

London Business School Ethics Policy

Purpose

The School's vision is to have a profound impact on the way the world does business and the way business impacts the world. It aims to achieve this vision through the delivery of degree and executive education programmes and the production and dissemination of high-quality research.

This vision requires a commitment to ethical standards in both research and teaching. London Business School expects all those engaged in research to maintain the highest ethical standards and integrity.

The following is written for the immediate benefit of the School's faculty, staff, students, research fellows, research assistants and all those who are in a visiting capacity at the School. This policy applies to all Subject Areas. In the case of collaborative research with external institutions or non-London Business School researchers, this policy will apply to the extent that it involves a contribution from a researcher working under the School's remit. This policy will not apply in the case of research conducted on a consultancy basis, with the exception of any consultancy activity that has been approved by London Business School. On the rare occasion where the School has entered into a competitive tendering process to deliver an agreed programme of research, this policy will apply, in addition to any agreed arrangements with external parties. This policy is freely available to potential research funding agencies in the interests of transparency.

London Business School attaches considerable importance to the practice of high ethical standards in research undertaken, whether the research is supported directly by the School or by external sources. The School is publicly accountable for the research undertaken under its auspices and all researchers have a responsibility to maintain the reputation of the School.

The London Business School Research Ethics Policy therefore aims to guide thinking on research ethics issues, sets out the process for ethical review of research, provides, and defines the framework for ethics at the school by:

Outlining the general ethical principles that London Business School expects researchers to follow.

Providing a definition of research misconduct that will be used to determine whether research has failed to meet the School's ethical standards.

Providing definitions of accountability and responsibility of the School and researchers under this policy and outlining the obligations for the development and maintenance of research ethics and practice.

Our commitment to The Concordat to Support Research Integrity:

In July 2012, Universities UK, published the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. The Concordat is the UK's national policy statement on research integrity, and was devised, and endorsed, by a broad group of Signatories – funders of research, government departments, and other key stakeholders – with the provision of expert advice from the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO).

The Concordat was revised in October 2019, and institutions in receipt of funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and a number of other funding bodies, have a requirement to comply with the key principles of the Concordat.

The School is wholly committed to the ambitions of the Concordat, and in supporting research integrity and rigour, our ethical framework, complies with the associated key principles.

Acting in accordance with the five specific Concordat principles, the School endorses:

Commitment 1: Maintaining the highest standards of research integrity

Commitment 2: Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.

Commitment 3: Embedding a culture of research integrity, by supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers.

Commitment 4: Using transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct, should they arise.

Commitment 5: Working together, to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly, and openly.

In September 2009, the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) designed and published a Code of Practice for Research to encourage good research conduct within UK universities and help prevent misconduct. This policy continues to draw on some of the principles set out in the UKRIO Code of Practice and complements existing guidance on research conduct published by UKRI, and the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Research Ethics Framework.

The Prevent Duty is a new law which London Business School and all other UK higher education institutions are required to comply with.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a duty on institutions to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism - the Prevent Duty. In ensuring the protection of the School's faculty, staff, and students, who are engaged in research into potentially sensitive topics and any associated material this Code also acknowledges the Prevent Duty and as such the research ethics policies and process take into consideration any risks associated with both accessing sensitive material online and also as part of any proposed research.

2. Key definitions

Research ethics:

'Research ethics' refers to the moral principles guiding research, from its inception through to completion and publication of results and beyond.

Research:

'Research' is defined as any form of disciplined inquiry that aims to contribute to a body of knowledge or theory.

Research misconduct:

Performance or conduct by a London Business School researcher that exhibits one or more of the characteristics set out under Section 4 of this policy and under Section 2 of the Misconduct Policy.

Research participants:

'Human participants' (or subjects) who are the focus of the research.

Researcher:

All members of London Business School conducting research at any level, including faculty, research fellows, research assistants, visitors, staff, and students.

3. Principles

At London Business School, we strive to have a profound impact on the way the world does business and the way business impacts the world. In research terms, this translates into delivering world-leading rigorous research which is underpinned by academic excellence. Maintaining integrity and high standards is of central importance to the School's commitment to achieve these goals.

Researchers should adhere to the following principles in all aspects of their work, which set out the responsibilities and values relevant to the conduct of good research practice:

3.1 Excellence

Researchers should strive for excellence when conducting research and aim to produce and disseminate work of the highest quality.

3.2 Honesty and Integrity

Researchers should demonstrate honesty, integrity and professionalism, in relation to their research and that of others.

3.3 Co-operation

While recognising the need for researchers to protect their own research interests in the process of planning their research and obtaining results, the School encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and the public. This principle is subject to exceptions in respect of Data Protection and Intellectual Property.

3.4 Conflicts of Interest

Researchers must be honest about conflict of interest issues whether real, potential, or perceived, when reporting results. They should declare any potential or actual conflicts relating to research and where necessary take steps to resolve them.

3.5 Participation

First, and foremost, in relation to participation in research, the School's Data Protection Policy, and the legal obligations associated under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR 2018) and Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR should be adhered to.

The School's Data Protection Policy is enclosed.

