



Science Ethics Code of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

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Committee on Research Ethics, Hungarian Academy of Science

Standing Committee on Science and Ethics Hungarian Academy of Sciences



The Standing Committee on Science and Ethics was established at the initiative of the leadership of the HASc in 1985 for giving advise on issues related to science ethics and to deal with cases of misconduct .

Each of the eleven sections of the HASc nominates 2 members (one of the two can be a member of HASc) to serve in the Committee; they are elected by the Assembly of HASc for a three years period.

One of the 22 members is elected by the Committee members to serve as chairperson.

The Committee is autonomous, responds only to the Assembly of HASc, works on the basis of „The Science Ethics Code of The Hungarian Academy of Sciences“.

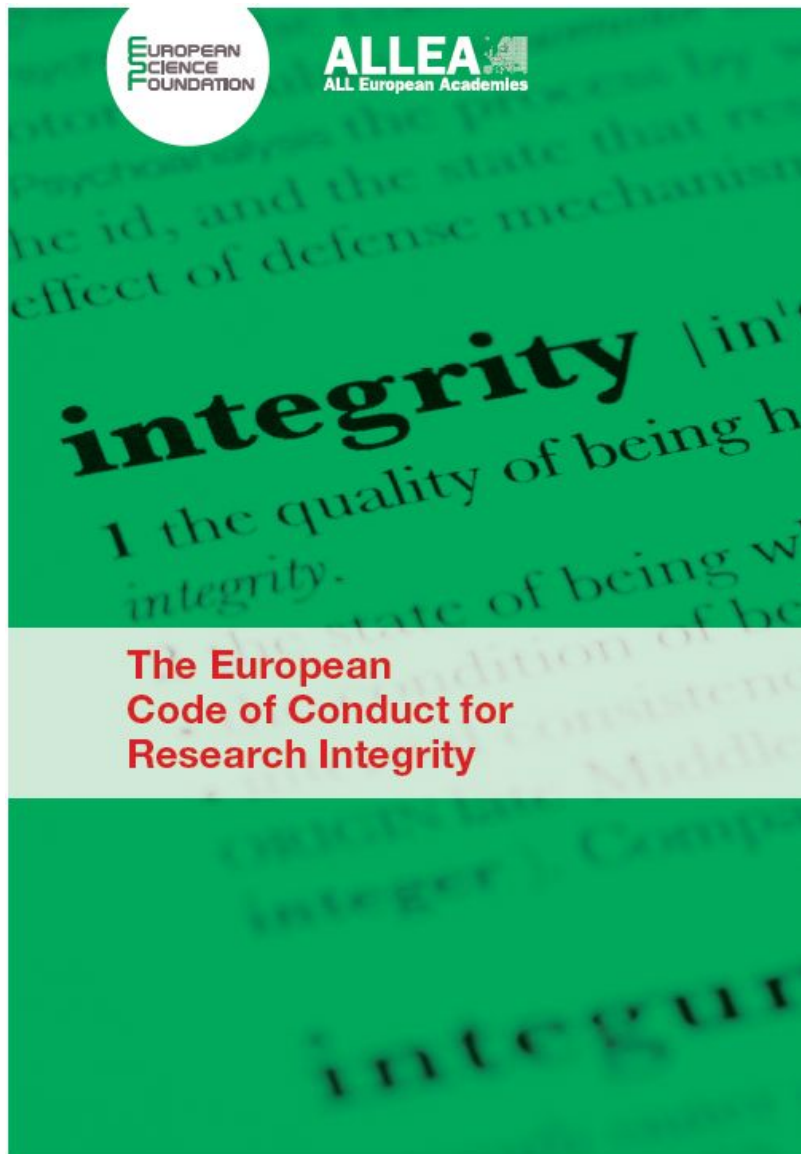
The Science Ethics Code of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences



Proposed and formulated by the Standing Committee on Science and Ethics.

The document „Code of Conduct for Scientific Integrity” of ALLEA and ESF was used as a reference and for steering.

<http://www.mta.hu> Statutes



„Science as the process of knowledge augmentation is embedded in a wider socio-ethical context, and scientists must be aware of their **specific responsibility towards society and the welfare of mankind.**“

In this Code, however, we confine ourselves to standards of integrity while conducting research, and do not consider this wider socio-ethical responsibility.”

„The standards and principles discussed refer to **fundamental and universal** norms for responsible conduct in research. There is no need for cultural or regional adaptations or compromises in a Code of Conduct.”

„This **Code of Conduct is not a body of law, but rather a canon for self regulation.** It is a basic responsibility of the scientific community to formulate the principles and virtues of scientific and scholarly research, to define its criteria for proper research behaviour, and to set its own house in order in case scientific integrity is threatened.”

