

Mandate for the Research Integrity Committee at NTNU

Adopted by the Rector on 11 March 2024 [unofficial translation]

Responsibilities and scope

1. The Research Integrity Committee is a joint committee on ethical conduct for NTNU and the Central Norway Regional Health Authority, in line with Section 6, second paragraph of the Research Ethics Act [forskningsetikkloven].
2. The Research Integrity Committee must deal with and issue a statement in cases of alleged scientific misconduct. Cases at NTNU are handled in line with NTNU's guidelines for dealing with possible misconduct in research. According to Section 8 second paragraph of the Research Ethics Act, scientific misconduct is defined as falsification, fabrication, plagiarism and other serious violations of recognized standards for research that have been committed intentionally or with gross negligence in the planning, implementation or reporting of research.
3. A notification of possible misconduct at the Central Norway Regional Health Authority (Helse Midt-Norge - HMN) is first investigated internally in HMN. If HMN has cause to suspect scientific misconduct, the case will be forwarded to the Research Integrity Committee, which deals with the case in accordance with Section 6 of NTNU's guidelines.
4. The committee may be asked or may on its own initiative decide to issue a statement or advice in cases that do not concern scientific misconduct in the legal sense, but that still involve ethical issues in research.
5. The committee should contribute to promoting good research practice by stimulating debate and shared reflection on aspects of research ethics.

Composition and appointment

6. The Research Integrity Committee must have the necessary expertise in research, research ethics and law; see Section 6, second paragraph of the Research Ethics Act. The committee is to consist of six permanent members without deputies and is composed as follows:
 - The committee must have at least one member who is not employed by the institution, preferably a legal adviser.
 - The internal NTNU members must jointly ensure breadth in their research backgrounds. They must have the necessary expertise in research and experience from leadership roles, from key NTNU internal positions or from other governance bodies relevant to research.
 - One of the internal members must be a PhD candidate.
 - At least one member must have specialized competence or experience in work with ethics.
 - The committee is chaired by a permanent academic employee at NTNU.

The committee has its secretariat at NTNU's Joint Administration.

7. The committee is appointed by the Rector for a term of three years at a time. Each member can remain in office for three consecutive terms. The committee appoints a deputy chair itself.
8. In individual cases, temporary members with specialized subject-matter expertise or legal competence may be appointed. In cases at the Central Norway Regional Health Authority, an internal candidate may be appointed from there.
9. The committee may designate an investigative committee with experts to assess individual cases or issues with clearly defined scope related to individual cases. The expert group must be given a clearly defined mandate and ceases to exist when it has submitted its statement to the Research Integrity Committee.

Reporting and access to information

10. The committee must submit an annual report on its activities to the Rector. The report is publicly available.
11. Through the Rector, the institution must report to the National Commission for the Investigation of Research Misconduct on cases of possible serious violations of recognized ethical standards for research, under Section 6, fourth paragraph of the Research Ethics Act. The Rector may authorize the secretariat of the Research Integrity Committee to report on the institution's behalf.¹
12. The committee's activities must be open to public access within the framework of the rules that safeguard privacy and other confidential information.

¹ Section 6, fourth paragraph of the Research Ethics Act; cf. [Veileder for forskningsinstitusjoners rapportering til Granskingsutvalget \[Guide for reporting by research institutions to the National Commission for the Investigation of Research Misconduct\]](#), Chapter 2.3: *"It is the research institutions that must report to the National Commission for the Investigation of Research Misconduct [Granskingsutvalget]. This means that the report must be signed by the person with formal authority to represent the institution in cases of scientific misconduct. Any delegation of authority must be described in the report to the Commission."*