

# INTEGRITY CHARTER



**UHASSELT**

# FOREWORD

## A positive integrity culture for everyone

Social engagement, excellence, respect, integrity and a critical attitude: at Hasselt University, we believe these are important values. Our university therefore aims to do all it can to encourage a positive commitment to these values in all its employees. With the [integrity charter](#) and this brochure, we have taken an important step towards this.

Hasselt University is committed to establishing a positive integrity culture. The charter is part of a broader vision of integrity at our university. In this brochure, we want to make you aware of situations in which integrity may be an issue in your day-to-day job. Yet UHasselt goes one step further, because we also organise the necessary training on issues such as: How can you assess ethically sensitive situations in the workplace more accurately? And how can we respond appropriately to them? In addition, we are happy to offer support in addressing specific problems. Who can you contact with which integrity-related questions? We've included that information in this brochure too.

The integrity charter applies to all staff of Hasselt University: administrative and technical, non-statutory academic/assistant academic and independent academic staff. It forms part of the employment regulations. New staff members have signed the integrity charter since 2018, and from now on scholarship holders, guest staff, voluntary academic staff and FWO guest staff who are not covered by the employment regulations will also sign it, or are automatically covered by it.

Just like this brochure, the charter was drawn up by and for Hasselt University staff. Integrity in the workplace is a shared undertaking. Let's work on it together.



# INTEGRITY IN PRACTICE

## Recognise the pitfalls!

**Behaviour that crosses boundaries often starts very subtly. It happens in an unguarded moment, but can quickly lead to a slippery slope. This is why it's important to stay alert, recognise pitfalls and learn how to deal with them.**

What integrity questions could be an issue in your job? We'd like to illustrate this by sketching a number of very concrete situations, because having an eye for these challenges is the first step. Naturally, all the cases mentioned here are purely hypothetical. Any link with any real-life situation is purely coincidental.

### **HOW DO YOU TREAT YOUR COLLEAGUES WITH INTEGRITY?**

Shana, a staff member at the Education Office, will shortly be having a meeting with her head of department and the Vice Rector of Education. She has an innovative idea and would like to discuss it with them. Implementing the idea would involve one of her colleagues, whom she also invites to the meeting. Just before the meeting, Shana bumps into her colleague at the coffee machine. She tells her about her idea and her plans. They enter the meeting room together, and Shana's colleague speaks first. She talks about the innovative idea that she and Shana have come up with. Shana isn't happy about her colleague taking the credit.

## **WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR?**

Katleen is eating lunch in the restaurant of the University with two colleagues, Nadia and Sas. A female colleague passes by and Nadia and Sas make a sexist comment about the colleague's outfit. Katleen decides to ignore the comment.

## **WHAT IS SENSITIVE DATA?**

Professor Petra Van Esch comes home after a long day at work and gets into conversation with her neighbour. The neighbour says that her son, who is studying at UHasselt, has been doing very well. However, Professor Van Esch has her doubts about this. The next day she goes into her office and decides to look up his grades. One of Professor Jan Van Ham's PhD students saves all the data from her PhD project on her private laptop. Professor Van Ham would like to use the data, but has no access. Is this a breach of Hasselt University's research data management policy? And isn't it also referred to in the charter for supervisors and PhD students?

## **WHICH CANDIDATE SHOULD WE SELECT?**

Kathleen Thijssens is head of department and sits on the committee for selecting a new staff member. There are two broadly equal candidates in the running. Kathleen decides to select Ismail Yilmaz, because it's good for the university to recruit someone with a migration background.

## **WHEN IS SCIENTIFIC NEUTRALITY JEOPARDISED?**

'I'm asked by a journal to review an article. I quickly realise that it's an article that an ex-colleague of mine has submitted. He's rather sloppy, doesn't work hard and often takes credit for other people's achievements. His

article is also mediocre in quality. Should I ask some fundamental questions that could lead to the article being rejected, should I inform the editor that I think I know who the author is or should I suggest a few modifications?’  
‘My climate-related PhD research was funded by a large oil company. Recently it has come to light that the oil company gave misleading information about the climate research it commissioned, and only released the positive results. Now I want to publish, but the journals are rejecting my papers: because of the oil company’s financing they don’t regard them as credible.’

