



Procedures for responding to allegations of research misconduct



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1. Purpose

This document sets out the procedures to be followed when responding to an allegation of research misconduct, and as such, it complements and supports Dublin City University’s Research Integrity Policy, which was approved by the Executive in December 2015 and updated in 2023. Users of these procedures are advised to refer to this policy prior to implementing the procedures set out in this document. Dublin City University will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the entire process is carried out in line with best practice recommendations as set out in the [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity](#) in Ireland (2019) and the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) (2017).

2. Scope



These procedures and the associated DCU Research Integrity Policy apply to all staff members, students and all those officially engaged in research work at Dublin City University and/or undertaking any research activity in Dublin City University's name (including visiting researchers). Any person, whether employed by Dublin City University or not, may make an allegation of research misconduct.

3. Definitions

Allegation

An allegation means any written or oral statement or other indication of possible research misconduct made to the Research Integrity Officer. Normally, allegations based on conduct, which occurred 5 years or more prior to the making of the allegation will not be inquired into. An allegation is not in good faith if it is made with reckless disregard for or willful ignorance of facts that would disprove the allegation.

Complainant

Complainant means a person who makes an allegation of research misconduct. Any person, whether employed by Dublin City University or not, may make an allegation of research misconduct under these procedures. Dublin City University will accept anonymous allegations of research misconduct, but may be limited in its ability to conduct related inquiries where there is no named complainant. Allegations which are anonymous or where there is no specific complainant will only be considered at the discretion of the Research Integrity Officer (RIO), taking into account: the seriousness of the concerns raised and the likelihood of confirming the concerns from alternative and credible sources/ evidence. It is also possible that there is no identifiable Complainant, or that the University is the initiator of the inquiry and investigation processes (for instance, in cases where the information comes to the University's attention from public domain or through a third-party source such as a peer reviewer).

Inquiry

An inquiry (stage 1) means gathering information and initial fact-finding to determine whether an allegation or apparent instance of research misconduct warrants an investigation.

Investigation

An investigation (stage 2) means the formal examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine if misconduct has occurred and, if so, to determine the responsible person and the seriousness of the misconduct.

Research Integrity Officer

The Research Integrity Officer (RIO) (or nominated alternate) is the person nominated by Dublin City University to promote adherence to the principles of research integrity. They (or nominated alternate) will also assist in the processing of any instances of allegations of research misconduct. This compliance aspect of the RIO role will be assisted by the Office of the Chief Operations Officer. Any reference to the Research Integrity Officer in this policy



should be read as a reference to the nominated alternate where one has been appointed.

Research misconduct

Research misconduct relates to breaches of research integrity. Where the principles and good practice underpinning research integrity are not followed, issues of research misconduct may arise. The most serious research integrity breaches that are classified as research misconduct are fabrication of data, falsification of data, and plagiarism of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. However, there are also other unacceptable research practices¹ that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research, and serious or repeated examples of such practices can constitute research misconduct. Research misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.

Research record

Research record means any data, document, computer file, computer storage medium, or any other written or non-written account or object that reasonably may be expected to provide evidence or information regarding the proposed, conducted, or reported research that constitutes the subject of an allegation of research misconduct. A research record includes, but is not limited to, grant or contract applications, whether funded or unfunded; grant or contract progress and other reports; laboratory notebooks; notes; correspondence; videos; photographs; X-ray film; slides; biological materials; computer files and printouts; manuscripts and publications; equipment use logs; laboratory procurement records; animal facility records; human and animal subject protocols; consent forms; medical charts; and patient research files.

Respondent

Respondent means the person(s) against whom an allegation of research misconduct is directed or the person whose actions are the subject of the inquiry or investigation. There can be more than one Respondent in any inquiry or investigation. Where there is more than one Respondent, each may be separately or jointly considered in the inquiry stage or the investigation stage and may be considered jointly or individually in any resulting report. The Inquiry Panel will determine whether multiple respondents should be addressed jointly or individually at either stage or in the resulting reports.

Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest means the real or apparent interference of one person's interests with the interests of another person, where potential bias may occur due to prior or existing personal or professional relationships.

