

4.14 Environmental issues

4.14.1 In any research project, researchers must evaluate the likely environmental pressure on water, land, emissions to air, and materials and their impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, human health, natural resources and the economy. Furthermore inter- related consequences, such as socio-environmental impacts that may be either beneficial or adverse, should be considered.

4.14.2 Researchers must ensure that identified environmental pressures and impacts, from their research project, adhere to the University's Environment Policy and are in accordance with UK environment legislation and good practice.
If unsure use the precautionary principle and seek further advice from Senior Campus Services Officer. If required, an environment risk/impact assessment can be carried out.

4.15 Finance

4.15.1 The University and its researchers should ensure that the terms and conditions of any grant or contract related to the research are adhered to.

4.15.2 The University has issued guidelines regarding the purchasing or procurement of all materials, equipment or other resources including those to be used for research, and the hiring of staff for research projects. These guidelines include statements on the ownership of resources and the rights of staff to use them. The University also has procedures for the monitoring and audit of finances relating to research projects. These guidelines and further information can be obtained from Finance.

4.15.3 Researchers must comply with organisational guidelines regarding the use and management of finances relating to research projects. They must co-operate with any monitoring and audit of finances relating to research projects and report any concerns or irregularities to the appropriate person(s) as soon as they become aware of them.

4.16 Collection and retention of data

4.16.1 The University expects its researchers to comply with all legal ethical, funding body and organisational requirements for the collection, use and storage of data, especially personal data, where particular attention should be paid to the requirements of data protection legislation, as outlined in the Data Protection Policy

4.16.2 Data should be kept intact for any legally specified period and otherwise for three years at least, subject to any legal, ethical or other requirements, from the end of the project. It should be kept in a form that would enable retrieval by a third party, subject to limitations imposed by legislation and general principles of confidentiality.

4.16.3 If research data is to be deleted or destroyed, either because its agreed period of retention has expired or for legal or ethical reasons, it should be done so in accordance with all legal, ethical, research funder and organisational requirements and with particular concern for confidentiality and security.

4.16.4 The Research Office of the University will develop procedures, resources (including physical space) and administrative support to assist researchers in the accurate and efficient collection of data and its storage in a secure and accessible form.

4.16.5 Researchers should consider how data will be gathered, analysed and managed, and how and in what form relevant data will eventually be made available to others, at an early stage of the design of the project.

4.17 Monitoring and audit

4.17.1 The University and its researchers should ensure that research projects comply with any monitoring and audit requirements. Researchers charged with carrying out such monitoring and audits will have sufficient training, resources and support to fulfil the requirements of the role.

4.17.2 The University will monitor and audit research projects to ensure that they are being carried out in accordance with good practice, legal and ethical requirements, and any other guidance, adopting a risk-based and proportional approach.

4.17.3 Researchers should consider any requirements for monitoring and audit at an early stage in the design of a project.

4.17.4 Researchers must co-operate with the monitoring and audit of their research projects by applicable bodies and undertake such when required. They must co-

operate with any outcomes of the monitoring and audit of their research projects. If they become aware of a need for monitoring and audit where it is not already scheduled, they should report that need to the Director of Research and Development in the first instance.

4.18 Peer Review

4.18.1 The University will ensure that its researchers are aware that peer review is an important part of good practice in the publication and dissemination of research and research findings; the assessment of applications for research grants, and in the ethics review of research projects.

4.18.2 The University encourages its researchers to act as peer reviewers for meetings, journals and other publication, grant applications and ethics review of research proposals, and supports those who do so. The institution recognises the obligations of peer reviewers to be thorough and objective in their work and to maintain confidentiality, and will not put pressure directly or indirectly, on peer reviewers to breach these obligations.

4.18.3 Researchers who carry out peer review should do so to the highest standards of thoroughness and objectivity. They should follow the guidelines for peer review of any organisation for which they carry out such work.

4.18.4 Researchers should maintain confidentiality and not retain or copy any material under review without the express written permission of the organisation which requested the review. They should not make use of research designs or research findings from a paper under review without the express permission of the author(s) and should not allow others to do so. Researchers acting as peer reviewers must declare any relevant conflicts of interest.

4.18.5 While carrying out peer review, researchers may become aware of possible misconduct, such as plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, or have ethical concerns about the design or conduct of the research. In such cases they should inform, in confidence, an appropriate representative of the organisation which requested the review, such as the editor of the relevant journal or chair of the relevant grants or ethics committee.

4.19 Publication and authorship

4.19.1 The University expects its researchers to accept their duty to publish and disseminate research in a manner that reports the research and all the findings of the research accurately and without selection that could be misleading, including publishing or sharing negative or null results.

