

## Research Integrity Policy

This document should be read in conjunction with the HSRC Research Integrity Procedure document, as well as the HSRC Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct, Code of Research Ethics, Fraud Prevention Plan, Disciplinary Code and Procedures, and Data Curation Policy.

### 1. Introduction

The HSRC is in the business of research in the social and human sciences – and of ensuring that the knowledge garnered by the organisation is obtained legitimately and made available responsibly and appropriately. In carrying out these functions, the HSRC must devote every effort to the promotion of research integrity through adherence to the highest standards of ethical research and academic conduct.

### 2. Purpose of this document

This policy describes the approach to promoting research integrity, and dealing with cases of alleged research misconduct within the HSRC.

### 3. Scope

The policy applies to all HSRC employees, associates and subcontractors who are concerned in any way with matters of research, research-training or research-related grants or cooperative agreements. Such employees, associates and subcontractors include, but are not limited to, scientists, trainees, interns, guest researchers, field workers, project managers, volunteers, collaborators and any other person (legal or natural) paid by, under the control of, or otherwise affiliated with the HSRC.

### 4. Policy statements

#### 4.1. Information in respect of Research Integrity will be provided

The HSRC will provide information in respect of research integrity and research misconduct, the functions of the Research Integrity Officer (RIO), as well as regarding protocol for and implications of bringing incidents of research misconduct to the attention of the RIO.

#### 4.2. The HSRC requires its employees, subcontractors and associates to report any incident of suspected research misconduct

In any instance where an HSRC employee, subcontractor or associate comes to know of a suspected or apparent incident of research-related misconduct, he or she is required to make the matter known to the RIO either directly or through the channels made available for this purpose from time to time. Members of the public are also able to report such suspected or apparent incidents to the HSRC.

### **4.3. The Research Integrity Officer of the HSRC is responsible for the receipt and subsequent referral of allegations or complaints regarding suspected misconduct**

When an allegation of research misconduct is received, the RIO, in consultation with the Chairperson of the HSRC Research Ethics Committee (REC) and /or CEO will as soon as possible assess the matter and determine whether the matter fulfils the definition of research misconduct as set out in Section 6 (Definitions) of this document.

All matters deemed to be potential cases of research misconduct will be referred for further action to the appropriate HSRC officials in accordance with existing disciplinary policies and contractual agreements. Records of such referrals and subsequent decisions will be kept by the RIO.

### **4.4. The HSRC will protect those who report incidents of research misconduct**

The HSRC is committed to protecting the privacy and safety of those who make an allegation of research misconduct in good faith.

### **4.5. The HSRC will protect those against whom allegations of research misconduct are levelled**

The HSRC will conduct its enquiries and investigations in such a way as to ensure the fairest possible treatment to the respondent or respondents. It will also preserve confidentiality to the greatest extent possible without compromising the thoroughness of the enquiry or investigation.

### **4.6. Charges of research misconduct are persistent**

Where – before or after initiation of procedures in terms of this policy – the relationship of a respondent with the HSRC ends, be it due to resignation, termination of employment or otherwise, research misconduct enquiries will continue at the discretion of the RIO in consultation with the CEO.

### **4.7. The HSRC will maintain records and report on cases of research misconduct**

The RIO will ensure that all records are kept and outcomes of investigations are reported to interested parties, and will submit reports to the HSRC Board as well as any other relevant authorities as required.

## **5. Support for this policy**

- HSRC Code of Research Ethics, HSRC Code of Ethics, HSRC code of Conduct
- HSRC Fraud Prevention Plan
- The HSRC Data Curation Policy
- The HSRC Disciplinary Code and Procedures

## 6. Definitions

<b>Allegation</b>	Any statement, written or spoken, or any other indication of possible research misconduct made to an official of the HSRC.
<b>Allegation in good faith (“Good faith” allegation)</b>	An allegation made with the honest belief that research misconduct may have occurred. An allegation would not be considered to be “in good faith” if made with reckless disregard for - or wilful ignorance of - facts that would disprove the allegation.
<b>Investigation</b>	The process of gathering information and carrying out initial fact-finding in order to determine whether an allegation – or any apparent instance of research misconduct – has substance and thus warrants instigation of an investigation.
<b>Enquiry</b>	The formal creation and development of a factual record around an allegation or incident of research misconduct, followed by the examination of that record. The examination of such a record leads to a finding that research misconduct has or has not taken place – or to other appropriate remedies, including administrative actions.
<b>RIO</b>	The HSRC’s Research Integrity Officer (appointed by the CEO from time to time)
<b>Research misconduct (or “misconduct in research”)</b>	<p>Research misconduct consists of any unethical action in respect of research and research subjects. It may include, but is not limited to - fabrication* or falsification** of data as well as plagiarism*** in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or in reporting research results.</p> <p>A finding of research misconduct requires proof that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepted practices of the relevant community have been departed from in a significant manner;</li> <li>• That the research misconduct be committed intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly; and</li> <li>• That the allegation be proven by a preponderance of evidence.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>The definition of research misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences in interpretations or individual judgments of data.</i></b></p> <p>* <b>Fabrication:</b> the making up of data or results and recording or reporting them.</p> <p>** <b>Falsification</b> is 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.</p> <p>*** <b>Plagiarism</b> is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.</p>

<b>Respondent</b>	The person against whom an allegation of research misconduct is levelled -- or the person whose actions are the subject of an enquiry or investigation. Any enquiry or investigation may have one or more respondents.
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## 7. Authorisation

This Policy Document was approved by the HSRC Board and the CEO on **3 March 2011** after consultation with interested parties.



**Dr O. Shisana**  
CEO

**Date: 3 March 2011**

Version	Date	Author	Details
Draft 1.0	26 Jan 2010	CE Baudin	Initial draft version for comment, clarification and addition.
Draft 1.1	4 Feb 2010	CE Baudin	Updated according to comments and queries by C. van Zyl.
Draft 1.2	12 Feb 2010	C van Zyl	Policy section separated from procedures, following comments from Ms AJ Ohlson and Mr JC Chabani
Draft 1.3	8 November 2010	C van Zyl and JE Botha	Incorporation of comments from Research Ethics Committee, 10 March 2010, Enterprise Risk Management unit, October 2010 and Legal Services, November 2010.
Draft 1.4	26 Nov 2010	C van Zyl and JE Botha	Incorporation of comments from Ms AJ Ohlson
Draft 1.5	3 Dec 2010	C van Zyl and JE Botha	Incorporation of comments from ED Workshop