

Policy Identifier: Good Research Practice

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| Policy Title: | Good Research Practice Policy |
| Description: | This policy sets out the key behaviours and responsibilities expected by the Institute for any research or innovation work it sponsors, which is undertaken in its name or by its staff and student body |
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Good Research Practice Policy

1 Context

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) is committed to research excellence. The research environment at MIE is based on the key qualities of honesty, openness, care, integrity and accountability. The Institute is committed to developing and nurturing a culture of research integrity. This is achieved through actively supporting researchers and defining clearly how they can comply with ethical guidelines and good research practice. The aim is to create a framework for understanding how to design, manage, conduct, and disseminate research in a conscientious and responsible manner. Scholarly research is conducted at MIE under the superintending structure of ethical matters for MIE in the form of the Marino Ethics in Research Committee (MERC). This committee that has responsibility for the oversight of all policies relating to research ethics and research integrity¹.

2 Purpose

MIE recognises that research excellence is an endeavour based upon trust and the maintenance of the highest standards of behaviour. It acknowledges that its good reputation and the good repute of its research is dependent on its integrity. This policy sets out the key behaviours and responsibilities expected by the Institute for any research or innovation work it sponsors, which is undertaken in its name or by its staff and student body. We are committed to ensuring the highest standards of integrity in all aspects of our research, founded on basic principles of good research practice to be observed by all researchers and research organisations.

3 Benefits

The practice of research will require adherence to principles of ethics and integrity that may vary in their details according to the type of research undertaken. This policy will be routinely reviewed every three years unless earlier revision is required due to a major change in the legislation, regulations and guidance that govern good research practice. Researchers should make efforts to understand and meet the expected standards of integrity and good practice relevant to their work. To facilitate such efforts, this document provides guidelines on good practice in research. It is intended for all staff and students carrying out research at or on behalf of MIE.

¹ [Ethics in Research Policy](#)

4 Principles

The [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) specifies the basic principles that underpin all research integrity and good practice in carrying out research. The principles outlined below are taken from the national policy statement and must be adhered to by all researchers:

- i. Honesty in presenting research goals and intentions, in precise and nuanced reporting on research methods and procedures, and in conveying valid interpretations and justifiable claims with respect to possible applications of research results.
- ii. Reliability in performing research (meticulous, careful and attentive to detail), and in communication of the results (fair and full and unbiased reporting).
- iii. Objectivity: interpretations and conclusions must be founded on facts and data capable of proof and secondary review; there should be transparency in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data, and verifiability of the scientific reasoning.
- iv. Impartiality and independence from commissioning or interested parties, from ideological or political pressure groups, and from economic or financial interests.
- v. Open communication in discussing the work with other scientists, in contributing to public knowledge through publication of the findings, in honest communication to the general public. This openness presupposes a proper storage and availability of data, and accessibility for interested colleagues.
- vi. Duty of care for participants in and the subjects of research, be they human beings, animals, the environment or cultural objects. Research on human subjects and animals should always rest on the principles of respect and duty of care.
- vii. Fairness in providing proper references and giving due credits to the work of others, in treating colleagues with integrity and honesty.
- viii. Responsibility for future science generations: the education of young scientists and scholars requires binding standards for mentorship and supervision. In addition, we recognise that research should always be designed and conducted in accordance with ethical principles², and with appropriate review processes in place to ensure this.
- ix. Integrity: research integrity² covers many issues including research misconduct, conflict of interest and policies for inquiring into allegations of research misconduct. Policies in MIE relating to research integrity are guided by the national policy statement [Ensuring](#)

² [Ethics in Research Policy](#)

[Research Integrity in Ireland](#). All individuals involved in research at MIE are expected to observe the highest standards of integrity, honesty and professionalism in respect of their own actions in research and in their responses to the actions of others. This applies to the whole range of research work including, but not limited to: designing studies and experiments; generating, recording, archiving, analysing and interpreting data; sharing data and materials; applying for funding; presenting and publishing results; training new researchers, staff and students; and peer reviewing the work of other researchers. The direct and indirect contributions of colleagues, collaborators and others should be acknowledged.

- x. MIE expects research results to be checked for accuracy and consistency by the researchers responsible for them before being made public. Researchers must be able to explain and justify how results were reached.

