

# Report from UiB Workshop I on 13.04.18

## 1. Summary

The University of Bergen (UiB) has started an affiliation process to the EU "Charter and Code" (C&C) according to the "strengthened" HRS4R implementation method. The affiliation process at UiB is supervised by the C&C Steering Committee, and the gap analysis is conducted in the form of a survey, and workshops for three working groups.

Workshop I dealt with the C&C topics "Professional and ethical aspects" and "Training and development". The working groups consisted of people at academic management level and researchers at various career levels from UiB's faculties. The topics were illustrated with introductions and followed up by discussions in the Working Group based on C&C principles and UiB's practices in the field.

Under the topic "Professional and ethical aspects", the discussions can be summarised in the following main areas; 1) Research ethics and researcher integrity, 2) Researchers' professional responsibilities and 3) Requirements to researchers' dissemination and exploitation of results. Similarly, the topic of "Training and development" can be summarised as; 1) Career development inside and outside academia, 2) Academic supervision and career guidance at UiB, and 3) Qualities of a good supervisor. Positive and negative variations were considered with a view to any proposed remedial measures in UiB's Action Plan.

The main conclusions of the discussions in Workshop I are that research ethics and researcher integrity at UiB fully comply with the C&C principles in the field. Researcher education at UiB has been directed towards a career in academia, while a system for researcher careers outside academia has generally not been developed. It is therefore necessary to establish a system for career guidance for researcher positions outside academia in administration, business and industry etc.

Proposals for measures in UiB's Action Plan will be considered together in the further administrative procedures, and will be based on positive and negative variations arising from the survey and discussions in all the workshops.

## 2. Background and purpose of Workshop I

UiB signed a declaration of intent on the implementation of C&C, on 05.03.09, and has been for many years a Euraxcess Contact Point. The university management at UiB decided in the spring of 2016 to start the process of affiliation to C&C according to the "strengthened" HRS4R implementation method. The University Board has been briefed on several occasions regarding the development of the relationship with C&C and the affiliation process.

The affiliation process at UiB is monitored by the C&C Steering Committee. The University Director heads the Steering Committee, and its members are academic/administrative leaders and researchers at various career levels. The Steering Committee has decided that UiB's gap analysis should be carried out in the form of a survey, and workshops for three working groups.

The Steering Committee has given the working group for Workshop I the following mandate:

"Working Group 1" shall use the workshop as an analysis tool to conduct a gap analysis with the aim of implementing UiB's Charter and Code in accordance with the "strengthened" HRS4R. The gap analysis must compare UiB's actual practices with the principles of "Academic and ethical aspects"

and "Training and development" as stated in the Charter and Code. It should state the extent to which UiB already complies with each of these principles, and document the status with reference to existing strategy and action plans etc. It should also state whether national or institutional regulations endorse or oppose implementation of any of the principles. The gap analysis must describe existing variations in such a way that it is possible to see the correlation between the variation and proposed remedial measures in the Action Plan to fulfil the principles."

### 3. Composition of the Working Group and agenda for Workshop I

The C&C Steering Committee has given general recommendations that the working groups should be made up of people at an academic management level and researchers at different career levels from UiB's faculties.

Workshop I was conducted on 13.04.18 and the following people participated in the Working Group:

Academic management level:

HR Director Sonja Dyrkorn, HF Head of Department Jan Heiret, PSYK Head of Department Åsa Hammar and SV Head of Department Ståle Knudsen

Researchers at various career levels:

R1: MED Research Fellow Anna Bjerkreim, R1: MAT PhD Mildrid Kyte and R4: MED Professor Valeriya Lyssenko

Agenda for the meeting:

- 09:00-09:15: Welcome and some practical information about the organisation of the workshop
- 09:15-09:30: Brief overview of C&C principles for the topic "Professional and ethical aspects" and "Training and development"
- 09:30-10:45: "Training and development": Introductory speaker Professor Roland Jonsson
- 10:45-12:00: "Professional and ethical aspects" - Part 1: Introductory speakers from the Division of Research Administration
- 12:00-13:00: Lunch
- 13:00-14:15: "Professional and ethical aspects" - Part 2: Introductory speaker Professor Matthias Kaiser
- 14:15-15:00: Summary of Workshop I and the way forward

The meeting was led by HR Director Sonja Dyrkorn, and conducted in accordance with the agenda and ended at 14.30.