¹ As outlined in the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) (2017) and the [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#) (2019).



Working Days

Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays and University closure periods.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

1) Research Integrity Officer

The Research Integrity Officer (or nominated alternate) for Dublin City University, assisted by the Office of the Chief Operations Officer, will have primary responsibility for implementation of the processes referred to in these procedures. They will appoint the Inquiry Panel and will ensure that necessary and appropriate expertise is secured to carry out a thorough and authoritative evaluation of the relevant evidence in an inquiry or investigation. Signed declarations of confidentiality and conflicts of interest will be obtained from the Inquiry Panel members and any other relevant staff involved in the investigation process. These written declarations will be kept as part of the documentation of proceedings.

The Research Integrity Officer (or nominated alternate) will assist Inquiry Panels and all institutional personnel in complying with these procedures and with applicable standards imposed by government or external funding sources. The Research Integrity Officer (or nominated alternate) will initiate and supervise/coordinate the investigation procedure but will not personally participate in any inquiry panels nor seek to influence the work or findings of said panels. The Research Integrity Officer (or nominated alternate) may call on other institutional officials as necessary, and in particular, where they could be deemed to have a conflict of interest in the case of a particular allegation made. The Office of the Chief Operating Officer is responsible for maintaining files of all documents and evidence and for the confidentiality and the security of these files.

In the event that an allegation of Research Misconduct is made concerning the Research Integrity Officer, the President of Dublin City University shall have primary responsibility for implementation of the processes set out in these procedures.

In the event that an allegation of Research Misconduct is made concerning the President of Dublin City University, the Chancellor of the University shall have primary responsibility for implementation of the processes set out in these procedures.

2) Complainant

The Complainant will have an opportunity to testify before the Inquiry Panel, to review portions of the inquiry and investigation reports pertinent to his/her allegations or testimony, to be informed of the results of the inquiry and investigation, and to be protected from retaliation. The Complainant is responsible for making allegations in good faith, maintaining confidentiality, and co-operating with an inquiry or investigation. No payment will be made



by Dublin City University for any advice sought by a Complainant as a result of the implementation of these procedures. Dublin City University will make diligent efforts to protect the position and reputation of a good faith Complainant. If an allegation is deemed to have been made in bad faith through implementation of these procedures, i.e. is made in order to cause harm to the Respondent, or wilfully disregards facts which would disprove the allegation, then the University may seek to apply disciplinary procedures set out in the Dublin City University Disciplinary Policy and Procedures under University Statute No. 5 of 2010: 'Suspension and Dismissal of Employees' for staff and the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline for students.

3) Respondent

The Respondent will be provided with a written notice when an inquiry is opened and notified in writing of the final determinations and resulting actions. The Respondent will also have the opportunity to be interviewed by, and present evidence to, the Inquiry Panel, to review the draft inquiry and investigation reports, and to take appropriate advice. No payment will be made by Dublin City University for any advice sought by a Respondent as a result of the implementation of these procedures. The Respondent is responsible for maintaining confidentiality and cooperating with the conduct of an inquiry or investigation. Dublin City University will make diligent efforts to protect the position and reputation of Respondents against unsubstantiated claims.

5. Procedures

The Research Integrity Officer has authority to suspend these procedures at any stage in a given case where, in the view of the Research Integrity Officer, such suspension is appropriate due to exceptional circumstances. The Research Integrity Officer will have authority to recommence the procedures after such a suspension.

Where an officer of the University identified in these procedures has a conflict of interest, their line manager may nominate an alternative officer of the University to fulfil the function, as set out in these procedures, of the initial officer.

5.1 Initiation of Inquiry

A) Receipt and initial assessment of allegation

An allegation of research misconduct must be submitted to the Research Integrity Officer (RIO) in writing.

A submission to the RIO may be anonymous, but normally for an inquiry to take place it will be necessary for the Complainant to identify themselves in the formal, written complaint. In the case of an anonymous submission or where there is no specific complainant, the RIO will



make an assessment regarding the seriousness of the concerns raised and the likelihood of confirming the concerns from alternative and credible sources/evidence.

