

Research Ethics & Integrity



Isla-Kate Morris

Research Governance Officer

E: rgoffice@sussex.ac.uk

Tel: 01273 872748

US

University of Sussex
Research & Enterprise



Lego Academics

@LegoAcademics

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The @LegoAcademics overlooked one somewhat improbable 'risk' on their ethics approval form.



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7:30 a.m. - 25 Aug 2014

What we'll do today

Ethics and integrity

Researchers responsibilities

Ethics approval and permissions

Q&A

Questions:

- i. Research practice is self-evident, Researchers self-regulate: True or False

- ii. How do research staff and students learn to do research well?

Research practice is self-evident, Researchers self-regulate: True or False

Neither true nor false, but believing it to be true is negligent. Most researchers are trying to do the right thing, most of the time.

Fanelli showed that misconduct and questionable practices are more common than we think:

On average, 1.97% of respondents admitted to having fabricated, falsified or modified data or results at least once.

Up to 33.7% admitted to questionable research practices.

In surveys asking about the behaviour of colleagues, 14.12% knew of falsification and up to 72% knew of other questionable research practices.

Respondents were anonymous but considering the sensitivity of the survey questions these figures are a conservative estimate.

How do research staff and students learn to do research well?

From those around them! Fostering research integrity is necessary to cultivate a good research culture.

Why is this important?

A culture is developed by customary assumptions; standards; practice; habits; support from policy; leadership;

Awareness and prevention

Handling research misconduct well

- *This Code of Conduct is not a body of law. It is not intended to have a legal character, but rather to be a canon for self-regulation.* (European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity)
- Customary practices, standards and assumptions. (Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research Collaborations)
- Primary mechanisms are leadership and culture. Secondary mechanisms are codes, regulations, reinforcement by training or process.

More common ----- Misconduct spectrum ----- rare



Accidental

Well-meaning

Deliberate

↓
Ignorance or

↓
Dishonesty

Incompetence

RCR ← QRP ← ----- → FFP

The Mind of a Con Man



Koos Breukel for The New York Times

Diederik Stapel, a Dutch social psychologist, perpetrated an audacious academic fraud by making up studies that told the world what it wanted to hear about human nature.



University of Sussex

“Stapel did not deny that his deceit was driven by ambition. But it was more complicated than that, he told me. He insisted that he loved social psychology but had been frustrated by the messiness of experimental data, which rarely led to clear conclusions. His lifelong obsession with elegance and order, he said, led him to **concoct sexy results that journals found attractive**. “It was a quest for aesthetics, for beauty — instead of the truth,” he said.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/28/magazine/diederik-stapels-audacious-academic-fraud.html?pagewanted=all>

58 papers of Stapel’s papers have been retracted (as of Dec 2015).

Fabricated data – leading to two papers in Science to be retracted on Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer

Used illegally obtained embryo's from his own clinic

Coerced two female junior research associates to donate embryo's

Highest number of retracted papers ever
(<http://retractionwatch.com/the-retraction-watch-leaderboard/>)

The Telegraph

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Disgraced South Korean scientist guilty of fraud over faked stem cell research

A South Korean scientist who falsely claimed to have achieved major breakthroughs in stem cell research has been found guilty of fraud.



Prof Hwang Woo-suk

6:27AM GMT 26 Oct 2009

Hwang Woo-suk, 56, once a scientist with rock-star like status for bringing South Korea to the forefront of stem cell studies, had also been on trial on charges of misusing state funds and violating bioethics laws.

"He was guilty of fabrication," the Seoul court said in a verdict in the trial that stretched more than three years and included painstaking details about the scientific work Hwang and his team had performed at Seoul National University.

The court also said that Hwang illegally diverted a portion of the money he received for research for his personal use.

"But he has shown he has truly repented for his crime," the court said in its verdict. Hwang's supporters, who have packed the court for each hearing, broke into applause when the court sentenced Hwang to two years in jail, suspended for three years.

Prosecutors were seeking a four-year prison term, saying Hwang had set

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Korean ferry disaster



Misconduct & QRPs: What do you do & where to go

UoS procedure for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct in Research

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/spg/research-policy>.

UoS whistle-blower policy

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ogs/policies/goodconduct/raisingconcerns>

UK Research Integrity Office Code of practice for research:

<http://www.ukrio.org/publications/code-of-practice-for-research/3-0-standards-for-organisations-and-researchers/3-16-misconduct-in-research/>

Who to contact:

Registrar registrar@sussex.ac.uk,

Research Governance Officer:
rgoffice@sussex.ac.uk.

