Quality Assurance, Good Scientific Practice @ University of Vienna

Dr. Michael Hofer, Head of Unit for Quality Assurance, 6 Oct. 2022
Quality Culture @ UoV in a Nutshell

Quality assurance is the task of all members of the University in their respective areas of responsibility to

• achieve top quality in research and teaching

• being successful in international competition
Quality Assurance in Research

• International peer review
  ◦ research publications
  ◦ research grants
  ◦ researchers: hiring, promoting and retaining
  ◦ research units (every 7 yrs)

• Doctoral education & doctoral schools

• Supervision | (Peer) Mentoring

• Research Integrity | Ethics | Open Science | Responsible Metrics

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Quality Audit – doctoral education @ UoV

• Swiss Agency AAQ audited the quality assurance system of the Univ. of Vienna in 2022

• One focal topic: quality assurance of doctorate / doctoral schools

Doctoral Candidates and Quality Assurance

- Code of Good Practice for Doctoral Schools
- Evaluation of Courses, Workshops and Trainings
- Survey of Doctoral Candidates
- Guideline of Good Academic Practice
- Evaluation of Faculties incl. Doctoral Schools
- Graduate Survey
Principles of Good Research Practice

- **Reliability** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources.

- **Honesty** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way.

- **Respect** for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment.

- **Accountability** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.
Research misconduct: FFP

- **Fabrication** is making up results and recording them as if they were real.

- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment or processes or changing, omitting or suppressing data or results without justification.

- **Plagiarism** is using other people’s work and ideas without giving proper credit to the original source, thus violating the rights of the original author(s) to their intellectual outputs.

These three forms of violation are considered particularly serious since they distort the research record.
Other unacceptable practices include

• **Manipulating authorship** or denigrating the role of other researchers in publications.

• **Re-publishing** substantive parts of one’s own earlier publications, including translations, without duly acknowledging or citing the original (‘self-plagiarism’).

• **Citing selectively** to enhance own findings or to please editors, reviewers or colleagues.

• **Expanding** unnecessarily the bibliography of a study.

• **Exaggerating** the importance and practical applicability of findings.

https://allea.org/code-of-conduct/
Guideline UoV for Good Scientific Practice

• The University of Vienna acknowledges its responsibility by instructing early stage researchers on the principles of good research conduct and practice.

• Compliance with guideline is required through:
  ◦ Statutes of the University of Vienna: Study law
  ◦ Doctoral thesis agreement
  ◦ Working contract (if employed)

https://qs.univie.ac.at/en/services/ombuds-office/
Survey of doctoral graduates @UoV: To what extend did the doctorate teach you the following principles and practice?

**Principles of good research practice**
- Not at all: 3.9%, 4.3%, 15.1%, 26.7%, 49.9%
- Not extensively: 4.5%, 4.7%, 15.3%, 24.1%, 51.4%
- Extensively: 36.6%, 36.6%

**Correct handling of research data**
- Not at all: 4.3%, 4.6%, 15.1%, 26.7%, 49.9%
- Not extensively: 4.5%, 4.7%, 15.3%, 24.1%, 51.4%
- Extensively: 36.6%, 36.6%
## Responsibilities for investigating research misconduct complaints

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Internal Investigation: Research Misconduct</th>
<th>Internal Investigation: Plagiarism of Doctoral Theses</th>
<th>External investigation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ombudsperson:</strong> Preliminary inquiries</td>
<td><strong>Studyenpräses</strong></td>
<td>Austrian Agency for Scientific Integrity (OeAWI)</td>
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<td><strong>Standing Committee:</strong> Investigation</td>
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<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:ombudsstelle@univie.ac.at">ombudsstelle@univie.ac.at</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>T: +43-1-4277-18006 (Claudia Stemsek)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:buero.studienpraeses@univie.ac.at">buero.studienpraeses@univie.ac.at</a></td>
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<td>T: +43-1-4277-12151 (Roswitha Esberger)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sabine.chai@oeawi.at">sabine.chai@oeawi.at</a></td>
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<td>T: +43-0-1-7106821 [or via anonymous system]</td>
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<td><strong>Guidelines</strong></td>
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<td>Guideline <em>Office of the Ombudsman for Ensuring Compliance with Good Academic Practice</em></td>
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<td>Guidelines <em>Good Scientific Practice; Rules of Procedure</em></td>
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<td><strong>Link</strong></td>
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Internal Investigation: Research Misconduct

1. Reporting Suspicion
   - to Office
   - Report to Ombudsperson

2. Preliminary Investigation
   - by Ombudsperson
   - Report to Rector

3. Investigation
   - by Standing Committee
   - Report to Rector
Ombudspersons and Standing Committee
(appointed by the Rector for 2020-2022)

- Univ.-Prof. Dr. Alexander Somek (Ombudsperson, Chair)
  Faculty of Law
- Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Isabella Moll (Deputy Ombudsperson)
  Centre for Molecular Biology
- Univ.-Prof. Dipl.-Pol. Dr. Michaela Pfadenhauer
  Faculty of Social Sciences
- Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Michael Jursa
  Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies
- Univ.-Prof. Torsten Möller, PhD
  Faculty of Computer Science
## Overview of cases in the past five years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tr>
<td>#cases</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>topics</td>
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<td>fabrication, plagiarism</td>
<td>authorship, negative review, plagiarism</td>
<td>plagiarism, research infrastructure</td>
<td>sloppy science, political pressure</td>
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