When an allegation is first received, the RIO (assisted in confidence by internal experts if required) will check that the allegation falls within the definition of research misconduct as outlined in the DCU Research Integrity Policy and these procedures, and that the allegation provides sufficient information to initiate an enquiry. If it does, then the matter will be addressed via the inquiry process below. If it does not, the process will conclude at this point and the Complainant, where they are identifiable, should be informed of any alternative DCU policy or procedure through which their complaint could be pursued. It should be clear that the RIO's responsibilities with respect to processing the allegations have concluded at this point.

Following the preliminary assessment, if the RIO determines that the allegation provides sufficient information, they will initiate an inquiry process including sequestration of research records as appropriate. The Complainant will be notified in writing that an inquiry process is being initiated, and the Respondent will receive a written notice that an allegation of research misconduct have been received (and is being investigated) against them. At that time, the Research Integrity Officer will also notify the appropriate Executive Dean of Faculty that an allegation has been made, the basis for the allegation and the name of the person against whom an allegation has been made. The Executive Dean will maintain the confidentiality of the process of inquiry and investigation. Where an allegation is made against an Executive Dean, the RIO will inform the Deputy President. Dublin City University will adhere to any specific requirements of the external sponsor in respect of allegations of research misconduct agreed to under the Terms and Conditions of the research contract entered into by the Institution.

B) Membership of the Inquiry Panel

If the Research Integrity Officer (RIO) determines that an inquiry process should be initiated, they will appoint an Inquiry Panel and a Panel Chair, not more than 21 working days following initiation of the inquiry. The Inquiry Panel should consist of at least 3 individuals, and must always consist of an uneven number of members, who do not have real or apparent conflicts of interest in the case and are impartial. These individuals may be peer researchers, administrators, or other qualified persons, and they may be from inside or outside the institution. It is expected that the Inquiry Panel will include at least one peer researcher. Signed declarations of confidentiality and conflicts of interest will be obtained from the panel members and any other relevant staff involved in the inquiry process. These written declarations will be kept as part of the documentation of the inquiry proceedings.

Upon initiating an Inquiry Panel, the RIO shall inform Research and Innovation Support of the case. Research and Innovation Support shall inform the RIO of any requirements, including reporting and notification requirements, of external funding or sponsoring agencies in respect of investigations of research misconduct. The RIO will ensure that the subsequent application



of the *Procedures for responding to allegations of research misconduct* encompass any such requirements that are relevant to the case.

Once initiated, the Inquiry Panel should follow its course irrespective of the Complainant withdrawing the allegations, the Respondent admitting to the allegations, or the Complainant or Respondent resigning. The Inquiry Panel will first conduct a fact-gathering exercise (stage 1) and, based on the conclusion it reaches, it may conduct an investigation (stage 2).

5.2 Stage 1: Fact-gathering exercise

The purpose of stage 1 (a fact gathering exercise) is to make a preliminary evaluation of the available evidence and testimony of the Respondent, Complainant, and key witnesses to determine whether there is sufficient evidence of possible research misconduct to warrant an investigation. The purpose of stage 1 is not to reach a final conclusion about whether misconduct definitely occurred or who was responsible. The Inquiry Panel will normally interview the Complainant, Respondent and key witnesses, as well as examining relevant research records and materials. Within 60 working days of its first meeting, the Inquiry Panel must produce a draft preliminary inquiry report (a stage 1 report) that states the names and titles of the panel members and external experts, if any; the allegations; a summary of the inquiry process used; a list of the research records reviewed; summaries of any interviews; a description of the evidence in sufficient detail to demonstrate whether an investigation is warranted or not; and the panel's determination as to whether:

- i) stage 2 (investigation) should be initiated or not; and
- ii) whether any other actions should be taken if stage 2 is not to be initiated. For example, the stage 1 report may determine that an allegation has substance, but that, *prima facie*, the misconduct is insufficiently grave to warrant a full investigation. It may be decided to address the issue through education and training, in consultation with the Respondent's line manager.

