

Code of Good Practice in Research

1 Introduction

The School of Advanced Study is required by the UK Research Councils and other major funding bodies to have in place a code of good practice for the conduct of research which they fund. This document specifies the Code of Good Practice for researchers at the School of Advanced Study and provides guidance on the standards expected. It follows closely the guidelines issued by the ESRC.

2 Professional Standards

In the conduct of all research, the School of Advanced Study expects the following general principles and standards to be understood and observed. These apply to all School of Advanced Study staff, research students, and to those who are not members of the School, but who are conducting research under its auspices, such as Visiting Fellows (all categories hereafter referred to as 'researchers').

3 Integrity

3.1 All researchers are expected to be honest in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of other researchers. This applies to the whole range of research, including generating and analysing data, publishing results, and acknowledging the direct and indirect contributions of colleagues.

3.2 Plagiarism, deception or the falsification or fabrication of results will be regarded as a serious disciplinary offence.

3.3 Researchers are encouraged to report cases of suspected misconduct and to do so in a responsible and appropriate manner.

3.4 Researchers should declare any real or potential conflicts of interest before undertaking the research.

4 Openness

4.1 While recognizing the need for researchers to protect their own research interests, the School of Advanced Study encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their research with other researchers and with the public.

4.2 Researchers should be prepared to question the outcome of their research and to check results before being made public.

4.3 Once results have been published, the School of Advanced Study expects researchers to make available relevant data and materials to other researchers, on request, provided that this is consistent with any ethics approvals and consents which cover the data and materials and any intellectual property rights in them.

4.4 Senior staff should ensure that a research climate of mutual co-operation is created in which all are encouraged to develop their skills and in which the open exchange of ideas is fostered.

5 Guidance from Professional Bodies

5.1 Where available, the School of Advanced Study expects researchers to observe the standards of research practice set out in guidelines published by scientific and learned societies, and other relevant professional bodies.

5.2 All researchers should be aware of the legal requirements which regulate their work.

6 Supervision and training

Appropriate supervision of researchers (including the training of supervisors) is an essential part of good research conduct. All researchers should undertake appropriate training, for example in research design, regulatory and ethics approvals and consents, confidentiality, data management, record keeping, and data protection.

7 Documenting Results and Storing Primary Data

7.1 There should be clarity at the outset of the research programme as to the ownership of, where relevant:

- data used or created in the course of the research; and
- the results of the research.

7.2 Researchers should keep clear and accurate records of the procedures followed and the approvals granted during the research process. This is necessary both to demonstrate proper research practice, but also in case questions are subsequently asked about either the conduct of the research or the results obtained.

7.3 For similar reasons, primary data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic format, as appropriate and held normally for a period of five years (or as required by the funding body) after the completion of a research project. Back-up records should always be kept for data stored on a computer.

8 Ethical Practice

8.1 The School of Advanced Study requires researchers to comply with the requirements of both the School of Advanced Study's Ethics Policy and Procedures issued by School Ethics Committees.

8.2 Researchers should ensure the confidentiality of personal information relating to the participants in research, and that the research fulfils any legal requirements such as those of the Data Protection Acts.

9 Publication Practice

9.1 The School of Advanced Study encourages the publication of the results of research in an appropriate form. Principal authorship and other publication credit should accurately reflect the relative scientific or professional contribution of the individuals involved, regardless of their relative status.

10 Applications and Project Management

Researchers should take all reasonable measures to ensure:

- the accuracy and completeness of information contained in applications for funding, and
- if an application is successful, compliance with the terms and conditions specified by the funding body

11 Misconduct in Research

Failure to comply with this Code may give rise to an allegation of misconduct. See below for the policy and procedures for responding to allegations of misconduct in research.

12 Evaluation

Institute Directors must ensure that all researchers are aware of the requirements of this Code and have procedures in place for checking that they do so.

Policy and procedures for responding to allegations of misconduct in research

1 Policy on Research Conduct

This policy and procedures applies to all members of the School of Advanced Study involved in research. This includes all School of Advanced Study staff, research students, and to those who are not members of the School, but who are conducting research under its auspices, such as Visiting Fellows.

