

Annual Report of the VU-VUmc Academic Integrity Committee

2019 - 2020

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Changes to the AIC's annual cycle..... | 2 |
| Code of conduct and complaints procedure..... | 2 |
| Decision making | 2 |
| Composition of the Academic Integrity Committee | 2 |
| Number of cases..... | 2 |
| Nature of the allegations | 2 |
| Procedures | 2 |
| Recommendations of the Academic Integrity Committee | 3 |
| Decisions of the Board and LOWI procedures | 3 |
| Anonymous complaints..... | 3 |
| Publication of recommendations..... | 3 |
| Publication of the AIC's annual reports | 3 |

Introduction

This is the annual report of the VU-VUmc Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) for the period July 2019 to December 2020. The AIC advises the Executive Board (EB) of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Governing Board (GB) of Amsterdam UMC, VUmc location, regarding matters of academic integrity.

Changes to the AIC's annual cycle

In order to facilitate the comparison of developments involving academic integrity at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and VUmc, the AIC's annual cycle will be altered. Since its inception in 2014, the AIC's annual cycle has run from July until June of the following year. For the purposes of the annual report of the confidential counsellors for academic integrity at VU-VUmc, on the other hand, the annual cycle runs from January to December of the same year. A change will also facilitate comparison with developments involving academic integrity at other institutions. For these reasons, this particular annual report covers a longer period: from July 2019 to December 2020. From 2021 onwards, the Academic Integrity Committee will report on the period between January and December of the same year.

Code of conduct and complaints procedure

Between July 2019 and December 2020, the AIC assessed complaints submitted regarding violations of academic integrity based on the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Integrity 2018 (*Nederlandse Gedragscode Wetenschappelijke Integriteit* - NGWI). For academic activity that did not fall under the NGWI, the AIC applied the codes of conduct that were applicable at that time. As a result, the AIC has assessed a number of activities based on the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice (*Nederlandse Gedragscode Wetenschapsbeoefening* - NGWb) dating from 2004, 2012 and 2014.

When handling complaints, the AIC worked in accordance with the 2016 VU-VUmc Academic Integrity Complaints Procedure (Complaints Procedure). A revision of that Complaints Procedure is planned in 2021. In 2020, the relevant preparatory work was carried out by the official secretary and chairperson of the AIC.

Decision making

The AIC issues its recommendations to the Executive Board. If a complaint involves a researcher from VUmc, the Governing Board is involved in the decision-making process.

Composition of the Academic Integrity Committee

The composition of the AIC for the period July 2019 - December 2020 was as follows:

Prof. Jan Struiksmā, chairperson
Prof. Jan van Mill, member
Prof. Guy Widdershoven, member
Prof J. Schilder, member
Prof. Martin den Heijer, member (from 1 September 2020)
Prof. Heleen Oudemans - van Straaten, member (until 17 December 2020)
Official secretary as of April 2020: Nathalie Trifkovic, LL.M (previously: Fieke Smitskamp)
Deputy secretary as of July 2020: Jos  Kiss, MSc (previously: Nathalie Trifkovic)

Number of cases

Two new cases were received by the AIC in the period July 2019 - December 2020. One of these cases was also concluded within that same period. In addition, two pending cases, which had been received during the period July 2018 - June 2019, were concluded.

Nature of the allegations

The allegations related to authorship, plagiarism and academic negligence. The complaints varied in their scope and duration.

Procedures

The procedural deadlines in the Complaints Procedure were met in all cases. Nevertheless, two of the three cases required a longer period of time. This was partly due to the large amount of documentation submitted in relation to these two cases, the need to consult external experts and the resulting opportunities granted for both sides of the argument to be presented.

Recommendations of the Academic Integrity Committee

In two of the three cases, the AIC advised the Executive Board to declare the complaint, or parts thereof, well-founded.

Decisions of the Board and LOWI procedures

In its decision regarding the case concluded in the period July 2019 – December 2020, the Executive Board adopted the AIC's recommendation. No petition was made to the National Board for Research Integrity (*Landelijk Orgaan Wetenschappelijke Integriteit* - LOWI) for advice to the board.

With regard to the two pending cases from July 2018 – June 2019 that were concluded, the Executive Board adopted the recommendations of the AIC. In one case, one party subsequently submitted a petition to the LOWI. This petition was considered by the LOWI and this resulted in an advisory report. The advice was similar to that of the AIC and included additional suggestions. The Executive Board decided to adopt the AIC's recommendation and to include the suggestions provided by the LOWI.

Anonymous complaints

No anonymous complaints were received by the AIC in the period July 2019 - December 2020.

Publication of recommendations

The anonymized reports of the AIC, including the statement of the Board's final decision, can be found on the [Association of Universities in the Netherlands](#) website six weeks after the completion of a case, with the exception of cases that have been dealt with under an abbreviated procedure. The LOWI publishes its anonymized recommendations, including the relevant Executive Board decisions, on its own [website](#).

Publication of the AIC's annual reports

With effect from 2021, the AIC's anonymized annual reports will be published in an adapted format on the [Academic Integrity page](#) on the VU website.