POLICY ON CODE OF ETHICS IN RESEARCH

(PCER-2017)

Policy No. R&D/41/2017

KALASALINGAM ACADEMY OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
(Under the section 3 of UGC act 1956)
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RECOMMENDATION OF EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR THE REVISION OF APPROVAL IN RESEARCH PROMOTION POLICY AT KARE 2017-2018

The following revisions have been made in the Policy on Code of Ethics in Research - 2014, based on the recommendations of the committee:

1. Inclusion of acts of research misconduct definition in subsection 3.1
2. Inclusion of Professorial Misconduct in publishing added at subsection 3.2
3. Inclusion of Research Funding at section 8
4. Inclusion of Academic Freedom, Integrity, and Responsibility at section 9
5. Inclusion of Norms of publication in IP and Confidentiality subsection 10.4
6. Other section and subsections have been appropriately renumbered in order due to inclusion of revisions 1 to 5, wherever applicable.

History of the Policy on Code of Ethics in Research

S.No.	Newly Added Title/Sub Section	PCER 2014 (1st Version)	PCER-2017 (2nd Version)
1.	Acts of research misconduct (Subsection 3.1)	Not Available	Newly Added (Page No. 2)
2.	Professorial Misconduct in publishing (Subsection 3.2)	Not Available	Newly Added (Page No. 3)
3.	Research Funding (Subsection 8)	Not Available	Newly Added (Page No. 7)
4.	Academic Freedom, Integrity, and Responsibility (Subsection 9)	Not Available	Newly Added (Page No. 8)
5.	Norms of publication in IP and Confidentiality (Subsection 10.4)	Not Available	Newly Added (Page No. 9)

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Reviewed by	**Name and Designation**  **1.Dr.C.Ramalingam, Dean(SAS)**  **2.Dr. K. Sundar, Dean (SBCE)**
Complied by	 **1.Dr. C. Sivapragasam** **Director (IQAC)**
Approved by	 **Dr. S. Saravanasankar** **Vice-Chancellor**
Approved date by the BoM	**03.12.2017**

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1. Preamble

Ethics is "the science of moral values and duties; the study of ideal human character, actions, and ends". Ethics is a norm for conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. It is usually expressed in rules, codes of professional conduct, religious creeds, or wise aphorisms that distinguish right and wrong.

As a research organization, KARE work on diversified issues, often in inter-disciplines and in collaboration with other partners. Hence, we must strive towards avoiding fraud/misappropriation in scientific research output, for which we need to agree on specific codes and policies relating to research ethics. Cognizant of the values of the Code of Ethics; therefore, it has become necessary to establish institutional research codes to monitor fraud/misappropriation in scientific research output. Furthermore, creativity and excellence demand a free mind and a fair working atmosphere. Nonetheless, responsible research is encouraged and guided by the research culture of the organization. A robust research culture will demonstrate honesty and integrity, objectivity, respect for human research participants, animals and the environment, good stewardship of public resources used to conduct research, collegiality (sharing), Justice (appropriate acknowledgement of the role of others), openness (disclosure), and responsible communication of research results. With this aim in view and considering all those mentioned earlier, the Policy on Code of Ethics in Research (PCER-2017) as a revision of PCER-2014 to develop and nurture ethical organizational culture involving all stakeholders of KARE.

2. Objectives

Research and development comprise systematic work undertaken to enhance and increase the treasure of knowledge of people, culture, and society and use this treasure of knowledge to invent new applications for sustainable well-being. It is a culmination of original and innovative activities encompassing academic, professional, and technological

domains. Therefore, the code intends to outline the mannerisms of research scholars registered for their doctoral program in dealing with the academic community, contemporaries, and the public. The major objectives for adhering to ethical norms in the research system are to:

1. Guide research centres and researchers in responsible research practices.
2. Raise the level of awareness within the research system about research and scientific ethics and to help diminish the likelihood that breaches of scientific ethics would occur.
3. Foster a genuine commitment to fairness, accuracy, and integrity in the conduct of scientific research and development by establishing a clear understanding of expectations regarding scientific ethics.
4. Ensure that researchers can be held accountable to the public.
5. Promote the aims of the research (knowledge, truth) and avoid error.
6. Promote the values that are essential to collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness.
7. Attract public support for research by making people build trust on the quality and integrity of the research.
8. Promote other moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety.

