

**Research groups work as transparently and in as open a way as possible!**  
(cf. ECoC 2017, p.5)

## Description and background

This learning unit:

*Introduces researchers to norms in research collaborations*

*Builds competency to set common objectives and norms in research collaborations*

*Challenges researchers to choose norms that their research partners agree on while working collaboratively*

*Emphasises openness and transparency and its limits*

### Role Model

### Keywords

*This unit has been prepared for interdisciplinary learning groups.*

## Learning Objectives

- 1** *Listen actively and present your own wishes, aims and goals*
- 2** *Accept and learn to respect others' wishes, aims and goals*
- 3** *Practice being able to understand others and be understood by them in dialogues*
- 4** *Learn to formulate an agreement with logically traceable arguments*

## Learning Stages

- 1** *Introduce the topic*
- 2** *Motivate by introducing an interesting example*
- 3** *Discuss and come to an agreement*
- 4** *Reflect on collaborative research*

**“Quote about Research Procedure”**



## 1 Introduce the topic:

*Homework (before the unit starts) or reading session*

Read the paragraph on good research practice in “The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity”. Discuss any questions regarding the material, and the meanings of any unknown words.

Ask around whether it is possible to read an agreement of collaborative work from your institution. If you are able to, read one!



## 2 Motivate by introducing an interesting example:

Read or recall together Hannah’s story and flesh out her character in six adjectives. Imagine that Hannah receives an answer from her friend Rory the next morning. Choose one person to read the following letter to the class:

Dear Hannah,

thank you for stepping in for me at the conference meeting. You really saved the day. It seems you encountered one of the more interesting meetings :) In my experience, a research integrity policy would be desirable.

Did I already tell you that one partner (we can call him 07) from our international collaboration asked me to store their data recently? At first I was surprised about the odd request – 07 just asked us bluntly via email to store the data. After a few emails back and forth I found out that their (very prestigious) institution had restricted data protection rules and 07 was trying to bypass them by using us. After thinking about it for a while I refused to store the data. Even if it’s not legally forbidden, I assume that these data are ethically questionable. Seriously, 07’s last email ended with this: **YOUR INSTITUTION DOESN’T HAVE A CODE OF CONDUCT! IF YOU DO NOT STORE THE DATA WE WILL NO LONGER CONSIDER YOU A PARTNER IN THIS COLLABORATION....** see what I mean about needing a research integrity policy?

:) I just realised I’ll be in your neighbourhood on Wednesday evening. Do you have time for a drink? I can tell you the rest of 07’s story... but only if you want! Promise!!

Best,

R

## 4 Discuss and come to an agreement

**Build interdisciplinary groups of 3 to 4 people.** Imagine you start a collaboration. Give your collaboration a meaningful title, and think about what each of you can contribute to this collaboration.

**One partner asks you to agree on complete transparency and openness from beginning to end in your collaboration.** Discuss what that means and state what limits there are to this request, if any. Give reasons for these possible limitations. Together, write a paragraph on transparency and openness for your collaboration agreement that everyone approves of.

**Take one rule/norm from your agreement paragraph and discuss how each of your actions would look if you adhered to this rule.**

**Read some of the agreement paragraphs aloud!**

## 4 Reflect on collaborative research

Come together as class and discuss:

when should researchers insist on a written agreement?

what fields (roles and relationships, interests, compliance, training and supervision, etc.)

should an agreement cover at a minimum?

