

The Danish Committee on Research Misconduct

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The Danish Committee on Research Misconduct replaced the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty on 1 July 2017. The Committee will take over the task of dealing with research misconduct cases in Danish research.

New law on research misconduct etc.

The Danish parliament has passed a new law on research misconduct with new definitions in the area and a larger degree of involvement from the Danish research institutions in dealing with research misconduct and questionable research practice. The law came into force on 1 July 2017.

With the law, the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct are established as a replacement for the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty (DCSD).

One purpose of the new law is to have a more clear division of responsibility between the central national misconduct body (the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct) and the Danish research institutions. Therefore the law determines that the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct will handle all cases of research misconduct where as the remaining instances of questionable research practice will be handled by the research institution in question.

What is research misconduct and questionable research practice

The law defines research misconduct as

Fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism committed wilfully or gross negligent in planning, performing, or reporting of research.

- *Fabrication: Undisclosed construction of data or substitution with fictitious data.*
- *Falsification: Manipulation of research material, equipment or process as well as changing or omitting data or results making the research misleading.*
- *Plagiarism: Appropriation of others' ideas, processes, results, texts or specific terms without rightfull crediting."*

The law defines questionabel research practice as

"Breaches of current standards on responsible conduct of research, including those of the Danish code of conduct, and other applicable institutional, national and international practices and guidelines on research integrity."

Tasks of the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct

The Committe handles Danish cases of research misconduct. As a general rule a case is raised via a complaint handed in at the research institution where the research in question was carried out. If there is no such Danish research institution or a research institution wants to raise a case themselves complaints may be brought directly before the Committee

The Committee has to publish an annual report on questionable research practice in Denmark based on annual reporting from the institutions to the Committee. In this respect the Committee works toward strengthening the credibility of Danish research, prevent research misconduct and support the effort on research integrity as expressed in the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

[Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)

The Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty has previously published a set of guidelines for good scientific practice. The previous guidelines from 2009 kan still be accessed as a historical document.

[DCSD's guidelines for good scientific practice](#)

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Scope and jurisdiction for the Committee

All Danish cases of research misconduct are handled by the Danish Committee on Research Misconduct. It is within the jurisdiction of the Committee to deal with cases concerning public funded research and research carried out at a public Danish research institution. If the case concerns sheer privately funded research, the Committee can deal with the case if the private company or similar consents.

The scope and jurisdiction of the Committee is determined in the following regulations:

- Act on research misconduct etc.

[Regulations](#)

The Committee's organisation

The Danish Committee on Research Misconduct consists of a chairman and 8-10 academic members jointly representing broad experience with different scientific disciplines. For each academic member there is an alternate who can enter the Committee in case absence or when otherwise relevant.

The academic members and alternates are recognized scientists who are appointed by the Danish Minister for Higher Education and Science following an open call and consultation with the Independent Research Fund Denmark. The Chairman is a high court judge and appointed by the Minister following a nomination from the Danish courts.

[Here is a complete list of members and alternate members of the Committee](#)

Procedures for investigations

For the Committee to begin an investigation of an allegation of research misconduct, the matter must fall within the mandate of the Committee as defined in the relevant regulations. In particular, the following conditions must be met:

1. The allegation must relate to a scientific product, for example a scientific paper, a PhD thesis or similar.
2. The case must concern a researcher who has contributed to the scientific product.
3. The case must concern "research misconduct". Questions about scientific disagreements or the quality of research is outside the mandate of the Committee.

When a complaint is handed in at the relevant research institution, the institution assess whether or not the information listed above is present in the case. If so the institution must compose a report on the facts of the case and send the case and the report to the Committee which will open an investigation based on the material from the institution.

As part of the investigation, the Committee must ensure that the case is adequately informed and obtain all necessary further information required for the Committee's decision in the matter. This means that the Committee has to carry out consultations in accordance with the Danish Act on public administration giving the accused a chance to provide a statement.

If there is a specific need in a case, the Committee may obtain expert advice, e.g. external expert or expert knowledge from an alternate or others.

The decision

The decisions of the Committee are sent directly to the parties involved in the case, that is in general the accused researcher and the research institution involved. Decisions are also made available in anonymous form on this web page.

[Decisions of the Committee \(also includes previous decisions from the DCSD\)](#)

Annual reports

The Committee publishes annual reports on cases of research misconduct and the status of questionable research practice in Denmark.

[Annual reports of the Committee \(also includes previous reports of the DCSD\)](#)

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The website includes the Ministry/the Department, Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education and Danish Agency for Institutions and Educational Grants.

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