

STATEMENT OF MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY

Following a report from a senior member of academic staff, Maynooth University has fully investigated an issue relating to the circumstances that led to the withdrawal of two papers which were published in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. These papers were co-authored by a then-PhD student, Aisha Qasim Butt, along with two colleagues and a senior staff member (who was the principal investigator). During the detailed investigation, the student admitted to the falsification and misrepresentation of some research data included in her PhD thesis and in the journal publications.

Maynooth University takes an extremely serious view of issues of this nature and has decided to revoke the PhD degree awarded to Aisha Qasim Butt. This is necessary as the PhD thesis of Aisha Qasim Butt is no longer sufficient to support the award of PhD.

The investigation was conducted according to the University's Research Integrity Policy 2014 and in accordance with the "National Policy Statement on ensuring research integrity in Ireland". It was conducted by a four-person panel, three of whom were external to the University. The investigating panel had relevant international scientific experience and research management as well as legal expertise. It found that the senior staff member who initially reported the matter, Dr Sinéad Miggin, and the two other researchers, Dr Suaad Ahmed and Dr Ashwini Maratha, were in no way complicit with the actions of Ms. Butt and thus have been fully exonerated of any wrongdoing. The University would like to thank them for their co-operation in the investigation and their professional forbearance during this very difficult time.

The University has reported the outcome of the investigation to Science Foundation Ireland and other relevant external stakeholders.

The integrity of the research record is of the highest importance to Maynooth University. The University's research integrity policies reflect international best practice, with the aim of doing everything possible to prevent such situations from occurring and dealing appropriately with any that do arise. Having conducted a thorough investigation and acted on its findings, the University considers the matter concluded.

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