

A researcher is responsible for conducting reliable results!

Description and background

This learning unit:

Enables citizens and (future) researchers to ask for Research Integrity

Introduces citizens and (future) researchers to commitments of responsible researchers

Challenges citizens to ask for and demand these professional commitments

Emphasises how important Research Integrity is

Role Model

Keywords

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

Learning Objectives

- 1** *Acknowledge self-declarations to follow Research Integrity*
- 2** *Request a self-declaration from researchers*
- 3** *Make a students' self-declaration of academic integrity*

Learning Stages

- 1** *Reflect on what you have learned*
- 2** *Motivate with an interesting story*
- 3** *Work with self-declarations*
- 4** *Commit to academic integrity*

“Quote about ...”



1 Reflect on what you have learned:

Together with the rest of your class, go online and answer the questionnaire (right), with everyone starting at the same time. Designate one person to write an email to zollitsch@path2integrity.uni-kiel.de requesting the results of the survey.

Evaluation of learning units



2 Motivate with an interesting story:

Recall or read the story of LONA Science Centre and read then the following short story about Prof. Weis aloud:

Prof. Weis' hands were sweating, but her thoughts were clear. After she had quit her job at LONA Science Centre and transferred to another university, she had felt a huge relief. In leaving her former boss and the research project, she had upheld her research principles.

Her back ached in this uncomfortable chair. She was sitting in the audience at a conference, and her former boss was standing at the podium explaining the significant results he had discovered in his research.

Prof. Weis waited tensely until his talk was over. Then she stood up and asked in front of the attentive research community: "Can you confirm that you followed good research practice for the duration of the project, and that all of the research results you have presented are reproducible and thus reliable?"

Discuss different endings of this story. What do reproducible and reliable mean? In which cases would you request such a self-declaration from a researcher?



An example of a researcher's pledge:

„By accepting my Doctor of Philosophy degree, I earnestly assert that I will apply my scientific skills and principles to benefit society; I will continue to practice and support a scientific process that is based on logic, intellectual rigor, personal integrity, and an uncompromising respect for truth; I will treat my colleagues' work with respect and objectivity; I will convey these scientific principles in my chosen profession, in Mentoring [sic], and in public debate; I will seek to increase public understanding of the principles of science and its humanitarian goals. These things I do promise.” (Ravid, K., & Wolozin, B. (2013). The Scientist's Pledge. *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 88|6, p. 743.)

3 Use self-declarations: Research shall produce reliable results:

In pairs, read and consider the following:

In school and as a bachelor student, you become acquainted with research procedures and even carry out some research in class or as homework. You have likely already written a paper or conducted an experiment. Are you familiar with the standards of such academic research work? However, you may not yet be familiar with the procedures of informed consent or citation. Possibly you still feel insecure about various other practices for your academic research. Don't worry. You will succeed.

But even when you are deeply familiar with good research practices, there are still situations in which certain incentives can pull open the door to fraud or misconduct. Think for instance about how time-saving doing copy-and-paste (without citations) appears to be. To succeed in academic research, however, you do not only need the knowledge on *how* to do it; you need to understand and be in accord with the values of good research practice.

Think about a statement that you as students can pledge to confirm your commitment to good research practice in your academic lives, including when writing a thesis, conducting an experiment, carrying out an interview, observing others' work etc.

4 Commit to academic integrity:

Come back together as a class and read your pledges to one another. Decide which one suits your class the most and write it down in your notebooks. Close this session by reading the commitment together.

