

Introduction

The DBA programme was created in 2012-13 upon the observation by a group of French University professors whose former MBA students, occupying senior positions across the world, were looking to advance their practice through doctoral studies, but could not find a programme that was adapted to their busy schedules or aspirations. Business Science Institute and its DBA programme were thus created to satisfy this need. The mission of the institution reflects the genesis of the initial idea, offering a DBA that is accessible to a diverse range of experienced international senior practitioners, and with a focus on enabling doctoral candidates to generate impact as future manager-researchers. This rationale is underpinned by 3 values: Ethics & Responsibility, Sustainability, and Diversity.

The programme focuses on providing students with the tools and resources required to achieve their research objectives in their fields of practice that as senior managers inevitably involve ERS considerations, and to advance this practice for wider impact.

Ethics and Responsibility: The position of Business Science Institute concerning plagiarism is made clear to applicants and subsequently to candidates, who are required to sign an ethical commitment upon enrolment. All members of faculty are required to sign the same ethical commitment, and are forbidden to undertake any form of consulting activity in a student's business organisation during their enrolment on the DBA programme.

A director of academic integrity is a member of the management team. In October 2016, the Institution was awarded an anti-plagiarism certificate by SGS. This was an important initiative, firstly because managers come from a business environment where borrowing ideas from competitors is not seen as misconduct (but often proof of effectiveness), and secondly because Business Science Institute wanted its candidates to be able to create true knowledge. Finally, since May 2021, the Institution has engaged in a process to adopt a formal Code of Conduct related to academic integrity. This work, which will lead to certification by IRAFPA (Institute of Research and Action on Fraud and Plagiarism in Academia) in 2023, involves a group of senior faculty members along with the Director of Academic Integrity and the Head of QA and Accreditations.

As illustrated in the Programme ILOs and graduate attributes, DBA graduates leave the Institution with the ability to apply high-level knowledge and skills that will enhance their roles as responsible and ethical leaders in the workplace (transferring and sharing knowledge; challenging current concepts, thinking or approaches; managing others in a community of practice; life-long learning; etc.).

Finally, ethics and responsibility are fundamental to our philosophy concerning the action research¹ undertaken by and with DBA candidates. The traditional 'top-down' approach to research involves the academic building theories, which they then teach to practitioners. The belief at the Institution is that a 'bottom-up' approach is preferable (because ethical and responsible) through the co-construction of knowledge with practitioners who become the source of this knowledge based on their actual managerial practice. **The Code of Ethics is therefore fundamental in supporting our candidates' transition from manager to manager-researcher, by providing a shared ethical framework to guide them along this journey.**

The Code is the result of the first steps in the work undertaken towards IRAFPA certification, with input from programme and faculty management, faculty and alumni, and international benchmarking.

¹ Laval F., Dudézert A. (2019), « Et si j'étais personnellement responsable des suicides à France Télécom ? » : une éthique de la recherche « en action », in Desmazes J., Helfer J-P., Lebraty J-F., Orsoni J. (eds.), *Entrepreneur à l'université : Mélanges en l'honneur de Michel Kalika*, Paris : éditions EMS



ERS Faculty Workshop, Spring Seminar, Paris March 2022

CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics is a set of 7 core principles that underpin academic life at Business Science Institute. All members of the Business Science Institute community, including doctoral candidates, faculty, support staff and alumni are expected to behave in line with these principles to the highest standards of ethical integrity.

These 7 ethical principles are consistent with our values² and are applied in practice by the members of our community in the running and everyday operations of Business Science Institute.

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|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Responsibility and Accountability | 5. Collegiality |
| 2. Integrity, Honesty and Transparency | 6. Sustainability |
| 3. Intellectual Freedom | 7. Making a Positive Impact |
| 4. Respect, Equality and Diversity | |

1. **Responsibility and Accountability**

As a doctoral community made up of senior academics and business leaders, the principle of individual responsibility and accountability is embedded at every level of the Institution, led by example via the management and governance structures (Strategic Committee, Academic Steering Committee).

² **Business Science Institute values:** Ethics and Responsibility; Sustainability; Diversity.

As part of this responsibility, Business Science Institute members are expected to raise concerns relating to ethical matters as they arise so that they can be discussed appropriately. In particular, those involved in **taking decisions on behalf of the Institution** should be prepared to be transparent, to take responsibility and to be accountable for those decisions.