4.19.2 The University will ensure that sponsors and funders of research respect the duty of researchers to publish their research and the findings of their research; do not discourage or suppress appropriate publication or dissemination; and do not attempt to influence the presentation or interpretation of findings inappropriately.

4.19.3 The University will provide training and support to guide researchers in the publication and dissemination of research and the findings of research that involves: confidential or proprietary information; issues relating to patents or intellectual property; findings with serious implications for public health; contractual or other legal obligations; and/or interest from the media or the general public.

4.19.4. Researchers should address issues relating to publication and authorship, especially the roles of all collaborators and contributors, at an early stage of the design of a project, recognising that, subject to legal and ethical requirements, roles and contributions may change during the time span of the research. Decisions on publication and authorship should be agreed jointly and communicated to all members of the research team.

4.19.5 Authorship should be restricted to those contributors and collaborators who have made a significant intellectual or practical contribution to the work. No person who fulfils the criteria for authorship should be excluded from the submitted work. Authorship should not be allocated to honorary or “guest” authors (ie those that do not fulfil criteria of authorship). Researchers should be aware that anyone listed as an author of any work should be prepared to take public responsibility for that work and ensure its accuracy, and be able to identify their contribution to it.

4.19.6 Researchers should list the work of all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship in an acknowledgements section. All funders and sponsors of research should be clearly acknowledged and any competing interests listed.

4.19.7 Researchers must clearly acknowledge all sources used in their research and seek permission from any individuals if a significant amount of their work has been used in the publication.

4.19.8 Researchers must adhere to any conditions set by funding or other bodies regarding the publication of their research and its findings in open access repositories within a set period.

4.19.9 Researchers should declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest in relation to their research when reporting their findings at meetings or in publication.

4.19.10 Researchers should be aware that submitting research reports to more than one potential publisher at any given time (i.e. duplicate submission) or publishing findings in more than one publication without disclosure and appropriate acknowledgement of any previous publication (i.e. duplicate publication) is unacceptable.

4.19.11 Researchers who are discouraged from publishing and disseminating their research or its findings, or subjected to attempts to influence the presentation or interpretation of findings inappropriately, should discuss this with the Head of Research Development in the first instance, so that the matter can be resolved.

4.20 Research misconduct

4.20.1 The University, in its Research Ethics Policy, defines what it considers to be misconduct in research. Following the position of the UK Research Integrity Office, this definition of misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

a) Fabrication;

b) Falsification;

c) Misrepresentation of data and/or interests and/or involvement;

d) Plagiarism;

e) Failures to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for:
   i) avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to:
      - humans;
      - animals used in research; and
      - the environment; and

   ii) the proper handling of privileged or private information on individuals collected during the research.

4.20.2 The University has a Research Misconduct Procedure. The University has adopted the UKRIO *Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research*, which is a standard process for investigating alleged misconduct that is thorough and fair to all parties. This will ensure that any such allegations are investigated thoroughly and fairly and in a timely manner using independent external members for formal investigation panels, and clear routes for appeal. All researchers should be aware of this procedure.

4.20.3 The University will publish on the website a named member of staff who will oversee research integrity and ensure that this information is kept up to date and publicly available on the AUB website. Also provide a named member of staff who will act as the first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity, and ensure that contact details for this person are kept up to date. An appropriate third party will also be identified for anyone wishing to raise concerns about the integrity of research conducted at AUB. The University will ensure that staff who investigate allegations have the necessary training, resources and support to fulfil the requirements of the role.

4.20.4 The University will make it clear to researchers that any misconduct in research is unacceptable and should be reported; that researchers who are found to have committed misconduct in research will be subject to disciplinary proceedings; and that where researchers are members of a regulated profession, cases of serious misconduct in research will be referred to the body regulating their profession. They should also make it clear that researchers who are found not to have committed misconduct will be supported and appropriate steps taken to restore their reputation and that of any relevant research project(s).

4.20.5 The University will support those who raise concerns about the conduct of research in good faith and not penalise them. This is in accordance with the University's *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy,* which can be found on the Intranet.

4.20.6 Researchers should be aware of what constitutes misconduct in research and report any suspected misconduct through the relevant procedure of the organisation as soon as they become aware of it. They should recognise that good practice in research includes reporting concerns about the conduct of research and should co-operate with any investigation of misconduct in research when requested. Researchers should work with the University to support those who raise concerns in good faith about the conduct of research and those who have been exonerated of suspected misconduct.

SECTION B Ethics Review and Approval

Governance

1.1 Academic Board, as the most senior academic committee of the Arts University Bournemouth holds overall responsibility for the academic activities of the University, including the conduct of staff and students involved in research. Detailed oversight of research ethics is devolved to Research Ethics Committee (REC), who in turn reports to Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKE), which reports to Academic Board on a regular basis.

