

## Research Ethics Compliance Manual

Waseda University, Graduate School of Political Science,  
Graduate School of Economics  
The Okuma School of Public Management

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### Introduction

Complying with research ethics rules has become very important. Obviously, research activities must be carried out through correct means and procedures. But in addition to this, strict adherence to global standards of research ethics is necessary in Japan today as global research activities advance. In line with this, a higher consciousness is expected from students enrolled in the Master's, Professional Training, and Doctoral programs of the Graduate School of Economics, the Graduate School of Political Science, and the Okuma School of Public Management.

Research activities that violate the rules of research ethics not only seriously harm the validity of research results, but also the researcher's social responsibility, which is then seriously questioned, perhaps leading to the loss of a researcher's academic life prospects. In addition, it is an undeniable fact that scholars who do not properly understand research ethics lack the qualifications to become researchers. Students should devote themselves to their studies taking this point into consideration. Students, particularly those who aim at writing and publishing papers, should read carefully this brochure and check whether their research activities and the associated results comply with research ethics rules.

It should be noted that the code of conduct and ethical behavior of all Waseda University's researchers who are involved in academic research activities have been established through the "Waseda University Academic Research Ethics Charter." This charter is quoted in the Appendix at the end of this brochure.

### 1. What is Research Ethics?

Regardless of whether they concern humanities, social science or mathematical science, academic research activities have a significant impact on human society. Research by unfair means or research that is not concerned with probity, public awareness, and human rights not only has a negative impact on society, it also harms social trust in legitimate research.

Research ethics is a code of ethical principles which are mandatory in order to avoid such negative consequences. Academic research activities do not aim at just obtaining a degree for the researcher. The goal is to contribute to an increase in global society's knowledge and values. Thus, strict observation of and compliance with research ethics rules is a social responsibility of all those involved in research.

## 2. Research Misconduct

Concretely, then, what is behavior violating research ethics rules? In particular, issues related to students' research activities and the presentation of research results are listed below following the Waseda University Academic Research Ethics Charter. Research misconduct can essentially be classified into the three following categories.

1. Acts against human rights in research activities and results
2. Research by illegal means
3. Fraudulent use of research funds

### (1) Acts against human rights in research activities and results

A careful approach is needed in order to prevent the presentation of research results and research activities that violate human rights. In particular, during research activities there must be no discrimination based on race, gender, social status, thought, belief, religion, nationality, and the like. Furthermore, such discrimination must not appear in any details of the research results. In addition, it is necessary to pay serious attention to avoiding disclosure of personal information. In particular, it is known that specific personal information is often obtained in humanities and social sciences. It is prohibited to disclose information that violates people's rights and interests during the process of research or in the presentation of results. It should be noted that undertaking an ethical review of the research plan may be required if a questionnaire or a survey related to personal information is carried out for thesis writing. For more information, please refer to the section on "Procedures related to research that involves people as an object of research" on the web page of the Waseda University Research Ethics Office (<http://www.waseda.jp/rps/ore/jpn/procedures/01/>) (available in Japanese only).

### (2) Research by illegal means

The presentation of research results (conference presentations, paper publications) must be made via legitimate means and procedures. In the world of academic research, the presentation of research results made by illegal means is considered the equivalent of a crime and will be severely punished. The main cases classified as illegal means are the following five:

- 1) Fabrication
- 2) Falsification
- 3) Fraud by collaboration
- 4) Plagiarism (fraudulent use)
- 5) Misuse of research funds

A detailed description of each of these is provided below:

#### 1) Fabrication

Fabrication refers to presenting data and survey results that do not actually exist as if they were real.

Concrete examples are given below.

[Example 1]

To produce an official document by yourself and claim in your paper that your hypothesis can be verified by this document.

[Example 2]

To create fictitious experimental results and describe them in your paper in order to reinforce your own point.

[Example 3]

To claim that you went for an interview that did not happen in reality and create and present the interview's content in the paper in order to reinforce your own point.

