Practicing the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Rachel Douglas-Jones

Sue Wright (PI), Lise Degn, Laura Louise Sarauw, Jakob Williams Ørberg

World Conference on Research Integrity
June 2-5 2019
The Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity rests on three basic principles that should pervade all phases of research.

**Honesty**

To ensure the trustworthiness of research, researchers should be **honest** when reporting objectives, methods, data, analysis, results, conclusions, etc.

This requires accurate and balanced reporting when:

- presenting and interpreting research
- making claims based on findings
- acknowledging the work of other researchers
- applying for research funding
- reviewing and evaluating research

**Transparency**

To ensure the credibility of scientific reasoning and to ensure that academic reflection is consistent with practice in the relevant field of research, all phases of research should be **transparent**.

This requires openness when reporting:

- conflicts of interest
- planning of research
- research methods applied
- results and conclusions

**Accountability**

To ensure the reliability of research, all parties involved should be **accountable** for the research carried out.

This requires that researchers and institutions accept responsibility for the research they are conducting, in terms of:

- accuracy and reliability of research results
- adherence to all relevant regulations
- fostering and maintaining a culture of research integrity through teaching, training, and supervision
- taking appropriate measures when dealing with breaches of responsible conduct of research

---

The Danish Code

"provides the research community with a framework to promote commonly agreed principles and standards. The Code of Conduct aims to support a common understanding and common culture of research integrity in Denmark."

How that gets taken up in practice (organisationally, institutionally and individually) is a question of institutional and disciplinary translation.
Who does what?

III. Research integrity

1.2. Division of responsibilities

i. **Research leaders** and **supervisors** should act as role models, and manage research under their auspices in accordance with the principles of research integrity and responsible conduct of research.

ii. **Research leaders** and **supervisors** should nurture a culture of research integrity and mutual respect in accordance with the principles of research integrity and responsible conduct of research.

iii. **Supervisors** should take measures to ensure that the research carried out by researchers, research trainees, and students under their supervision is conducted in observance of the principles of research integrity and responsible conduct of research.

iv. **Institutions** are responsible for ensuring that all staff (including guest researchers) and students involved in research have sufficient knowledge of and receive training in the principles of research integrity and responsible conduct of research.
Questions & Methods

How is the Danish Code of Conduct translated in training courses for early career researchers?

How is this code, and any others used, understood across disciplinary borders?

- Ethnographic research (2 full days of participant observation at each of the 4 PhD courses)
- In situ interviews (6 interviews lasting between 1-2 h)
- Analysis of local policy documents on integrity
- Collection of course materials
- Interviews with course leaders and teachers
How is integrity framed?

**Table 1. Characteristics of the observed courses.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Natural sciences</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Social sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Responsible Conduct of Research</td>
<td>Responsible Conduct of Research</td>
<td>Research Ethics and Research Integrity</td>
<td>RCR for PhD students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>3 hours are mandatory - 2 days voluntarily</td>
<td>2 days + 1 day workshop with paper</td>
<td>2 day workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ 8-hour online pre-course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory since</strong></td>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Previous tradition</strong></td>
<td>Continuously developed since 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-mandatory Research Ethics course</td>
<td>In development – first course conducted in March 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format</strong></td>
<td>Lectures, active participation and casework</td>
<td>Lectures, active participation and casework</td>
<td>Lectures and active participation – bringing issues from own practice</td>
<td>Lectures, active participation and casework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECTS</strong></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1 + 1 extra ECTS awarded for additional assignment</td>
<td>2 days 1.5</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem narratives</strong></td>
<td>All researchers are (unconscious) small cheaters – and creating reflexivity about this is pedagogically demanding</td>
<td>Responsibility for ‘good science’ must be enhanced</td>
<td>‘Integrity’ as standards for conduct challenges disciplinary diversity and ‘ethics’ as a reflexive practice relevant in all subfields</td>
<td>The scientific system is ‘broken’ and young researchers need to navigate this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How is integrity framed?
Problem Narratives

the ways research integrity is established as a problem to be addressed, either in documents or in teaching.

- How they legitimize the course curriculum, pedagogic format and expected learning outcome
- How the program, course materials and teachers respond to these problem narratives
1. Health

- High priority within the medical faculty
- Problems residing in the individual, not the structure, rules or incentives of the university system
- Objective: to enhance ‘enlightenment’ regarding individual unconscious contributions to malpractice

Problem Narrative "We are all unconscious small cheaters"

Teaching Style
- Intimate atmosphere
- Used EPIGEUM
- Self-reflexive conduct
- Examined through cases
Problem Narrative” Navigating the ‘broken system”

2. Social Science

” Many will do what some label as questionable research practices. I have no doubt about that. They all will, because otherwise they won’t survive in the system”

Teaching style

• System focused Problematic incentives
• Assessment criteria
• Systemic problem in how we do research
• Lack of support as a symbol of the lack of recognition of the problem
Problem Narrative: The scientific project as essentially ethical

Teaching Style
• to create a safe space
• sharing experiences
• Referring experiences to codes and rules.

3. Humanities

The course is necessary for the creation of recognizable validity externally

Integrity presented as topical

ethical and research integrity reflexivity was insufficiently developed.
4. Natural Sciences

Pedagogical aims: to highlight the societal responsibility of research and innovation

Integrity presented to students as an obtainable state of being. The ‘natural state’ of most local research environments was thought to be one of research integrity.

Reflexivity enhancing exercises

Teaching style

- Small exercises on the 'basic principles' of honesty, trustworthiness, openness and transparency
- Desire to create a less ‘gloomy’ picture.
- Integrity a matter of common sense
- Supported by transparency and reflexivity

Problem Narrative: Responsibility for ‘good science’
Analysis

"The Code of Conduct aims to support a common understanding and common culture of research integrity in Denmark”

While responding to the same overall policy discourse about integrity training, problem narratives varied according to local debates, disciplines and developments.

A diversity of interpretation is perhaps not unexpected, with variations in emphasis across disciplines.

Commonalities

All four courses engage with individual or local reflexivity

Course designs do not engage with the fostering of a shared integrity culture or with institutional systems for supporting it

Reflexivity as a key method in integrity training speaks to student-centered pedagogies common in Denmark
Analysis

Regardless of the diverse local problem narratives (e.g. the “small cheater” vs “broken culture”), there is a cross-faculty focus on individual reflexivity.

We see a cross-disciplinary ideal: a reflexive research who is highly responsibilised.

The question remains is whether this responsibilization of the most junior actors in the research and higher education system is an adequate response to the overarching aim of fostering a culture of research integrity.
Researcher development through doctoral training in research integrity

Laura Louise Sarauw, Lise Degrn & Jakob Williams Ørberg

To cite this article: Laura Louise Sarauw, Lise Degrn & Jakob Williams Ørberg (2019) Researcher development through doctoral training in research integrity, International Journal for Academic Development, 24:2, 178-191, DOI: 10.1080/1360144X.2019.1595626

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2019.1595626

Published online: 08 Apr 2019.