3. Scientific Misconduct

Scientific misconduct includes both research misconduct and professional misconduct. Nonetheless, honest errors related to sloppiness, poor record keeping, miscalculations, bias, self- deception, and even negligence do not constitute misconduct. Also, reasonable disagreements about research methods, procedures, and interpretations do not constitute research misconduct.

3.1 Research Misconduct

Misconduct in academic research implies but is not limited to fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or deception in proposing, carrying out, or reporting results of research and deliberate, dangerous, or negligent deviations from accepted practice in carrying out research. It includes failure to follow an agreed protocol if and when this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to persons, the environment, and when it facilitates misconduct in research by collusion in, or concealment of, such actions by others. The University demands that research misconduct is to be abhorred by a researcher and further states that "research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion".

Misconduct includes but is not limited to the following acts:

- Plagiarism: The deliberate copying of ideas, text, data, or other work (or any combination thereof) without due permission and acknowledgment. Plagiarism is "the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit". Representing any part or parts of another's work as one's own is considered plagiarism and may be a violation of the Principle of Ethics.
- Piracy: The deliberate exploitation of ideas from others without proper acknowledgment.
- Abuse of Intellectual Property Rights: Failure to observe legal norms regarding copyright and the moral rights of authors.
- Abuse of Research Resources: Failure to observe the terms and conditions of institutionally licensed research resources.
- Defamation: Failure to observe relevant legal norms governing libel and slander.
- Misinterpretation: The deliberate attempt to represent falsely or unfairly the ideas or work of others, whether or not for personal gain or enhancement.
- Personation: The situation where someone other than the person who has submitted any academic work has prepared (parts of) the work;
- Fabrication and Fraud: The falsification or invention of qualifications, data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
- Sabotage: Acting to prevent others from completing the work that includes stealing or cutting pages out of library books or otherwise damaging them, or willfully disrupting the experiments of others, or endangering institutional access to licensed research resources by failing to observe their terms and conditions.

3.2 Professorial Misconduct

Professorial acts that are arbitrary, biased, or exploitative. Denying access to information or material: To deny others access arbitrarily to scholarly resources or to deliberately and groundlessly impede their progress.

Professional misconduct includes but is not limited to the exploitation of research associates, conferring or denying authorship inappropriately, duplicative publication, misstating one's research credentials, failing to retain significant data for a reasonable period, unauthorized use of data, or failing to publish significant data in a timely manner without reasonable cause. Some examples of misconduct:

In conducting research and research process:

- Making significant deviations from the research protocol approved on a review forum
- Recording false data
- Failing to maintain research data for a reasonable period of time
- Failing to keep good research records
- Not reporting an adverse event in a research experiment
- Rigging an experiment, so you know how it will turn out
- Changing research results
- Stealing supplies, books, or data
- Overworking, neglecting, or exploiting subordinates and technical assistants
- Exposing staff to biological risks in violation of biosafety rules
- Failing to report timely
- Abusing research resources
- Stretching the truth on a job application or curriculum vita
- Stretching the truth on a grant application in order to convince
- reviewers that his/her project will make a significant contribution to the field

In publishing:

- Conducting a review of the literature that fails to acknowledge the contributions of other people in the field or relevant prior work
- Publishing the same paper in two different journals without telling the editors
- Submitting the same paper to different journals without telling the editors
- Not informing a collaborator of your intent to file a patent in order to make
- sure that you are the sole inventor
- Including a colleague as an author on a paper in return for a favor even though the colleague did not make a serious contribution to the paper
- Discussing with colleagues confidential data from a paper that you are reviewing for a journal
- Trimming outliers from a data set without discussing your reasons in paper
- Using an inappropriate statistical technique in order to enhance the significance of your research
- Bypassing the peer review process and announcing your results through a press conference without giving peers adequate information to review your work

- Making derogatory comments and personal attacks in your review of author's submission
- Rejecting a manuscript for publication without even reading it
- Sabotaging someone's work
- Making unauthorized copies of data, papers, or computer programs

3.3 Ethical Dimensions of Research

The widely accepted five ethical dimensions of academic research are;

1. Normative ethics- includes determining what is right and wrong
2. Compliance- includes instituted policies and regulations at the University
3. Rigor and reproducibility – "only kind of science that can offer social value and justify risks to subjects and financial investment in research".
4. Social Value- "means that research addresses problems of importance to society, generating knowledge used to solve real-world problems through new technologies or procedures".
5. Workplace relationships- a newly identified aspect of research that in essence forecasts the beneficial relationship that has to be established and sustained for greater outcomes.