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The document „Code of Conduct for Scientific Integrity” of ALLEA and ESF was used as a reference and for steering.
- After 6 months debate in sections of HASC it was accepted by the Assembly of HASC in May 2010.
- It serves as the general guide for the Hungarian research institutions and universities and has become the basic reference document in Hungary.

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Introduced by a

MEMORANDUM ON MORAL AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

- The autonomy of scientific research and the obligations of researcher
- Moral self-control of scientific research
- Dangers of infringing upon science ethic norms
- The role of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in maintaining the integrity of science and ethics

The autonomy of scientific research and the obligations of researchers

Scientific research shall be independent, unbiased, and autonomous.

The realization of this is often hampered or even prevented by strong personalities or institutions, political pressure, economic or financial interest.

The researcher shall have the freedom needed to keep to the rules and criteria formulated by him/herself, serving the cognition of reality and keeping public welfare in mind.

However, it must be seen clearly that the researcher shall fulfill his/her task in order to produce value: his/her presumptions, starting points of research, the selection of the research object, the method of collecting data, and the effect of its results and discoveries on society are connected to the moral, ethical and social relations in the midst of which science is proceeding.

The institutions of Hungarian science aspire to operate in a way unquestionable in both legal and moral terms. Therefore it is demanded of all persons pursuing science to comply with effective laws and regulations, to unconditionally respect human dignity and fundamental freedoms, and to carry out proper work of a high level of professional skills.

Moral self-control of scientific research

Extended administrative duties, a lack of time, financial austerity, tensions generated by competition, human frailty and social changes are all factors raising the **temptation for the researcher** to achieve fast scientific success by questionable and unacceptable means, or to try to gain more attention to him/herself than deserved.

Therefore it is necessary that rules laid down in a **code of conduct** delimit such attempts so that **scientific research remains moral and authentic**.

Infringing upon science ethic is spreading. The publication pressure caused by an expansion of science metrics, various evaluation techniques, practices and quantified systems regulating the careers of scientists, the business sphere, the ever harder competition for resources, the possibilities provided by the internet all contribute to this regrettable phenomenon.

Dangers of infringing upon science ethic norms

The researcher's behavior going against science ethics is **harmful to science itself** as it can give false guidelines to other researchers and so it can result in a continuous misrepresentation.

Behavior infringing upon science ethic can be **harmful to society** as well: false research may result in e.g. the commercial marketing of hazardous medicines or other industrial products. Further, if science policy or legislation is based on false research results, the harmful consequences are unforeseeable.

It can also have **a harmful effect on the trust of the public in science**.

Finally, behaviour infringing upon science ethic can also be **harmful to the researcher him/herself** since sooner or later he/she will be rejected by the researcher community.

2 AUGUST 2012 | VOL 488 | NATURE | 7

The time is right to confront misconduct

Colin Macilwain

„After a generation of denial, research leaders are finally treating scientific fraud with the seriousness it deserves”

„Considerable hard data have emerged on the scale of misconduct. A metastudy (D. Fanelli PLoS ONE 4, e5738; 2009) and a detailed screening of all images in papers accepted by The Journal of Cell Biology (M. Rossner The Scientist 20 (3), 24; 2006) each suggest that roughly 1% of published papers are fraudulent. That would be about 20,000 papers worldwide each year.”

„A „...study, by the **US National Academy of Sciences, will report in 2013.**

It is likely to call for far-reaching changes in how US agencies define and police misconduct.

Since the 2000 decree, agencies have regarded only ‘falsification, fabrication and plagiarism’ as misconduct: the academy may call for this definition to be widened in line with an emerging global consensus to include most other sorts of unethical behaviour, such as falsely attributed authorship.”

INTER ACADEMY COUNCIL UK: University Concordat Canada: Tri-agency Framework

„Current scientific leaders have the opportunity to take the initiative and stamp down hard on fraud.”

The research ethic role of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Based on its statutory obligation, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences takes responsibility for the **preservation of the morality and authenticity of Hungarian scientific research**. Pursuant thereto it

- creates and continuously maintains its Code of Conduct and operates its Science Ethics Committee;
- considers it prominently important that the leaders of institutions and institutes should be in their persons committed to an exemplary preservation and strengthening of the integrity of science;
- calls on all research organizations operating in Hungary to set up research ethics bodies which shall guard over the integrity of science research on the basis of this Science Ethic Code or their own science ethical rules;
- regards as a fundamental requirement the alltime observance of Hungarian legal regulations and international rules relating to human research and animal tests;
- regards it crucial that in the secondary and tertiary education and especially in doctoral training science ethic knowledge, and principles and practices to be followed should be continuously taught and learned;
- authorises its Science Ethics Committee to proceed upon request in all cases that injure or endanger the integrity of scientific research or raise a suspicion of a science ethical misconduct. In this role the Science Ethics Committee can also act as a forum of appeal in cases decided by the science ethic committees of research institutes, higher education, or other institutions and organisations.