1.2 Academic Board, on behalf of the University, has confirmed its commitment to ensuring that its staff act in accordance with the principles described in the *Concordat to support Research Integrity* launched in July 2012 by Universities UK. The Concordat outlines what is expected of researchers and their employers to ensure the highest standards of research, in particular by:

- maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research;
- ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards;
- nurturing a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers;
- using transparent, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct;
- working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly.

1.3 The University is committed to delivering these outcomes, and this Research Policy sets out the framework through which we deliver our commitment to research integrity.

1.4 Each School will appoint a Research Ethics Advisor. This will be an established member of staff who is able to offer advice and guidance to staff and students on matters of research ethics. Normally, the Research Ethics Advisor will also be the School's representative on the University's Research Ethics Committee, to ensure consistency of advice.

1.5 Any queries about the provisions of the Policy should be referred in the first instance to the Research Office.

1.6 The Policy is introduced to all new staff as part of the induction process, and the Chair of Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for this. The Policy is also referenced in any relevant training programmes. At induction each new member of academic staff is allocated a research mentor to support them in understanding the mechanisms for research practice at the AUB.

B1.17 AUB will produce a short annual statement setting out what work they have undertaken to support research integrity, as well as policies/processes and actions to address any concerns about research conducted under their auspices (Annual Research Integrity Statement). Once approved by Governors, this will be hosted in the AUB website.

2.0 Approval process

2.1 It is the responsibility of all researchers to ensure that the research undertaken meets the requirements of the Policy and is not in breach of it at any stage.

2.2 Projects should not commence unless ethical approval has been obtained.

2.3 Any research proposal must include a clear statement of the ethical implications of the research, and the methods and procedures to be adopted in undertaking the project. An Ethical Implications of Research Activity form (EIRA) can be used for this purpose. This will include an explanation of how confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be maintained.

2.3.1 The approving authority (which may be the Unit or Course Leader, Line Manager, Research Ethics Advisor or the Research Ethics Committee) will consider whether all ethical issues are properly taken into account and may recommend or specify certain changes to the project. In exceptional circumstances, it may interview the researcher(s) to seek additional information about the project

2.4 If the proposal is not approved, the researcher(s) may be invited to re-structure the research project for re-submission. The approving authority will offer feedback in support of such a decision. A researcher may appeal against a decision not to approve the project by submitting their case to the Research Ethics Committee; the decision of the Research Ethics Committee is in all instances final, and no appeal is permitted

2.5 A failure to disclose information in a timely fashion to the relevant approving authority may constrain a researcher's ability to continue with the identified project; or in the case of a student may inhibit their progression and qualification. It should be noted that failure to disclose significant information, which is clearly of relevance to ethical considerations and may have influenced the decision of the approving authority, will be considered a disciplinary matter (for staff or students)

2.6 The ethical dimensions of a research project may change during the course of a project. Researchers must monitor developments for ethical implications and seek approval, or approval of changes when changes affect ethical dimensions significantly. For example, the category of risk

may change if the researcher decides to include personal data in their research.

3.0 Members of staff

3.1 All members of staff are encouraged to complete an EIRA form prior to seeking ethical approval. Staff should seek advice, as required, from the School Ethics Advisor or Professional Services Ethics Advisor.

No project can commence until ethical approval has been given.

3.2 Minimal risk

Projects that are deemed to represent minimal risk can be signed off by the Line Manager.

3.3 More than Minimal risk

3.3.1 Projects that are deemed to be more than minimal risk must be referred to the School Ethics Advisor for approval.

3.3.2 Where the School Ethics Advisor is unsure or unable to give approval, the projects should be referred to Research Ethics Committee.

3.3.3 Projects which are particularly sensitive or complex or which pose significant risk to the reputation of the University must be referred to Research Ethics Committee.

4.0 AUB funded research (excluding research qualifications)

4.1 Applicants should complete a Post Approval Ethics Application once a project has been approved for AUB support.

4.2 School Ethics Advisors can approve projects that represent minimal and more than minimal risk.

4.3 Where the School Ethics Advisor is unsure or unable to give approval, the projects should be referred to Research Ethics Committee. Projects which are particularly sensitive or complex or which pose significant risk to the reputation of the University must be referred to Research Ethics Committee.

5.0 Research Qualifications

Staff supported by AUB to study for a research qualification will need to obtain the requisite ethical approval from the institution at which they are studying. Ethical considerations will be monitored by AUB through the annual report on progress and application for continuation funding.