5 Definitions

- 5.1 **Research:** Research is defined as an original discussion or investigation undertaken in order to generate new knowledge, understanding, and insight. It refers to all aspects of the research process³.
- 5.2 **Researchers:** Researchers are defined as anyone who is involved in contributing to research. This includes academic, research, and relevant research support staff employed by the Institute, and other individuals carrying out research at, or on behalf of, the Institute.
- 5.3 **Plagiarism:** This includes the general misappropriation or use of others' ideas, intellectual property or work (written or otherwise), without acknowledgement or permission⁴.
- 5.4 **Fabrication:** This includes the creation of false data or other aspects of research, including documentation and participant consent.
- 5.5 **Falsification:** This includes the inappropriate manipulation and/or selection of data, imagery and/or consents.
- 5.6 **Conflict of Interest:** For the purposes of this policy, the definition of Conflict of Interest shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - 5.6.1 When a person's judgement concerning a primary interest could be unduly influenced by a secondary interest.

³ [Guidelines on GDPR for Research Purposes](#)

⁴ [Procedure for Preventing and Responding to Cases of Suspected Plagiarism](#)

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- 5.6.2 Apart from financial interests (including benefit in kind), conflicts might, for example, be personal, academic or political.
- 5.6.3 Conflicts of interest can occur at any stage of the research endeavour. For example, submitting the same proposal to different grant bodies may be acceptable, whereas accepting more than one source of funding for exactly the same proposal may not be acceptable.
- 5.6.4 There is nothing inherently unethical in finding oneself in a position of conflict of interest; what is required is to recognise the fact and deal with it accordingly.
- 5.7 **Research Misconduct:** Research Misconduct is defined as but is not limited to fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

6 Policy

6.1 Research Misconduct

MIE takes allegations of misconduct in research very seriously. The Institute is committed to ensuring that allegations of misconduct in research are investigated with all possible thoroughness and vigour. All members of MIE, and individuals permitted to work there, have a responsibility to report any incident of misconduct, whether this has been witnessed, or is suspected.

Research misconduct includes, but is not limited to, misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors, or inappropriate attribution of authorship. 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.

6.1.1 Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

6.1.2 Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing, distorting, dishonestly misinterpreting or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. The omission of data is considered falsification when it misleads the reader about the results of the research. Publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading is regarded as falsification. The *research record* is the record of data⁵ or

⁵ [Document Retention Policy](#) and [MIE Records Retention Schedule](#)

results that embody the facts resulting from scientific inquiry, and includes, but is not limited to, research proposals, laboratory records, both physical and electronic, progress reports, abstracts, theses, oral presentations, internal reports, and journal articles.

- 6.1.3 Plagiarism⁶ is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, or dishonest use of unacknowledged resources.

Maliciously making false accusations of research misconduct against someone is considered a serious matter that may be dealt with using MIE's [Disciplinary Policy](#) and [Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students](#). However, drawing new conclusions from material previously interpreted in a different way, which may result in previous conclusions being contested, is not regarded as maliciously making false accusations of research misconduct. Research misconduct includes failure to obtain appropriate permission where required to conduct research, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent and also includes misuse of research funds or research equipment.

Research Misconduct also includes collaborating with others to become involved in research misconduct or encouraging others to be involved or concealing research misconduct by others when there is clear evidence to that effect.

- 6.1.4 Deception in relation to research proposals. Investigators should take all reasonable measures to ensure that accuracy and completeness of information is contained in applications for funding. Misrepresentation of a researcher's qualifications or ability to perform the research in grant applications or similar submissions may constitute falsifications or fabrication in proposing research.
- 6.1.5 Integrity in managing research projects. Principal Investigators should take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with sponsor, institutional, legal, ethical and moral obligations in managing projects.
- 6.1.6 Behaviour in the conduct of research. The Institute acknowledges that it must play a proactive role in helping researchers achieve good practice in research. Researchers must strive continually to improve their scholarship and to ensure that their knowledge is current. Above all, they must bring due care and diligence to

⁶ [Procedure for Preventing and Responding to Cases of Suspected Plagiarism](#)

bear upon the discharge of their academic duties in relation to research. In particular staff involved in research must ensure that deviation from good research practice does not occur where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, particularly children and vulnerable adults, animals or the environment.

