

Code of Conduct of Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUAs)

Nature and scope

The ambition to make an impact - to shape a better world - is representative of the generation coming to us to attend a study programme today and tomorrow. It reflects a sense of civic duty, responsibility, optimism, initiative, and the desire to do more than just perform a job. It is therefore our mission to empower young professionals on their journey to shape a better world. Our partners also ask us to deliver young professionals with the knowledge, mindset, and skills to do that.

At BUAs, we pursue this mission by combining domain and cross-domain learning and research. In learning communities, our students, industry partners, lecturers and researchers work together on practical challenges for businesses and society - combining education, applied research and impact¹.

BUAs' mission implies that we set high standards for ourselves and each other. Not only in terms of the necessary quality and quantity of output, but also in terms of desired behaviour, which is why there is this Code of Conduct.

At BUAs, everyone's contribution to our diverse and intercultural community is respected and valued. The Code of Conduct gives us guidance and clear guidelines on how we treat each other; with integrity and respect.

This Code of Conduct applies to all BUAs staff, students and visitors, based on our shared community values. The Code of Conduct is not without obligation, but specified and made binding in regulations adopted by the competent bodies of BUAs. These rules are therefore an elaboration of the Code of Conduct.

What can you read in this document?

- > In section 1 you will find the **shared community values** that form the basis for this Code of Conduct;
- > In section 2 we address the three pillars for **integrity in behaviour and conduct** that **characterise** BUAs;
- > In section 3 it is described how BUAs **supports ethical behaviour and conduct**;
- > In section 4 you will read how BUAs **promotes integrity in behaviour and conduct**. This section also includes an overview of the regulations adopted by BUAs' competent bodies.

¹ [BUAs+ Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#)

1 Core values

Our behaviour within the BUAs community is guided by several community values. These form the basis of this Code of Conduct. The values are (in no particular order):

- > Care for each other
- > Care for the environment
- > Commitment
- > Connection
- > Courage to be different
- > Curiosity
- > Sense of pride

2 Behaving and acting with integrity

Behaving and acting with integrity starts with personal integrity. The general view, which BUAs adopts, is that integrity of a person refers to it being undivided and free from internal conflicts. By personal integrity, BUAs thus means that a person's principles and commitments do not contradict each other, that one acts in accordance with them, and that one does so for reasons arising from one's principles and commitments (Archer, 2017).

This principle underpins the inclusion that BUAs strives for within its community, as well as its further interpretation of integrity on the following three pillars:

- > Integrity in education, research and innovation;
- > Social integrity;
- > Integrity as an organisation.

Below you can read how the criteria for behaving and acting with integrity as to these three aspects are specified by BUAs.

2.1 Integrity in education, research, and innovation

This pillar aims to support the ethical dimension and acting with integrity in education (teaching) and research.

The education curriculum is designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they need to function well in an international working environment later, and have the impact that BUAs aims for in its strategy. At BUAs, small-scale and student-centred education, research and innovation are central, with a focus on and contributions to sustainability, safety, well-being, and respect for individuals.

BUAs staff and students observe the standards for research integrity and act according to the principles set out in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity signed by BUAs. These principles are honesty, diligence, transparency, independence, and responsibility. Employees are obliged to perform their duties in accordance with the objectives set out in the articles of association and employment contract. All members of the BUAs community ensure that education (teaching), research and innovation, and administrative and decision-making processes are verifiable. They should avoid conflicts of interest, or apparent conflicts of interest.

The staff, students, and guests of BUAs act in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable to them, as laid down, for example in the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act, Management and Administrative Regulations, the Authorisation Regulations, the Regulations concerning Staff and Student Participation in Decision-Making, the Students' Charter, the

Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER), and for that matter with all internal regulations adopted by the Executive Board. If regulations are unclear, action will be taken in accordance with the nature and scope of the regulations (see section 4 of this Code of Conduct).

2.2 Social integrity

BUas aims to achieve a diverse, inclusive, healthy and safe working and study environment. The pillar social integrity describes the behaviour to achieve these aspects of behaving with integrity.

Within the BUas community, both its members and guests accept and respect this Code of Conduct, respecting the personal integrity of others. Staff, students, and guests treat each other respectfully regardless of their personal, identity-conferring principles and commitments or otherwise personal characteristics.

This also explicitly applies to the recruitment, selection and admission or hiring of both students and staff.

Staff and students strive to realise the objectives of BUas through cooperation, using as principles: openness, honesty, and transparency. Members of the BUas community strive to inspire each other and are willing to give and receive constructive feedback. They reflect on each other's and their own behaviour. They also contribute to a culture of integrity, respect, commitment, courage, and trust, and thus inclusiveness.

