

# **PALAMURU UNIVERSITY**

## **Code of Ethics to check malpractices and plagiarism in Research**

The chief intent of this set of guidelines is to offer a positively oriented set of concrete suggestions for upholding integrity in research. The observance to ethical research practice leads to more responsiveness to the details of scientific research including qualitative analysis, quantitative & statistical techniques and to more attentive collaboration among investigators. Also, the trustworthiness of science and humanities with the general public depends on the maintenance of the highest ethical standards in research.

Adherence to these guidelines will help an investigator avoid departures from time-honoured ethical research practice and prevent those most serious deviations that constitute research misconduct. Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, misrepresentation, or plagiarism including distortion of credentials in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or in reporting research results. It does not take in honest error or differences of opinion. Misconduct as defined above is considered as a grave professional deviation that is subject to sanctions imposed both by the University by many professional associations and in the case of funded research, the respective funding agency.

These guiding principles can be made use of as a common repository of usually accepted practice for skilled researchers and as an orientation to those beginning research careers. Though some of these principles apply to all fields of research including scientific research, social and behavioural sciences that involve collection and interpretation of data. These materials can be modified or specified in a more particular form suitable for each scholarly discipline or academic unit. In fact, many academic units have developed admirable handbooks on research ethics and integrity. When in doubt about the accepted ethical standards in a particular case, a researcher should discuss the matter on a confidential basis with an academic supervisor, another respected colleague, or the Dean of Research of the University.

### **MATTERS OF ETHICAL CONCERN IN RESEARCH**

#### **1. Plagiarism**

Authors who present the words, data, or ideas of others with the implication that they own the same, without ascription in a form appropriate for the medium of presentation, are committing theft of intellectual property and may be guilty of plagiarism and thus of research transgression. This statement applies to reviews and to methodological and background / historical sections of research papers as well as to original research results or analyses. If there is a word-for-word copying beyond a short phrase or six or seven words of someone else's text, that section is to be kept in quotation marks or indented and referenced, at the place in the manuscript of the copied material, to the original source. The same rules are relevant to grant applications and proposals, to clinical research protocols, and to student papers submitted for academic credit. Not only does plagiarism infringe the

standard code of conduct governing all researchers, but in many cases it could constitute an infraction of the law by infringing on a copyright held by the original author or publisher.

The work of others must be cited or credited, whether published or unpublished and whether it had been written effort, an oral presentation, or matter on a website. Each periodical or publisher may state the particular form of appropriate citation. One need not present citations, however, in the case of well-established concepts that may be found in common textbooks or in the case of phrases which describe a commonly-used methodology. Exceptional rules have been developed for citing electronic information.

## **2. Use and Misuse of Information**

Research integrity entails not only that reported hypotheses are founded on exactly recorded data or observations but that all pertinent observations are reported. It is considered a violation of research integrity to fail to report data that disagree with or simply fail to support the reported conclusions, including the deliberate withholding of information regarding confounding factors. If some data are disregarded for a known reason, established by a standard statistical test for disregarding outliers, the reason has to be stated in the published accounts. An outsized background of negative results ought to be reported. Any premeditated or inattentive disregard for the truth in reporting observations may be cogitated to be an act of research transgression.

## **3. Ownership of and Access to Data**

Research data acquired in studies performed at the University by employees of the University are not the property of the researcher who produced or observed them or even of the principal investigator of the research group. They are the possessions of the University, which can be held liable for the integrity of the data even if the researchers have gone out of the University. One more reason for the University's claim to possession of research data is that the University, not the individual researcher, is the grantee of sponsored research awards. Realistic access to data, nonetheless, should not be denied to any member of the research group in which the data were gathered. Suppose there is any possibility that a copyright or patent application might come into view from the group project, a written agreement within the group should denote the rights, if any, of each member of the group to the intellectual property. A researcher who has made a discovery which may be patentable should file an Invention Disclosure with the Office of Technology Management.

A principal investigator who leaves the University is entitled to make a copy of data to take to a new institution so as to be able to carry on the research or, in some cases, to take the original data, with a written contract to make them available to the University on request within a stated time period. An official Agreement on Disposition of Research Data must be discussed in such cases through the Office of Research. Every student, postdoctoral fellow, or other investigator in a group project should come to an understanding with the research director or principal investigator, particularly in writing, about which aspects of the project he or she might continue to investigate after leaving the research group. Such an understanding should spell out the extent to which a copy of research data may be taken.

Co-investigators at another institution are entitled to use the data which they aided to acquire.