For independent advice go to UKRIO (UoS is a member):

<http://www.ukrio.org/get-advice-from-ukrio/>

What is Research Integrity or Responsible Research Conduct?

Being responsible for your research
Undertaking your research to a high ethical standard
Follow the University Research Governance Code of Practice
Follow your professional body's ethical code
Contribute professionalism to your research culture

Research Integrity statement:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/standards>

Research Integrity information:
<http://tinyurl.com/RI-Sussex>

UoS Code of Practice for Research:
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/rqi/policy/research-policy>



Singapore Statement of Research Integrity, 2010

Honesty in all aspects of research

Accountability in the conduct of research

Professional courtesy and fairness in working with others

Good stewardship of research on behalf of others

The concordat to support research integrity



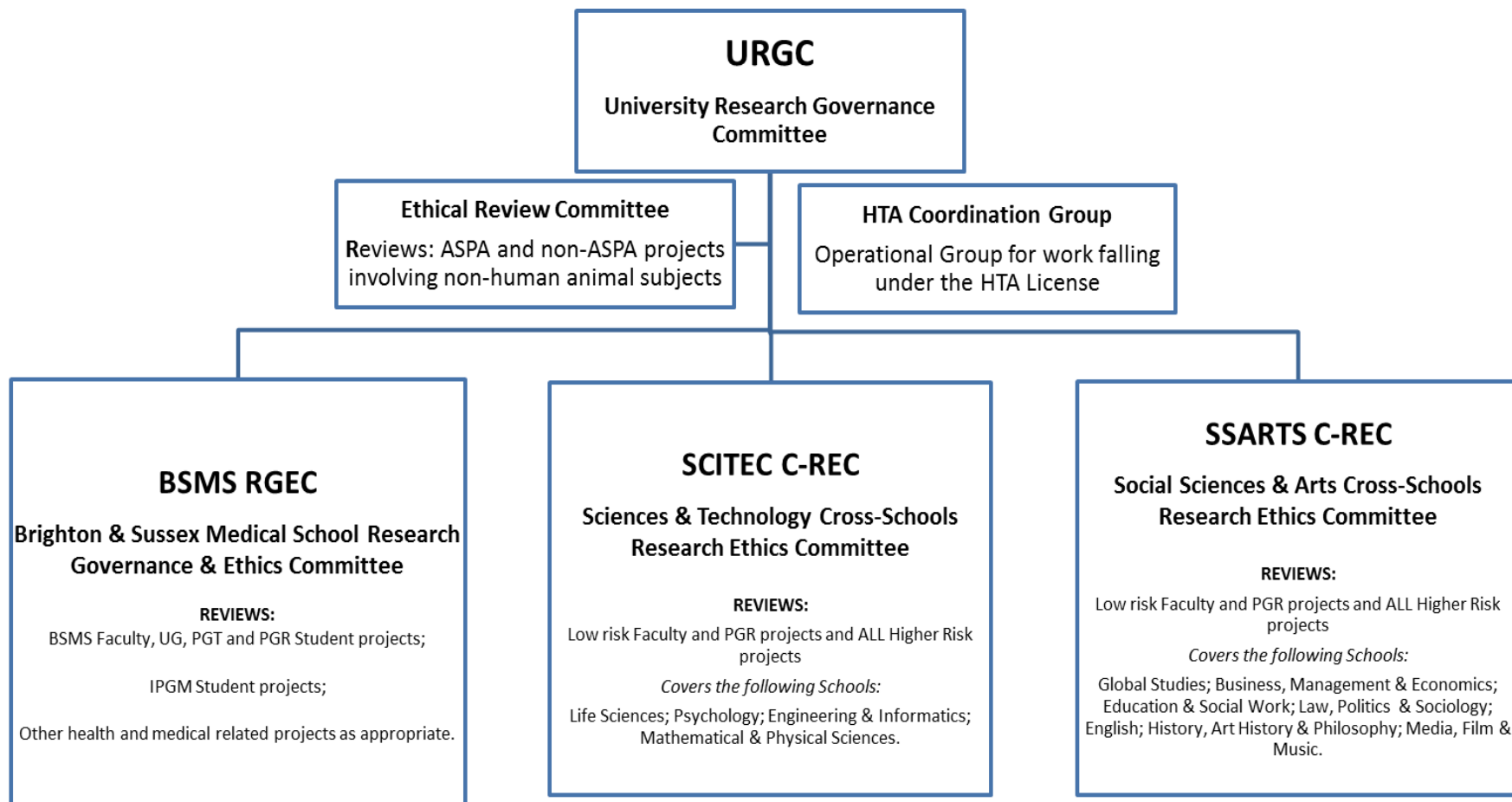
Why is Research Integrity important?