The Science Ethics Code of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences



CODE OF CONDUCT

Preamble

1. Scope of the Science Code of Conduct
2. Fundamental moral and ethical principles of scientific research
3. Performing scientific research
4. Communication of scientific results
5. Infringement of scientific ethics
6. Procedure in the case of suspected infringements of ethical rules

Preamble

Based on point g) of paragraph (1) of article 3 of the Act XL of 1994 on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HASL)

“guards over the clarity of public life, the freedom of scientific research and articulation of scientific opinions”,

further, in line with such intentions arising in international scientific life

the present Code of Conduct determines the **moral and fundamental ethical principles** that those carrying out scientific research shall adhere to, describes the recommended procedures and rules relating to the carrying-out of scientific research and presents the cases and modi operandi in case of which research ethic is infringed.

The Code of Conduct is not a law, nor it is a legal norm, but is the means of the moral self-regulation of the scientific community.

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Fundamental moral and ethical principles of scientific research

Honesty in presenting scientific goals and research intentions, a precise presentation of scientific methods, procedures and interpretations, and honesty also in explaining possibilities, dangers and justifiable claims inherent in the possible application of results

Reliability in performing research, recording, storing and presenting data. Eliminating negligence and inattention. Full reporting on the accomplishments and results of previous research.

Objectivity: interpretations and conclusions must be exclusively founded on facts or impartial and logical proof and on data the correctness of which can be verified at least on a theoretical level.

Impartiality and independence from any interested party or group interest, from ideological or political pressure groups, and from economic or financial influence.

Openness in discussing the results with other researchers and contributing to the augmenting of public knowledge through the publication of results.

Duty of care for participants in and the subjects of research, be they human beings, experimental animals, the environment, or cultural objects.

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Grievous forms of infringement of research ethical norms

Fabrication is the publication of “results” without any base.

Falsification is the manipulation, alteration, or deliberate neglect of data or results. Publication of falsified data also qualifies as an ethical misconduct.

Plagiarism is the takeover of ideas, scientific results, words, texts of others and indicating them as one’s own.

It is an aggravated case of plagiarism when the editor or reviewer of the publication expropriates new thoughts or experimental results of an article submitted for publication

Bringing personal influence to bear usually offends the dignity of persons, an offence that can easily turn into injury.

- It can aim at the acquisition of a position favourable to the person bringing his/her influence to bear, but also at the making of a decision unfavourable to a third party.
 - The ethical misconduct of personal influence may be, subject to the circumstances, qualified as a criminal act akin to blackmail or defamation.
 - Threat of reprisal against the whistleblower shall also be qualified as personal influence.
- Involves the attempt of raising the number of references through personal pressure.

Hungarian scientific public opinion strongly condemns misconducts of personal influence, including favouritism in kind, and prohibits them in normative regulations.

Diederik Stapel, the Dutch social psychologist who has made news on a rather regular basis over the last several years, and who had even become popular on some television chat shows, has been found to be a complete fraud, making up data, rather than conducting field trials as he claimed. In his so-called studies of social phenomena, he's made claims suggesting for example that eating meat makes people more aggressive, or that scientists working in messy labs tend to discriminate more.



INTERIM-RAPPORTAGE INZAKE DOOR PROF. DR. D.A. STAPEL GEMAAKTE INBREUK OP WETENSCHAPPELIJKE INTEGRITEIT

Tilburg, 31 oktober 2011

„...three young researchers under Stapel's supervision had found irregularities in published data and notified the head of the social-psychology department...”

"We have some 30 papers in peer-reviewed journals where we are actually sure that they are fake, and there are more to come," says Pim Levelt, chair of the committee that investigated Stapel's work at the university."

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Other morally objectionable forms of behaviour and practice

Infringement of **social consensus or the laws**

Infringement of **personality rights**

Inappropriate **management of data**:

... improper storage of original data, alteration of data, neglecting data disturbing the outcome desired, distortion of data, and ignoring unexpected results...

Misconducts regarding **publication**

...It is an ethical misconduct to deny deserved authorship, insist on or grant undeserved authorships, and in general to indicate merits relating to authorship in a false way....