All this is also reflected in style and tone of mutual communication, in personal conversations and through digital systems. Misunderstandings are discussed openly and at the earliest possible stage, as a result of which escalation can be prevented. Students and staff have their own responsibility regarding their safety abroad. For instance, they should comply with local legislation and prevailing codes of conduct in the country of destination.

2.3 Organisational integrity

This pillar supports integrity in interaction between staff, students, the BUas organisation, and third parties, for example in dealing with resources, ancillary activities, other educational organisations, businesses, and authorities.

The BUas organisation aims to provide students, employees and guests with a safe and healthy learning and working environment and, based on its social responsibility and aspirations and in line with its statutory duty, actively contributes to this.

BUas ensures adequate rules for the way in which alcohol and drugs are handled within BUas, with special attention to the handling of these substances within its own training company Sibelicious.

Every user of BUas' (digital) facilities is careful and respectful in the use, management and maintenance of resources, data, and information.

BUas furnishes and supervises its buildings and campus grounds in such a way that users are protected as much as possible from accidents and physical injury, and personal property is protected as much as possible. BUas provides buildings and grounds complying with building safety and fire safety regulations in accordance with the statutory framework of regulations of the municipality and fire service.

Within its possibilities and institutional responsibilities, BUas makes every effort to prevent employees and students in the Netherlands and abroad from ending up in unsafe situations. To this end, the necessary protocols have been developed.

BUas is responsible for a sound occupational health and safety (*ARBO*) policy that complies with the set statutory regulations.

The students and staff of BUas are expected to observe the recommendations, instructions, rules and regulations for optimal implementation of the health & safety legislation and internal safety and environmental regulations. BUas ensures an adequate emergency response policy with associated emergency plans, protocols and organisation according to the legal framework of *ARBO*.

BUas safely equips workplaces and lecture rooms in accordance with the latest *ARBO* and NEN standards. Necessary risk inventories and maintenance plans are developed in a timely manner.

3 BUas supports acting and behaving with integrity

BUas has a clear policy for pursuing and achieving desired behaviour and dealing with undesired behaviour. By undesired behaviour BUas means in a broad and most comprehensive sense the disrespect of another's personal integrity, both physical and mental. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, aggression, violence, and bullying of any kind or nature.

BUas safeguards the physical and mental safety of staff, students and guests to the best of its ability by means of a Code of Conduct, internal rules, and complaints regulations, to which further reference is made in this Code of Conduct.

BUas ensures that all relevant rules are known within the organisation. It also stimulates awareness by providing adequate information on risks, crisis management and (safety) protocols to be followed. Through its regulations and protocols, BUas facilitates the possibility of reporting ethical issues and enforces that these can be discussed without reserve and fear of repercussions.

All information on safety, related regulations and protocols is publicly available. BUas safeguards the privacy of its staff and students according to the GDPR and has laid these down in privacy regulations for students, staff, and guests.

BUas provides an adequate automation infrastructure and ensures information security for its staff and students and translates this into BUas Regulations on the Use of ICT Facilities in compliance with the GDPR.

In the occupational health action plan, BUas lays down how it ensures a physically and mentally safe working environment for its staff, in which work pressure, sickness absence, sustainable employability, mobility, professionalisation, vitality, and risk inventory are important points of attention.

The Executive Board ensures a professional crisis management organisation and procedures and records them in the Duty of Care Framework. Protocols for a crisis situation must be well known to and immediately accessible to those who must work with them. In the event of an (impending) crisis, BUas will make every effort that can reasonably be expected of it to handle the (impending) crisis adequately, up to and including aftercare.

Members of the BUAs community are entitled to autonomy, privacy, and professional support, challenge and appropriate remuneration, so that they can develop personally and are stimulated in their personal growth. BUAs is responsible for designing its organisation in such a way that these rights are guaranteed.

When filling vacancies, BUAs ensures equal treatment and encourages underrepresented groups joining the BUAs community.

For students, BUAs ensures clear, complete and correct information about education and facilities, and the campus and educational programmes must be available and accessible to all members of the BUAs community.

BUAs protects the data used and developed in accordance with the principles of Open Access (Open Science) and FAIR: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable.

4 BUAs promotes acting and behaving with integrity

4.1 Resources

BUAs has an exemplary function. From this awareness, the concept of integrity is cultivated and embedded in the curriculum and research programme, in the professionalisation of its employees and in the system of rewarding and assessing employees.

BUAs regularly reviews and maintains the ethical and integrity standards applied.

BUAs has a comprehensive integrity infrastructure, with the following facilities:

- > Confidential counsellors;
- > Student Support Officers;
- > Confidential counsellor on Research Integrity;
- > Internal and external committees, such as the Disputes Resolution Committee, Examinations Appeals Board, Research Ethics Review Board (RERB), Ethical Expert Group, Dispute Resolution Committee on Undesired Behaviour;
- > Central facility for complaints, objections, and appeals.