In the event of unavoidable delays in gathering testimony and/or other evidence the duration of the panel's work can be extended on request by the RIO. It is at the discretion of the panel to submit a stage 1 report where it has not been possible to obtain testimony from the Complainant, Respondent or other witness if the panel believes alternative evidence is sufficient to conclude the preliminary inquiry.

The draft stage 1 report will be submitted to the RIO.

A) Comments on the Draft Report by the Respondent and the Complainant

The RIO will provide the Respondent with a copy of the draft stage 1 report for comment and rebuttal and will provide the Complainant with portions of the draft stage 1 report that address the Complainant's role and opinions in the investigation.



1. Confidentiality

The RIO may establish reasonable conditions for review to protect the confidentiality of the draft stage 1 report.

2. Receipt of Comments

The Complainant and Respondent will provide their comments, if any, to the Inquiry Panel within 15 working days of their receipt of the draft stage 1 report. In response to exceptional circumstances, the RIO (or nominated alternate) may extend this time limit. Any comments that the Complainant or Respondent submits on the draft report will become part of the final stage 1 report and record. Based on the comments, the Inquiry Panel may revise the draft stage 1 report as appropriate.

B) Inquiry Decision and Notification

Once the panel has received any comments submitted by the Complainant and Respondent, and has made any revisions to the draft report it deems appropriate, it will determine its findings and finalise the stage 1 report accordingly. Stage 1 is complete when the panel submits its final stage 1 report to the RIO.

The RIO will review the stage 1 report. Where the Inquiry Panel has concluded that stage 2 (an investigation) should be initiated, this decision is subject to the RIO being satisfied that procedures have been adequately followed and that measures are in place to ensure natural justice and fair procedures are observed.

The RIO will provide a copy of the final report to the Respondent and Complainant, advise both parties whether or not the process will proceed to stage 2 (an investigation), and will notify all appropriate institutional officials of the preliminary inquiry report's conclusion, including the Director of Human Resources, the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty, the Deputy President and the Vice President for Research.

5.3. Stage 2: Investigation

A) Purpose of the Investigation

The purpose of stage 2 (an investigation) is to explore in detail the allegations, to examine the evidence in depth, and to determine specifically whether misconduct has been committed, by whom, and to what extent. It will also be determined during stage 2 whether there are additional instances of possible misconduct that would justify broadening the scope beyond the initial allegations. Should any evidence or allegation arise during the formal investigation that suggests other instances of potential misconduct by the Respondent or potential misconduct in research by another person, then the Inquiry Panel should submit these new allegations to the RIO in writing. This submission should be accompanied by supporting



evidence and/or details of the alleged misconduct. The RIO shall decide what action, if any, is necessary. Concurrently, the RIO should notify the Respondent of any such developments. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, expansion of the scope of the existing Research Investigation Panel; the initiation of a new investigation under this procedure; and/or referral to another University policy.

The findings of the investigation will be set forth in an investigation report (a stage 2 report).

B) Investigation Process

The investigation will normally involve examination of all documentation including, but not necessarily limited to, relevant research records, computer files, financial records, proposals, manuscripts, publications, correspondence, memoranda, and notes of telephone calls. Additional research records not previously considered may be sequestered by the panel.

The Inquiry Panel shall consult with the RIO on the specific question of how to ensure natural justice and fair procedures are observed as part of the process. Whenever possible, the panel will interview the Complainant, the Respondent, and other individuals who might have information regarding aspects of the allegations. Interviews may be taped or transcribed. The Respondent may take appropriate advice and have an advisor present during investigation interviews.

5.4 Stage 2: The Investigation Report

A) Elements of the Stage 2 Report

The Inquiry Panel will submit the final report to the RIO within 60 working days of the completion of stage 1. In the event of unavoidable delays in gathering testimony and/or other evidence the duration of the panel's work can be extended by the Research Integrity Officer on the request of the panel. The final report must:

- i. describe the policies and procedures under which the investigation was conducted;
- ii. describe how and from whom information relevant to the investigation was obtained;
- iii. state whether the allegations have been upheld in full, upheld in part, or not upheld, and indicate the level of seriousness of any misconduct, give the reasons for and context of the findings, and explain the basis for the findings and record any differing views between members of the Inquiry Panel;
- iv. address any procedural matters that the investigation has brought to light within DCU and/or relevant partner organisations; and
- v. Where an allegation of research misconduct has been upheld, in full or in part, make a recommendation on whether the research record needs to be corrected.