6.0 Externally funded research

6.1 Applications to an external funding source must be approved by a School Ethics Advisor prior to submission. This can take the form of review of the ethical implications within an application or by the completion of an EIRA form as appropriate. Further review may be required if the project is supported. A note of the approval should be sent to the Research Office.

6.2 Where the School Ethics Advisor is unsure or unable to give approval, the projects should be referred to Research Ethics Committee. Staff undertaking an application which is likely to have complex ethical implications should be encouraged to raise the matter as soon as possible.

6.3 Projects which are particularly sensitive or complex or which pose significant risk to the reputation of the University must be referred to Research Ethics Committee, attended by a representative group of members.

7.0 Externally funded research (Joint bid with external organisation)

7.1 Where research is being conducted by members of staff in more than one institution, the research should gain formal ethics approval in one of them. The decision on which is the most appropriate should take into account the location of the principal investigator and the formal ethics review structures in place in each institution. If ethics approval is given by another institution, this does not remove the responsibility of researchers to comply with the University's Research Ethics Policy.

8.0 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students

8.1 UG and PGT students should refer to the guidance on research ethics given in course handbooks.

8.2 <u>Minimal risk</u>

Projects that are deemed to be minimal risk can be approved by the Unit or Course Leader.

8.3 More than minimal risk

8.3.1 Projects that are deemed to be more than minimal risk must be referred to the School Ethics Advisor for approval.

8.3.2 If there are more than three projects being undertaken that are deemed to be more than minimal risk, the unit leader should provide a sample to the School Ethics Advisor. The sample should be representative.

8.3.3 Where the School Ethics Advisor is unsure or unable to give approval, the projects should be referred to Research Ethics Committee.

8.3.4 Projects which are particularly sensitive or complex or which pose significant risk to the reputation of the University must be referred to Research Ethics Committee.

8.3.5 Projects cannot commence until ethical approval has been given.

9.0 Research Degree Students

9.1 Ethical approval is governed by University of the Arts London (UAL). Students should refer to the UAL research degrees handbook and regulations for guidance on ethical approval and consider this with their Director of Studies. Post registration ethics applications are first considered by AUB Research Ethics Committee who make a recommendation on the level of risk before final review by Research Degrees Committee (RDC) which has devolved authority to approve applications deemed to represent minimal ethical risk. Applications deemed to represent more than minimal risk are referred to UAL Research and Knowledge Exchange Ethics Sub-Committee (RKEESC).

10.0 Issues relating to Pedagogic research

10.1 There are particular issues associated with pedagogic research. The University wishes to encourage research into learning and teaching, or the student learning experience, and accepts that projects of this type can lead to a better understanding of the learning environment, and hence improvements for all students. For example, this could include study of the staff and student experience, curriculum content, teaching and learning methods, learning resources, course management, and teaching and learning facilities.

10.2 Research is often of relatively small scale, is conducted within the professional practice setting, and will include the informed consent of those involved.

10.3 Where the research is to be conducted within the University as part of the normal professional teaching and learning context, informed consent will be required. If it is intended to use student work, or images of students or of their work, as part of a report or publication, this

consent must be given in writing; otherwise, informal consent would be sufficient. Individual staff and student members have the right to refuse to participate. However, there is no significant risk to such an activity, and it can be approved by the Course Leader or Director.

10.4 Reference to the Research Ethics Advisor is required only where issues of confidentiality and/or data protection are involved which lead to a "new agreement" between the researcher and student group, such as in cases where the researcher is not the teacher of the group of students and hence does not normally have access to personal information about them.

11.0 Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Projects

11.1 Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Projects may require ethical approval depending on the nature of the activity being undertaken. All projects that involves engagement with human participants and data collection, sensitive data, animals or pose risks beyond everyday life would qualify as research projects and require ethical approval. Projects to measure impact or evaluate how successful/effective a knowledge exchange or public engagement event is would not require ethical approval. Projects will be assessed by the Innovation Manager/Head of KE & Innovation in the first instance to determine if they qualify as a research project and then EIRA forms forwarded to a School Ethics Adviser for approval.

5.0 Recommended checklist for researchers

The checklist lists the key points of good practice in research for a research project. More detailed guidance can be found in sections 3 and 4 of the Code of Practice for research.

You should refer to this checklist before conducting your research, and bearing in mind that, subject to legal and ethical requirements, roles and contributions may change during the time span of the research.

1 Does the proposed research address pertinent question(s) and is it designed either to add to existing knowledge / understanding of the subject in question or to develop methods for research into it?