2. Integrity, Honesty and Transparency

To uphold our commitment to integrity, members of the Business Science Community should:

- Be honest and truthful.
- Act in accordance with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements, including the guidelines provided by the international accreditation bodies of which we are members.
- Declare interests and appropriately manage possible conflicts of interest.
- Not use their employment for personal gain.
- Be transparent and consistent in their decision making.
- Maintain their independence and the Institution's values in engaging with outside parties.
- Conduct financial activities in line with the principles set out in the Code of Ethics.

As a doctoral institution, **research** is central to the scientific activities of our faculty, candidates and alumni, especially those graduates who continue as Associate Researchers³. Given the international academic focus of our Institution and our developing collaborations with leading Anglo-Saxon DBA programmes, whilst the work towards the development of a Code of Research Conduct continues as part of the IRAFPA certification, the following guidelines for research integrity have been integrated into the Business Science Institute Code of Ethics based on **Universities UK's Concordat to Support Research Integrity**⁴, which involves:

- Upholding the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research.
- Ensuring that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.
- 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.
- Using transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.
- Working together to strengthen the integrity of research and to reviewing progress regularly and openly⁵.

Reporting misconduct or breaches: Allegations of scientific misconduct or breaches of research integrity may be made via email to our [third-party confidential liaison](#) for whistle blowers or any other person wishing to raise concerns. To report an allegation of misconduct please contact:

Professor Pierre-Louis Dubois
Advisor for Academic Integrity (Business Science Institute)
Email: duboispierrrel@wanadoo.fr

³ **Associate Researchers:** <https://en.business-science-institute.com/associate-researchers/>

⁴ <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-08/Updated%20FINAL-the-concordat-to-support-research-integrity.pdf>

⁵ Since 2021, Business Science Institute has been a signatory of [DORA](#) (Declaration on Research Assessment).

3. Intellectual Freedom

Business Science Institute protects its members' freedom of expression and promotes debate in line with its values, especially that of **diversity**. As a diverse and open community of manager-researchers and academics, we uphold the freedom to research and convey research findings, especially those that question and test received wisdom. As an independent network of senior business leaders and academics, we will encourage our community to put forward new ideas including controversial, critical or unpopular opinions provided they are within the law. We will ensure that our members exercise these freedoms responsibly in a way that does not cause any reputational risks for themselves, their employer or for Business Science Institute.

4. Respect, Equality and Diversity

Business Science Institute is proud of its **diverse community**, underpinned by an Institutional mission statement centred upon offering a programme that is **accessible** to the widest possible range of practitioners. We value this **diversity** and aim to create an environment where all people are treated with the same dignity and respect and where staff, faculty, students and alumni can reach their full potential. No person will be treated less favourably on account of their personal characteristics or background. Staff and students are able to raise issues and complaints within this environment without fear of retribution. All complaints are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

In view of the depth of our community's diversity, a **Student Charter** has been written to reflect how Business Science Institute's mission, vision and values are reflected in the doctoral education they are partners in.

Finally, when conducting activities with external organisations and the international community, Business Science Institute members should ensure they act in accordance with our Code of Ethics and respect relevant laws and conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁶.

5. Collegiality

As an 'extended academic network' of professors and management-researchers representing diverse nationalities and institutional backgrounds, our commitment to collegiality is a fundamental principle upon which the resilience and legitimacy of Business Science Institute is based. We therefore continue to promote across the Institution's activities an inclusive and participatory working environment in which we encourage, support and behave appropriately to one another, ensuring fairness and a safe atmosphere of **trust** and **mutual respect**.

6. Sustainability

While our predominantly online and distributed structure enables Business Science Institute to be a low carbon footprint organisation, we will continue to minimise any negative impact we have on the natural and built environment by effectively managing our financial, (physical),

⁶ See: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

human and intellectual resources. We will also aim to support efficient and effective work, study and research practices.

As a signatory of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education since 2019⁷, the Institution has a clear understanding of its role in addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as part of the PRME agenda. This is reflected in our support for the further development of faculty and manager-researchers' ability to generate positive and sustainable impact within their community of practice.