The final report will include all comments received from the complainant, or an accurate summary of those comments, and the response of the Inquiry Panel to those comments. The panel may decide to produce a separate report for each Respondent, or to differentiate and



detail the responsibilities of each Respondent in a single report. The RIO may also ask the panel to clarify any of its findings in the draft report. The report should only be modified for errors of fact and/or clarification purposes, and be agreed by the panel before amendment.

1. Copy of the Report to the Respondent

The RIO will provide the Respondent with a copy of the draft investigation report for comment and rebuttal. The Respondent will be allowed to review and comment within 14 working days of receipt of the draft report. Comments should be on matters of fact only. The Respondent's comments will be attached to the final report. The findings of the final report should take into account the Respondent's comments in addition to all the other evidence.

2. Copy of the Report to the Complainant

The RIO will provide the Complainant, if they are identifiable, with those portions of the draft investigation report that address the Complainant's role and opinions in the investigation. The report should be modified, as appropriate, based on the Complainant's comments. Comments should be on matters of fact only.

3. Confidentiality

In distributing the draft report, or portions thereof, to the Respondent and Complainant, the Research Integrity Officer will inform the recipient of the confidentiality under which the draft report is made available and may establish reasonable conditions to ensure such confidentiality. For example, the Research Integrity Officer may request the recipient to sign a confidentiality statement or to come to their office to review the report.

B) Institutional Review and Decision

The RIO along with other institutional officials, to include the Director of Human Resources where the Respondent is a staff member or the Vice-President for Academic Affairs where the Respondent is a student, the relevant Executive Dean of Faculty, and the Vice President for Research will consider the investigation report and decide what additional steps, if any, should be taken.

The Research Integrity Officer may return the report to the Inquiry Panel with a request for further fact-finding or analysis.

After the Investigation Report has been subject to the Institutional Review and Decision step, and additional steps, if any, have been agreed, the RIO will notify both the Respondent and the Complainant in writing. Following a period of time to permit the submission and consideration of an appeal, the RIO will determine whether external agencies such as the Gardaí, professional societies, editors of journals in which falsified reports may have been



published, collaborators of the Respondent in the research, external funding agencies or other relevant parties should be notified of the outcome of the case.

5.5 Right to Appeal

The Respondent has the right to appeal on grounds which include (but are not restricted to): failure to follow appropriate procedures in the investigation; new evidence; arbitrary, capricious or erroneous decision-making, and; inappropriate disciplinary action. An appeal must be filed within 14 working days of receipt of the final determination by the RIO.

A Review Officer will be appointed by the President to be the institution official responsible for conducting the appeal. This will normally be the Deputy President. In order to make an appeal, the Respondent must prepare an appeal submission for issue to the Deputy President, which clearly states the basis for and nature of the appeal and which includes all relevant evidence. During the appeal process, the Review Officer may interview any party involved in the original investigation and will take appropriate actions to consider any new evidence.

The Review Officer will issue a decision to the Respondent and Complainant within 60 working days. In the event that an appeal is successful, the University will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the reputation of the Respondent is restored.

5.6 Institutional Administrative Actions

Dublin City University will take appropriate administrative actions against individuals when an allegation of misconduct has been substantiated. Any administrative actions taken by the institution with respect to Dublin City University's staff and students will be initiated in accordance with the appropriate Dublin City University's regulations and disciplinary procedures.

Administrative actions taken with respect to persons, who are not Dublin City University's employees, will be initiated in accordance with Dublin City University's policies and codes of practice, the terms and conditions of external sponsors and in compliance with relevant national legislation.