The University is committed to facilitating research with the highest ethical standards.

Shared responsibility to reassure the public and funders that the methods, conduct, results and outcomes of research are trustworthy and valuable.

Meeting the Concordat. If a University fails to meet the expectations their RCUK funding may be withdrawn.

Research Governance Framework



Do I need ethical approval, sponsorship or any other permissions?

Ethical review

University: Use the self-assessment checklist on webpages

- i. human participation (not social care service users or NHS patients or their data)
- ii. research that raises other ethical issues (e.g. research with potential social or environmental impact)
- iii. Research involving animals

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/checklist>

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/governance>



Sponsorship

The sponsor is the organisation responsible for the research (particularly conduct and management) where ethical review is undertaken by a national body (e.g. NHS, social care or local authority services)

- i. BSMS through RGEC then NHS
- ii. Non-BSMS through HoS & CREC Chair then NHS or SCREC

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/sponsorship>



Other Permissions

DBS clearance: children, Mental Capacity Act, NHS, individuals in local authority care

NHS research passport: to undertake research in an NHS setting

Gatekeeper permission (schools, institutions, organisations for elite interviews)

What makes a strong ethical application

- Explain your objective - what you want to explore and why
- Write all content in lay language (avoid acronyms and subject specific terms unless explicitly unexplained)
- Put yourself in the reviewers shoes– demonstrate that you’ve considered ethical concerns, risk/benefit analysis of the research for the participant(s), the researcher(s), wider society, the environment and the institution
- Ensure all supporting documents are attached (where applicable);
 - i. Information sheet and consent form
 - ii. Recruitment materials e.g. poster or advert
 - iii. Questionnaire / topic guide / interview questions
 - iv. Overseas Travel Safety and Security Risk Assessment form
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/riskassessment/fieldwork/overseastravelsafetyandsecurity>
 - v. Letter to the gatekeeper organisation

Take time to consider how to:

- i. protect the care and welfare of participants and researchers
- ii. minimise any risk of physical and mental discomfort, harm or danger to yourself, others and the environment
- iii. maximise the value and benefits
- iv. ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants
- v. get informed consent (unless you have strong justification for not gaining consent)
- vi. provide participants with information about the research, how it will be used and their right to withdraw in everyday

US language.

Supervision

Check your school handbook

Coaching in the ethical, legal and other conventions used in the conduct of research, and supporting the student in the consideration of these as appropriate.

Ensuring awareness of codes of ethics of relevant professional bodies

If funded, students awareness of funders expectations and terms and conditions

Supervisors of students engaged in research will seek to ensure compliance with the University Code of Practice in research on the part of students.

Supporting them with their ethics application(s) and seeking permissions or approvals for their research

Supervising Doctoral Studies information: <http://tinyurl.com/Doc-Sup-Sussex>

Q&A

Good record keeping

Openness correlates with scientific rigour

Encourages better recording

Can be checked, reproduced and shared

Sharing data is a more efficient use of public money

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/researchdatamanagement/>

“Of 53 clinical oncology papers, only 6 (11%) were reproducible” Begley & Ellis Nature 483,531–533(29 March 2012) <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v483/n7391/full/483531a.html>

‘Challenges in Irreproducible Research’ Special edition of Nature

<http://www.nature.com/nature/focus/reproducibility/#editorial>

Willingness to Share Research Data Is Related to the Strength of the Evidence and the Quality of Reporting of Statistical Results Wicharts et al (2011)

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0026828>



📷 To mark open access week, Knowledge Unlatched, a group that works with libraries to support open access, asked enthusiasts to create memes that sum up the form of publishing. Photograph: Knowledge Unlatched

References and links

Fanelli, D. (2009) (How Many Scientists Fabricate and Falsify Research? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Survey Data PLoS ONE 4(5): e5738. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0005738)

Research Integrity statement: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/standards>

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The Retraction Watch Leaderboard <http://retractionwatch.com/the-retraction-watch-leaderboard/>

