



**UNIVERSITY  
OF GHANA**



**NOGUCHI**  
Memorial Institute for Medical Research  
University of Ghana

## **Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research Institutional Policy**

**Number : Mgt-070-1.0**

**Title : Policy on Scientific Misconduct**

**Department : All Departments**

**This Policy supersedes: None or older versions  
Draft, Photocopied, and Obsolete versions of this document are not to be used.**

**EFFECTIVE: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

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## 1. Introduction

- a. The Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, (NMIMR, UG), a constituent of the College of Health Sciences, University of Ghana, conducts research into communicable and non-communicable diseases of public health importance. The Institute is committed to the University of Ghana's vision of becoming a world class research-intensive University. By this policy, NMIMR, UG affirms its commitment to high standards of scientific honesty and integrity, which underpin good research and laboratory practices.
- b. Misconduct in research, scholarly, or sponsored activities is prohibited at NMIMR, UG, and all allegations of such misconduct will be investigated thoroughly and resolved promptly in line with the Statutes of University of Ghana.

## 2. Definitions

**Allegation:** Any written or oral statement of possible research misconduct made to an institutional official or on other public platforms

**Complainant:** The person making allegations of research misconduct of another person(s)

**Confidentiality:** The rules or promises that limit the access or place restrictions on types of information gathered while investigating alleged research misconduct<sup>1</sup>

**Conflict of Interest:** The real or apparent interference of one person's interests with the interest of another person, where potential bias may occur due to prior or existing personal or professional relationships

**Good Faith:** An allegation made with the honest belief that research misconduct may have occurred. This allegation shall not be made with reckless disregard for, or willful ignorance of, facts that would disprove the allegation

**Research Misconduct:** Fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. It does not include honest error or differences of opinion

**Respondent:** The person against whom all allegations of research misconduct is directed or the person whose actions are the subject of the inquiry or investigation. There can be more than one respondent in any inquiry or investigation

**Fabrication:** Inventing or making up data and recording or reporting them

**Falsification:** Manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record

**Plagiarism:** The appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit

**University of Ghana Research Integrity Officer (UG-RIO):**The University of Ghana Official responsible for Research misconduct and research integrity activities. This is the Pro-Vice Chancellor (RID)

**Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research Integrity Officer (NMIMR-RIO):** The Institute’s Official responsible for Research misconduct and research integrity activities. This is the Director

**Improprieties of authorship:** Improper assignment of credit, such as excluding others, misrepresentation of the same material as original in more than one publication, inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work published; or submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors

### 3. Purpose

- a. This policy is meant to encourage and support scientific research or other sponsored programs by ensuring the highest integrity and standards of ethical behavior on the part of every member of the NMIMR, UG.
- b. This policy defines the Institute’s remit on scientific misconduct covering:
  - i. Research proposal development
  - ii. Research data generation
  - iii. Scientific publications
  - iv. Testing and diagnosis
- c. This policy is applicable to:
  - i. Staff of NMIMR, UG
  - ii. Collaborators of NMIMR, UG Researchers
  - iii. Visiting Scientists to NMIMR, UG
  - iv. Students and interns who are supervised by NMIMR, UG Researchers

#### **4. Policy objectives**

The objective of this policy is to ensure that research work performed by staff, collaborators, visiting scientists, students and interns at NMIMR, UG is conducted with the highest integrity.

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

All individuals listed under the scope of this policy have the responsibility of conducting research and other science-related activities in a manner that would not cause anyone to infer misconduct.

##### **5.1 Director:**

The Director shall:

- a. Consult the IMC on matters related to scientific misconduct if necessary.
- b. Take necessary actions within the scope of the University of Ghana Guidelines on Allegations of Research Misconduct (UG-GARM)

#### **6. Policy Statements**

##### **6.1 Confidentiality**

All records associated with any allegation shall not be disclosed by the Director to any third party except the UG-RIO, the UG disciplinary committee, and the IMC when necessary.