The protocol from Workshop I is published on UiB's C&C website:

[www.uib.no/charterandcode](http://www.uib.no/charterandcode)

## 4. Introductory speakers and presentations in Workshop I

Senior Advisor Svein Åge Eilertsen from the University Director's office started by presenting a brief overview of the C&C principles related to both of the topics "Professional and ethical aspects" and "Training and development".

Professor Roland Jonsson from The Faculty of Medicine followed with a more detailed account of "Training and development", the development of PhD programmes and UiB's practices related to the education of medical professionals.

The "Professional and ethical aspects" topic was presented through two introductions. The first introduction was held by UiB's Division of Research Administration (FA) represented by Senior Advisors Espen Dahle, Vibeke Kyrkjebø Irgan, Magnus Holtermann and Susan Johnsen, who presented information on the C&C principles and UiB's practice in FA's working areas. In the second introduction, Professor Matthias Kaiser of UiB's Centre for the Philosophy of Science (SVT) described basic issues related to research freedom and ethics, and related them to the C&C principles and UiB's practice in the field.

After each presentation, the topic was discussed by the Working Group based on the C&C principles and UiB's practice in the field. Positive and negative variations were considered with a view to any proposed remedial measures.

The PowerPoint presentations that were used by the speakers are available on UiB's C&C website:

[www.uib.no/charterandcode](http://www.uib.no/charterandcode)

## 5. Survey conducted among UiB's researchers

The survey was prepared by an academic group comprising Professor Roger Strand (SVT), postdoctoral fellow Erik Knudsen, Department of Information Science and Media Studies, and Advisor Jill A. Opsahl (HR). The survey was conducted in February 2018 among all employees in scientific positions at UiB. Overall response rate was 34%, with 734 responses given. The questions in the survey are linked to a sample of 17 of the C&C principles. In the final report from the survey, the questions are grouped between questions related to Evaluation Committees, Pages 9-21, general questions, Pages 22-29, employment situation and career development, Pages 30-39 and guidance Pages 40-45.

The report functions both as part of UiB's gap analysis and as background material for the workshops. It was therefore made available to the workshop as background material, along with a form that showed the correlation between the relevant C&C principles, national/institutional regulation and the survey. In relation to "Professional and ethical aspects", Page 23 of the report shows the opinion of UiB's researchers in terms of their professional responsibilities. Similarly, on Pages 24-26 the report show their attitude towards dissemination and exploitation of research results. The opinions of the parties regarding career guidance in UiB are presented on Pages 39-45.

Final report on the survey of C&C at UiB is published on UiB's C&C website:

[www.uib.no/charterandcode](http://www.uib.no/charterandcode)

## 6. Discussions during Workshop I on C&C's principles regarding "Professional and ethical aspects" and UiB's practices in the field.

C&C's principles on "Professional and ethical aspects" are based on research freedom, and that researchers should adhere to recognised ethical practices and principles. This is followed up with various requirements to researchers' professional responsibility, dissemination and exploitation of results.

### 6.1 Research ethics and researcher integrity

There is a long tradition of the relationship between research and ethics. The development of research fields and techniques has resulted in a corresponding development of perceptions as to what research ethics are, and the reasons for violations of the requirements to researchers' integrity. There are three types of explanatory models for such misconduct 1) The theory of "rotten apples", 2) lack of training and knowledge and 3) systemic factors in knowledge production.

UiB pays a great deal of attention to research ethics and the reasons for breach of norms.