2 Principles of Good Practice in the Conduct of Research

2.1 The School of Advanced Study's [code of good practice in the conduct of research](#) (see above) sets the following principles:

2.2 All those to whom the policy applies are expected to:

- maintain professional standards
- be familiar with guidance on best research practice, for example in relation to matters of policy, ethics, finance and safety
- observe legal and ethical requirements laid down by the School of Advanced Study or other properly appointed bodies involved in the research field
- recognise the importance of good leadership and co-operation in research groups
- take special account of the needs of young researchers
- document results and keep secure primary data
- question findings
- attribute honestly the contribution of others
- take steps to ensure the safety of all those associated with the research
- report any conflict of interest, actual or prospective, to the appropriate person.

3 Definition of Research Misconduct

3.1 Research misconduct includes the following, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent:

- failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
- deception in relation to research proposals
- unethical behaviour in the conduct of research, for example in relation to research subjects
- unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially
- deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to others
- fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data
- distortion of research outcomes
- dishonest misinterpretation of results
- publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading
- plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
- misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors
- inappropriate attribution of authorship
- fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment
- attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct
- inciting others to be involved in research misconduct

- collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others.

3.2 It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretation or judgement in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct (including gross misconduct) unrelated to research processes.

3.3 Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment may be dealt with under separate financial regulations.

4 Procedure for Investigation of Suspected Research Misconduct

Instigation of Proceedings

4.1 The School of Advanced Study has a responsibility to investigate allegations of research misconduct fully and expeditiously. It also has a responsibility to protect researchers from malicious, mischievous, or frivolous allegations.

4.2 All those to whom this policy applies should report any incident of misconduct, whether witnessed or suspected. Members of staff and research students are encouraged to raise concerns about suspected research misconduct in confidence with their Director, or the Dean. Those who raise concerns in good faith will not be penalised in any way for doing so. Allegations should normally be made in writing, accompanied by any available supporting evidence.

4.3 In the event that serious allegations are made, they will be referred to the Dean who may either initiate immediate action under the appropriate disciplinary procedures or, appoint an investigation committee to consider the allegations.

Appointment of Investigation Committee

4.4 An investigation committee will normally consist of three members: a member of the same institute unconnected with the allegation, a member of staff from another institute and the Dean or his/her nominee, who shall chair the committee. At least one member should have expert knowledge of the area of research involved. The person(s) against whom the allegation is made (the respondent) and the person(s) making the allegation ('the complainant') shall be informed of the decision to appoint an investigation committee and shall be given the opportunity to comment on the proposed membership.

4.5 The investigation committee shall take all reasonable steps to preserve the anonymity of the respondent and the complainant, and to ensure that the investigation is undertaken as expeditiously as possible. The investigation committee may seek legal advice.

4.6 The Chair will define the scope of the investigation in written terms of reference to the investigation committee.

Investigation Report

4.7 The investigation committee will produce a report stating: the procedures under which the investigation was conducted; how information was obtained; the findings of the committee and the basis for these; a summary of the views of the respondent; and a description of any sanctions recommended by the committee.

4.8 The report shall be submitted to the Vice Chancellor. The investigation committee may also make recommendations to promote best practice in the conduct of research.

Outcome and action

4.9 On receipt of the report by the Vice Chancellor, and with his/her approval, the Dean shall proceed as follows:

(a) In the event that the investigation committee has found no evidence of misconduct, the complaint shall be dismissed.

(b) In the event that a complaint is upheld, but the offence found to be insufficiently serious to warrant formal disciplinary proceedings, the matter may be referred to the institute Director or other appropriate individual for resolution.

(c) If the investigation has uncovered prima facie evidence of serious misconduct, then the matter shall be dealt with under the appropriate University disciplinary procedures.

4.10 If the investigation committee finds the allegation to have been malicious or mischievous in nature, the Dean shall consider whether disciplinary action should be taken against those making the allegation.

4.11 Where the research is funded in whole or part by an outside grant, such body shall be informed of the investigation and any referral under disciplinary regulations.