##### **6.2 Impartiality**

All activities carried out in the Institute including investigation of allegations of scientific misconduct shall be undertaken impartially. Personnel shall not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality

##### **6.3 Protection of Complainants:**

The Director shall monitor the treatment of complainants by others within the scope of this policy. Any victimization shall be reported to the UG RIO for investigation and application of recommended sanctions. Any person with knowledge of the allegation shall be reminded of the need for confidentiality. Any breach of confidentiality shall be handled by the UG RIO. A complainant may raise an objection where there is actual or perceived conflict of interest on the part of the Director and UG RIO

##### **6.4 Protection of Respondents**

- a. Any person with knowledge of the allegation shall be reminded of the need for confidentiality.

- b. The Director shall monitor the treatment of respondents by others within the scope of this policy.
- c. Fair treatment of respondents shall be emphasized at all levels.
- d. Where allegations of misconduct are found to be false, the respondent shall be offered psychological/emotional counseling.
- e. A respondent may raise an objection where there is actual or perceived conflict of interest on the part of the Director or the UG RIO.

#### **6.5 Cooperation with Inquiries and Investigations:**

Complainants, respondents, and any related individual shall fully cooperate with the Director and the UG-RIO. Individuals who fail to cooperate shall be referred to the UG disciplinary committee.

#### **6.6 Reporting misconduct**

- a. All individuals listed under the scope of this policy have the responsibility of reporting in good faith any observed, suspected, or apparent research misconduct to the Director and UG RIO
- b. No personnel shall be subjected to personal and institutional reprisals when they, in good faith, report alleged misconduct. Such persons shall be protected, to the maximum extent possible.
- c. Reporting of scientific misconduct to the Director and UG RIO shall be in writing and must include a detailed description of the alleged misconduct and the person(s) involved. The report must also bear details of the complainant, and evidence to support the allegation.

#### **6.7 Notification of Respondent**

The Director shall notify the respondent of the allegations in writing and request a response within ten (10) days of receipt of notification.

### **6.8 Review of Allegation**

- a. Upon receipt of the responses from the respondent, the Director shall assess the veracity or otherwise of the allegation using the definitions given in this policy.
- b. Where an allegation is found to have elements of scientific misconduct and is substantial enough, the Director shall, in consultation with the IMC, refer to the UG-RIO for further investigation.
- c. Where an allegation is considered mistaken, frivolous, vexatious, and/or malicious, the complainant and respondent will be written to and informed accordingly. Subsequently, the complainant will be referred to the UG disciplinary committee for further investigations and necessary administrative action.
- d. The disciplinary committee's investigation shall be concluded and reported to the UG-RIO. The respondent shall also be presented with a copy of the draft report and given an opportunity to respond in writing within (ten) 10 days of receipt of the draft report. The Director shall obtain a copy of the report.

### **7. Attachments**

N/A

### **8 Related documents**

- Policy on Risk Management:
- Personnel Management process
- UG Guidelines on Allegations of Research Misconduct

### **9 Policy Revision History**

N/A

### **10 References**

1. University of Ghana, Guidelines on Allegations of Research Misconduct (2013). <https://orid.ug.edu.gh/allegations-research-misconduct-0> Guideline on Allegation of Research Misconduct (2014).pdf
2. Brown University, Research Misconduct Policy (2017). <https://www.brown.edu/research/research-misconduct-policy>
3. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Scientific Misconduct


4. National Institute of Health. Research Misconduct – Definitions.  
[https://grants.nih.gov/policy/research\\_integrity/definitions.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/policy/research_integrity/definitions.htm)
5. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Research Misconduct.  
<https://research.mit.edu/integrity-and-compliance/research-misconduct>
6. British Medical Journal. Scientific misconduct.  
<https://authors.bmj.com/policies/scientific-misconduct/>



## 11. Approval Page

Approved by Director

Name: Prof. Dorothy Yeboah-Manu

Signature: 

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## 12. Policy Revision History

Policy #: Mgt-070-1.0

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Revised: