

Can we assess how effectively an institution has engaged in the responsible conduct of research?

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- USA – Office of Research Integrity
- UK – RCUK Policy and Code of Conduct on the Governance of Good Research Conduct
- UK- RIO Code of Practice for Research: Promoting good practice and preventing misconduct
- ESF – Fostering research integrity in Europe
- Canada – Honesty, accountability and trust: Fostering research integrity in Canada
- Singapore Statement on Research Integrity
- **Effective monitoring starts with good implementation!**

Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research



- Released 2007. Developed jointly by National Medical and Health Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia, prerequisite for ARC/NHMRC funds
- To guide institutions and researchers in responsible research practice.....*"a basic reference for development of appropriate policies and procedures..."*
-*"a reference for people outside the research community on the standards expected..."*
- Part A describes the principles and practices for encouraging the responsible conduct of research, for institutions and researchers
- Part B provides a framework for resolving allegations of breaches of the Code and research misconduct

Requirements of the Code



- Each institution should provide an appropriate research governance framework through which research is assessed for quality, safety, privacy, risk management, financial management and accountabilities of those who play a part in research
- Governance framework should demand compliance with laws, regulations, guidelines and codes of practice governing conduct of research in Australia
- Each institution must ensure availability of documents that help guide good research governance, conduct and management
- Specific responsibilities for institutions and researchers

➤ **Set in context of “ a strong research culture”**

➤ ***Responsibilities of Institutions***

- **Promote responsible conduct of research**
- **Establish good governance & management practices**
- **Train staff**
- **Promote mentoring**
- **Ensure a safe research environment**

➤ ***Responsibilities of Researchers***

- **Maintain high standards of responsible research**
- **Report research responsibly**
- **Respect research participants (*National Statement*)**
- **Respect animals used in research -*Animal Care Code***
- **Respect the environment**
- **Report research misconduct**

Code in two parts



Part A – General Principles and Practices

1. General principles of responsible research.
2. Management of research data and primary materials.
3. Supervision of research trainees.
4. Publication and dissemination of research findings.
5. Authorship.
6. Peer review.
7. Conflicts of Interest.
8. Collaborative research across institutions.

Can
be
measured?

Part B – Breaches, Research Misconduct and Framework for Resolving Allegations

Implementation of the Code



Establish a governance framework – Research Integrity, Accountability and Compliance

Essential for effective implementation and then monitoring!

Implementation of Part A – 95% of the Code!

The imagined issues

- “It’s not a problem for me” syndrome
- “It’s all bureaucratic nonsense”

Some real issues

- A major overhaul of policy and process
- It is very complex
- Getting academic buy in
- Learning from 1998 experience

Getting to the real underlying issues

- Trust, Time, Understanding how to comply

The real implementation issues



Trust

- A federal government requirement, highlight current misconduct cases
- Enlist some academic champions

Time

- Look to consolidate information (*8 policies, 6 guidelines + Codes and regulations*)
- Processes and tools are just as important as policy – *eg 8 separate working parties in all; Data management requirements – 10 versions and 2 years alone*

Understanding

- Communication

Ultimately, this is about developing a culture – but what sort of culture?

Can we assess culture?



- ***“Ethical conduct” is more than simply doing the right thing. It involves acting in the right spirit, out of an abiding respect and concern for one’s fellow creatures. National Statement 2007.***
- **Easy to use culture as an excuse for doing little or nothing**
- **The question is about institutional compliance, not an individual’s “heart.”**

Can assess compliance against common sense requirements

What could we assess?



Part A – General Principles and Practices

1. General principles of responsible research- **Persons undertaking training**
2. Management of research data and primary materials – **data storage records**
3. Supervision of research trainees – **Supervisors/students at development workshops/issues raised in progress reports**
4. Publication and dissemination of research findings **???**
5. Authorship – **Authorship forms completed**
6. Peer review - **???**
7. Conflicts of Interest – **Declarations? Lack of complaints?**
8. Collaborative research across institutions – **Number/percentage agreements**

Part B – Breaches, Research Misconduct and Framework for Resolving Allegations – **Lack of front page stories!!!!**

Elements in an effective culture of responsible research practice



CONTINUAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Research conduct a component in initial induction
- Continuing education, interesting, not “same old course”
- On-line, face to face, case studies
- Academic leadership!

CONTINUAL COMMUNICATION

- Systematic, not ad-hoc
- Story based as well as conveying information
- Web, face to face, print

REGULAR (CONTINUAL?) MONITORING

- Requirements understood
- Embedded (*time surveys at Oxford!*)
- Vertical and horizontal

CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT CYCLE