

The University of Copenhagen's rules for handling cases of questionable research practice and research misconduct.

Part 1. General provisions

Purpose

Section 1.

The purpose of these rules is to promote responsible research practice at the University of Copenhagen and to provide a basis for the activities of the Committee for Responsible Research Practice (the Practice Committee), see Part 2.

(2)

The rules apply to research conducted by or at the University of Copenhagen, or that forms the basis for a degree bestowed by the University of Copenhagen. The rules also apply to research conducted in other contexts by employees of the University of Copenhagen.

(3)

The rules also concern such aspects of teaching, communication and public-sector services that are based on research as set out in (2).

Basis

Section 2.

The assessment of whether a particular practice is in accordance with the requirements for responsible research practice is based on applicable legislation, which at the time of the adoption of these rules is Act no. 383 on research misconduct etc. of 26 April 2017 as well as the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, drawn up by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. As interpretative aids, other broadly accepted institutional, national and international guidelines for research integrity are used, such as the Vancouver Rules (International Committee of Medical Journal Editors), the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (European Science Foundation) and The Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (World Conferences on Research Integrity).

Section 3.

Responsible research practice should be promoted in such a way that the interests of academic freedom are not jeopardised.

Named Persons

Section 4.

The individual faculties at the University of Copenhagen have appointed Named Persons, who are responsible for providing consultancy to faculty members on research misconduct and questionable research practice. The guidelines for the activities of Named Persons are described in 'Guidelines for Named Persons at the University of Copenhagen'.

Part 2. The Committee for Responsible Research Practice (the Practice Committee)

The Practice Committee

Section 5.

The Rector appoints a committee to address questions of responsible research practice, known as the 'Committee for Responsible Research Practice (the Practice Committee)'.

(2)

Professors, associate professors or senior scientists at the University of Copenhagen are eligible to be members of the Committee, however, see (4) below. SUND and SCIENCE each appoint two members, while HUMANITIES, LAW, SOCIAL SCIENCES and THEOLOGY appoint one each. They also nominate substitutes for each member. Members and substitutes are appointed for a period of three years. Reappointment is permitted. Substitutes are normally only invited to the Committee in the event of members' long-term absence.

(3)

Committee members and substitutes are appointed by the faculties' academic councils.

(4)

In special cases, the Rector may approve the appointment of an emeritus professor, an emeritus associate professor or an emeritus senior scientist.

(5)

The Practice Committee elects a chair and a deputy from among its members.

(6)

The Practice Committee adopts rules of procedure.

(7)

The Practice Committee may seek expert assistance from individuals with special insight into a particular subject, see also part 5.

Section 6.

The Practice Committee acts as an independent body.

(2)

In its work, including the assessment of specific cases, the Practice Committee is independent of the Rector and is therefore, in these contexts, not under the Rector's authority.

(3)

The Rector provides secretarial services to the Practice Committee.

(4)

The Secretariat assists the chair and the Committee in their work, as agreed with the chair.

Tasks

Section 7.

The Practice Committee is responsible for

- 1) helping to clarify the existing norms for responsible research practice
- 2) taking steps to ensure that the norms for responsible research practice are discussed
- 3) assessing whether claims to the Committee concern questionable research practice or research misconduct, see part 4
- 4) dealing with cases of questionable research practice, see part 5.

(2)

The Practice Committee may also – on a mandate from the Rector or of its own volition – propose rules and guidance on responsible research practice.

(3) The Practice Committee decides how its work is organised.

(4) The Practice Committee publishes an annual report on its activities.

Part 3. Reporting of cases of questionable research practice and research misconduct.

Initiative

Section 8.

Claims of questionable research practice and research misconduct related to the University of Copenhagen are submitted electronically to the Practice Committee in accordance with the procedure set out on the Committee's website at <https://praksisudvalget.ku.dk/>.

Section 9.