3.4 Consequences of unethical research

Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects and the public. Researchers have three sets of obligations that motivate their adherence to professional standards (National academy of sciences, 2009). First, researchers have an obligation to honor the trust that their colleagues place in them. Science is a cumulative enterprise in which new research builds on previous results. If research results are inaccurate, other researchers will waste time and resources trying to replicate or extend those results. Irresponsible actions can impede an entire field of research or send it in a wrong direction, and progress in that field may slow. Imbedded in this trust is a responsibility of researchers to mentor the next generation who will build their work on the current research discoveries. Second, researchers have an obligation to themselves. Irresponsible conduct in research can make it impossible to achieve a goal, whether that goal is earning a degree, renewing a grant, achieving tenure, or maintaining a reputation as a productive and honest researcher. Adhering to professional standards builds personal integrity in a research career. Third, because scientific results greatly influence society,

researchers have an obligation to act in ways that serve the public. Some scientific results directly affect the health and well-being of individuals, as in the case of clinical trials or toxicological studies. A researcher who fabricates data in a clinical trial may harm or even kill patients. Science also is used by policy makers and voters to make informed decisions on such pressing issues as climate change, stem cell research, and the mitigation of natural hazards. Taxpayer money fund the grants that support much research. A researcher who fails to abide by regulations and guidelines relating to radiation or biological safety may jeopardize his health and safety or the health and safety of staff. An agricultural engineer who bases his studies on erroneous design can ruin the end product. A researcher who bases his fertilizer, pesticide, etc. recommendation or improved variety on false data can seriously damage the crops, can bankrupt farmers, can damage the national economy, mislead future researchers embarking on this false data, can mislead science and scientific community, etc. Hence, unethical research will have a lot of serious consequences on science and society.

4. Institutional Responsibilities

The University is committed to ensuring that all activities that encompass the University, particularly those including research, are facilitated to the highest of standards and uphold legal, ethical, and safety norms. However, the institutional responsibility is individuals' professional responsibilities on behalf of the Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education (KARE).

The University thus;

1. Formulate research governance framework via policies and procedures;
2. Facilitates training and development programs and appropriate mentoring to enable skill up-gradation and consequential support for career development.
3. Provides research orientation for achieving excellence.
4. Institutes robust management systems that ensure compliance with set standards and systems for resolving disputes and preventing misconduct; also process for apt decision making and grievance redressal.
5. Provides apt infrastructure and resources, support, and services.

5. Leadership and Supervision

Leadership in the context of this code is to motivate/inspire to act in a way that benefits the University. Leaders, the research supervisor, are expected to foster a conducive

ambiance to promote sound research accolades to the University. Leaders are to facilitate research activities by assuredly upholding integrity, sound governance, and ethical practice and instilling a culture of honesty, cooperation, and professionalism.

As a supervisor, the leader is expected to exhibit apt competence in providing the training necessary to garner improved research results and acceptance by the stakeholders. The research supervisor shall maintain a professional supervisor–supervisee relationships and assign credit appropriately.

6. Training And Mentorship

It is the prerogative that the University lays policies to ensure all researchers receive apt training opportunities and ensuing supervision and required assistance to enable research of the highest standards. The academic departments are to facilitate directions and coordination to in filter the policies to all stakeholders. The academic departments shall therefore facilitate training programs i.e., coursework (research methodology, regulatory, equipment use, confidentiality, data management, record-keeping, data protection, and publication). Furthermore, the academic departments shall ensure the appropriate use of licensed research resources and IPR as well as gear up the concerned administrative and technical personnel for accurate record-keeping and providing technical assistance for research.

A research mentor, a knowledgeable, open-minded, supportive, and a good listener himself, in the context of this code, is expected to serve as a catalyst, a role model, and a coach that facilitates progressive research beneficial for all researchers and the like and in turn the University. The research mentor shall therefore inspire and demand to disseminate of research outcomes in various publicizing mediums such as conferences, journals, and the like.

7. Excellence

A mere attempt at acquiring/facilitating a doctoral degree is an inferior expectation from the context of the University. Therefore, personnel involved in research are to excel in the research of highest standards upholding ethics and disseminate their findings for the larger benefit of the society.

