

PRACTICING INTEGRITY

CENTRE FOR
HIGHER
EDUCATION
FUTURES

PRACTICING RESEARCH INTEGRITY



DANISH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

AARHUS UNIVERSITY



WHY 'PRACTICING'?

- Other terms: Ne gotia tion, Conte sta tion, Per for mance
- The aim of the project:
 - How integrity is embedded, translated and constituted in practice
- The field of “re se arch in te grity”
 - World conferences and inter/ na tional network
 - Unive rsities and university colleges –ma nagers and ad mi nis tra tors (orga ni sa tional transla tors)
 - Te a chers of re se arch in te grity
 - PhD stu dents
- How is re se arch in te grity turned into prac tice in each of these sites?
 - And is there any dia logue be tween them?



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

WP1. History and context for the emergence of ‘integrity’ in international and national codes and regulations.

- Why and how ‘integrity’ arose at particular moments, and how ‘integrity’ relates to ‘ethics’, ‘trust’, ‘responsibility’?

WP2. Translation of Danish Code into universities and university colleges

- How and to what extent have integrity policies been integrated into management structures and incentives?

WP3. Formal doctoral training in integrity principles and practices

- How are concepts and codes of integrity understood and translated into training courses in different disciplines (health, natural sciences, arts, social sciences)?

WP4. Navigating integrity in practice

- How do PhDs form their conceptions of integrity and their research practices in the context of their training, organizational setting, research and funding conditions and challenges of career development?



RESEARCH METHODS

WP1:

- Collection of 136 documents from international, European and national sources. Analysis of organisations, individuals and moments that shaped the field and the changing meanings of keywords and associated terms.

WP2:

- Collection of university and university colleges' official policy documents and guidelines on research integrity procedures. 20 interviews with managers and administrators.

WP3:

- Participant observation in PhD courses on research integrity in four faculties (health, natural science, social science and humanities). Interviews with course leaders and teachers.

WP4:

- Follow-up interviews with 3-4 PhD students from each course on their own conception of research integrity in practice.



WP1

American Prehistory

- The adversarial 1980s
- Series of falsification and fabrication scandals in the USA
- Desire to legislate against fraud
- Recourse to the self-correcting nature of science



European Futures

- In comparison with 2000, we now have a plethora of international and national statements
- The World Conference series attempts to convene a Global Fora for discussing matters of research integrity
- There is a highly active publication landscape (multiple new documents in 2017)
- More attention is being paid to the environment, role of institutions and universities.

"The research process goes beyond the actions of individual researchers. Research institutions, journals, scientific societies, and other parts of the research enterprise all can act in ways that either support or undermine integrity in research."

Source: 2017, introduction of the ALLEA Report
Produced by Integrity in Research

WP2

Organisational translation

Universities: One cluster with high degree of translation and infrastructure. Other clusters low and moderate

UCs: varying - but are clearly still in process

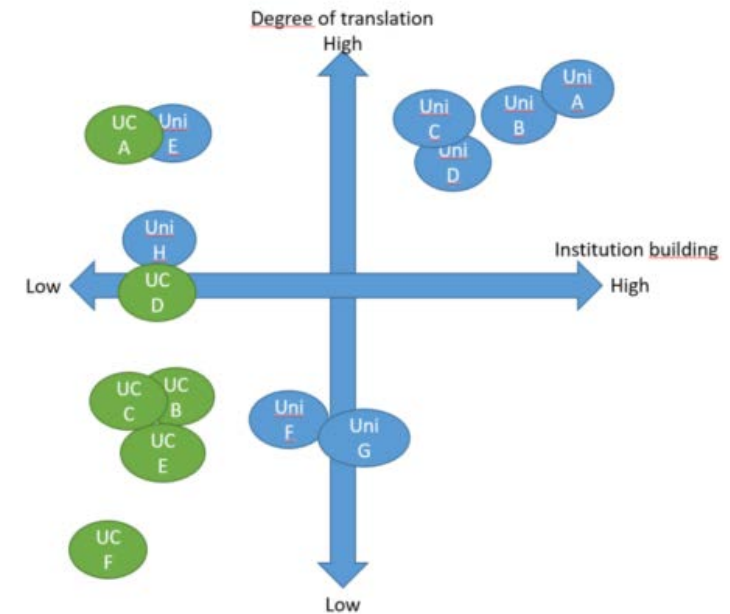
Drivers behind translation

Imitation of seemingly successful or established institutions (cluster 1)

Packaged ideas?

Challenges

Embed RI in the institutions and its culture, “ceremonial implementation?”