2 Is your research design appropriate for the question(s) being asked?

3 Will you have access to all necessary skills and resources to conduct the research?

4 Have you conducted a risk assessment to determine:

a whether there are any ethical issues and whether ethics review is required;

b the potential for risks to the organisation, the research, or the health, safety and well-being of researchers and research participants; and

c what legal requirements govern the research?

5 Will your research comply with all legal and ethical requirements and other applicable guidelines, including AUB Research Ethics Policy and those from other organisations and/or countries if relevant?

6 Will your research comply with all requirements of legislation and good practice relating to health and safety?

7 Has your research undergone any necessary ethics review (see 4(a) above), especially if it involves animals, human participants, human material or personal data? (See AUB Research Ethics Policy).

8 Will your research comply with any monitoring and audit requirements?

9 Are you in compliance with any contracts and financial guidelines relating to the project?

10 Have you reached an agreement relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship?

11 Have you reached an agreement relating to collaborative working, if applicable?

12 Have you agreed the roles of researchers and responsibilities for management and supervision?

13 Have all conflicts of interest relating to your research been identified, declared and addressed?

14 Are you aware of the guidance from all applicable organisations on misconduct in research?

When conducting your research:

1 Are you following the agreed research design for the project?

2 Have any changes to the agreed research design been reviewed and approved if applicable?

3 Are you following best practice for the collection, storage and management of data?

4 Are agreed roles and responsibilities for management and supervision being fulfilled?

5 Is your research complying with any monitoring and audit requirements?

When finishing your research:

1	Will your research and its findings be reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame?
2	Will all contributions to the research be acknowledged?
3	Are agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship being complied with?
4	Will research data be retained in a secure and accessible form and for the required duration?
5	Will your research comply with all legal, ethical and contractual requirements?

ANNEX 1: Guidance on Determining the level of Ethical Risk

Minimal risk

Minimal risk is defined as an absence of any significant risk to anyone involved in the research, or any others affected by it directly or indirectly, that is reasonably foreseeable.

Examples of projects with minimal risk

A study involving interviewing domain experts
A researcher plans to interview eight artists/curators/designers for her thesis. She offers a letter of introduction about the project, gains written informed consent for the interview from each interviewee, later check the contents of the transcription with each interview, allows the interviewee to withdraw comments/approve the interview record.
The interviews will be used as attributed statements with the thesis. A recognised approach from oral history/social sciences/ethnography/art and design criticism and history is part of the methodology. The interviews will involve travel in the UK and abroad, the researcher has discussed her travel plans and personal safety with her supervisors.

A study which collect information via anonymous questionnaires
Two collaborating artist-researchers plan to conduct a survey of responses to their artwork in a public space or gallery. They gain the consent of the venue for this survey, which will be done by placing a questionnaire for responses in the space.

The questionnaire does not ask for names/addresses/emails/phone numbers. but perhaps it does ask for age/gender/class/race of respondents. Filling in the questionnaire and leaving it in the gallery operates as 'consent' to take part. The questionnaire offers information about why the study is conducted and how it is going to be used. A separate notice and information sheet is also provided in the location stating why the survey is being conducted and how it will be used in a research project.

Research involving more than minimal risk

The following types of research are likely to fall into this category:

- Research involving vulnerable groups, for example children and young people under 18, those with a learning disability or cognitive impairment, or individuals in a dependent or unequal relationship.

- Research involving sensitive topics such as:
  - Sexual behaviour
  - Illegal or political behaviour
  - Experience of violence, abuse, exploitation and/or other racist or sexist behaviour
  - Mental health
  - Physical health and treatment.

- Research involving groups where the permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial access to members e.g. ethnic or cultural groups, native peoples or indigenous communities.

- Research involving deception or which is conducted without participants' full and informed consent at the time the study is carried out.

- Research involving access to records of personal or confidential information concerning identifiable individuals.

- Research which would induce psychological stress, anxiety or humiliation or cause more than minimal pain.

- Research involving intrusive interventions such as vigorous physical exercise.

- Research involving security sensitive material.

- Research undertaken outside of the UK.

Participants would not normally encounter such interventions, which may cause them to reveal information which causes concern, in the course of their everyday life.

Case Study 1: Working with vulnerable groups

My research project involved working with and photographing vulnerable trans-sexual groups. It raised serious issues on questions of:

- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Informed consent
- Integrity of representation
- Reflexive methodology
- The need for constant, ongoing and responsive ethical review
- Personal relations built up through research process.

The participants were selected from this marginalised social group and sensitive personal data was collected. Through dissemination of the research findings participants risk exposure of their transsexual status and possible subsequent repercussions.