8. Research Funding

Financial assistance is a matter of pride and privilege for a researcher. Utmost care must be exercised by a researcher in;

- Familiarize themselves with the terms and conditions of any funding agreement (grant or contract and whether from public, government funding bodies, industry, or other), to ensure that they fully understand the implications of those terms.
- Agree to and accept the terms and conditions of their research funding organization. Once the funding has been accepted, researchers must ensure that they observe and fully comply with the terms and conditions of any grant or contract.
- Adhere to all Financial Regulations and Procedures including those related to purchasing or procurement of materials, equipment, or other resources for research, the hiring of research project staff, and expenses.
- Use and manage financial resources responsibly and sustainably and following the terms and conditions of the funding agency and the University.
- Co-operate with any financial monitoring and audit. Any concerns, irregularities, or events which can result in unforeseen financial consequences, should be reported to the supervisor and the University as soon as they become apparent.

9. Academic Freedom, Integrity, and Responsibility

Integrity, accountability, and responsibility are cornerstones of KARE. The University renders academic freedom to all researchers to pursue knowledge and conduct advanced research without unreasonable interference or restriction from any quarters, norms, law, institutional regulations, or public pressure. Within the bounds of the University, a researcher is given apt freedom to inquire into the subject of study, present research findings, and publish data and conclusions without control or censorship in a manner considered professionally appropriate. However, the researcher must exercise the freedom diligently and care must be taken to abhor violations of widely-recognized academic research standards, that represent severe offences to the entire academic community, and such things will be considered injurious to the credibility of the University which strives to promote excellence in academic research.

10. IP and Confidentiality

All research scholars are required to familiarize themselves with, and strictly observe the terms and conditions relating to IP and confidentiality in any sponsored research, grant, contract, or collaboration agreement. Research scholars are also expected to respect IP created by others, use it only with appropriate permissions, and fully comply with all relevant IP licenses. Research Scholars should ensure that they keep all their field and lab

notebooks and other records of data collection and experimental findings for evidencing the creation of new IP arising out of their research work.

10.1 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The University deems fit to encourage and facilitate successful utilization of intellectual property rights. Intellectual Property is the product of innovative, diligent, creative, and intellectual effort.

10.2 Confidential Information

Researchers may receive confidential information from other researchers, collaborators, and funders. Researchers need to ensure that they handle confidential and/or restricted information carefully and not use or disclose it to others without the consent of the party who owns the confidential information. Researchers must also ensure that they are aware of any confidentiality provisions applying to specific projects involving commercially sensitive data or Intellectual Property, and of possible obligations concerning those provisions.

10.3 Publication and Authorship

All researchers are expected to publish and disseminate the results of their research in an open, honest, transparent, and accurate manner, and via all appropriate media such as journal papers, books, reviews, software, a data repository, or conference proceedings. While both the Intellectual Property rights regulations and the requirements of research contracts must be satisfied.

10.4 Norms of Publications

The University expects all the publications to conform to appropriate discipline-specific professional standards, as well as the following examples of good practices:

1. In any publication, the authors must be able to identify their contribution to it. In addition, they should be familiar with its content and accept personal responsibility for it.
2. In all aspects of research, the contributions of formal collaborators and all others who have directly assisted or indirectly supported the research (including research students, research staff, and professional services staff) should be properly acknowledged with their permission.
3. Funding agencies of research should be acknowledged.

4. The sequence in which authors are listed should be agreed upon by all authors.
5. Intentional failure to acknowledge the contributions of others is regarded as unprofessional conduct, and instances other than minor omissions will be treated as research misconduct.
6. Any person who has not made an intellectual, scholarly, or practical contribution, and has not participated in a substantial way in conceiving, executing, or interpreting at least part of the relevant research, should not be included as an author of the publication derived from that research. The so-called 'honorary authorship' is not encouraged.
7. Research scholars must acknowledge and attribute all sources used in the research in line with their specific discipline citation and referencing convention.
8. When a researcher submits substantially similar work to more than one publisher should disclose that fact to the publishers at the time of submission.
9. Researchers have the full responsibility to ensure that any inconsistencies or errors in their published material are rectified on time.
10. The stipendiary Research scholars should observe the conditions, if any, set by funding or other bodies regarding the publication of their research.

11. Good Practice of Research Scholars

Some of the practices and attributes that research scholars must possess and exhibit that are deemed key for undertaking good research are;

- **Sincerity and Dedication:** Every research scholar should be sincere in the work culture. They should be dedicated and devote their time only to research works.
- **Time Management:** Time spent on unproductive work will never fetch anything. Care should be taken to chart a timeline for completing the given task and submitting the thesis.
- **Honesty:** Refers to being accurate and truthful about one's self, one's work, and in acknowledging the work of others; reporting all the findings; and making valid interpretations and claims.
- **Rigour:** choose and adhere to appropriate methods; draw conclusions; and communicate the results.
- **Transparency:** report data collection methods; analyze and interpret data; and make findings widely available, including to the general public.