‘A brilliant master’s student approaches me to ask if he can write a thesis on a topic of his own choosing. He would like to investigate to what extent a specific mining company contributes to the development of a particular country and to what extent the company complies with international and African human rights treaties. However, the mining company is a major provider of research funding at our university. Its representatives regularly speak at prestigious Hasselt University events and, what’s more, we often collaborate with them at our university. I can foresee that the research won’t go down very well with the faculty board, and that I’ll gain a reputation as a troublemaking supervisor. What should I do?’

### **WHO IS THE AUTHOR AND WHO IS THE CO-AUTHOR?**

‘As a PhD student, I am working on a larger project run by my supervisor. I’m completely responsible for one work package for my PhD, but I’m also collaborating on the other work packages. Several publications have already resulted from the project, in which I am not systematically included as a co-author. Don’t I meet the requirements? Or is my supervisor in breach of the integrity rules?’





## FIRST AID FOR INTEGRITY ISSUES

### **Who can you contact about which questions?**

Are you facing an integrity issue? Do you have questions about a specific situation? Don't worry. The following Hasselt University colleagues will be happy to advise and assist you.

ILSE CRETSKENS – ERIC LANCKSWEEEDT – INGE LENS –  
BIE NIELANDT – PHILIP SWERTS - ILSE VAN DAMME

**Confidential advisors**

Are relations with your colleagues not going smoothly? Are you experiencing bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination or aggression? Or are you suffering physical or psychological harm as a result of the organisation of your work, or the content, conditions or circumstances of your employment? If so, get in touch with one of Hasselt University's seven confidential advisors. We will be happy to listen to your problems and look for a solution together.

**contact:**

[www.uhasselt.be/intra/staff/73751-Well-being/Internal-counselors.html](http://www.uhasselt.be/intra/staff/73751-Well-being/Internal-counselors.html)

## Contact point for unacceptable behaviour (UB)

All Flemish Universities have an internal policy to handle unacceptable behaviour (UB) and in 2018, a charter concerning the UB was signed. UB is defined broadly herein and is not limited to behaviour in of a sexual nature, but also includes bullying behaviour and behaviour in which cultural boundaries are breached. Besides easy access to the contact point for UB, a culture for respectful working relations is necessary. The focus here is on zero tolerance for discrimination and abuse of power and a positive attitude towards diversity and inclusion, a culture of equality and open communication where boundaries are indicated and also respected.

Have you experienced unacceptable behaviour (or do you have any questions about this subject), please contact the contact point for unacceptable behaviour. A report can be about UB of a student, a staff member or a campus visitor. Reports can include intimidation, affecting your personal integrity, verbal and/or physical aggression, discrimination, bullying, sexually undesirable behaviour, among other things. Send an email to [meldpunt@uhasselt.be](mailto:meldpunt@uhasselt.be). A confidential advisor will reach out to you. If you wish, you can also contact a confidential advisor of your choice directly.

### **contact:**

[meldpunt@uhasselt.be](mailto:meldpunt@uhasselt.be)

[www.uhasselt.be/nl/info-voor/studenten/begeleiding-en-ondersteuning-tijdens-je-studie/meldpunt-grensoverschrijdend-gedrag](http://www.uhasselt.be/nl/info-voor/studenten/begeleiding-en-ondersteuning-tijdens-je-studie/meldpunt-grensoverschrijdend-gedrag)



## Katrien Tips en Agna Dodion

### HR business partners

Do you have questions about integrity within HR areas such as training, well-being, evaluation and functioning, employment status and careers? We'll be happy to help you with all your integrity-related questions and challenges.

**contact:**

[katrien.tips@uhasselt.be](mailto:katrien.tips@uhasselt.be)  
[agna.dodion@uhasselt.be](mailto:agna.dodion@uhasselt.be)

# Stefanie Kerkhofs en Stephanie Ruysschaert

## Ombudsperson for PhD students

Are you a PhD student? Are there problems with your working relationship with your supervisor? Are you a supervisor and do you have questions related to the PhD process or the working relationship with your PhD student? Or have you encountered integrity issues in the course of your research? If so, get in touch. Together we'll try to get the PhD back on track.