#### 2) Falsification

Falsification refers to altering survey results and actual data in such a way that they differ from the actual results and data in order to claim the validity of your hypothesis or to justify your point.

[Example 1]

To change statistical data in such a way as to indicate that they prove your hypothesis and to describe them as such in a paper.

[Example 2]

To remove certain parts of official documents in order to support your own interpretation or reinforce your point and to present this interpretation or point in your paper.

[Example 3]

To conduct an interview but not report in your paper the part of the interview that is contrary to your hypothesis.

### 3) Fraud by collaboration

This refers to the act of publishing part or the whole of a paper as your own writing, despite the fact that it was written by a third party. With regard to the research process, it refers to the fact that you present research results as if you conducted all the research by yourself, despite the fact that somebody else performed the survey or analyzed the results for you.

[Example 1]

To ask a senior scholar/student to write your conclusion for you because you cannot meet the deadline, and then submit the report as it is.

[Example 2]

To ask a younger scholar/student to conduct necessary interviews/surveys, and then prepare the thesis without any reference to him/her as if you did everything by yourself. Finally, any act that supports fraud by collaboration is classified as research misconduct and is subject to strict punishment.

### 4) Plagiarism (fraudulent use)

All submissions that are necessary to obtain a degree must also meet the following two requirements:

Everything you present as original must be written using your own expressions and words.

Everything you present as original must be based on your own ideas and judgments/evaluations.

Plagiarism refers to stealing other people's words, expressions, ideas, judgments, evaluations, etc., and presenting them as yours. Plagiarism substantially violates the value of other people's original research, and it is recognized as a crime in the academic world. Plagiarism is a form of misconduct that appears particularly often when a paper/thesis is being prepared. Thus, examples of plagiarism and methods of prevention are described in detail in the following section.

### 5) Misuse of research grants

In most cases, there are strict rules/official regulations about how to use research grants. Use of grants that does not comply with these regulations qualifies as misconduct. Preparing a thesis/paper by the improper use of research grants qualifies as preparation of a thesis/paper by fraudulent means.

Where a degree has been awarded and it is later found that the degree was obtained by fraudulent means, it is highly probable that serious measures will be adopted, such as revocation of the degree. Self-consciousness is of the utmost importance in order to avoid such misconduct.

## 3. Avoiding plagiarism

As already mentioned, plagiarism refers to stealing other people's words, expressions, ideas, judgments, evaluations, etc., and presenting them as your own in papers to be published. However, when preparing a paper, relying on and citing previous research is inevitable, and indeed to quote other people's words, expressions, ideas, etc., is actually desirable. But it is absolutely essential to specify this in the paper. If you neglect to do so by improper citation, the effective result is plagiarism, and severe punishment may follow. Plagiarism is a crime in the academic world. It goes without saying that intentional plagiarism is totally unacceptable. However, you may commit plagiarism *unintentionally* if you do not understand properly which kind of actions can lead to plagiarism and which kind of citations are appropriate. Therefore, through the presentation of examples of plagiarism below, we explain in detail how plagiarism can happen and what methods are available to avoid it.

## (1) What actions can lead to plagiarism

### 1) Examples of plagiarism and an appropriate citation

[Example 1]

Sentences from another person's previous research are borrowed in their original form, but neither quotation marks nor explanatory comments are given.

<Borrowed text>

{The factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education are so closely interrelated as to form one common factor. And the factors subsumed under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy.}

<Your text> (The underlined text is borrowed.)

{This statistical association between income and democracy is the cornerstone of the influential modernization theory. Democracy was both created and consolidated by a broad process of modernization which involved changes in the factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education [which] are so closely interrelated as to form one common factor. And the factors subsumed under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy.}

This is an archetypal example of plagiarism. Although the other person's idea, expression, and words are used in their original form, neither quotation marks nor explanatory comments are given. A proper reference is shown below.