6.2 Determination of Research Misconduct

The Institute will investigate all allegations of research misconduct using the procedures outlined in accordance with its established [Disciplinary Policy](#) and [Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students](#). A finding of research misconduct requires that there be a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community; and the misconduct be committed intentionally, or knowingly, or recklessly; and the allegation be proven by a preponderance of evidence.

Raising a false or malicious allegation is a serious breach of this policy. Allegations which are found to be malicious will be treated as serious misconduct under Institute disciplinary procedures. This provision should not deter the reporting of genuine complaints. Research misconduct includes retaliation of any kind against a person, who acting in good faith, reported or provided information about suspected or alleged misconduct.

6.3 Conflict of Interest

The Institute has the right to know that a recognised expert in a given area has an interest, material or otherwise which could be seen to pose a conflict. Declaring such interests is one way of indicating that the declared interest is perfectly ethical and need not interfere in the researcher's capacity to conduct independent research. Researchers should declare and manage any real or potential conflicts of interest, both financial and professional. Researchers should ensure that they abide by any conflict of interest requirements of funders or that are otherwise relevant to their research.

Disclosure of any potential conflict of interest is essential for the responsible conduct of research. This should cover disclosure of such interests to the persons responsible for institutional research management, to the editors of journals to which papers are submitted and to bodies from which funds are sought.

An obligation is placed on the recipients of all research grants to declare any interest that would interfere with or compromise the performance of research supported by the grantor. This is to ensure the technical integrity and impartiality of the researcher's work.

If a researcher working with an organisation is approached by a competing entity, the onus is on the researcher to inform the latter entity that they are already conducting some work for the former entity provided there is a substantial overlap in the research endeavour. Similarly, the researcher should only accept a contract with the latter entity if they have informed the former entity of this new contract (if there is a substantial overlap in the research endeavour).

6.4 Openness

Whilst recognising the need for researchers to protect their own intellectual property rights (IPR), the Institute encourages researchers to be as open as possible in discussing their work with other researchers and with the public. The aim in disseminating research is to increase knowledge and understanding: its purpose should not be primarily to seek publicity for the researcher or for the Institute.

The Institute is committed to disseminating research and scholarship as widely as possible, whilst affirming academic freedom to choose the location and nature of publication. In keeping with this commitment, the Institute supports its staff in making their research available through Open Access. Once results have been published, the Institute expects researchers to make available relevant data and materials to other researchers, on request, provided that this is consistent with any ethical approvals and consents which cover the data and materials, confidentiality considerations, and any intellectual property rights in them.

6.5 Research Design

All projects should have a clear aim and should be designed to address that aim in a way which is rigorous, transparent, efficient, effective and fair. Timescales, resources and methodologies should be justifiable and proportionate to the project. The Institute supports peer review as an effective means of ensuring that this is the case. Research methodology must be rigorous and well-planned to ensure that results are as robust and unambiguous as possible, and to enable reproducibility of studies.

Research methodology should include:

- i. Statistical tests to determine adequate power, sample and group size.
- ii. A description of how bias in data collection and analysis will be managed.

Researchers should maintain accurate records of their methodologies, procedures and the approvals granted during a project. These should be reported clearly in any

publications to enable the study to be repeated. Research records should include clear cross-referencing to electronic data sources.

6.6 Sharing Research Outputs

Researchers have a fundamental right to publish their findings. This right must be taken into consideration when contractual agreements are made with funding partners. An individual researcher's right in this context must be within the framework of any collaboration with other participants, having respect for agreements made and for other participants' rights.

Researchers should publish their findings in good time and should not unnecessarily withhold data that may be of interest to the public or to the advancement of knowledge.

The Institute encourages the publication of and dissemination of results of high-quality research but believes that researchers must do this responsibly and with an awareness of the consequences of any such dissemination in the wider media. The Institute expects all outputs of research to be shared openly and as quickly as possible. At the same time, it is recognised that there may be an overriding need for confidentiality in some instances. For example, if researchers generate intellectual property during a grant, they must consider how to protect it before disclosure and in line with our policy. Besides publications, patents and pre-prints, other important research outputs may include datasets, technologies, software reagents and policy reports.