### **contact:**

PhD-Ombuds@uhasselt.be





## Wendy Tanghe

**Health and safety adviser  
for psychosocial aspects**

Are you experiencing psychological and/or physical complaints as a result of your working conditions? Would you like to have the risks analysed, either formally or informally? If so, contact the health and safety adviser for psychosocial aspects. We devise preventive measures and receive requests for informal and formal psychosocial intervention.

**contact:**

[afspraakUHasselt@securex.be](mailto:afspraakUHasselt@securex.be)

## Noella Batens

**Occupational doctor**

Are you wondering whether the demands of your work are compatible with your capabilities? Do you have questions such as: Can I simply carry on working in the lab during my pregnancy? How can I avoid burnout? The Hasselt University occupational doctor monitors the health and well-being of our employees on a preventive basis.

**contact:**

[noella.batens@uhasselt.be](mailto:noella.batens@uhasselt.be)





## ETHICAL COMMITTEES AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

Do you need professional advice on the ethically correct approach to your research project? There are various ethical committees and safety committees at Hasselt University that you can contact for advice and support. Seven different committees focus on integrity and ethics at the university. There is also an umbrella organ, the Ethics and Integrity Steering Group in which the chairs of these ethics and integrity committees participate, together with representatives of the Research, Education and Human Resources directorates.



## Prof. Dr Marcel Ameloot

### **Steering Group Ethics and Integrity**

The Steering Group Ethics and Integrity is an overarching council, consisting of all chairmen of the Ethical Committees, as well as representatives from the directorate of Research, Education and Staff. The goal is to connect all ethical committees and exchange information about each other's work.

**chair:**

Prof. Dr Marcel Ameloot

**contact:**

[integriteit@uhasselt.be](mailto:integriteit@uhasselt.be)

# Prof. Dr Bieke Broux

## Steering Group Inclusion

UHasselt strives for diversity and inclusion among students, staff, alumni and partners. But also within research, education and the social impact we make. Together, we go for a diverse and inclusive UHasselt. The steering committee inclusion formulates the transversal policy on inclusion, aligns with the different domains to implement this policy, monitors progress, reports on it and adjusts.

### chair:

Prof. Dr Bieke Broux

### contact:

rectoraat@uhasselt.be





## Prof. Dr Geert Molenberghs

### **The Scientific Integrity Committee (CWI)**

Heb je vragen of problemen rond wetenschappelijke integriteit? Dan kan je bij de CWI terecht.

**chair:**

Prof. Dr Geert Molenberghs

**contact:**

[cwi@uhasselt.be](mailto:cwi@uhasselt.be)

[www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-19e-scientific-integrity](http://www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-19e-scientific-integrity)

# Prof. Dr Ivo Lambrichts

## The Committee for Medical Ethics (CME)

As a researcher, what protocols should you observe when conducting experiments on people and human tissue? The CME can advise you.

### chair:

Prof. Dr Ivo Lambrichts

### contact:

CME@uhasselt.be

[www.uhasselt.be/cme](http://www.uhasselt.be/cme)





## Prof. Dr Johan Ackaert

### **The Social and Societal Ethics Committee (SMEC)**

What ethical considerations should you take into account in research involving human participants? The SMEC can advise you. Please note: The SMEC is NOT concerned with practices in the health sciences or with medical or pharmacological procedures.

**chair:**

Prof. Dr Johan Ackaert

**contact:**

[smec@uhasselt.be](mailto:smec@uhasselt.be)

[www.uhasselt.be/smec](http://www.uhasselt.be/smec)

# Prof. Dr Virginie Bito

## **Ethical Committee on Animal Experimentation (ECD)**

Do you use animal testing in your research? If so, you must seek advice from the ECD. They evaluate planned tests, set criteria for ethical aspects and provide advice to users, test managers and employees.

### **chair:**

Prof. Dr Virginie Bito

### **contact:**

ethischecommissiedieren-  
proeven@uhasselt.be

[www.uhasselt.be/en/aparte-sites-uhasselt-en/ethical-committee-for-animal-experimentation-ecae](http://www.uhasselt.be/en/aparte-sites-uhasselt-en/ethical-committee-for-animal-experimentation-ecae)







Prof. Dr Karen  
Smeets

**Biosecurity Committee**

How do you organise research and teaching activities in which employees or students are exposed to biological substances, and in particular to genetically modified and/or pathogenic organisms and CGOs in the environment? The Biosecurity Committee advises on and coordinates the preparation and follow-up of biosecurity dossiers.

**chair:**

Prof. Dr Karen Smeets

**contact:**

karen.smeets@uhasselt.be



## ir. Bruno Janssen

### Counsel for Data Protection

How do we manage data protection and misuse or incorrect distribution of data within UHasselt? The term 'data' can be interpreted in the broadest possible sense of the word: both research data, and personal data, both hard copies and electronic media, both written data and images.... Issues and questions concerning this topic are approached from a legal angle (AVG/GDPR) and technical angle (IT-security....). From these analyses and concrete cases, general guidelines are formulated but also concrete answers to ad hoc questions are provided.

#### **moderator:**

ir. Bruno Janssen

#### **contact:**

[bruno.janssen@uhasselt.be](mailto:bruno.janssen@uhasselt.be)



## IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES

### **THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

Are there serious indications of intentional or serious misconduct, such as academic fraud or violence? In such cases, the rector can ask the chairs of the disciplinary committee to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

chairs:

Prof. Dr Ken Haenen (Vice Rector for Research & Internationalisation)

Prof. Dr Wanda Guedens (Vice Rector for Education)



# INTEGRITY IN HANDLING DATA AND RESULTS

## From dual use and GDPR to Nagoya

As a university, we collect and generate a lot of data and results: about students, employees, research and so on. We have to handle this data with due caution. Every protocol has its own name, but what exactly do we mean when we talk about dual use, misuse, GDPR and Nagoya? An overview:

### DUAL USE ITEMS AND MISUSE

Dual use items are products – including knowledge, results, software and technology - that can have both a civilian and a military use. This includes all products that can be used for non-explosive purposes, but which can also contribute in some way to the manufacture of nuclear weapons or explosive devices. By misuse, we mean research that could be used for unethical purposes.

Do you have any questions or uncertainties about dual use or misuse? Then contact us at [dualuse@uhasselt.be](mailto:dualuse@uhasselt.be)  
[www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-03d-dual-use-and-misuse](http://www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-03d-dual-use-and-misuse)

## GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) provides for the protection of personal data. Every organisation must be able to demonstrate what personal data it collects, how it uses this data and how it protects it. There are a lot of associated rights and obligations for the data subject, the processor and the data controller.

Do you come into contact with personal data? Would you like more information about how you can handle it with integrity? Then take a look at the website: [www.uhasselt.be/intra/GDPR-UHasselt](http://www.uhasselt.be/intra/GDPR-UHasselt)

### Contact:

GDPR in Research: [Stephanie.ruysschaert@uhasselt.be](mailto:Stephanie.ruysschaert@uhasselt.be) and [Debbie.melissas@uhasselt.be](mailto:Debbie.melissas@uhasselt.be)

GDPR in general: [privacy@uhasselt.be](mailto:privacy@uhasselt.be)

## NAGOYA

Do you collect seeds, plants and other living organisms from other countries for your research? Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) legislation and the Nagoya Protocol may apply to your research. The protocol monitors the control of access to genetic resources and the fair distribution of the benefits that result from their use.

Do you have any doubts or questions about Nagoya and ABS?

Contact our employees through [nagoya@uhasselt.be](mailto:nagoya@uhasselt.be)

[www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-a33-nagoya-protocol](http://www.uhasselt.be/en/research/responsible-research#anch-a33-nagoya-protocol)

# FOR ALL HASSELT UNIVERSITY STAFF

## Here you can read the integrity charter

### I. RESPECT

Hasselt University staff demonstrate respect for ethnic, sexual and socio-cultural diversity and for Hasselt University values. They are committed to a collegial, courteous and respectful attitude with internal and external contacts. When performing their activities at Hasselt University, they ensure one another's safety and commit to a sustainable and economical use of infrastructure and resources. Staff speak considerately when dealing with others.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY

In contacts or collaboration with others, Hasselt University staff are careful not to act in a self-interested way and avoid conflicts of interest. In the case of potential conflicting interests, the necessary transparency is to be displayed. They take timely measures to discuss and/or report problems, when relevant, to the appropriate authorities.