{This statistical association between income and democracy is the cornerstone of the influential modernization theory. Lipset (1959) suggested that democracy was both created and consolidated by a broad process of "modernization" which involved changes in "the factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education [which] are so closely interrelated as to form one common factor. And the factors subsumed under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy" (80).<sup>(1)</sup>}

(1) Lipset, Seymour M. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review*, 53(1): 69-105.}

The quoted sentence is marked (with quotation marks) and a page reference is given. Moreover, the source of the text is provided in a footnote or an endnote. In this way, the writing includes an appropriate reference and is no longer guilty of plagiarism.<sup>1</sup>

[Example 2]

You revised or summarized the text of an article and included it in your paper without any reference note.

<Borrowed text>

{The factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education are so closely interrelated as to form one common factor. And the factors subsumed under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy.}

<Your text> (The underlined text is revised.)

{This statistical association between income and democracy is the cornerstone of the influential modernization theory. Democracy was both created and consolidated by a broad process of modernization which involved changes in the factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education [which] are closely related to each other so that they form one common factor. And the factors involved with economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy.}

This also qualifies as plagiarism. It is not necessary to use quotation marks because you have changed the text itself, but an explanatory note is absolutely essential because you are borrowing another's ideas. It becomes an appropriate reference in the following way:

{This statistical association between income and democracy is the cornerstone of the influential modernization theory. Lipset (1959) suggested that democracy was both created and consolidated by a broad process of "modernization" which involved changes in the factors of industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education [which] are closely related and consequently form one common factor. And the factors

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<sup>1</sup> The example is taken from Acemoglu et. al (2008). Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, James A. Robinson, and Pierre Yared. 2008. "Income and Democracy." *American Economic Review* 98 (3): 808–842.

comprised under economic development carry with it the political correlate of democracy.<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Lipset, Seymour M. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *American Political Science Review*, 53(1): 69-105.}

[Example 3]

You have written your text by organizing knowledge and ideas from another paper or from several other papers. Those information sources were organized into a reference list at the end of your paper. This case is also likely to qualify as plagiarism (though no specific example is provided here). Even if you include in the reference list all the sources from which you borrowed ideas or knowledge, you must attach a note to every part of your text where you refer to knowledge and ideas from other sources, specifying what exactly you have taken from which documents.

## 2) Commonly used excuses

The excuses given below are often heard at interviews investigating cases of plagiarism. Although used in desperation, such claims are unacceptable. It is a mistake to think that such excuses will be tolerated to explain away misconduct.

### ① ["It's a coincidence!"]

This is an excuse that claims a paper written by you accidentally resembles one written by another scholar. It is possible, of course, for two papers to share a few similar short sentences, but no one will believe a case in which several continuous lines are identical.

### ② ["I did it carelessly rather than on purpose."]

It may be seen as a mistake due to carelessness if one or two instances appear in an inconsequential part of a paper. However, the action will be considered intentional if improper citations appear in many places.

### ③ ["An explanatory note is not necessary because I have the same opinion."]

Even though an opinion may be identical to yours, it was published first by another scholar. It cannot therefore be considered as your original opinion, and an explanatory note is necessary. If it is not borrowing from others and you just want to emphasize that you have already come to this conclusion before reading a preceding study, then you should specify it in a note in the following form: "~~ (name of person) states a similar opinion."

### ④ ["I haven't used copy and paste. I entered it all properly by myself."]

This excuse would make people laugh if it were not such a serious matter. Can anyone seriously pretend to claim that they "did not copy and paste" just because the supervisor forbade it when information was found on the Internet? Needless to say, this justification has no validity whatsoever.

## (2) How to avoid plagiarism?

It goes without saying that self-discipline in not performing misconduct is most important to prevent acts of plagiarism. However, there seems to be an unexpectedly high number of cases in which plagiarism happens by misunderstanding. To avoid such a situation, it is essential to pay attention to the methods of your daily research and to the building of your writing plan.

