Path2Integrity

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Researchers, research institutions, scientific journals, government and regulatory agencies as well as funding agencies all safeguard good research and ensure reliable research results! (cf. ECoC 2017, p. 5)

Description and background

This learning unit:

- Introduces students to the research environment

- Challenges students to value good research and reliable research results

- Enables students to realise guardians in research

- Emphasises that research is embedded in a broader research environment

An advocate for research integrity

Albrecht Beutelspacher

Keywords

Research integrity; codes and regulations; research environment; guardians; ombudsperson; data management officer; research ethics committee

This unit has been prepared for non-disciplinary learning groups.

Learning objectives

1 *Identify, accept and actively use research rules*

2 *Realise the existence of research codes and regulations within research institutions and organisations*

3 *Review rules from clear research codes and regulations*

4 *Request that researchers follow research rules*

Learning stages

1 *Become familiar with the topic*

2 *Dive into an interesting story*

3 *Engage in storytelling*

4 *Put the pieces together*

5 *Reflect on rules for researchers*

"Universities and research institutions can promote research integrity at various levels. There are codes of good scientific practice and there are appropriate committees that monitor compliance in case of conflict." (Albrecht Beutelspacher, an advocate for research integrity)

1 Become familiar with the topic:

Find out who in your region observes and helps in situations that jeopardise research. Search for the following words: ombudsperson (ombudsman), data management officer in research or research ethics committee. Find out what they do, their contact information for your region and if possible their task description. Bring this information to your class.

2 Dive into an interesting story:

Review or look up the story from LONA Science Centre (video or text). Briefly flesh out what characteristics the students (Emma, Rebecca and David) and two researchers (Prof. Weis and her colleague) have. Imagine the story continues as follows:

Mr. Liebling, the class teacher, starts a project week with his students called "Research integrity" to analyse what happened at the research institution that some of his students had visited. He wants his students to understand why such incidents do not conform to the guidelines of good research.

Researchers with research integrity generate results that society can rely on. They are able to explain step by step how they arrived at their research results. Furthermore, the results should be reproducible by others. Researchers with research integrity use the standards of their research discipline as a guideline from the first idea for new research to the end of the research process.

Researchers are both supported by and observed within their research environment. Some people specialise in observing and advising to keep research reliable and trustworthy. Their tasks are outlined in research ethics committee policies, codes for good scientific practice, task descriptions of ombudspersons, declarations of data protection etc.

3 Engage in storytelling:

● **Build groups of three to four persons.** Imagine you are Mr. Liebling's students. You plan to write one scene of a play telling Emma's, Rebecca's and David's story.

● **Discuss the following topics before you start writing:**

1. Who are the actors in your play?

2. Should Emma contact guardians of research integrity (such as an ombudsperson, a data management officer in research or a research ethics committee)?

3. Which research policies exist in your region and can be used in the play? Are there institutional regulations your actors can refer to? Or national regulations? What about European regulations? Search for relevant documents and refer to them.

● **Your scene should include a dialogue about good research.** By putting honesty, respect, reliability and accountability first, your actors should emerge from the conflict and stand up for research integrity. Write your scene.

● **Read some of your stories aloud!**

European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

4 Put the pieces together:

Take a short break from your stories. Come back together as a class. Collect your information about your research environment by showing your material on ombudspersons, research ethics committees and data officers. Decide together what information is important for your region, and write it down in your notebook.

5 Reflect on rules for researchers:

Return to your stories with the groups you were working in earlier. Imagine that other students will watch your scene. Decide together which rules of research behaviour your fellow students should learn through your scene.

Researchers should _____.

Researchers should _____.

Researchers should _____.

Researchers should _____.

What do ombudspersons do?

They can be called to enforce the rules of good research practice in the event of suspicion of misconduct. All enquiries and procedures will be treated confidentially and impartially. The support includes advice, assessment and recommendation (first advice also by telephone or email).

What are data management officers in research?

They ensure and monitor compliance with the research data management policy and provide technical support.

What are the tasks of a research ethics committee?

Research ethics committees assess ethical issues in research projects, provide information and advice in compliance with legal requirements, professional rules and research standards. The support includes advice, assessment and recommendation.