

Title: Staff Research Misconduct Policy
Document Type: Policy
Location: Academic Handbook Section 2T
Version: 1.1
Publication date: July 2015
Author: Academic Services
Approved by: Research and Innovation Committee
Last updated: July 2015

2T: Staff Research Misconduct Policy

Introduction

1. The University is responsible for ensuring that the research it supports is carried out legally, in the public interest and in accordance with best practice (Academic Handbook section 1C : Research & Innovation Strategy).
2. The University expects that staff and students will at all times observe the highest standards of integrity in relation to research which is supported by the University and/or conducted on its premises.
3. This section sets out the University's policy on making, managing and investigating allegations of research misconduct against staff engaged in research in the University or any individual who is not a member of the University but who may be conducting research on the University premises.
4. The policy focuses upon misconduct in the context of research activity and includes knowledge exchange activities often defined as enterprise.
5. Allegations of research misconduct by students undertaking the postgraduate research degree are considered separately under the University's Academic Misconduct in Postgraduate Research Degrees procedure and the Ethics Policy.
6. Allegations of research misconduct by undergraduate or postgraduate students undertaking research as part of a University taught programme are considered separately under the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure and the Ethics Policy.
7. All employees of the University and individuals permitted to work in the University have the responsibility to report any cases of suspected research misconduct. All individuals undertaking research at the University are obliged to comply with these procedures.
8. It should be noted that this policy is concerned with investigative processes rather than disciplinary procedures. Where disciplinary procedures are indicated by the outcome of the investigation other University policies or procedures will be invoked for example the University Staff Disciplinary Procedure and the Ethics Policy. The precise nature of these procedures will be determined by the nature of the misconduct.

Principles

9. The University will take seriously all allegations of research misconduct relating to the work of any employee, student or anyone else involved in research within the University
10. No detrimental action will be taken against any person making an allegation through this policy, in line with the Staff Whistle blowing policy and Students Speak Up policy.
11. Any allegation made will be investigated thoroughly, and in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, accuracy and fairness
12. Investigations will be carried out in such a way to safeguard the confidentiality of the interested parties. However the University reserves the right to disclose such information as is necessary to ensure a full and fair investigation of any allegation.
13. The Staff Research Misconduct Policy is based on the concept of reasonable behaviour and that allegations will not be knowingly malicious, frivolous or vexatious.¹

Definition of Research Misconduct

14. For the purpose of this policy, research misconduct includes (but is not restricted to) doing, planning or attempting to do the following:
 - i. Failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research;
 - ii. Deception in relation to research proposals;
 - iii. Unethical behaviour in the conduct of research, for example in relation to research subjects;
 - iv. Unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially;
 - v. Deviation from good research practice, where this results in risk of harm to humans, animals or the environment;
 - vi. Fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data;
 - vii. Distortion of research outcomes;
 - viii. Dishonest misinterpretation of results;
 - ix. Publication of data known or believed to be misleading;
 - x. Plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources;
 - xi. Misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors;
 - xii. Inappropriate attribution of authorship;
 - xiii. Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment;
 - xiv. Attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct;
 - xv. Inciting others to be involved in misconduct;
 - xvi. Collusion in or concealment of misconduct by others.
15. This policy is not intended to compromise the freedom of staff to question and test received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions.

¹ Students or Staff knowingly making untrue or malicious complaints may be subject to disciplinary action.