Ethics is a mandatory part of UiB's PhD education. At UiB, SVT has special responsibility for training in scientific theory and ethics in all research training programmes at UiB. The field is comprehensively regulated in both national and UiB's regulations, which are published on special websites related to ethics. A central Research Ethics Committee has been established to follow up cases of research misconduct.

The training in ethics at the start of a career must create increased awareness of the temptation to take "shortcuts" in research in the face of pressure and expectations to achieving results. Important to instruct supervisors about ethics. The relationship between a research fellow and a supervisor must be clarified, so that there is no symbiotic relationship that makes it difficult for a research fellow to report ethical issues. More experienced scientists may also experience uncertainty if they are in danger of making mistakes in their research.

When attention is directed towards the faculty-specific ethical challenges, differences can be seen in the needs of the faculties and the types and consequences of misconduct. The differences indicate that consideration could be given to establishing research ethics committees in the faculties. On the other hand, interdisciplinary projects provide meeting places across branches of science and strengthen the development of common ethical attitudes.

In some cases it may be difficult for evaluation committees to identify intended plagiarism. At UiB any possible case of misconduct is sent to the faculty for assessment. It is therefore important that the committees are familiar with the procedures for assessment of plagiarism. The question could be raised as to whether UiB should have an institutional body that could undertake this assessment.

The University of Bergen (UiB), the University College of Western Norway (HVL) and the National Research Ethics Committees (FEK), have started to work together on a project called "Research Integrity in Norway (RINO)". The project is intended to survey the prevalence of dishonest and debatable research practices at Norwegian universities, university colleges and research institutes. Attitudes towards and knowledge of these issues will also be examined. Through the project it is hoped to obtain further insight into how different institutions promote integrity in research, and which systemic issues may help strengthen the research ethical culture of an institution.

## 6.2 Researcher's Professional Responsibility

Researchers' professional responsibilities cover various aspects. Scientists have a professional responsibility for socially relevant research and the protection of research results. They are committed to a professional attitude in research environments and in research projects. Furthermore, contractual and legal obligations must be adhered to.

Scientists are primarily obliged to safeguard academic research freedom. No freedom is absolute, and scientists need to be aware of the borderline between legitimate and illegitimate governance. Socially relevant research and strategic objectives must be addressed through good research management, and through the proper use of public research funds and externally funded projects. It is important that scientists are informed, and that administrative routines and personnel are in place for follow-up, particularly in terms of economy and research administration. The University of Bergen has good procedures for research administration, but has a potential for improvement in ongoing accounting follow-up.

Good research practices are achieved through secure working routines. UiB's HSE Division is responsible for Health, Safety and the Environment. The IT Department manages software solutions and data security. Each researcher should also be familiar with the rules and procedures, but new requirements and directives create the need for continuous training and information. Therefore, there is a delicate balance between what must be considered as sufficient knowledge for scientists, and what are technical issues etc. that can best be solved by good communication channels between the scientists and the administrative support staff.

Researchers' contractual and legal obligations can be divided into two main types; HR Contracts and IPR Agreements. Increased internationalisation of research entails the need for development of international employment contracts and regulations for international working conditions. Researchers are familiar with existing IPR rules, but the regulations are complicated and legal assistance must be available if needed.

## 6.3 Requirements for the researchers' dissemination and exploitation of results

It is a requirement to all researchers that the results of their research are disseminated and exploited. There must therefore be systems for the transfer of research results to other research environments and for commercialisation. At UiB, there appears to be varying knowledge on the part of researchers regarding the exploitation and commercialisation of research results, depending on how relevant economic exploitation is for the different disciplines. These variations are confirmed in UiB's survey. Nevertheless, it is important that there is a communication plan related to all research so that the dissemination requirement is followed up.

Researchers should also ensure that the research work is made known to the public in order to contribute to a better understanding of science in society. UiB is good at media and dissemination, and has unique opportunities through its participation in "Media City Bergen", a global knowledge hub and industrial park. Dissemination in connection with user participation in research is becoming an increasingly important perspective in all subjects. Knowledge and a support apparatus for this should therefore be developed.

