

Preamble Academic Integrity Complaints Regulations for Universities of the Arts (1 June 2021)

The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Within the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH), the board decided that the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (NGWI, Oct 2018) would be implemented at all universities of applied sciences. This code of conduct was drawn up by the Committee for the Revision of the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Integrity, at the request of the boards of the KNAW, NWO, NFU, TO2 federation, VSNU and VH¹.

This code replaces the 'Code of Conduct Applied Research for Higher Professional Education' (VH, 2010) and the 'Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice' (VSNU, 2004) for university research.

The new code of conduct formulates five widely supported principles that form the basis of practicing integrity in research: honesty, scrupulousness, transparency, independence and responsibility. These principles are further specified in more concrete standards for good research practices, which must be complied with by researchers and other parties involved in the research. They are formulated for each phase of the research process: design, conduct, reporting results, assessment and peer review, and communication.

Collective Academic Integrity Committee in art education

One essential condition for integrity in research is attention to a working environment in which good research practices are both promoted and safeguarded. By implementing the code of conduct, the universities commit themselves to a number of duties of care. One of those is to regulate a committee or official for handling complaints. If someone suspects that one or more standards are not being complied with, an executive board must ensure that this is investigated with integrity, honesty and expertise. A complaint about academic integrity can, after all, have a big impact on both the complainant and the researcher against whom the complaint is lodged. Also in the interests of the image of the university in question and that of art education in general, it is important to be scrupulous.

The executive boards of the universities of the arts stated below have decided to address this duty of care collectively and set up a collective Academic Integrity Committee for art education. We think that this collaboration will lead to a shared research culture and responsibility, and will ensure continuity. It will also enable good and broad representation of expertise in the area of practice-based research in the arts. This is even more important when that research leads to a complaint about the violation of academic integrity.

¹ The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU), Associated Applied Research Institutes (TO2 federation), the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences (VH).

The following *Academic Integrity Complaints Regulations* serve as a collective basis. The complaints procedure is based on the NGWI, also using the *Complaints Procedure Model* (Oct 2019) drawn up by the VH and the *National Model for Complaints Regulations concerning Academic Integrity* by the VSNU. A draft version of the procedure, drawn up by HKU, has been discussed with all the affiliated universities of the arts and subsequently revised.

A culture of academic integrity

Forming an Academic Integrity Committee –popularly known as ‘the complaints committee’ – is the last step in a long process. The aim is to prevent complaints, to safeguard an open, safe research culture and to create an automatic awareness of academic integrity, through training and supervision, for example. The code of conduct provides a methodological and ethical framework of standards that is widely supported and is taught, consulted and applied. Other duties of care stated in the code of conduct are supportive of such a culture. For instance, the university is requested to facilitate ethical testing and advice, to ensure good data management and to appoint one or more easily accessible confidential counsellors for academic integrity.

The universities of the arts stated below have each decided to appoint one or more of their own confidential counsellors for academic integrity. This means that the confidential counsellor is embedded in the university’s own environment and is at low-threshold proximity to the students, lecturers and researchers. Articles relating to the confidential counsellor for academic integrity are therefore not included in these regulations, contrary to the VH and VSNU models.

Agreed on 1 June 2021 by the Executive Boards of the 7 mono-sectoral universities of the arts:

Amsterdam University of the Arts

ArtEZ University of the Arts

Codarts Rotterdam

Design Academy Eindhoven

Gerrit Rietveld Academie

University of the Arts The Hague

HKU University of the Arts Utrecht