

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

The Charter for Researchers

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Contents

Preamble:.....	2
1. Regulatory and Policy Basis.....	2
2. Key Principles for Conducting Ethical and Responsible Research.....	3
2.1 Academic Freedom	3
2.2 Responsibilities of a Researcher	4
2.3 Ethics and Research Integrity.....	4
2.4 Sustainability and Democratisation of Science	7
2.5 Publication, Authorship and Peer-review	8
2.6 Collaboration.....	10
2.7 External Communication.....	12
2.8 Contractual, Legal Obligations and Funding	12
2. Observance and Breaches of Charter	13
3. History of Versions	13

Preamble:

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (hereinafter referred to as 'VUB'), founded on freethinking and humanism (1)*, upholds free and independent research as a fundamental value and guiding principle for its researchers, as set forth by Henri Poincaré:

*"Thinking must never submit,
neither to a dogma,
nor to a party,
nor to a passion,
nor to an interest,
nor to a preconceived idea,
nor to anything whatsoever,
except to the facts themselves,
because for it to submit to anything else would be the end of its existence."*

- Henri Poincaré (1854-1912)

Grounded in this statement, the Charter for Researchers (hereinafter referred to as 'the Charter') establishes the fundamental principles and practices for conducting research in an ethical, transparent, socially and environmentally responsible manner, delineating the rights and responsibilities of all researchers, including those performing leadership or supervisory roles within the research context. Additionally, the Charter serves as a reference point in assessing potential violations of research integrity.

The provisions of this Charter apply to all researchers operating under the responsibility of VUB, irrespective of the nature, type, or duration of their employment or assignment. The Charter provides guidance to ensure compliance throughout all stages of research, from initial conception to the dissemination of results.

1. Regulatory and Policy Basis

The Charter builds upon the founding principles and procedures described in the Organic Statute (2) and contributes to fulfilling the VUB's policy priorities and strategic plans concerning research. Moreover, it aligns with the regulations governing the work of Independent Academic Staff (ZAP), Assistant Academic Staff (AAP), Academic and Teaching Staff (WPP), (post)doctoral fellows, unpaid employees and external employees, including visiting researchers, and with the commitments – such as creating a fair, transparent, and supportive research environment – associated with the VUB's status as a holder of the HR Excellence in Research Award. Finally, this Charter draws on two European-level reference documents for guidance: the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (hereinafter

* A list of references is provided in the *Explanatory Note and Referenced Sources* document, issued together with this Charter

referred to as ‘the ALLEA Code’) (3) and the European Charter for Researchers (4), as defined in the Council Recommendation of 18 December 2023.

2. Key Principles for Conducting Ethical and Responsible Research

The following sections outline key principles and practices for conducting ethical, transparent and responsible research at VUB.

2.1 Academic Freedom

Universities are engaged in the search for truth in order to serve the common good. Academic freedom is regarded as a necessary precondition for the discovery of truth. At VUB, every researcher is granted the freedom to conduct research in the pursuit of the truth about the world, to exercise individual thought, including questioning and testing received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas as a result thereof.

In this regard, researchers are entitled, among other things, to determine:

- What is being researched (the Object).
- How research is conducted (the Method).
- When the research is completed.
- When and how the research results will be disclosed.

At the same time, academic freedom comes with responsibilities. A fundamental tenet of academic freedom is that all truth claims are contestable. It is through the collective exercise of individual reason that knowledge gains the status of truth – a truth that remains always open to contestation (5). Accordingly, researchers at VUB are expected to remain open to evolving understandings of truth and to constructive criticism from peers, to adhere to methodological rigour as well as to uphold honesty in reporting of their findings and the limitations thereof.

Furthermore, academic freedom must be exercised with respect for ethical standards – as outlined, among others, in this Charter – and within the limits of regulatory and contractual obligations. Additionally, since only members of the Independent Academic Staff (ZAP) hold the right to initiate research (2) and assume its final responsibility, researchers are expected to operate within a supervisory framework appropriate to the level of research training and experience. As research is frequently conducted within research groups, researchers who are members of such group(s) should make efforts to contribute to and align with the strategic priorities and internal guidelines of their respective research group(s).

Finally, academic freedom must be actively exercised to ensure it does not become mere rhetoric or an ossified dogma. Academic freedom depends on a strong culture of genuine truth-seeking and on researchers who remain resistant to pressures to echo only dominant viewpoints.

2.2 Responsibilities of a Researcher

Researchers at VUB are also expected to uphold the following general responsibilities in support of their role as researchers and as members of both the university and the broader academic community:

- To conduct scientific research with the aim of making an original contribution to existing knowledge within a research domain.
- To familiarise themselves with the strategic objectives and regulations of their research institution and research group(s), and with the rules of relevant funding bodies.
- To participate in the meetings and deliberations of their research group(s) and other relevant entities.
- To communicate with stakeholders such as their research group(s), institution, and funding bodies regarding the status of their project. Timely notice should be given if a project is delayed, redefined, completed, or requires early termination or suspension for any reason.
- To ensure that all necessary approvals are obtained before initiating their research or accessing allocated resources.
- To adhere to the principles of sound, transparent and efficient financial management, including those established by the funder.
- To maintain and continuously develop the expertise and skills necessary to be a well-rounded researcher, collaborator, and, where relevant, promotor or mentor. This includes active participation in professional development activities – such as training programs, workshops, conferences, e-learning opportunities, and network initiatives – both within and beyond VUB.
- Doctoral researchers are expected to meet additional specific responsibilities, as outlined in Central Regulations for the Conferral of the Academic Title of Doctor (hereinafter referred to as ‘CDR Regulations’) (6).

2.3 Ethics and Research Integrity

2.3.1 Research Integrity

To ensure that their research is conducted transparently and responsibly, researchers at VUB are expected to adhere to the highest standards of research integrity, stipulated in the ALLEA Code (3), including the following fundamental principles:

- **Reliability** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, methodology, analysis and the use of resources.
- **Honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full, and unbiased way.

- **Respect** for colleagues, research participants, research subjects, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage, and the environment.
- **Accountability** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision, and mentoring, and for its wider societal impacts.

The three main types of violations of research integrity include fabrication, falsification and plagiarism. Additional breaches may encompass, but are not limited to, the failure to disclose conflicts of interest, the deliberate obstruction of research progress, and any conduct that compromises the accuracy of scientific reporting or diminishes the credibility and integrity of scientific work.

Furthermore, the ALLEA Code (3) offers a comprehensive list of actions that are deemed “unacceptable research practices” and may themselves be violations of research integrity, including:

- Hiding the use of AI or automated tools in the creation of content or drafting of publications.
- Misusing seniority to encourage violations of research integrity or to advance one’s own career.
- Splitting up research results with the specific aim of increasing the number of research publications (‘salami-slicing publications’).
- Unnecessarily expanding the bibliography of a study to please editors, reviewers, or colleagues, or to manipulate bibliographic data.
- Re-publishing substantive parts of one’s own earlier publications, including translations, without duly acknowledging or citing the original (‘self-plagiarism’).
- Establishing, supporting, or deliberately using journals, publishers, events, or services that undermine the quality of research (‘predatory’ journals or conferences and paper mills).

For a more detailed definition of what constitutes a violation of research integrity, as well as relevant examples, researchers should consult the ALLEA Code (3). The Research Integrity Committee (7) (hereinafter referred to as ‘the CWI’) is the designated body at VUB responsible for addressing and handling potential violations of research integrity, in accordance with the procedure outlined in the CWI Regulations (8).

2.3.2 Ethical Research

VUB is committed to improving society through free inquiry. Researchers are therefore encouraged to uphold strong ethical principles and focus their work on the greater good and the advancement of human knowledge. In this context, it is important to look beyond the immediate outcomes of one’s work, taking into account its societal impact and long-term consequences.

Researchers – particularly, though not exclusively, those engaged in medical research, research involving human subjects, research with potential military or harmful applications and research involving animal experiments – must ask themselves, “What is the social and scientific value of the expected results, and does this value outweigh potential drawbacks and unwanted effects?” This process of ethical reflection and accountability is important across all research contexts and at every stage of research process.

In addition, research results of certain research collaborations may be at risk of being misused or compromised such as being used to spread disinformation, to enhance military capabilities in authoritarian regimes, and in human rights abuses, among others. Therefore, it is essential that researchers exercise due diligence in ensuring the security and integrity of their research. Relevant guidelines (9) issued on this matter should be consulted for further guidance. For advice on information security and privacy, researchers might refer to guidelines (10), issued by the Data Protection Officer (hereinafter referred to as ‘the DPO’) and the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO).

While researchers at VUB are expected to work within the scope and objectives of their respective research groups and projects, every researcher retains the right to decide freely whether or not to engage in research activities with military applications, based on their own ethical convictions, professional judgement, or personal preferences. As such, a researcher may choose not to join a particular research group or project on these grounds. However, neither VUB nor its research groups are obliged to provide alternative research opportunities that align with an individual’s ethical, professional, or personal considerations.

When faced with ethical questions or when ethical approval is required by law, a funder, or an academic publisher, researchers should seek guidance from the relevant ethical committees and contact points at VUB well in advance of the research activity. If such approvals are required, VUB will not release research funding until the necessary approvals have been obtained or formal agreements are in place to secure them before the research begins.

VUB has established ethical committees in the areas of medical research; human sciences; military research, research involving dual-use items, and research prone to misuse; and research involving animal experiments. A more detailed description of each ethical committee as well as other contact points offering assistance regarding legal and ethical compliance, including, among others, the CWI and the Contact Point for Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), can be found on the intranet site of the VUB Legal and Ethics Office (11).

2.3.3 Use of AI Technologies in Research

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies can improve both the quality of scientific work and the productivity of researchers. It is important, however, that the AI tools are applied in an ethical and transparent manner.

Researchers at VUB bear responsibility for all of their research outputs and for the integrity of the research processes in which AI is employed. This responsibility is non-transferable and

cannot be delegated to the tools used. Therefore, researchers are required to exercise thorough oversight over AI-generated content, recognising that such outputs may be inaccurate, biased, or contain elements of plagiarism. In addition, researchers must ensure transparent disclosure of AI tools used during their research activities.

In all cases, researchers are required to adhere to the VUB guidelines (12) that provide recommendations on the use of AI tools.

2.3.4 Research Data Management and Data Protection

Prudent research data management enhances research quality, reproducibility and integrity, while preventing loss, fraud, and inefficiencies. Effective research data protection further ensures the confidentiality, security, and lawful handling of sensitive information.

When collecting and processing personal data it is important to implement measures to ensure its security and privacy, as required by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (13). This includes establishing a legal basis – informed consent or public interest – and recording processing activities in VUB’s internal register (14). For further guidance researchers should consult the guidelines (10) issued by the DPO and those concerning Research Data Management (15) (hereinafter referred to ‘RDM’) as well as comply with the VUB Policy Framework on Research Data Management (16).

2.3.5 Open Science

To enhance transparency and build trust in research, researchers are encouraged to engage in Open Science – the open sharing of research results through practices such as making data open and FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable), ensuring open access to publications, and participating in open peer review, among others.

When engaging in Open Science, it is important to uphold the principle of “as open as possible, as closed as necessary”, carefully considering publication of data the sharing of which might be subject to confidentiality or privacy restrictions (as defined in the GDPR) (13), as well as data that is ethically sensitive – such as information related to military research or vulnerable population groups. Restrictions are also required for data containing commercially valuable research results, where premature disclosure could compromise the ability to obtain patents or licenses, in accordance with the university’s Valorisation Regulation (17).

To ensure safe engagement in Open Science, researchers should comply with the VUB Policy Framework on Research Data Management (16) and the associated RDM guidelines (15).

2.4 Sustainability and Democratisation of Science

VUB is committed to contribute to the Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations which aims at prosperity and protection for people and the planet. Within this broader context of societal responsibility, researchers at the VUB are, among others, expected to consider the long-term environmental impacts of their research and uphold sustainability

principles in their daily research practices (4). This involves practical measures like efficient energy usage in laboratories and facilities, responsible waste management, use of sustainable materials, low-impact travel, appropriate usage of digital tools and integration of circular economy principles into research methodologies.

VUB researchers are also encouraged to contribute to the democratisation of science. Where appropriate, this may involve integrating citizen science into the design and execution of research to build public trust and tap into societal intelligence, and being mindful of biases related to e.g., gender, sex, ethnic origin, culture, socioeconomic status, disability, age or sexual orientation, in order to enhance the quality and social relevance of scientific outcomes and to foster diversity and inclusion.

2.5 Publication, Authorship and Peer-review

2.5.1 Publication and Authorship

Selecting the right journal for publication of research results is important for gaining academic recognition, establishing a strong scholarly reputation, and maximising the impact of one's work. To avoid the risks of submitting to 'predatory' journals – which usually lack rigorous peer review, provide limited editorial transparency, and may exploit authors through high fees – researchers must conduct a thorough evaluation before submission. Similarly, caution should be exercised with 'grey area' journals, which may not be overly predatory but still display questionable practices.

In this context, researchers should carefully assess whether a journal's scope aligns with their field and intended readership, and to examine its editorial policies, peer review procedures, and quality of previously published work. Relevant sections of the Mind the GAP (Good Academic Practices) online training tool (18), accessible to all VUB researchers, offer references to valuable resources for assessing the credibility and quality of academic journals. Moreover, the pertinent RDM guidelines (19) on this subject should be duly followed and adhered to.

Moreover, when publishing research results, it is essential to disclose any potential conflicts of interest – both financial and non-financial – as well as all sources of support for the research or publication. Where necessary, corrections should be issued or publications retracted to maintain the accuracy, reliability, and credibility of the scientific record.

Science is often a collaborative process. The contribution of researchers to scholarly publications is publicly acknowledged through the attribution of authorship. To ensure appropriate credit and recognition, authorship should be assigned in accordance with general principles, including those stipulated in the ALLEA Code (3). These include, but are not limited to:

- Formal agreement on the sequence of authorship, acknowledging that authorship itself is based cumulatively on: 1) a significant contribution to the design of the

research, relevant data collection, its analysis, and/or interpretation; 2) drafting and/or critical reviewing the publication; 3) approval of the final publication; and 4) agreeing to be responsible for the content of the publication, unless specified otherwise in the publication.

- Where applicable, inclusion of “Author Contribution Statement” in the final publication, describing each author’s responsibilities and contributions.
- Acknowledging important contributions of those who do not meet the criteria for authorship, including collaborators, assistants etc.

Researchers can contact the VUB Legal and Ethics Office (11) for more information and for assistance in establishing an authorship agreement.

2.5.2 Peer review

Peer review ensures the quality and validity of research by evaluating its merits, suggesting improvements, and preventing the publication of flawed or low-quality work. When engaging in a peer-review, the following principles should be upheld:

- When invited to review a manuscript, researchers should ensure the topic aligns with their expertise.
- Researchers should decline an invitation to review a manuscript if there are conflicts of interest, such as financial ties, personal relationships, or direct involvement with the authors' work.
- Manuscripts under review are confidential until published, and reviewer reports may remain confidential even after publication. Reviewers should consult the editor before involving others, such as students or co-workers, in the review process and provide their names in the confidential comments. Communication should always be conducted through the journal, and reviewers should never contact authors directly.
- Manuscripts should be reviewed impartially. Reviewers guide the publisher by identifying flaws and providing clear, respectful, and constructive feedback. Ethical concerns, such as conflicts of interest, lack of approval, or misconduct like plagiarism, should be reported to the editor.
- While researchers are entitled to their own opinions and preferences, these should not interfere when performing a peer review.

2.5.3 Author affiliation

All researchers operating under the responsibility of the VUB, irrespective of the nature, type, or duration of their employment or assignment are required to list ‘Vrije Universiteit Brussel’ as their affiliation when publishing their research results. When doing so, researchers must ensure that they adhere to the principles outlined in the Charter, that the research falls within their area of expertise, and that they take full responsibility for their work.

An author can have multiple affiliations, for example in case where he or she is affiliated with multiple entities within the same university, or alternatively when someone is appointed at multiple institutions. When an author has moved to another organisation, the affiliation should list the organisation(s) where the work was performed, with the new organisation noted as the 'current address'.

Below are the rules governing the correct use of the university's affiliation:

- Authors should always spell out their full last and first names whenever possible and mention their ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) to distinguish themselves from others with similar names.
- Authors should always use 'Vrije Universiteit Brussel' as the institutional affiliation, followed – where applicable – by the name of the relevant laboratory or research unit. The use of abbreviations such as 'VUB' without also mentioning the full name, or any translated versions of the university's name is not permitted.
- Authors with multiple affiliations must always include their 'Vrije Universiteit Brussel' affiliation alongside any other affiliations.
- Authors should carefully check the proofs of any publications to ensure that affiliation details are cited correctly.

While researchers have the right to publish and disseminate their work, it is important to note that, since only members of the Independent Academic Staff (ZAP) hold the right to initiate research (2) and assume its final responsibility, any research not supervised by a ZAP member of VUB is not permitted to use the university's affiliation.

2.6 Collaboration

2.6.1 Collaborative Working

Researchers at VUB are expected to treat others with respect and professionalism, fostering a collaborative academic environment where diverse perspectives, transparency, and openness are valued. This does not mean that researchers should refrain from offering critical feedback; indeed, the constructive evaluation of each other's work is vital for intellectual growth and scientific progress. A professional exchange of views should avoid personal attacks and instead focus on the work or behaviour. Regardless of power dynamics within a relationship (whether it is symmetrical or asymmetrical), showing respect for collaborators also means maintaining a transparent and well-defined relationship.

Researchers under the supervision of (a) promotor(s), mentor(s), and/or others in managerial roles have a (pro)active role in building and fostering transparent and well-defined relationships. This includes diligently documenting work progress and research findings, seeking and applying constructive feedback, and adhering to agreed-upon schedules, milestones, deliverables, and research outputs.

Researchers are expected to share access to infrastructure and to research data with collaborating researchers and supervisors, both during and after the research project's implementation. Conversely, researchers should not grant access to confidential research data to third parties without prior approval from collaborating researchers and supervisors.

Moreover, since research is frequently conducted within research groups, researchers working in such settings should foster a positive, respectful, and open environment in which scientific ideas can thrive. In addition, they are expected to uphold the principle of collegiality and to actively contribute to the shared goals and long-term development of their research group, and to align their work with its strategic priorities and internal guidelines.

The next section describes some key aspects to take into account for researchers in leadership roles.

2.6.2 Leadership and Research Supervision

VUB researchers in leadership positions must recognise their influence as role models, and adhere to behavioural standards for engaged leadership and collaboration outlined in the Regulation for the Independent Academic Staff, Visiting Professors and Substitute Professors (20). Systematic destructive or dysfunctional behaviours by a leader or supervisor – including abuse of power, manipulation, or intimidation – that harm the welfare, dignity, motivation, job satisfaction, or autonomy of colleagues, or that undermine the legitimate interests of the organisation (21), are prohibited at VUB and in case of transgression may lead to disciplinary action.

The senior researchers taking on a formal role in supervision and mentoring of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, take accountability for their role in the research project as well as their role in supporting researchers' broad development. Importantly, (co)promoters of doctoral researchers adhere to the rules set out in the CDR Regulations (6).

The common, core principles of qualitative supervision of doctoral as well as postdoctoral researchers are:

- To make expectations concerning the project, the assignment and the collaboration transparent.
- To provide guidance and structure that benefits doctoral researchers' sense of competence, fosters the postdoctoral researcher's independence and supports high-quality scientific research.
- To support the broad development and career perspectives of (post)doctoral researchers.
- To take on your own responsibility as (co)promotor or principal investigator in human resources and other processes.

Importantly, these elements can also be addressed within a supervision team.

In case of interpersonal conflict or other psychosocial issues, VUB has a number of confidential helplines (22) who offer a listening ear with an option for advice and mediation (such as the confidential counsellors and ombudspersons for doctoral researchers).

In case of external attacks on academic freedom or instances of intimidation, VUB remains firmly committed to offering support to those affected.

2.7 External Communication

Researchers participate in public discourse both as experts in their field and as engaged citizens. While such contributions, including media appearances, are valuable for informing the public, they can also present challenges – especially when roles and responsibilities are unclear or when scientific facts are misrepresented. Problematic cases may include: misinterpretation of research, unauthorised representation, defamation, and statements that contradict the university's commitment to scientific rigor and societal responsibility.

In this context, it is crucial for researchers to clearly distinguish between two roles when speaking publicly:

- Speaking as a researcher affiliated with the VUB (stating the research title and/or the name of the university).
- Speaking as a private individual (without referencing their research title or the name of the university).

When speaking in their capacity as researchers affiliated with the VUB, individuals are expected to adhere to the following principles:

- Representing research findings accurately – ideally after undergoing peer-review – including a clear communication of their limitations and uncertainties, and avoiding making claims that are untrue, unfounded, or contrary to scientific principles.
- Ensuring that statements made align with their area of research expertise and, wherever possible, are supported by insights derived from their own scholarly work.
- While acting as expert, ensuring that one's statements are well-informed and based on credible sources.
- Maintaining professionalism and respect in all public communications.

2.8 Contractual, Legal Obligations and Funding

Researchers should be aware of the national, sectoral and institutional regulations that govern their training and working conditions. Researchers are expected to comply with these regulations when producing deliverables such as dissertations, publications, reports, new products, or other research outcomes. If uncertainties arise, researchers are expected to consult relevant VUB departments, including, among others, the Tech Transfer and the Legal and Ethics Office.

VUB researchers should treat funding applications as they would any other academic work. The following guidelines define professional practices for applying for and using research funding:

- Respect the funding body's procedures for peer review and evaluation.
- Be aware of and respect the funding body's conditions for application.
- Ensure letters of support or commitment are obtained in a timely manner.
- Ensure partners' costs are appropriately included in the project budget.
- Apply standards of research integrity to the application text, so that it does not involve any form of misrepresentation, fabrication, falsification or plagiarism.
- Follow the rules relating to obtaining funding from specific sources or for particular activities.

2. Observance and Breaches of Charter

Breaches of the Charter will be handled by the CWI or, where applicable, other relevant body at VUB.

3. History of Versions

The first version of this Charter was published in 2011, followed by two updates in 2019 and 2021. The current version was written in 2025. The Charter will be revised regularly.

The VUB Charter for Researchers (2025) – Explanatory Note and Referenced Sources

This document outlines the decisions made and the methodology followed in drafting the new version of the VUB Charter for Researchers. It also includes a list of internal and external regulations, guidelines, and other sources referenced in the Charter, as well as those used as inspiration during the drafting process.

- The decisions made and the methodology followed in drafting the new version of the VUB Charter for Researchers

A comparative analysis has been conducted between the current VUB Charter for Researchers (2021) and key European-level documents addressing ethics and research integrity. The objective of this analysis was to identify gaps and areas for improvement to be addressed in the new version of the Charter. The two principal European-level documents used for this comparison are:

- the Council Recommendation of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe¹ (hereinafter referred to as ‘European Charter for Researchers’);
- the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity² (hereinafter referred to as ‘ALLEA Code’).

Furthermore, the charters of other Flemish universities were analysed, although these had a more limited scope, often focusing solely on doctoral students and their supervisors (e.g., the charters of UAntwerpen and UGent). Inspiration was also drawn from the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018), which addresses the broader scientific community, ranging from researchers to research directors and managers, at the national level. Finally, valuable input provided by the VUB community through targeted discussions, workshops and brainstorming sessions – held in various formats, including during Ethics Week 2023 – was carefully considered.

As a result, it was decided to include dedicated sections in the new version of the Charter, addressing, among other topics, *academic freedom, open science, the use of generative AI, external communication, sustainability, and the democratisation of science*. Additionally, more detailed descriptions are provided on subjects such as the *responsibilities of researchers (including those performing leadership or supervisory roles within the research context)* as well as *peer-review, and collaborative working*. The decision to emphasise these topics stems from the significant attention they received in both the aforementioned documents and internal discussions.

¹ Council of European Union. (2023). Council recommendation of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe – Annex II: European Charter for Researchers. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C_202301640

² ALLEA. (2023). The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (Revised ed.). <https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>

Given the explicit request from the VUB community members for a shorter document, the new version of the Charter no longer includes the sections 'before,' 'during,' and 'after' research. Additionally, the document has been streamlined by providing references to relevant sources for further information, rather than citing them directly.