Arrangements and responsibilities for the publication of results should be taken into account when planning a study and should ideally be agreed by all investigators at the outset. These should be revisited where role and contributions change over the life cycle of the study. Such discussions might include authorship, authorisation for the content of papers, and the intended place of publication. Authors must have had significant input into the research. This could be through the design, execution or interpretation of the research. They must also accept accountability for the content of the publication.

Researchers should take into account the following guidance when publishing or disseminating their research or research findings including any plans they may have to publish or publicise research at conferences or on websites.

- 6.6.1 Research should normally be peer reviewed prior to it being published, publicised or disseminated. If research is placed in the public domain before peer review has been undertaken, it is good practice to make this clear in any publicity.

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- 6.6.2 Funding sources should normally be acknowledged in any publication or publicity.
- 6.6.3 Results of research should be published in an appropriate form.
- 6.6.4 Anyone listed as an author on a paper should accept responsibility for ensuring that he or she is familiar with the contents of the paper and can identify his or her contribution to it. Honorary authorship is not good practice.
- 6.6.5 The contributions of formal collaborators and all others who directly assist or indirectly support the research should be both specified and properly acknowledged.
- 6.6.6 Researchers should make every effort to ensure that research is disseminated in a responsible manner, in such a way that results are not overstated.

6.7 Supervision

MIE has an institutional responsibility to ensure integrity and ethical practice in the conduct of research. In the case of graduate and undergraduate research, responsibility devolves to the supervisor in overseeing the student's research project. The supervisor has a duty of care to ensure integrity and ethical practice in research as well as a pedagogical responsibility to help develop the new researcher's understanding of appropriate research practices. The Institute wishes to ensure that appropriate training and direction of research and supervision of researchers is available. Training in supervisory skills is provided as part of the Institute's overall staff [Continuing Professional Development](#) programme.

It is mandatory that supervisors supervise all stages of the research process, including outlining or drawing up a hypothesis, preparing applications for funding, protocol design, data recording and data analysis. The supervisor is expected to ensure that students and new researchers understand and adopt best practice as quickly as possible. Supervisors should facilitate their researchers in undertaking appropriate training, for example in research design, regulatory and ethics approvals and consents⁷, equipment use, confidentiality, data management, record keeping⁸ and data protection as stated in [MIE Privacy Policy](#).

6.8 Data

The Institute's [Guidelines on GDPR for Research Purposes](#) and [Ethics in Research Policy](#) outline the processes for managing personal data in research activities.

⁷ [Ethics in Research Policy](#)

⁸ [MIE Records Retention Schedule](#) and [Document Retention Policy](#)

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Primary data are those that have been collected by, or on behalf of, the researcher. The retention of primary data is of particular importance for research which is dependent on the collection of observations relating to the data subject, for example in social, medical, scientific and experimental research. A well-implemented policy on the retention of primary data enhances the quality, reputation and value of the research undertaken and provides the possibility of auditing and verifying the results of research which is based on primary data.

Throughout their work, researchers are required to keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed and of the results obtained, including interim results. This is necessary not only as a means of demonstrating proper research practice but also in case questions are subsequently asked about either the conduct of the research or the results obtained. For similar reasons, data generated in the course of research must be kept where this is possible and should be retained securely in paper, electronic or other form, as appropriate to the task and the type of research undertaken.

7 Responsibility

The Director of Research is responsible for this policy.

8 Related Documents

- 8.1 [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)
- 8.2 [Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- 8.3 [MIE Privacy Policy](#)
- 8.4 [Application for Ethical Approval of Research Proposals](#)
- 8.5 [Guidelines on GDPR for Research Purposes](#)
- 8.6 [Lone Researcher Guidelines](#)
- 8.7 [Ethics in Research Policy](#)
- 8.8 [Procedure for Ethical Approval of Research Proposals](#)
- 8.9 [Policy on Managing Research Grants and Contracts](#)
- 8.10 [Procedure for Preventing and Responding to Cases of Suspected Plagiarism](#)
- 8.11 [Document Retention Policy](#)
- 8.12 [MIE Records Retention Schedule](#)

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- 8.13 [Continuing Professional Development](#)
- 8.14 [Disciplinary Policy](#)
- 8.15 [Disciplinary Procedures in Respect of Students](#)