### 1) Plagiarism prevention begins with everyday research habits.

#### ① Get into the habit of always distinguishing the arguments of other researchers from the ones you thought up by yourself.

You should establish a practice of adding quotation marks and notes to ideas gained from other researchers during your seminar reports and the in-class presentations of your course work. If you get used to claiming clearly which part of the text is your own opinion in your presentations and reports, then you will acquire the habit of distinguishing knowledge belonging to others from that of your own when you write a thesis or paper.

#### ② Be careful with the notes you take when you read a book or a paper.

You may be taking notes while reading research papers. When copying any sentence from such a source, make it obligatory to add quotation marks and to write down the source in your notes straight away. In this way you can avoid confusing your own ideas and phrases with knowledge and phrases from previous research papers at the time of writing your thesis. Then even if you are in a hurry due the approach of a paper's deadline, you can easily add the appropriate quotation by merely looking at the notes you made. There may be situations when you write

a summary of another researcher's text and do not copy the whole text as it is. Even in this case, make sure to record the exact source of this text. Please be particularly careful when you are taking notes by summarizing another researcher's text, as it becomes difficult to distinguish the knowledge and opinions of other authors from those of your own.

③ Build a more flexible writing plan for your paper.

Despite it being difficult to achieve in practice, it is important to build a writing plan that aims at completing the first draft of your paper as early as possible. For instance, the writing can be more successful if you complete the first draft one month before the deadline so that you can take your time checking the quotations. In addition, in this way you can get an adequate pre-check from your supervisor.

2) Other points

① If you are not confident in expressing yourself in Japanese (especially for international students)

International students who are not confident in using Japanese are apt to use expressions from texts they have read. In such cases, please revise your Japanese writing as soon as possible by using guidance from the Writing Center at Waseda University (<http://www.cie-waseda.jp/awp/jp/wc/>). Remember that poorly expressed Japanese language is not "misconduct"—but plagiarism is.

② Do not aim at unreasonable originality (for students on professional degree and Master's programs).

Students are supposed to aim at bringing originality and uniqueness to their papers. However, as a result of pursuing uniqueness and originality too obsessively, it often happens that they end up bringing a false uniqueness and originality at the expense of resorting to plagiarism. It is very important to aim at making a valuable and original academic contribution, but if it is at the expense of research misconduct, then it is better to accept a lower degree of uniqueness and originality in your paper and avoid any hint of plagiarism.

③ If you are not sure, add an explanatory note.

If you have read up to this point, you should have a concrete image about what plagiarism is. But while actually writing your thesis, there may be cases when you feel confused about whether an explanatory note is needed or not. In such cases, always add the note.

4. Coping with misconduct at the University

(1) Strict punishment

Misconduct such as plagiarism is strictly punished at the Graduate School of Economics, the Graduate School of Political Science, and the Okuma School of Public Management. Punishment consists of the following:

1) With regard to a Master's thesis or a research paper

① Where it is discovered prior to conferment of the degree

Depending on the level of the misconduct's severity, the punishment may involve invalidation of a whole academic year's grades, the rejection of the Master's thesis at the examination, suspension from school for an indefinite period of time, etc.

② Where it is discovered subsequent to conferment of the degree

When it is discovered that acquisition of a degree was made by misconduct, the cancellation of the degree and the official announcement of the fact will be made based on article 23 of the University's "degree rules."

2) With regard to a doctoral dissertation

① Where it is discovered prior to conferment of the degree

Depending on the level of misconduct's severity, the punishment may involve invalidation of the academic year grades, suspension from school for an indefinite period of time, the failure of the doctoral dissertation, expulsion from school, etc.

② Where it is discovered subsequent to conferment of the degree

When it is discovered that acquisition of a degree was made by misconduct, the degree will be cancelled and the official announcement of the fact will be made based on article 23 of the University's "degree rules."