Misconducts regarding **proofreading, publishing, and procedures**

Publication of **false or deceptive data** related to scientific accomplishments, publications, or awards

... It shall qualify as an ethical misconduct if someone publishes false or deceptive data regarding his or her scientific work, or in relation to the science metric data relating to his or her publications, research, scientific awards....

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Colin Macilwain

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Science 31 August 2012:
Vol. 337 no. 6098 p. 1019

EDITORIAL:

Ending Honorary Authorship

Philip Greenland¹, Phil B. Fontanarosa

„According to a recent report, honorary authors were attached to 25% of research reports, 15% of review articles, and 11% of editorials published in six major medical journals in 2008. It is time to end this practice.”

„Concerted efforts by institutions, authors, and journals are needed to put an end to this fraudulent and unethical practice”

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Fundamental principles of an ethical investigation in science misconduct

Ascertaining the seriousness of the misconduct

In case of an ethical misconduct the proper steps shall depend on the seriousness of the act. In this respect the level of demonstrable deliberateness and the weight of consequences shall be considered. Any person subject to the investigation can only be reprimanded in case it can be demonstrated that he or she committed the ethical misconduct deliberately and knowingly. As a standard of considering evidence the principle of „strong body of evidences” shall be applied.

Ensuring the internal integrity and legal regularity of the procedure

Uniformity

Balance

The investigation shall be carried out in full respect of the valid interests of all parties concerned and be in line with the relevant laws and regulations. Persons accused of ethical misconduct shall be given full details of the ethical misconduct attributed to them and given the possibility for responding to allegations in writing, asking questions, presenting evidence, calling witnesses, and providing responses to the information presented.

Presumption of innocence

Publicity of the resolution of the Science Ethics Committee

PROCEDURES OF THE SCIENCE ETHICS COMMITTEE (SEC) OF THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



1. Legal Status of the Science Ethics Committee
2. Scope of duties and competence of SEC
3. Members and officers of SEC
4. Operation of SEC
5. Procedure in individual cases
6. Miscellaneous
7. Final provisions

Scope of duties and competence of SEC

Takes a stand on the protection of the freedom of scientific research and the integrity of scientific public life in principal questions of science ethics;

Upon request, it proceeds in all cases that endanger the ethical principles of scientific research, or whenever the suspicion of science ethic misconduct arises;

Examines petitions submitted on ethical misconduct occurring during doctoral procedures;

Based on the motion of the scientific section of HAS in charge of the particular field of science it makes decisions on the suspension of public body membership;

Proceeds at first instance in the cases determined above and also at second instance as an appellate forum upon request in case of decisions adopted by the science ethic committees of research institutes, higher education and other institutions and organizations;

May, for the utilization of the experiences acquired during its proceeding, make a proposal for the amendment of the Code of Conduct towards the General Assembly;

Reports on its activity yearly to the General Assembly of the HASC



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Procedure in individual cases

A submission addressed to SEC shall be filed by the secretary of SEC and immediately sent to the president of SEC.

In an electronic way simultaneously with the sending of the submission, the president of SEC shall make a reasoned proposal for the members of SEC to reject or accept the submission for ethical procedure. Within 30 days the members of SEC shall inform the president of SEC on their position on the proposal with a “yes” or “no” vote. The president of SEC shall adopt his or her Decision on the acceptance or rejection of the submission according to the result of the voting.

Reasons of rejections:

- The notification is evidently frivolous, unfounded or anonymous,
- the notification is related to the verification of a final resolution adopted by SEC except when it contains new data or information not known for the decision makers,
- following the science ethic procedure, the court has, between the same parties and with the same statements of facts, come to a decision being contrary to the decision of SEC,
- the notification contains a petition contrary to a decision adopted in a case finally adjudged by a court of law,
- the submission calls the competence of a court or other authority into question,
- the complaint objects to a decision of an academic body (committee, scientific section, Presidency, etc.) adopted in a professional scientific question, or otherwise the complaint asks for a position in a scientific question,
- according to his or her consideration the handling of the complaint belongs to the competence of a different public body, social or labour organisation (e.g. bar or medical association).



Experience

The Science Ethics Committee has been called upon specific misconduct cases .

The cases have included plagiarism and other violation of science integrity.

After deliberations (in complicated cases rapporteurs and ad hoc committees have been involved) decisions have been made and the resolutions became public.

New unexpected tendencies:

- the codex is considered as a law, appearance of lawyers*
- personal disputes and conflicts are brought to the committee*

Experience



The Committee has served as a forum of appeal in cases decided by the science ethics Committees of research institutes, higher education or other institutions and organizations.

*The decisions of the Committee can be appealed at the Presidency of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
The Science Ethics*

New unexpected tendency:

- relatively large per cent of committee decisions have been appealed



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