Sensemaking - re-translation by department heads

Acknowledgement of “the problem”, but also belief in self-regulation

Concerns of formalization vs. institutionalization

“Not a problem here”

- No burning platform - “need” for a good scandal

Location of responsibility

- Individual, local or systemic?

WP3

- Four problem narratives about research integrity and the researcher
 - Navigating the broken system
 - All academics are “small cheaters”
 - Research is itself an ethical endeavor
 - Good science is obtainable through transparency and honesty
- Reflexivity (personal or research-group) becomes the answer in all four narratives
- Responsibilizing the individual researcher and local research group
- Can't fix “systemic flaws” – e.g. incentives, promotion, publication pressure, that work against RI

	Health	Natural Science	Humanities	Social Sciences
Title	Responsible Conduct of Research	Responsible Conduct of Research	Research Ethics and Research Integrity	RCR for PhD students
Duration	2 days + 8-hour online pre-course	3 hours are mandatory - 2 days voluntarily	2 days + 1 day workshop with paper	2 day workshop
Capacity	25	20	25	30
Mandatory since	April 2016	N/A	Spring 2017	Spring 2017
Previous tradition	Continuously developed since 2014	Continuously developed since approx. 2012 – earlier “Good Scientific Practice”	Non-mandatory Research Ethics course Elements of ethics training in other courses	In development – first course conducted in March 2017
Format	Lectures, active participation and case work	Lectures, active participation and case work	Lectures and active participation – bringing issues from own practice	Lectures, active participation and case work
ECTS	3.1	1 + 1 extra ECTS awarded for additional assignment	2 days 1.5 3 days 2.5	No
Problem narratives	All researchers are (unconscious) small cheaters – and creating reflexivity about this is pedagogically demanding	Responsibility for ‘good science’ must be enhanced	‘Integrity’ as standards for conduct challenges disciplinary diversity and ‘ethics’ as a reflexive practice relevant in all subfields	The scientific system is ‘broken’ and young researchers need to navigate this



WP4

- PhDs concerned inwardly to act as a ‘decent’ researcher and outwardly to comply with standards.
- Worries about non-compliance, but no definition of compliance.
- PhDs draw on disciplinary and common sense meanings to try and define ‘integrity’.
- PhDs continuously encounter new issues that question what integrity means.

“I like to think of myself as educated with a certain ethics and integrity foundation. ... But that said, I would like to know more about what the rules are!”



THE MISSING DIALOGUE

- Research integrity is a concern in all the sites (inter/national, organisational/institutional and local/individual)
 - But is unpacked and practiced differently
- Dialogue between sites is weak, allowing for dislocated practices
 - The various discourses are ideally linked, but in practice separate
- “Systemic pressures” are not addressed in either discourse, and make the dislocation even worse
 - Publication pressures, performance criteria, appointment, promotion and meritocratic structures work against RI but are “outside” the organisation and the individual
 - These contrary working conditions are beyond their capacity to shape into a coherent system focused on RI



DISLOCATED DISCOURSES

Integrity as quality

- Common sense
- Bound to disciplinary norms and socialization
- Quality criteria (validity, reliability, credibility)
- Internal to scientific community
- “It’s about proper behavior”

Tends towards individualizing the problem

- Educational and “moral” obligations

Integrity as legitimacy

- Formalization and legalization
- Bound to external, systemic pressures for credibility
- Data challenges
- Trust (and funding)
- Related to the external audience to science production

Tends towards “institutionalizing” the problem

- Policy and infrastructure-building for regulation



INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND/OR INDIVIDUALIZATION

- Throughout the material we see a tension between individualization vs. institutionalization
 - Rotten apple vs. rotten system
- Integrity is embedded in institutional regulation and policy systems
- But integrity is also seen as an “individual trait” of each researcher
- The dislocation between these two very different understandings of “the problem” and the shifting between them defines the conceptualizations, problematizations and solutions posed
 - Who owns the problem?



ACTIVITIES AND DISSEMINATION

‘Practicing Integrity’ activities

- Three Advisory Board meetings
- Workshop for stakeholders in October 2017
- Final conference in November 2018

Conference presentations

- World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) in Amsterdam 2017
- Printer European conference on Research Integrity 2018
- European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) 2018
- World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) in Hong Kong 2019

Publication plan

- 2 working papers published on: <http://edu.au.dk/forskning/chef/publications/working-papers/> (WPs 1 and 2)
- 1 article (WP3) in review in *International Journal of Academic Development*
- 3 articles in preparation (WPs 1, 2, and 4)
- Final report in preparation





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