Hasselt University staff adopt an open mind and broad interest in order to make the most of opportunities and constructively use feedback. They are dedicated to improving their own qualities and competences, take criticism seriously, and are prepared to question their own thinking and behaviour.

### III. CONFIDENTIALITY

In accordance with the Hasselt University policy on information security, Hasselt University staff commit to, at all times, safeguarding the confidential nature of the data to which they have access in the context of education, research or provision of services, as well as during administrative duties. Hasselt University staff also respect, at all times, the privacy of people and institutions they come into contact with, either directly or indirectly. Moreover, they take the necessary measures to preserve the confidentiality of data when using social media. Hasselt University staff manage data related to their research securely and sustainably, taking into account the particularities of the professional field, the nature of the research and compliance with the applicable standards. If additional or different confidentiality agreements are established for a specific context (such as, for example, but not limited to, a research project), those agreements take precedence over the general arrangement contained in this Integrity Charter.

#### **IV. HUMAN RIGHTS**

Hasselt University is connected to the world and assumes its responsibility in society. Respect for human rights is inherently linked to our services, education and research. Hasselt University Staff are actively involved in protecting and promoting human rights. They therefore avoid collaborating with partners involved in serious human rights violations and do not themselves engage in activities involving human rights violations.

#### **V. ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY**

In its pursuit of academic excellence, Hasselt University asks its employees to endorse the applicable quality standards for education, research and services.

Hasselt University staff refrain from any form of fraud or improper scientific conduct in their academic activities, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, forgery and fabrication. Hasselt University staff respect the internationally recognized standards of academic integrity and genuinely recognize their own contribution and that of others to joint academic efforts.

Staff aim for reliable and reproducible research, which results in research results that are accessible to the relevant scientific research community. If relevant, permission is obtained from an assessment committee, such as an ethics committee or a biosafety committee, before the start of the study. Academic staff members monitor the



ethically correct conduct of the research activities and the ethically correct behavior of their students, and here too, if relevant, turn to an assessment committee. Employees take the responsibility to withdraw or if possible correct publications if they contain known serious errors.

## **VI. SOCIAL COMMITMENT**

As a civic university, Hasselt University expects its staff to undertake all reasonable efforts to - together with well-considered partners - tackle societal challenges and thus make society smarter, more agile and better. As such, Hasselt University is a place where the region finds the world and the world finds the region.

## **VII. AFFILIATION WITH HASSELT UNIVERSITY**

Staff who, directly or indirectly, represent Hasselt University refrain from making statements or engaging in behavior that is incompatible with the values promoted in the vision and mission of Hasselt University. They also respect applicable ethical and legal standards. In publications and other forms of communication about their work at Hasselt University, they refer to their affiliation with Hasselt University. When engaging in activities that fall outside the scope of their academic activities at Hasselt University, staff communicate exclusively in their own name.

## **VIII. VALORISATION OF FINDINGS (RESEARCH RESULTS)**

Employees ensure that making their research results public, for example in scientific publications, does not jeopardise Hasselt University's possibilities with regard to valorisation. In accordance with the Higher Education Codex, the property rights to inventions of salaried staff belong to Hasselt University. Hasselt University also acquires the property rights to inventions made by voluntary researchers who conduct research at the university insofar as this transfer of rights is confirmed in a written agreement with these persons. Employees report such inventions to the Tech Transfer Office to enable their valorisation. If additional or deviating agreements are established for a specific context (such as, for example, but not limited to, a research project), those agreements take precedence over the general arrangement contained in this Integrity Charter.

Questions about the integrity charter? Contact [integrity@uhasselt.be](mailto:integrity@uhasselt.be) or consult the website.

## EVEN MORE INTEGRITY

**Do you have any further questions about ethics and integrity?**

Go to [www.uhasselt.be/en/about-hasselt-university/policies/integrity-policy#anch-Of2-integrity-charter](http://www.uhasselt.be/en/about-hasselt-university/policies/integrity-policy#anch-Of2-integrity-charter)

Or contact us by email: [integriteit@uhasselt.be](mailto:integriteit@uhasselt.be)



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