For an explanation of the available facilities and bodies, the relevant internal procedures and internal and external laws and regulations is referred to BUAs' integrity infrastructure.

4.2 External laws and regulations and Internal regulations

This Code of Conduct is in line with national laws and regulations, such as the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act, and the General Equal Treatment Act. The Code of Conduct is also the basis for internal regulations adopted by the Executive Board with the approval of the BUAs participation council and, where necessary, with the approval of the Supervisory Board. These are the Management and Administrative Regulations of BUAs, staff and student participation, legal status and legal protection of staff and students. These regulations are listed and briefly explained below.

4.2.1 Code of Good Governance

BUAs has signed the [Sector Code Good Governance HBO](#) and declared it applicable internally. This Code contains the guidelines for organisation, management and supervision for the university of applied sciences. The code is not of a mandatory nature. The guidelines must be complied with and completed according to the "apply and explain" principles. This means that the rules are not

mandatory, but that the main lines provide direction and that deviations from the direction must be explained and justified.

4.2.2 Complaints Regulations pertaining to Undesired Behaviour

These regulations apply to undesired behaviour by employees, students and guests concerning:

- > Sexual harassment;
- > Discriminatory behaviour;
- > Aggression;
- > Violence;
- > Bullying;
- > Abuse of power.

Any complaints must be submitted to the Executive Board or to the Dispute Resolution Undesired Behaviour Committee (from June 2023, [reports can be submitted externally](#), the BUAs regulation are being adjusted to this).

In principle, the Executive Board appoints a confidential counsellor and an external confidential counsellor for each study programme and location. Complainants themselves choose the confidential counsellor they wish to involve. For a summary of the confidential counsellor's tasks and profile in the implementation of the Complaints Regulations pertaining to Undesired Behaviour, please visit the [website](#).

4.2.3 Whistleblowers' Regulations

These Regulations apply in the event of a reasonable suspicion of abuse concerning:

- > An (impending) criminal offence;
- > An (imminent) gross violation of regulations;
- > An (imminent) danger to public health, safety and/or the environment;
- > A (threat of) deliberately misinforming public bodies;
- > An (imminent) waste of public money;
- > (A threat of) deliberately withholding, destroying or manipulating information about these facts.

The qualification for these circumstances and behaviours is "abuse". Abuse can be reported to the Executive Board or Supervisory Board. For more information, please visit [the website](#).

4.2.4 Research Ethics Review Board (RERB) and Committee for Research Integrity

The BUAs Research Ethics Review Board (RERB) takes care of the ethical assessment of research proposals and is there to give advice about research ethics, which apply to all forms of research by staff and students (more information on the Portal). The BUAs Research Ethics Review Board (RERB) is embedded in the regular Project Planning and Control (PPC) workflow. To contact the RERB mail to ethicsreviewboard@buas.nl.

BUAs has a collaboration with the southern universities of applied sciences intended to lodge formal complaints about misconduct during or after the execution of BUAs research projects, as defined in section 5.2 of the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018). For the implementation of this regulation, the southern universities of applied sciences have a joint Committee for Research Integrity.

The independent External Confidential Research Ethics Counsellor is available for consultation about research integrity issues / problems / violations. The counsellor can support the process towards lodging a formal complaint with the Committee for Research Integrity.

4.2.5 Ethical Expert Group

The Ethical Expert Group is an internal advisory group for BUAs institutions. The group provides solicited and unsolicited advice with arguments from both sides.

4.2.6 Students' Charter

Rights and obligations for students. The [Students' Charter can be found](#) on the website.

4.2.7 Code of Conduct International Student

Rules for interaction between BUAs and International Students. [Code of conduct International Student](#) in Higher Education can be found on the website.

4.2.8 Internal Rules

Practical rules regarding behaviour of staff, students and guests. Dutch version can be found [here](#).

4.2.9 Complaints Regulations and Dispute Resolution Committee

Information in Dutch can be found [here](#).

4.2.10 Rules of Procedure of the Examination Appeals Board

Information can be found on [the website](#).

4.2.11 Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER)

The rights and obligations of the student are listed per course in the Teaching and Examination Regulations.

4.2.12 Privacy Regulations Processing of Student Personal Data

Information can be found [on our website](#).

4.2.13 Privacy Regulations Processing of Employee Personal Data

Information can be found [on our website](#).

4.2.14 Regulation regarding Use of ICT Facilities

Information can be found on the [internal portal](#) (only accessible for BUAs community).

This Code of Conduct was adopted by the Executive Board on 13 September 2023, after approval of the BUAs participation council on 12 September 2023.