Since the scientific endeavour may be a cooperative undertaking encompassing many persons who now or in the future might follow related research interests, and since it is in the interest of all to depend on the contributions and findings of others, every investigator has the responsibility to the general scientific community to assist by sharing of data. Other merits of sharing data include the facilitation of independent confirmation or refutation of reported outcomes. It is usually accepted that the data underlying a research publication should be made available to other responsible investigators upon request after the research results have been published or accepted for publication.

#### **4. Authorship and Other Publication Matters**

Publication of research results is significant as a way of communicating to the intellectual world so that readers may be informed of research results and other researchers may put up on the reported findings. In fact, it is an ethical obligation for an investigator at the University to make research findings easy to get to, in a method consistent with the pertinent standards of publication. The reported data and methods should be amply detailed so that other researchers could try to replicate the results. Publication should be well-timed but should not be hastened improperly if premature publication involves a risk of not subjecting all results to adequate internal substantiation or of not considering satisfactorily all possible interpretations.

A commercial sponsor of an investigative project may not have a veto over a decision to publish, but a delay of publication for an agreed period, not to exceed six months, may be approved in order to permit filing of a patent application.

##### **a. Criteria for Authorship**

Since academic work is clued-up by a large number of sources offering concepts and information, it is necessary to accentuate rightful acknowledgement in the presentation of ideas and the publication of manuscripts. Authorship should be awarded merely to those researchers who have made an original and important contribution to the conceptualisation, design, execution and interpretation of the published work.

Individuals who have made smaller contributions by for example giving advice, doing analyses or providing subject material, or who have supported the research in some other way, should also be approved. The principal author should find out whether or not these individuals should be included as authors. Sometimes written permission has to be acquired for acknowledgement in the published work and even the format thereof is prescribed by the party concerned.

In the case of co-authorship, issues arise as to the criteria for inclusion as author, the ability of each author to estimate all aspects of the study and the sequence of the list of authors. Authors should discuss these questions honestly and should make appointments before undertaking a co-author project. The author submitting the work, or the principal

author, is accountable for coordinating the completion and submission of the work and for ensuring that all the contributions and all the collaborators are given appropriate acknowledgement. All authors should endorse the final version of the manuscript and should be prepared to accept accountability for the work in public.

Each author or co-author is answerable for the compilation, revision and verification of those parts of the manuscript, publication or presentation representing his / her contribution. All co-authors are entitled to making their own copies thereof, together with figures and attached documents.

In realistic or scientific reports, authors should go out of their way to quote applicable data, including those data not supporting the hypothesis planned. It is the responsibility of the author(s) to be familiar with other appropriate publications and to quote from them.

It is unscrupulous, and harmful to the academy, to present as one's own the work of others, whether in part or in full, to put together research results or to omit or change information. Authors who wish to quote information gained at a personal level or from unpublished written material should acquire written permission from the source.

It is out of place and improper to submit extracts from research, or reports on the same research, to more than one publisher, unless such action has been accepted by the editors of each publication or multiple submissions is the acceptable standard practice in the specific discipline or field. In the complete report on the work in question, reference has to be made to preliminary extracts from work that has already been published.

## **b. Order of Authors**

Customs regarding the order in which co-authors' name(s) appear differ with the discipline. Whatever the discipline, it is imperative that all co-authors know the basis for assigning an order of names and concur in advance to the assignments.

A corresponding, or senior author (usually the first or last of the listed names in a multi-authored manuscript) must be chosen for every paper, who will be accountable for communicating with the publisher or editor, for informing all co-authors of the status of review and publication, and for ensuring that all planned authors have approved the submitted version of the manuscript. This person has a bigger accountability than other co-authors to assure for the integrity of the research report and should make every attempt to understand and guard every element of the reported research.

## **c. Self-citations**

In citing one's own unpublished work, an author must be careful not to entail an unwarranted status of a manuscript. A paper should not be planned as submitted, in anticipation of expected submission. A paper should not be listed as accepted for publication or in press unless the author has received galley testimony or page proof or has received a letter from an editor or publisher stating that publication has been accepted, subject perhaps only to copy-editing.

#### **d. Duplicate Publication**

Researchers should not publish the same article in two different places without very good rationale to do so, unless appropriate citation is made in the later publication to the earlier one, and unless the editor is clearly informed. The same principle applies to abstracts. If there is unexplained duplication of publication without citation, sometimes referred to as self-plagiarism, a reader may be tricked as to the amount of original research data.

It is inappropriate in most fields to permit the same manuscript to be under review by more than one journal at the same time. Very frequently journals specify that a submitted work should not have been published or submitted for publication in a different place, and some journals need that a submitted manuscript be accompanied by a statement to that effect.

An author should not split a research paper that is a self-contained integral whole into a number of smaller papers just for the sake of expanding the number of items in the author's bibliography.