Ethical considerations informed the research throughout and were built into the formal structures of consent. I worked with my participants in a way that was highly responsive to their needs. They were consulted throughout the research process with respect to how they viewed the photographs of themselves that we produced. It is usual for the photographs presented in research outputs to be those that have been selected by the participants rather than by me. Participants have the final word in the selection and editing process – this applies to interview extracts as well as photographs. With regard to obtaining permission to use photographic portraits of a person, interview extracts and personal data I obtain permission each and every time I wish to use material in a research output. If a participant is in any way hesitant about the material being used I will not use it.

However, the way that I look at this is that I am not just working on a research project – I am handling very sensitive areas of people's actual lives in a long term dialogue. While I may have a particular investment in specific research material being used/shown the people who are providing that material could be putting their lives at risk.

Rigorous informed consent was at the core of the research. Participants are given details of the project, what it will require from them and my plans for dissemination before agreeing to take part in the research. Participants are given the option of using a pseudonym and for their data/photographs to be kept confidential (using a code name in my records). Nobody other than myself has access to my research data and I do not pass information on to any other party. I only work with people who are able to give informed consent.

Case Study 2: Graffiti on the South Bank
This was a research proposal which sought to interview around 30 producers of legitimate graffiti at the South Bank Undercroft. Participants were to be interviewed about their opinions and ideas regarding activities and future possibilities for the Undercroft, and also where relevant, their own graffiti habits and key trends in graffiti practices. The key issues were:

- Confidentiality
- Illegality of activities investigated

Researchers working in pairs would take notes, and with consent, record the interviews. The findings would be fed as general observations and recommendations to the site managers, and would also be used to build experience for Research Council funding bids on graffiti.

The following risks to respondents were anticipated. Even though no personal details were to be recorded, potential risk would be for participants to reveal illegal practices such as inappropriate placement of graffiti and theft of spray cans (where participants were victims or had heard of other incidents); in theory, regular attendees could be traceable by police. It was judged acceptable to give the participants an undertaking of confidentiality and that no identifying information would be passed to the site owners/managers (South Bank Centre) or the police.

It was felt inappropriate to require a written consent form, because respondents' identity would never be known and over-formality (in their sight) deterred them and would have impinged on the quality and value of the work and results. A light-touch combined oral information and consent procedure was developed, supplemented by a printed information sheet. Signed consent forms would negate the anonymity. The very fact of giving responses to the interview was deemed evidence of consent in these circumstances – but given the crime sensitivity, responses/judgements on participants' age, consent to be interviewed, consent to be recorded and consent for recording to be kept post-transcription were to be noted (without name, of course) as appropriate on a checklist by the second interviewer of the pair.

Case Study 3: Experiences of attending music festivals

My research project involved interviewing festival goers about their experiences of attending music festivals. I intended to camp at a festival to interview attendees and organisers but also to invite those who had attended in the past to share their experiences.

I recognised that I would need to address common ethical considerations when seeking ethical approval to undertake the research including:
• Consent - from festival organisers/participants
• Data management
• Personal safeguarding

Whilst the project was not about illegal activity, I was conscious that participants might disclose unlawful acts during the course of the interviews such as drug use. I recognised that I had a legal responsibility to report to relevant authorities any actions or planned actions discovered during the course of the research, which I believed had resulted or had the potential to result in serious harm to others. I noted that the specific reporting obligations that exist in UK law relate to:

i) Child protection offences (physical or sexual abuse of minors)
ii) The physical abuse of vulnerable adults
iii) Money laundering
iv) Other crimes covered by prevention of terrorism legislation.

These obligations aside, I noted that research is not covered by any legal privilege although it is unlikely that the researcher would be prosecuted. Unless a researcher has actually seen an offence being committed or can offer other hard proof of criminality – such as knowledge of the location of proscribed drugs, illegal weapons or stolen goods, for example – then most information that is garnered as research data would probably fall into the category of hearsay, if tested in court. At best it would be likely to be considered as 'intelligence' rather than admissible evidence.

Disclosure to the police would only generally be useful for the prosecution of the (alleged) offender-participant if it led to the discovery of clearer evidence of criminal wrongdoing. Those giving approval would factor this into any decision as to when to breach confidentiality and ensure that prospective participants were fully informed of the circumstances in which confidentiality would be breached.

I was aware that researchers also have a professional duty to refrain from doing anything that would bring the University into disrepute. Those that were giving approval would need to balance the value of the research, which might boost the reputability of the University, against the perception that the University was condoning the activity, which might be seen as tending to bring the University into disrepute. I also recognised that I had a responsibility to myself and to my other research collaborators to avoid where possible (and it may not always be possible) acquiring information that was likely to prove dangerous, compromising or otherwise problematic.