- **Values:** The values of global social responsibility are underpinned by a commitment to our own values of Ethics and Responsibility, Diversity and Sustainability.
- **Education:** As outlined in our 'Participant Development and Impact Strategy', rather than simply embedding sustainability in our teaching and learning experiences, Business Science Institute's wider purpose is to deliver a transformative doctoral-level education for managers. We offer experienced and expert practitioners the environment, relationships and academic resources to help them further develop their leadership skills for transformative impact and **sustainable** value creation.
- **Research:** We aim to contribute to the debate on global sustainability through a focus on bottom-up action research, whereby the supervisor and manager-researcher develop mutually transformative learning benefits. Rather than seeking 'more applied research around the SDGs that can create solutions to help businesses be more effective and sustainable' as recommended by PRME, our role is to provide an open and flexible supervisory framework that naturally encourages managers with associated research questions to apply to our DBA programme in the first instance.
- **Collaboration and partnerships:** The structure and academic culture of Business Science Institute has been founded on collaboration, trust and building tangible connections with practitioners from business corporations and other academic institutions to generate sustainable value and meet the challenges of social and environmental responsibilities.
- **Engagement, Leadership and Dialogue:** By creating a diverse and open academic forum for business and academic leaders from across the globe, Business Science Institute facilitates interdisciplinary and international dialogue that supports global social responsibility.
- **Investment in Resources:** Make sustainability a key part of our investment decisions.

For details of our Sustainability Policy, see the publicly available UNPRME Report (2020).

7. Making a Positive Impact

Each member of our community is expected to:

- Be aware that Business Science Institute's mission is to *'make it possible for a diverse range of experienced managers from across the globe to access a doctoral degree programme taught and supervised by outstanding faculty for **lasting personal and professional development and impact**'*.
- Support the Institution's core aim of enabling manager-researchers and faculty to make a **transformative contribution** to broader educational, organisational and societal objectives, from local through to international levels.

⁷ See: <https://www.unprme.org/search?country=Luxembourg>

- Be aware of their place as a member of a doctoral community operating at the frontiers of a multi-national business and academic environment.
- Be aware of the potential impact of activities and individual behaviours on **the diverse communities** in which and with whom Business Science Institute operates, taking care to act ethically, sensitively and responsibly at all times.

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Business Science Institute's academic community is a wide and diverse one, represented by manager-researchers, staff and faculty from over 50 countries and a variety of organisational cultures. The encounter between academia and business in a multi-cultural professional doctorate programme is therefore a complex one to manage. It generates unique challenges largely due to the different perspectives each category of the community may bring towards what constitutes ethics and ethical decision making. As a consequence, it is impossible to devise a single set of rules to resolve every ethical dilemma that members of the Business Science Institute community may face. The principles in the Ethics Code should therefore guide the exercise of judgement in all cases.

Three simple steps should be followed to identify and resolve the ethical implications of individual decisions and actions:

1. Consider whether what you plan to do is compatible with the principles in the **Code of Ethics**. Further guidance will become available as and when new policies are developed, in particular as part of the work undertaken by Business Science Institute to achieve **IRAFPA**⁸ certification.
2. Ask yourself how you would explain your actions if you would have to justify them to close friends and family, colleagues, students and alumni, or if they were made public in mainstream or social media. What would be the impact on your reputation, or that of Business Science Institute? What could go wrong as a result of your decision? How would you feel about asking someone else to do what you are proposing to do?
3. Seek advice from an appropriate person to ensure that you have thought of all issues from a different perspective. For support staff, this might include a colleague or the Scientific Advisor. For faculty, this might include a colleague or their Academic Track/Site Manager in the first instance. Academic Track/Site Managers might refer to the Scientific Advisor or the Chair of the Academic Steering Committee. Finally, students and alumni are encouraged to contact their (former) supervisor in the first instance. Cases of particular difficulty where principles may conflict, will be brought to the Business Science Institute Director of Academic Integrity, who will consider the case with the support of an *ad hoc* Ethics Committee.

Where possible, we recommend you keep a record of your decision making and the rationale behind it. You are also advised to consider and record any conflicts of interest.

For further information on matters of ethics and more specifically research integrity, please contact the Business Science Institute President and Scientific Advisor (Professor Michel Kalika): scientific@business-science-institute.com.

⁸ IRAFPA: <https://irafpa.org/en/>