A case can be brought before the Practice Committee by

- 1) a named physical or legal person submitting a written claim
- 2) a person who wishes to be cleared of rumours or accusations submitting a written claim
- 3) the Committee taking up a case on its own initiative.

Part 4. Claims of questionable research practice and research misconduct.

Section 10

If the claim concerns research misconduct, the Practice Committee sends the case to the The Danish Committee on Research Misconduct provided that the claim contains information about:

- 1) the scientific product that is the subject of the claim,
- 2) the name(s) of the researcher(s) that the claim concerns,
- 3) the allegations of research misconduct that have been brought and
- 4) the grounds for the allegations of research misconduct.

(2)

After dialogue with the Committee on Research Misconduct, the Practice Committee prepares an account of the facts of the case and sends the case to the Committee on Research Misconduct within three months of receiving the claim.

(3)

The Practice Committee rejects the case without submitting it to the Committee on Research Misconduct if the information listed in (1) is not submitted by the complainant. The Practice Committee considers whether there is a basis for handling the case as a matter of questionable research practice, see part 5.

(4)

The Practice Committee does not submit a case to the Committee on Research Misconduct if it finds that the case does not concern research misconduct.

Part 5. Handling cases of questionable research practice

Deadlines

Section 11.

A case of questionable research practice must be brought before the Practice Committee within a reasonable time after the person who initiates proceedings has received, or should have received, the necessary information to raise the matter. A case brought under section 9 (1) no. 1 must not relate to matters that are more than five years old when the case is taken up by the Practice Committee. A case brought under section 9 (1) no. 2 must not relate to rumours or accusations that the person concerned has known about for more than six months when the Practice Committee is requested to consider the case. In special cases, the Practice Committee may disregard these deadlines.

Rejection

Section 12.

The Practice Committee can reject a case of questionable research practice if the claim is manifestly unfounded or if the case is found to be outside the remit of the Committee, see section 1.

Suspension

Section 13.

If a similar case is dealt with by another authority or body, proceedings may be suspended until a decision is reached in that case. The Practice Committee advises whoever brought the matter accordingly.

Information

Section 14.

The Practice Committee makes sure that sufficient information is available for cases of questionable research conduct. The Practice Committee may ask for comments from experts.

(2)

For a particular case on questionable research practice, the Practice Committee can establish an ad hoc committee made up of experts representing the relevant subject area in particular. Individuals who are not members of the Practice Committee are allowed to be part of ad hoc committees. An ad hoc committee makes recommendations to the Practice Committee. For ad hoc committees, the provisions in section 15 (1) first sentence and (2) apply.

Statement of opinion

Section 15.

The Practice Committee terminates its proceedings with a statement of opinion as to whether the case submitted can be characterised as questionable research practice. The proceedings should generally be completed within six months of the case being brought before the Practice Committee.

(2)

If the Practice Committee does not reach a consensus, the minority position and reasons must be stated separately.

(3)

The Practice Committee forwards its statement to the parties and the Rector for information and any further action. The Practice Committee also sends decisions from the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct to the Rector for information and any further action.

Complaints and reopening of cases

Section 16.

The Practice Committee's statements of opinion cannot be appealed to any other administrative authority.

(2) Cases that have been decided by the Committee can only be reopened if new information has been obtained that presumably would have led to a different outcome, and only if the party requesting the reopening could not reasonably have submitted such information at the original case proceedings in the Practice Committee. In special cases, however, the Practice Committee may also permit the reopening of decided cases in other instances of special circumstances.

Rules and regulations

Section 17.

The rules of the Danish Public Administration Act are applicable to the work of the Practice Committee.

Part 6. Date of commencement, etc.

Section 18.

These rules came into force on 1 July 2021.

(2)

When necessary, the Practice Committee submits a report to the Rector about the application of the rules, including proposals for any amendments.

University of Copenhagen, 17 August 2021

Henrik C. Wegener, Rector

/Director of Rector's office, Vibeke Raaschou-Nielsen