In undertaking this project:
• I was careful only to work with participants who were over 18 years of age.
• I was mindful not to engage in illegal activity myself or to encourage it in others.
• I was clear with the potential research participants about the possible limits of confidentiality.
• I was careful to consider what was recorded audio-visually, digitally and in writing.

I decided that I would ask interview questions (anonymously) of quite a large number of participants. This would count as consent in that they might not participate at all. The answers were mixed up to avoid identification of any individual and to avoid having to get more detailed levels of consent which would be required if I had chosen to use a small number of respondents as case studies.

Case Study 4: Internet research

My research, for a practice-based PhD, involved engaging online presences in social networking sites under a pseudonym. It aimed to explore the ways in which identity is

constructed online. There were key areas of ethical concern which proved extremely problematic and difficult to address because my proposed procedures were deemed to lack the required transparency. The following issues raised ethical questions:

- Researching online in social networking spaces under a pseudonym
- Using private emails in my thesis and thus copyright concerns
- Asking for informed consent in retrospect (after the emails had been exchanged) for using these emails in my research
- Working with a combination of both participants and collaborators.

These factors raised major questions about:

- Transparency of the research process
- What constitutes 'deception' in the research process
- Processes of informed consent
- Confidentiality

My research was such that it cannot be revealed as such in advance to those involved. One of the challenges marking the project was that I had hoped to develop a community of online presences into a community of offline friends. This plan, however, was abandoned, in part because it proved too difficult to get ethics approval. Instead, the research focuses on how the pseudonymous author 'Lucy' presented herself through her interactions with other profiles online. These other profiles are not really asked to 'do' anything in the research, beyond become the pseudonym's 'contact/friend', respond to the occasional email and engage in other typical modes of exchange in online social networking sites upon Lucy's prompting. I felt strongly that the response to my research *required a constructive approach to risk which both protected participants but also allowed the development of researchers committed to ethical research.* In practice this proved extremely difficult to achieve with protracted negotiations on the ethical aspects of my research. The solutions which were put in place to enable the research to proceed in an ethically acceptable way were as follows:

I agreed not to use private emails in the thesis. REC agreed to waive informed consent from social network users, as there was no way to determine if consent was indeed informed and whether or not the user who initially gave their consent was the same user operating the user profile believed to have given consent. The Committee agreed to recognize online profiles as representations of identity. This is in contrast to perceiving them as actual people.

Case Study 4: Use of Alcohol within Student Research Projects

My research project involved asking students about their use of alcohol through an online survey followed up by interviews with individuals. It raised questions about:

- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Informed consent
- Disclosure of substance misuse
- Disclosure instigating alcohol use
- Under-18s

I was concerned that participants would be worried about revealing confidential information. Also, through the dissemination of the research findings participants risk subsequent repercussions such as exposure that might jeopardise their employment prospects.

At the outset, the protection of subject confidentiality was at the forefront of my research design. I decided to recruit participants via social media using an online survey that respondents could complete anonymously. The invitation to take part in follow-up interviews was included in the survey but respondents had to use a separate external email link so that their responses to their survey remained anonymous.

For the interviews, I had to collect personal information (email contact) in order to set up the interviews. This was held on a password protected file and destroyed as soon as the interviews had taken place. Interviews were held online, with participants being given the option of using a pseudonym to protect their identity. The data was anonymised as soon after collection as possible. Whilst this meant that I could not follow up with participants regarding their responses it did mean that participants were assured that they could not be identified as a result of taking part in the research. No-one other than myself had access to the research data and no research data would be passed on to someone else.

Participants were given detailed information sheets setting out what the project was about and how the findings would be disseminated. Participants were asked to confirm that they were over 18 and able to give informed consent. I also ensured that links to support organisations such as *NHS Alcohol Support*; *Drinkaware* and *Alcoholics Anonymous* were included in the participant information sent out.

As part of the ethical assurance to the university, I confirmed that no alcohol would be given to participants. I was mindful that the overarching principles to be applied were that of causing no harm (maleficence) and doing good to others (beneficence).

Guidance: The use of animals or animal products in research

1. This document provides additional guidance on out AUB's approach to research which involves the use of animals or animal products. It will be used as a reference point by Research Ethics Committee when it considers potential research projects, including student projects at any level.

2. For the purposes of this guidance, 'animal' should be given the widest possible interpretation and should be taken to refer to living creatures other than homo sapiens. It does not cover, either directly or by extension, plants or similar organisms.

Principles

3. Arts University Bournemouth promotes the highest standards in its research and teaching. The University is also committed to promoting environmental sustainability and protecting ecological diversity.