Administrative actions may include (but are not restricted to) any of the following:

1. The initiation of steps for implementation of the Dublin City University disciplinary procedures under Dublin City University Statute No. 5 of 2010: 'Suspension and Dismissal of Employees' leading to demotion or dismissal (relevant to Dublin City University employees only).



2. The initiation of steps for implementation of the Dublin City University disciplinary procedures under the terms of the University Regulations for undergraduate and postgraduate students.
3. Withdrawal or correction of all pending or published abstracts and papers emanating from the research where research misconduct was found.
4. Removal of the responsible person from the particular project, letter of reprimand, special monitoring of future work and / or restitution of funds as appropriate.
5. Publication of the final Inquiry Panel's investigation report, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2014.
6. Notification to research sponsors, external agencies and appropriate authorities as appropriate of the determination of the Inquiry Panel.

5.7 Record Retention

All records relating to the case will be maintained for a period of three years, for the purposes of reporting and case evaluation. Relevant data relating to the case may also be maintained in a database to facilitate case evaluation. The Office of the Chief Operations Officer will maintain all data relating to allegations of research misconduct. Information may be presented in aggregate form during case evaluation and reporting, following publication of individual case reports. The University is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

An Information Sheet summarising DCU Research Integrity Policy and the Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct for researchers is attached as appendix 2. The Dublin City University Code of Good Research Practice is available via the Office of the Vice-President for Research' website [here](#) .

6. Contact

Any queries regarding these procedures should be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Research, research@dcu.ie, 01-7008000.

7. Procedure Review

These procedures will be reviewed as and when changes are required to ensure their continuing relevance. Such review will be based on analysis and experiential learning arising



from cases covered by the policy on research misconduct and these procedures in the intervening period, as well as the relevant external policy environment.

Appendix 1 – Policy Implementation and Indicative Timeline

#	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe (in working days)
1	Appointment of Inquiry Panel	Research Integrity Officer	Within 21 working days of initiation of policy.
2	First meeting of Inquiry Panel	Research Integrity Officer	Within 15 working days of the appointment of Inquiry Panel
3	Production of Draft Inquiry Report.	Inquiry Panel	As soon as possible but within a maximum of 60 working days of the first meeting of Inquiry Panel
4	Comments on Draft Inquiry Report	Respondent and Complainant	Within 15 working days of receipt of draft inquiry report.
5	Production of Draft Investigation Report	Inquiry Panel	As soon as possible but within a maximum of 60 working days of the commencement of stage 2.
6	Comments on Draft Investigation Report	Respondent and Complainant	Within 14 working days of receipt of investigation report.
7	Determination following Final Investigation Report	Research Integrity Officer	Within 14 working days of receipt of Final Investigation Report.
8	Filing of an Appeal	Respondent	Within 14 working days of receipt of the final determination.
9	Determination following Appeal	Deputy President	Within 60 working days of receipt of appeal submission.
			Total possible no. of working days: 273



Appendix 2 – Making an Allegation of Research Misconduct

Information Sheet for Researchers

This information sheet is available to anyone considering making an allegation of research misconduct under the DCU Research Integrity Policy and the DCU Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct. It should help you to make a decision on whether this is the right policy to address your concerns and will explain to you what steps Dublin City University will take in response to an allegation of research misconduct.

WHAT is research misconduct?

Research misconduct means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other unacceptable research practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting or reporting research. It covers issues that are serious enough to put the legitimacy of research outcomes in doubt. Examples of research misconduct include **falsifying or fabricating data, plagiarism, or misusing research funding.**

In addition, these procedures also cover other unacceptable research practices, which includes:

- Non-retention of primary data
- Withholding of data from the scientific community
- Claiming undeserved authorship
- Denying authorship to contributors
- Misuse of research funds for unauthorized purchases or for personal gain
- Violation of human participant protocols
- Abuse of laboratory animals

A more comprehensive list of unacceptable research practices and cases of research misconduct is referenced in the [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland \(2019\)](#).