(2) Establishment of a system that discovers misconduct

1) Use of similarity-detecting software

At the Graduate School of Political Science, the Graduate School of Economics, and the Okuma School of Public Management,

similarity-detecting software is used at the time of submission to check whether there are any inappropriate quotations or instances of plagiarism in a Master's thesis, a research paper or a doctoral dissertation. Further detailed investigation is conducted if the possibility of inappropriate quotation or plagiarism is identified. Please bear in mind that any misconduct such as plagiarism is bound to be discovered eventually.

## Conclusion

Finally, please remember the following three points:

(1) A violation of research ethics is unlikely to remain undiscovered indefinitely.

Human rights violations, fabrication, falsification, fraud by collaboration, and plagiarism (fraudulent use) eventually come to light. Never fall into the trap of thinking that "It is all right to a certain extent."

(2) A violation of research ethics may derail your life.

The attempt to acquire a degree by misconduct is subject to severe punishment and remains on permanent record. Your academic life will be ruined, and your job will be severely affected, as the University announces to society that the degree was acquired by misconduct and that this led to the cancellation of the degree as punishment.

(3) Do not say "I did not know."

It is the duty of those engaged in research to understand and comply with research ethics rules. People claiming "I did not know" or "I did not understand" lack the common sense and qualifications to be engaged in research.

We sincerely hope that you now have a thorough understanding of research ethics and that you will always perform research in an ethical and productive way.

## Appendix

### 1. Waseda University Charter for Academic Research Ethics

The mission of Waseda University is to achieve a high ideal of academic research that conforms with its founding principles of Academic Independence and Enterprising Spirit. Specifically, the University wishes to promote contributions to human welfare and world peace through academic research. As such, academic researchers associated with the University shall make efforts to maintain its good tradition and constantly strive to improve themselves in accordance with good conscience. Researchers will courageously challenge the problems of modern society while considering that academic research has a great influence on humanity, society, and the natural environment. The University guarantees that academic research will be reliable and fair, but also free from unnecessary constraints. With regard to its assurances and social responsibility, this University declares that all researchers **and those concerned with research activities** shall conduct themselves by abiding by the following manners and principles so that society will trust and respect the establishment and its academic research.

1. Through academic research, all members of the University will contribute to the solution of common problems that individuals face in society, such as human welfare and world peace.

2. All members of the University will preserve human dignity, respect life, strive for harmony among human beings, society and nature, protect the socially vulnerable, maintain the global environment, and positively influence the public interest.

3. All members of the University will comply with international rules, domestic and foreign laws and regulations, school rules, the spirit of such rules, and social good sense. In addition, researchers will report their results timely and appropriately so that they can positively meet the demands of society.

4. During cooperative academic research activities, all members of the University will respect human rights, protect personal information, make efforts to prevent any kind of harassment and discrimination based on nationality, sex, age or any other reason, and consistently cooperate with others to prevent such behavior.

5. All members of the University will support cooperation in society and will appropriately manage all academic research.

6. The University will strive to improve and maintain proper education and training in research ethics and the research environment while safely

managing researchers so that no illegal activity occurs.

2. [Waseda University degree rules] Article 23

When the fact of having been conferred a degree (doctoral, Master's or professional degree) by misconduct being identified, after discussion with the Graduate School's Steering Committee and the Graduate School's Dean, the President of the University shall cancel this degree. (Diploma is to be returned). Moreover, an official announcement of this issue will be released.

3. [Waseda University Graduate School Regulations] Article 38 and Article 39.

(Disciplinary action)

Article 38. Disciplinary action is undertaken when a student violates the university rules or its own duty as a student.

2. The disciplinary action is of three types: warning, suspension from school, and expulsion from school.

3. Matters related to student's disciplinary procedures, shall be determined separately with (2012 Code 12-22 No. 1) rules concerning disciplinary procedures for students.

(Disciplinary expulsion)

Article 39. Those who disturb the order of the university or significantly violate the student's duty will be punished by expulsion from the school.