4. Together, these priorities form the context for any work with animals.

5. AUB requires all activities involving animals to be based upon the underpinning principle of appropriate respect for life. The University expects all staff and students engaged in research and educational activities to comply with both the letter and the spirit of legislation, regulation, best practice and professional and ethical guidelines.

6. Researchers should be aware that any use of animals or animal products,

Regardless of how they are sourced and any direct ethical considerations, can have the effect of normalising (or not challenging) the use of animals or animal products, including in situations where this is not desirable. It is for this reason that the use of animals or animal products should always be undertaken with caution.

7. In addition, some animals have a status within a religious or cultural context and this must be considered as part of any ethical review, especially in relation to how any work will be presented, published or shown.

Animals (living)

8. There may be occasions where live animals are used directly in a research project (for example where animals are filmed, photographed or painted; or where they contribute to the wider environment in which research takes place). In all such instances, the highest animal welfare standards should be prioritised.

9. Under no circumstances will AUB permit research which intends that any animal should come to harm (or the risk of harm). This includes death, injury or emotional trauma (fear, anxiety, shock or similar). In making this commitment, AUB is not taking a philosophical position on whether animals can feel pain or on whether their emotional reactions can be categorised as similar to human reactions; but is referring to the obvious, observable signs that an animal is in discomfort, and these may never be brought about, either intentionally or as a foreseeable consequence, as part of a research project.

10. It follows that imagery or representations of animals in distress (for example, of wild animals fleeing a bush fire) is ethically acceptable only if the cause of that distress is completely independent of and unrelated to the research project.

Animals (dead)

11. AUB does not prohibit the use of pre-deceased animals in research projects.

12. If the corpse / parts of a corpse are to be obtained from veterinary practices, clinics and diagnostic services where animals, including stray, feral and wild animals, are the 'patients', the researcher must follow the guidance in section 2.4 of the Ethical Framework for Obtaining Material from Sentient Animals issued by UKRIO (https://ukrio.org/wp-content/uploads/Ethical-Framework-May-2025.pdf).

13. In all other circumstances, the University's Research Ethics Committee must be satisfied that the animal's death was in no way related to or influenced by the proposed research project.

Animal products

14. 'Animal products' covers a wide range including for example leather, fur, feathers and beeswax. The ethical status of the use of animal products is complex. AUB will seek at all times to follow sector-wide best practice.

15. As a first principle, the University encourages the use of vegan products wherever these are suitable and available. It recognises that there may be occasions where the cost of this approach might be prohibitive, or where there are questions about the environmental impact (for example, the use of rare raw materials in place of plentiful animal product).

16. There are certain animal products which AUB does not permit under any circumstances. These include:

• Any part of an endangered animal

• Hair or feathers obtained from the plucking of live animals (including angora, mohair and cashmere/pashmina)

• Any other product listed in section 2 of the Ethical Framework for Obtaining Material from Sentient Animals issued by UKRIO (https://ukrio.org/wpcontent/uploads/Ethical-Framework-May-2025.pdf).

This list will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be amended as required.

17. In respect of other animal products, the researcher is required to present an ethical justification for their use. The following points are noted:

i) 'Found' products, such as feathers or snakeskins which have been shed by an animal and no longer serve any useful purpose to that animal, do not present ethical issues (subject to 9 above).

ii) Products which are available following the natural death of an animal, or in the circumstances described in para 12 above, do not present direct ethical issues.

iii) Beeswax is a typical example of a product created by an animal which can be obtained without causing direct harm, but where this can significantly disrupt the life of the animal. A clear rationale must be given for the proposed use of this type of product, which is only acceptable where no other suitable product is available.

iv) Leather is commonly identified as a co-product (not a by-product) of the meat and dairy industry. The use of leather will be approved only if it has a fully UK only supply chain, or clear, unequivocal evidence that animal welfare, environmental, and human standards in the production of the leather are at least equivalent to that which would apply in the UK.

Animal imagery and representation

18. The University does not consider that animal imagery or representation carries any direct ethical implications. Without adopting a formal philosophical position on animals and identity, AUB adopts the commonsense position that animals do not have a sense of self which could be disrupted or offended by imagery produced as part of a research project, even where this is the result of significant manipulation.

19. Researchers should nevertheless be aware that animal imagery can hold indirect ethical implications, for example:

i) The religious or cultural context must be considered as part of any ethical review, as set out at para 4 above;

ii) Some images are likely to be extremely unsettling for an audience. An example might be digitally generated images of a herbivore such as a giraffe engaging in carnivorous activity or cannibalism. This might be very significant in relation to how any work will be presented, published or shown;

iii) Imagery which would be deemed ethically unacceptable with human participants does not automatically become ethically acceptable just because

the participants have been digitally altered and given animal form. A full ethical review should still be conducted.