- List of the internal and external regulations, guidelines, and other sources referenced in the Charter
- 1. Fundamental principles and values upheld by VUB. *This footnote will be update as soon as the link to the text prepared by the Rectorate Policy Department is available.*
- 2. Organic Statute:
https://www.vub.be/sites/default/files/2022-08/2022_Reglementen_Organiek_Statuut_VUB_ENG.pdf
- 3. 'The 'ALLEA Code':
<https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/>
- 4. 'The European Charter for Researchers':
https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C_202301640
- 5. Hudson, C., & Williams, J. (Eds.). (2016). Why Academic Freedom Matters: A Response to Current Challenges:
<https://www.civitas.org.uk/content/files/Why-Academic-Freedom-Matters.pdf>
- 6. Central Regulations for the Conferral of the Academic Title of Doctor:
https://www.vub.be/sites/default/files/2025-02/2025_Reglementen_Centraal_Doctoraatsreglement_EN.pdf
- 7. Vrije Universiteit Brussel. *The Research Integrity Committee (CWI)*.
https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD_PA/SitePages/Research-Intergrity.aspx
- 8. Research Integrity Committee (CWI) Regulations:
https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD_PA/SitePages/Research-Intergrity.aspx
- 9. Guidelines on Research Security:
 - a. Guidelines for Researchers on Research Security, Dual Use and Misuse of Research (VLIR, 2025): *Link will be provided as soon as the guidelines are published*
 - b. Vision Statement on an Efficient Approach to Knowledge Security and the Prevention of Unwanted Foreign Interference (VLIR, 2022):
<https://vlir.be/beleidsdomeinen/internationalisering/>
- 10. Guidelines on Information Security and Privacy:
 - a. DPO guidelines: <https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB-DPO>
 - b. CISO guidelines: <https://ivp.vub.be/en/>
- 11. Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Legal and Ethics Office.
https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD_PA/SitePages/Legal-%26-Ethics.aspx
- 12. Guidelines on Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence for Research Purposes:

https://vub.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/PUB_RD_PA/SitePages/AI-for-Research---Guidelines.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=EbVUOp

13. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1–88). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/NL/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016R0679&qid=1655969537121>
 14. Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Register of personal data processing. <https://vub.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/PUB-DPO/SitePages/Templates-GDPR-contracten.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=OgCGXf%20>
 15. Guidelines on Research Data Management: https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD_DM
 16. Policy Framework on Research Data Management: https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD_DM/SitePages/RDM-Policy.aspx
 17. VUB/EhB Valorisation Regulation: https://vub.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/PUB_TT_Intranet_FR/Codes/Valorisation?csf=1&web=1&e=Ut5LUZ
 18. Mind the GAP (Good Academic Practices) online training tool (VLIR, 2022): <https://canvas.vub.be/courses/20953>
 19. Guidelines on Publishing (Research Data Management): https://vub.sharepoint.com/sites/PUB_RD/SitePages/Publishing.aspx
 20. The Regulation for the Independent Academic Staff, Visiting Professors and Substitute Professors: https://vub.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/PUB_MO/SitePages/Reglementen.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=qBvQQe
 21. Einarsen, S., Aasland, M. S. & Skogstad, A. (2007). Destructive Leadership Behavior: A Definition and Conceptual Model. The Leadership Quarterly: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.03.002>
 22. Psychosocial help at VUB. <https://www.vub.be/en/about-vub/vub-university-future/well-being-priority-vub/our-well-being-services-vub/well-being-staff>
- List of sources used as inspiration during the drafting process
- Declaration on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression at KU Leuven: <https://www.kuleuven.be/english/about-kuleuven/academic-freedom>
 - Simpson, W. Thomas. (2018). Academic Freedom: <https://www.cambridgepapers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/27-2-Academic-Freedom.pdf>
 - Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (NWO, 2018):

https://www.nwo.nl/sites/nwo/files/documents/Netherlands%2BCode%2Bof%2BConduct%2Bfor%2BResearch%2BIntegrity_2018_UK.pdf