In addition, the following principles, outlined in the UKRIO Code of Practice, continues to support best practice and integrity in the protection of participants:

Participants must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

The confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion.

Harm to research participants must be avoided.

Participants are not obliged to participate in research even after they have consented to it. They must be given the right to withdraw, including retrospectively, without any penalty and are not obliged to provide a reason for withdrawing. They are entitled to ask for their own data to be destroyed.

3.6 Accountability

Researchers and, in particular, those named as principal investigators or grant-holders, must ensure that the research they are undertaking is consistent with the terms and conditions defined by the sponsoring organisation (or covered by agreements between the School and the sponsor). This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that the research programme carried out adheres to that defined in the original proposal to the sponsor, unless amendments have been agreed in

writing; that finance is used solely for the purpose for which it was intended; that reports are accurate and timely; and that conditions relating to publication and to ownership of intellectual property are followed.

3.7 Accessibility

Researchers have an obligation to keep records and data in such a way as to facilitate the verification of the research by other researchers or future research.

3.8 Confidentiality

Data Protection and Privacy

As outlined under 3.5 above, researchers should refer to the School's Data Protection Policy, which highlights our legal obligations in respect to data protection and privacy laws. *Intellectual Property*

Confidentiality may also be necessary for a limited period in the case of contract research, or other research which is under consideration for patent (or design) protection, or for other commercial-in-confidence reasons. Where confidentiality agreements limit publication and discussion, limitations and restrictions must be explicitly stated in the agreement. All researchers should ensure that they are familiar with, and comply at all times with the confidentiality obligations in research contracts.

3.9 Health and Safety

Researchers should in all aspects of their work ensure the rights, safety and wellbeing of those associated with research activities that are undertaken at the School both as researchers and subjects of research.

3.10 Training and Skills

The School recognises the importance of training and mentoring in the development of those undertaking research activities. Researchers should ensure that they have the necessary training and resources to carry out research and report and resolve any unmet needs identified.

Student researchers, post-docs, research assistants, and research fellows should be supervised by a member of faculty and the supervisor should ensure that the student observes London Business School's Ethical Guidelines and Data Protection Policy.

4. Research misconduct

The School defines academic misconduct or academic fraud in the research context as committing an act whereby the researcher knowingly and deliberately seeks to corrupt, misrepresent or falsify the outcomes of academic and/or professional study, scholarship and/or research. Academic misconduct or fraud, as they relate to research, include but are not limited to:

- Fabrication;
- Falsification;
- Misrepresentation of data and/or interests and or involvement;

- Plagiarism; and
- Failures to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for:
avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to:
 - humans;
 - animals used in research; and
 - the environment; and
- the proper handling of privileged or private information on individuals collected during the research.
- Failure to meet legal ethical and professional obligations
- Failure to obtain appropriate informed consent and misuse of personal data
- Improper conduct in peer review of research proposals, results or manuscripts submitted for publication – including breach of confidentiality
- Improper dealing with any allegations of misconduct

Any conduct by a researcher that falls under one or more of these categories will be defined as research misconduct if it is conduct based on deliberate deception and dishonesty. Incidents of unintentional error are not defined as research misconduct and any researcher who detects errors or mistakes in the course of their research is expected to make all reasonable efforts to rectify them.

Allegations of research misconduct will be dealt with under the London Business School's *Procedures for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research* and where relevant under the appropriate School's disciplinary procedures.

The procedures relating to discipline of students for misconduct in the prosecution of research are set out in the Student Disciplinary Regulations. Any allegation or complaint of academic misconduct or fraud in research will be investigated and dealt with under those Regulations.

5. Accountability and Responsibility of researchers and London Business School

The responsibility for implementing the key principles of ethically guided research lies with both London Business School and researchers. This partnership is crucial to the development of a culture of good research practices.

This section defines the obligations of both parties under this Policy.

Researchers

The first responsibility for ethical conduct rests with the researcher who must:

Assess and consider ethical implications of projects and studies and conduct research in accordance with ethical principles outlined in [Section 3](#).

Avoid research misconduct as defined in [Section 4](#)

Report instances of behaviour, which they reasonably believe, represent research misconduct by following the *Procedures for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research*.

Seek re-approval by the School's Research Ethics Committee if the research protocol or other aspects of the research changes.

London Business School

The School has general responsibility to ensure compliance with the policy and procedures for ethical review and good research practice and must:

Develop and periodically review procedures for:

- Ethical review and approval of all research projects and studies.
- Reporting complaints relating to research projects and studies.
- Investigating and determining allegations of research misconduct.
- Handling personal data relating to participants.
- Retention and archiving of research data and results.
- Implementing and communicating the School Ethics Policy and associated procedures appropriately to all those conducting research at the School.

In addition, the School also has a responsibility to provide the appropriate training and mentoring for researchers and for those involved in investigating research misconduct and all colleagues who are involved in the stages of the ethical review process.

6 Policy Review

This policy was approved by Management Board on 21 November 2011. It will be reviewed and updated periodically. It was reviewed by Management Board in May 2016, to make reference to the School's obligations in regard to the Prevent duty. Since this time it has been reviewed periodically, at meetings of the Research Ethics Committee.

Latest policy revision: June 2021