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# National and International Research Integrity Structures

How to revise National Research  
Integrity Guidelines in the Changing  
International Landscape?

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Advisory Board on Research Ethics  
(TENK)

# Research Integrity in Finland

Long history of Research Integrity in Finland:  
National Advisory Board on Research Ethics  
established in November 1991

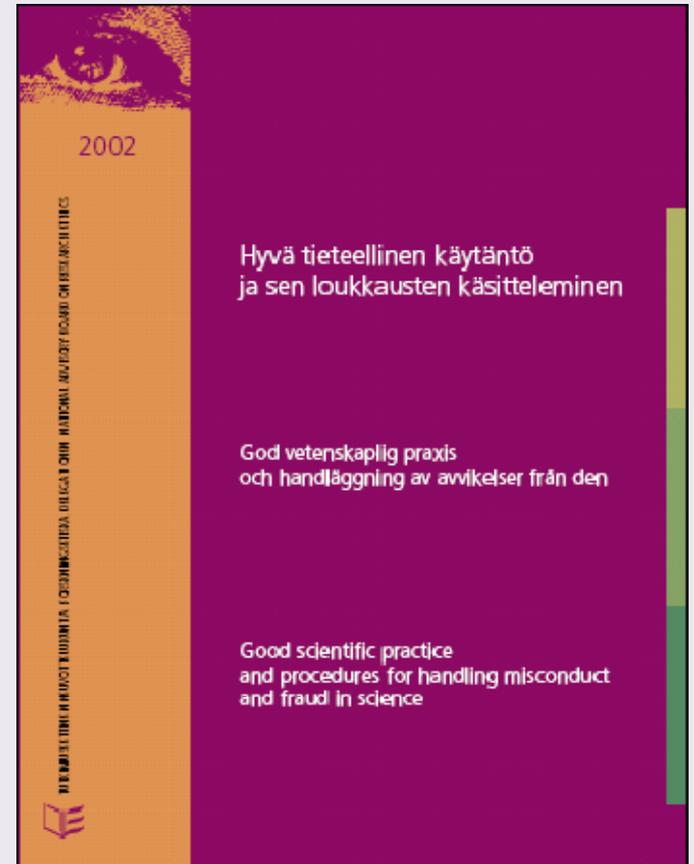
“Good scientific practice and procedures for  
handling misconduct and fraud in science”

Vocabulary issue: Research ethics (= Research  
Integrity)

Good scientific practice (= Responsible  
conduct of research)

# TENK Guidelines

- Good scientific practice and procedures for handling misconduct and fraud in science
- Signatories:
  - all Universities
  - all Polytechnics
  - Research Institutes [RPO's]
  - Funding organisations, learned societies etc.





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# Responsibility for maintaining Good scientific practice

- researcher him/herself
- research team
- supervisor
- head of unit/research organisation
- learned societies and editors of scientific publications
- funding organisations
- the Advisory Board



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# Violations of Good scientific practice

- Misconduct in science (gross negligence)
- Fraud in science (intentional)
  - fabrication
  - misrepresentation (falsification)
  - plagiarism
  - misappropriation



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# Procedures for handling alleged violations

- Handled at the first instance in the research organisation itself:
  - written notification to the rector/director
  - inquiry
  - investigation
  - final report (and a copy to TENK)
- Any party not satisfied with the local decision can request the **National Advisory Board of Research Ethics** for an opinion on the matter
  - based on written material

# Consequences of scientific misconduct

The actions and sanctions warranted by the findings are decided on by the Rector or the Director of the Institution.

Depending of the severity and possible recurrence of misconduct the sanctions may range from oral or written warning to failure to approve master's, licentiate's or doctoral thesis, to more severe punishments as set in the Universities act (and other legislation)

Special emphasis should be made to retract or correct any publication containing information judged to contain fraudulent material, and to publish the findings of the investigation in the same forum.

Also legal consequences are possible.

# Weaknesses of the system

Cases are rare: due to the low number of alleged violations Rectors/Directors have little experience of the implementation of the Guidelines and of the procedures. Many institutions have now set permanent Research Integrity Boards to investigate alleged misconduct at local level.

Despite continuous efforts, some researchers (particularly at doctoral training level and international visitors) are not aware of the guidelines.

Wide recognition of the guidelines-> threshold for revising them keeps getting higher, yet some revisions have been requested.

Lack of approved international guidelines.

# Requested improvements

Extension of the Guidelines to cover issues such as falsifications in self-drafted c.v.'s and publication lists, non-scientific communication with media, and expert statements by researchers to courts, public decision makers etc.

Guidelines are needed to investigate alleged misconduct in international collaborative projects.

In the absence of international agreed guidelines updating of the national guidelines has been postponed.



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