

Brunel University London 2016/7 Annual statement from University Research Ethics Committee

The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) made 16 investigations into research misconduct in 2016/7 (2 staff members; 14 students). Of these, 15 were upheld (1 staff member; 14 students). The student cases involved 13 taught students and 1 PGR student. All investigations undertaken in academic year 16/17 were resolved informally; none involved research funded by a Research Council.

The University Research Ethics Committee made its annual report to our governing body (Council) in June 2017 (CO/3534; minute 3434).

Council noted that matters relating to research ethics at the University continue to be well managed.

The report noted that the following actions are planned for 2017/8 to support consistently high standards of research ethics in the University:

- Completion of University-wide research ethics audit;
- Ongoing review of guidance and training documentation;
- Review of the Brunel Research Ethics Online application system;
- Review of the UREC Terms of Reference;
- Policy development in relation to security sensitive research and storage of relevant data;
- Review of Research Misconduct Procedure to incorporate RCUK updates.

Research Misconduct Policy is part of the Brunel University Research Integrity Code. This code is available on our website here <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/research/Research-Integrity>.

The University defines research misconduct thus:

Research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, fiscal wrong-doing, plagiarism or deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of research, deliberate and dangerous or negligent deviations from accepted practice in conducting research, or conducting research with human participants without first obtaining research ethics approval. It includes failure to follow an agreed protocol if this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other vertebrates or the environment, and facilitating misconduct in research by collusion in, or concealment of, such actions by others. Any plan or conspiracy or attempt to do any of these things is also considered to be research misconduct. This also includes failure to follow rules and regulations including those of a third party with a legitimate interest in the research of the University.

The senior officer responsible for dealing with cases of suspected misconduct is Mr Jim Benson, Secretary to Council and University Secretary. He can be contacted at res-ethics@brunel.ac.uk.