## 7. Discussions during Workshop I on C&C's principles regarding "Training and development" and UiB's practices in the field.

The C&C principles under the topic "Training and development" imply a shared responsibility for researchers and employers. The responsibility of researchers is expressed by researchers at all stages

in their careers having a responsibility to update and strengthen their competence. Senior researchers have a particular responsibility for supervision and research management. Employers' responsibilities consist in ensuring that all researchers are given the opportunity for professional and career development, regardless of position and stage in their research career. Employers should also designate supervisors and establish supervision schemes for researchers.

### 7.1 Career development inside and outside academia

Traditionally, researcher education at UiB has been directed towards a career in academia, whereas there is no particular system for researcher careers outside academia.

The academic career route starts with PhD positions, continues with postdoctoral fellows and is aimed at top positions in academia. There is considerable drop out along the academic career path, and many of those who start on an academic career end up in positions outside academia. Consideration to the many who do not achieve an academic career is reason enough for UiB to provide career guidance for positions outside academia as part of research training. The extended social responsibility for educating scientists for administration, business and industry etc. entails that UiB must adapt researcher training and career guidance to cover the various disciplines outside academia.

Project collaboration can be actively used as an instrument for career development both inside and outside academia. When research project agreements are concluded, an arrangement can be introduced between the collaborating parties that includes exchange and mobility for the scientists involved, aimed at establishing contact with networks for further career development.

For career guidance for positions outside academia, it is necessary to establish central units to achieve good competence and overview of career opportunities. The use of career centres at foreign institutions can act as a model for such establishment. Writing and building a CV is an appropriate tool when the continuing career path leaves academia.

### 7.2 Academic supervision and career guidance at UiB

Academic supervision and career guidance promotes competence building for all scientists on their career path, but it is especially important to have a good setup for young researchers and for those who are in recruitment and qualification positions. The institutions compete on recruiting the best research talents, so the whole of the recruitment process is of great importance - from the announcement, goal-oriented job description to selection based on professional level and motivation. Guidance works well for the most ambitious candidates.

UiB's researcher training takes place through a well-regulated PhD programme, with academic supervision and follow-up that satisfies the C&C principles. The use and follow up of the postdoctoral positions is less regulated, and it is necessary to have awareness and methods of supervision to ensure problem solving en route. Researcher positions in externally funded projects are partly regulated in the project agreements, but otherwise the content of these positions is not specified in more detail in the regulations.

For all research groups, the "Staff Interviews" scheme is meant to be a key tool for guidance and development. However, UiB's surveys show that these intentions are not followed up equally well for all position groups in the faculties, both in terms of the frequency of staff interviews and their contents.

Professional guidance in research groups is used at UiB as a good instrument for competence building. In practice, such groups can be suitable for assisting scientists who are struggling with professional, career and personal problems during the project period.

At UiB there are various courses that provide scientists with training in career development. Employees at UiB in postdoctoral- and assistant professor positions, for example, can apply for participation in "Momentum", a career development programme for younger researchers. The programme is designed to enable scientists to deal with challenges such as balancing of research activities, an increasing number of projects, interaction between research and teaching, cooperation with administrative support, links to business and industry, interdisciplinary focus, internationalisation and much more.

However, it is a long-term development effort to establish a general system of researcher career guidance, which also includes guidance for researchers at later stages in their career path.

### 7.3 Characteristics of a good supervisor

A good supervisor must have knowledge of the research field, have a genuine interest in supervision, take time to reflect on the supervision task, take active contact with, and give feedback to the person to be supervised.

UiB has rules and a good system for supervision by both the main and assistant supervisors. Important to follow up with the training of supervisors, so that the institutional responsibility for supervision is fulfilled. Each researcher has a responsibility for competence and career development, and this responsibility must also be stressed and followed up during supervision.

The organisation and contents of supervision must be adapted to the different subject areas. This adaptation must take place at the faculty level, but also in association with those who have academic and personnel responsibilities for the individual researcher. It is especially important that supervision starts early for PhD candidates.