



1.4 Research Misconduct

Research Misconduct is any intentional, knowing or reckless misconduct which affects the integrity of any aspect of the process of research, including the research itself, research records, and research publication. It is defined as, but is not limited to, fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. It includes questionable research practice including misquotation or misrepresentation relating to matters such as attribution of authorship, publication, record keeping, conflicts of interest, breach of confidentiality, ethical approval, interests, qualifications or failing to meet ethical, legal, professional, privacy or data protection responsibilities.

Research misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences of opinion in interpretations or judgements of data. In particular, the analysis of either old or new material and subsequent drawing of new conclusions is not considered to be research misconduct. The section below provides good insight for all researchers into establishing good practices, improving their scholarship and keeping up to date, and in so doing avoiding research misconduct. In particular, Principal Investigators from students to multi-site researchers, must take all reasonable measures to ensure that accuracy and completeness of information is contained in applications for funding, and to ensure compliance with sponsor, institutional, legal, ethical and moral obligations in managing projects. Financial fraud or misuse of research funds or research equipment may constitute research misconduct as defined above, and it may also be dealt with under [the College's Financial Regulations and Fraud Policy](#).

College takes any allegations of Research Misconduct seriously and will investigate them in accordance with [established disciplinary procedures](#). Plagiarism by undergraduate and postgraduate students is subject to [College Academic Integrity Plagiarism Policy](#).

1.4.1 Key Roles involved in the Research Integrity Process

The Senior Dean is the [College Research Integrity Officer](#) (RIO). The RIO delegates the Dean of Research to manage allegations of Research Misconduct from any source and implement an investigation process. If the Dean of Research and all Associate Deans of Research are sufficiently involved in the matter that their investigating could not objectively be regarded as independent, the matter shall be investigated by the Research Integrity Officer. The Research Ethics and Integrity Administrator within the Office of the Dean of Research is the designated administrator responsible for all research ethics and integrity matters in College. This person will manage and document all research misconduct allegations raised and facilitate and support the research of any investigation undertaken. The Dean of Research will report the outcome of any investigation to the RIO.

If allegations are deemed legitimate the Senior Dean will address disciplinary proceedings for staff members as necessary. In the event allegations relating to students are deemed legitimate, the Junior Dean (undergraduate) or Dean of Graduate Studies (postgraduate) will address disciplinary proceedings.



1.4.2 The Research Integrity Process

A concern may be reported to any individual in College. However, all matters involving issues of Research Integrity must be referred to the Dean of Research - see 1.4.3 for how to raise a concern.

On receiving the referral, the Office of the Dean of Research begins the coordination of informal preliminary enquiries to get familiar with the facts and whether College Research procedures were infringed ([2010 Consolidated Statutes of Trinity College Dublin](#)). Where the allegations are serious, and in particular where possible criminal conduct is involved, it will usually be inappropriate to deal with the matter informally.

As part of this informal enquiry the Dean of Research may:

- delegate responsibility for the review to an Associate Dean of Research depending on the nature of the enquiry
- contact the person raising the allegation to have them articulate it in more detail, thereby ensuring that they have fully expressed it and that the Dean of Research fully understands the allegation so that they can address each of the points raised
- gather information pertaining to the allegation from various other individuals who have responsibility, such as Head of School or Faculty Dean, and can address points raised.

NB. Every effort is made to resolve matters informally with the aforementioned panel

Where the allegation appears to be ill-founded, no further action is taken.

Where informal resolution is not possible, or if the allegation appears serious or of a criminal nature, then the Dean of Research will report preliminary findings to the RIO. On analysis of the report from the Office of the Dean of Research, if there is a case to answer, the RIO can instigate the DoR to undertake a formal investigation. The DoR may seek such assistance from external experts as is necessary.

- The RIO is informed of the outcome of the formal investigation by the DoR. If the allegation is upheld the matter is subject to the disciplinary process and will be carried out by the relevant College Officer according to College procedures:
 - the office of the Senior Dean if an academic or research staff member is at the centre of a case
 - the office of the Junior Dean if a undergraduate student is at the centre of a case
 - the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies if a postgraduate student is at the centre of a case

NB. Undergraduate and/or post graduate students will be disciplined as per [Academic Integrity procedures](#).



Appeals can be made on the outcome of the informal or formal process and should be addressed in writing to the RIO

1.4.3 How to Raise a Concern

Any member of college or external party may raise a concern on Research Integrity/Misconduct as follows:

- Please outline the nature of your concern to the designated email research.integrity@tcd.ie.
- In your email, you should include the following information:
 - your contact details
 - the name of the Trinity School, Discipline or other affiliation your concern is about
 - the specific nature of the concern and what precipitated it
 - when event occurred
 - include details of the alleged research integrity breach/misconduct and relevant supporting documentation

Regarding allegations of research misconduct:

- a) No person should suffer any penalty for making an allegation of research misconduct in good faith.
- b) The making in bad faith of allegations of research misconduct shall itself constitute research misconduct.
- c) Improper dealing with allegations of research misconduct – such as failing to address possible infringements, attempts to cover up misconduct, and reprisals against anyone who has made an allegation or complaint of research misconduct pursuant to the relevant Statute Chapter and Schedule shall itself constitute research misconduct.

The majority of instances are covered by the [general misconduct regulations](#). See Schedule 1 to the Chapter on Academic Staff Conduct; Schedule 1 to the Chapter on Administrative, Technical and Support Staff Conduct; Schedule 2 to the Chapter on Student Conduct and Capacity.

Complaints in relation to dignity and respect issues will be dealt with under the [College Dignity and Respect Procedures](#). Complaints that are upheld will be dealt with under the College Disciplinary Procedure as appropriate.

The University also has in place a [Protected Disclosures \(Whistleblowing\) Policy](#).