Research misconduct does **not** include honest errors or differences of interpretation. Nor does it include issues that are already covered under another policy. Examples of existing policies that cover related issues include policies for students published by the Office of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. You should first check that your allegation does not fall under one of these other policies. Making an allegation of research misconduct in good faith will be treated as confidentially and as rigorously as possible by Dublin City University. Someone considering making an allegation of research misconduct may request an informal



discussion with the Research Integrity Officer before deciding whether or not to submit a complaint.

WHO can make an allegation of research misconduct?

Anyone can make an allegation of research misconduct, whether or not they are employed by Dublin City University. Examples include: an academic; an administrator; a researcher; a research partner; a research sponsor; a postgraduate student; a visiting researcher; or a research study participant. It is expected that the allegation will relate to research conducted by or primarily involving a Dublin City University researcher and will be made in good faith, i.e. not made to cause harm to a researcher or to ignore facts which would disprove the allegation. We all share a responsibility to report research misconduct.

If you are making an allegation of research misconduct, it is preferable that you identify yourself. Anonymous complaints can be considered but by their nature may be more difficult to investigate in the absence of detailed information and evidence. You will be asked to attend at investigation meetings to discuss your allegation and to provide any evidence to back up your statements. Other colleagues connected with the research project or programme may also be asked to provide evidence and to speak to investigating University officials.

HOW will my confidentiality be protected if I do make an allegation of research misconduct?

During any inquiry and investigation into your allegation, the Research Integrity Officer (RIO) will take all reasonable steps to protect your confidentiality. The Office of the Chief Operations Officer will securely store the information relating to the allegation and insofar as possible will not release information which could identify you. Your name will be deleted from written documentation and published reports.

WHAT will happen if I make an allegation of research misconduct?

Having received your allegation and discussed it with you, the RIO first makes a decision about whether it is appropriate to implement the DCU Research Integrity Policy and the associated Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct. If the issues are relevant to the policy, they will establish an Inquiry Panel to determine whether a full investigation is warranted. The Inquiry Panel will have the right to seek any information or evidence necessary to conduct its work and to hold interviews with relevant individuals. During the inquiry, you will be asked to meet with the Inquiry Panel membership to discuss your allegation and to provide any evidence you have to support your allegation.

Following the initial inquiry (stage 1), if there is enough evidence that research misconduct may have taken place, the investigation stage (stage 2) will commence to determine the facts, the nature and the degree of seriousness of the misconduct. The Inquiry Panel will seek any information necessary to conduct its work and to hold interviews with relevant individuals. During the inquiry, you will be asked to meet with the Inquiry Panel membership to discuss your allegation and to provide any evidence you have to support your allegation.



Following consideration of the evidence available, the Inquiry Panel will prepare a report for submission to the RIO. You and the person who is the subject of the investigation will receive a copy and will be able to add comments to it. The RIO will consider the report and will take decisions on actions to be taken in consultation with the relevant Executive Dean of Faculty, Vice President of Research and the Director of Human Resources where the Respondent is a member of staff and the Vice President for Academic Affairs where the Respondent is a student.

If an appeal is not made to the Deputy President, then the report becomes the official record of your allegation and the investigation of your allegation. Your name will be deleted from the published report. If an appeal is lodged, the Deputy President of the University will normally lead the appeals procedure and may seek to interview you once more. Any sanctions to be taken following the implementation of the policy will be decided by senior University officials, in accordance with the University regulations and disciplinary procedures.

Where do I go to make an allegation of research misconduct?

The first steps in the process are to read this information sheet, the DCU Research Integrity Policy and the DCU Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct as well as the DCU Code of Good Research Practice. Then check out the research website for information on research ethics and integrity at:

<https://www.dcu.ie/researchsupport/research-integrity-dcu>

If you now want to discuss your allegation initially in confidence before making an official allegation – contact the Research Integrity Officer at 01 7005117 or by email coo@dcu.ie . An allegation of research misconduct may be made first orally and then in writing to the Research Integrity Officer, Dublin City University.

Version Control

Procedure Name	Procedures for responding to allegations of research misconduct		
Unit Owner	Office of the Vice-President for Research		
Version Reference	Original Version 3.0	Reviewed Version 2.1	
Approved by	Executive		
Effective Date	30/05/2023		

End.