### **5. Conflict of Interest**

Academic members of staff may not permit other professional or outside activities to divert their attention from their major responsibilities towards the University. They should keep up a momentous and professionally acceptable presence on campus during each semester in which they are on vigorous duty. Holidays and leave should be in accordance with the University's regulations.

They should create an ambience of academic freedom by promoting the open and timely disclosure of the results of their academic activities, by making certain that their advice to students and postdoctoral associates is not influenced by individual interests, and by disclosing external activities that could influence the free flow of academic information among themselves, students and colleagues.

Researchers may make use of the University resources, including amenities, staff, equipment, information or confidential information as part of contract work, provided that the University is rewarded in terms of the provisions of the Rules for Contract Work of the University. Researchers may not use University resources for any reason other than purposes related to tuition, research or service by the University, unless prior permission has been

attained by the head of the department and / or the dean, as provided by the University's regulations.

Researchers should reveal in good time all potentially patentable inventions that have been discovered or created in the course and within the compass of their service to the University. Ownership of such inventions should be dealt with in accordance with the policy of University. The inventors will, together with the University, distribute the benefits or royalties earned in accordance with the provisions of the University's Intellectual Property Policy.

Researchers should inform the University whether they (or members of their families) have consultation agreements or work in an outside institution, before the following proposed arrangements or agreements between such institutions and the University will be approved: a) gifts; b) funded projects; c) technology licensing agreements; and d) allocations.

In such cases formal University authorization will be required before the proposed arrangements or agreements can proceed.

University researchers should not permit their names to be used as "ghost" authors of manuscripts written or provided by business-related sponsors.

Faculty may be authorized to engage in outside professional activities such as consulting or service on a scientific advisory board, but approval of each such activity from the academic supervisor must be obtained in advance. In no case are University facilities to be used in the conduct of an outside activity, and the University name and logo may be used by outside entities only with authorization of designated University officers. Research performed for an outside entity must be carried out by means of a sponsored research contract and not by means of consulting. In some arenas, a contract for consulting must be approved in advance, to warrant, among other things, that remuneration is connected to unambiguous services and that legitimate intellectual property rights of the University are not contravened.

## **6. Obligation to Report**

### **a. Reporting Suspected Misconduct**

Reporting suspected research misconduct is a collective and solemn conscientiousness of all members of the academic community. Any individual who deduces research misconduct has a commitment to report the contention to the HoD of the department in which the suspected misconduct occurred or to the Dean of Academic Research. Allegations are handled under dealings described in the University's Policy. All reports are treated in confidence to the degree possible, and no unfavourable action will be taken, either directly or indirectly, against a person who makes such an allegation in good faith.

### **b. Correction of Errors**

If a finding of error, either on purpose or not deliberate, or of plagiarism must be made consequent to publication, the investigator has a commitment to submit a correction or retraction in a form specified by the editor or publisher.

## **7. Responsibilities of a Research Investigator**

An investigator who leads a research group has leadership and supervisory responsibilities with regard to the research carried out by members of the group. A principal investigator must not only put together the research group but also arrange for the assembly of an adequate financial and administrative structure to sustain the research. A supervisor not only provides guidance and advice to individual members of the group in the responsible ways of the research but also has eventual responsibility for the scientific integrity of the entire research project. He or she should thus take all realistic steps to verify the details of experimental procedures and the soundness of the data or observations reported by members of the group, including periodic reviews of primary data in addition to summary tables, graphs, and oral reports all set by members of the group.

An investigator serves not only as a research manager with respect to members of the research group but also as a mentor liable for the intellectual and professional progress of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty in the group, including awareness and sensitivity to issues in research ethics.

A researcher should be open to combined work with investigators having diverse but harmonizing skills at the University.

## **8. Responsibilities to Funding Agencies**

An investigator should be responsive that the same standards of correctness and integrity pertain to grant applications and proposals as to manuscripts submitted for publication. Reporting of results of experiments not yet performed as evidence in maintaining the proposed research funding, for example, is measured to be fabrication and is subject to a finding of research misconduct, even if the proposal is later rejected for funding or is withdrawn before full consideration for funding is completed. The same definition of plagiarism applies to an application or proposal, including background and methodological sections, as to a publication.

A researcher must submit progress and final research reports to a sponsor at times mentioned in the award. He or she must approve expenditures in a way consistent with the approved budget and must check financial reports cautiously.

Investigators, who enter into agreements with commercial sponsors of research, as negotiated by the Office of Research, should familiarize themselves with the special terms of such agreements, such as those, for example, concerning reporting of results, disclosure of inventions, and confidentiality. Failure to comply with the requirements might sometimes

amount to a break of contract or might compromise the University's claims to intellectual property.