- **Respect and care:** exhibit care for all research participants and the environment. Conduct respectfully towards other scholars, staff, and faculty.
- **Trust:** Exhibit mutual trust to encourage the free exchange of ideas.
- **Fairness:** Ensure fairness in institutional standards, practices, and procedures as well as in interactions between members of the research groups.
- **Responsibility**: Uphold high standards of conduct in learning, teaching, and research responsibly for promoting academic integrity, among all members of the University.
- **Legality:** Observe valid legal norms related to the conduct and publication of research, particularly in relation to copyright, the intellectual property rights of third parties, the terms and conditions regulating access to research resources, and the laws of libel.

12. Ethical values of research scholars:

Upholding ethical values are vital to good research and the University promotes such research activity. Some of them are;

- Be very punctual, dedicated, and sincere in all academic work.
- Research data collected should be synthesized as per the procedure laid down.
- Research results to be reported should follow standard practices.
- Publication status should not be manipulated or misrepresented.
- Need to keep their undertakings and agreements honestly.
- Avoid casual attitudes and negligence with their research work.
- Keep quality in their paperwork and records of research activities, such as literature review, research design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation, drafted manuscripts, and communication with UGC-recognized journals.
- Need to respect patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property.
- Strive to protect confidential communications, such as manuscripts, projects, or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, deals or military secrets, and patient records used for requisite research.
- Endorse social wellbeing and to prevent or lessen social harms through research, public education, and promotion and care to safeguard the environment.

13. Code of Ethics Committee

The University's Ethics Committee will be functioning to promote the best practices by all its research scholars. However, in the event of any unwanted misconduct observed within the University or its constituent unit, this committee shall take up the matter and evaluate to punish or prevent such incidences.

13.1 Composition of the Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee is appointed by the University upon nomination by the Vice Chancellor. The Committee shall be composed of the following members:

1. The Registrar
2. The Director, IQAC
3. The Director of Research & Development
4. The Deans of all Faculties
5. The Director, Planning and Monitoring
6. Three to four nominees of the Vice-Chancellor derived from outside.

13.2 Tasks of the Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee is expected to

1. provide advice and guidance to the academic community on all matters about academic research ethics
2. advise the authorities on compliance with the 'Code of Ethics in Academic Research'
3. provide guidance and academic support to scholars on ethical issues in respect of teaching, research, and other academic activities.
4. act as a consultative body for any disputed matter concerning research ethics and conduct and
5. to make recommendations to the University on what action, if any, should be taken as a result of identified misconduct committed by the individuals and based on inquiries and detailed investigations.
6. A preliminary investigation is to be conducted to ascertain whether there is sufficient substance to the allegation as to warrant a more thorough investigation.
7. The Committee will produce a report stating the procedures under which the formal investigation was conducted; how and, where appropriate, from whom information was obtained; the findings of the committee and the basis for these; a summary of the views of the respondent; and a description of any recommendations made by the committee.

14. Sanctions for Misconduct

The following are the expected sanctions that will be imposed based on the level of misconduct:

1. Warning: A written reprimand for misconduct.
2. Loss of privileges: Denial of specified privileges for a designated period.
3. Fines: Previously established and published fines may be imposed.
4. Restitution: Compensation for loss, damage, or injury. This may take the form of appropriate services and/or monetary or material replacement.
5. Suspension: Separation for a definite period.
6. Suspension from Hostel residential accommodation: Suspension from the residence and Hostel premises for a definite period.
7. Dismissal: Permanent separation from the University

Ethics and values are very important concepts in the life of growing (budding) research scholars. The purpose of these guidelines is to consider the positive aspects effectively and neglect the negative aspects, which, in any case, do not help anybody. Many research scholars may be aware of these guidelines, and there is no need to explain them. However, newly joining researchers should be highlighted these aspects, which will certainly help them to promote values, virtues, and good conduct with moral ethics, not only while doing research but also in their life too.

15. Amendments and revision of PCER

In general, the frequency of policy revision will be three years, however the policy will be reviewed every year based on the suggestions and expert advice of the statutory bodies of KARE. In case of no modification or changes suggested, the same policy in its existing form will be effective irrespective of the years. The Board of Management is requested to consider and approve the Policy on Code of Ethics in Research (PCER-2017).

Vice Chancellor
Dr.S.Saravanasankar

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