

Standard of Conduct Regarding Research Activities at Tokyo Medical and Dental University

Enacted October 16, 2007

Tokyo Medical and Dental University's philosophy of education is to foster creative human beings equipped with a broad-based education and a rich sensitivity who possess the ability to both pose and resolve questions of their own making, and medical professionals with a rich international perspective. This philosophy can only be realized through academic and research activities based on a strong awareness and understanding of the importance of contributing to society.

Research activities are activities that create new knowledge by building on the achievements of one's predecessors to obtain one's own findings. It is desired to encourage independent research by obtaining the trust and good faith of society. Research misconduct threatens to greatly damage trust in scientists as a group, hinders the development of science built on justice and integrity, and damages society's faith in science as a whole. Research misconduct can therefore not be tolerated.

Those that conduct medical and dental research at this university bear an important responsibility because such research contributes directly to human health and welfare. Researchers must be aware of transparency and accountability based on a strong ethical sense for every research activity in which they take part. The ethics and conduct standards regarding research activities are laid down here based on these points, and all persons involved in research activities—including the administration and management of public research funds (not only teaching staff and researchers but also research support staff and administrative staff—hitherto referred to as “all persons involved”)—must adhere to them.

These ethics and conduct standards were created based in part on “On Standards of Conduct for Scientists” (enacted October 3, 2006 and revised January 25, 2013 by the Science Council of Japan).

I. Researchers' obligations

1. Researchers' responsibilities

Researchers have a responsibility to guarantee the quality of any specialized knowledge or technology that they create, and to use this specialized knowledge, technology and experience to contribute to the health and welfare of humanity, the safety and peace of society, and the sustainability of the global environment.

2. Researchers' stance

Researchers shall always make decisions and act in an honest and conscientious way. They shall work to maintain and advance their own specialized knowledge, abilities and skills and work to their utmost to scientifically demonstrate the accuracy and validity of the knowledge their scientific research generates.

3. Researchers in society

Researchers must be aware that the independence of science is built on the trust and good faith of society. They must also understand the relationship between science/technology and society and the natural environment from a broad perspective, and act accordingly.

4. Research that responds to society's expectations

Researchers have an obligation to respond to society's expectations that they will elucidate truth and resolve certain issues. Researchers must always be cognizant of the existence of these broad social expectations when using research funds provided for the development of the research environment and the execution of their research.

5. Explaining and publicizing findings

Researchers shall endeavor to publicize and clearly explain the significance and role of research in which they are involved. They shall evaluate the effects that their research could have on people, society and the environment and report their findings in an impartial and objective manner while maintaining a constructive dialogue with society.

6. Ambiguities regarding use of scientific research

In recognizing that the results of their research could be misused for destructive purposes contrary to their own intentions, researchers shall choose appropriate, publically sanctioned means of executing their research and publicizing their findings.

II. Proper research

7. Research activities

Researchers shall carry out the drafting, planning, application, execution and reporting phases of their research conscientiously in keeping with the intent of these standards. When publicizing their research findings in a scientific paper or otherwise, researchers are recognized for results achieved through the work of every member of the research team. At the same time, the researcher must take responsibility for the actions of all team members. Research and test data must be painstakingly recorded and preserved to avoid committing any misconduct—including fabrication, falsification and plagiarism—nor should researchers conspire in such conduct.

8. Development of the research environment and thorough education and enlightenment

Researchers shall be cognizant that one of their important obligations is the establishment and maintenance of a proper environment that makes possible the execution of the research for which they are responsible as well as promoting the prevention of misconduct. Researchers shall work ceaselessly to qualitatively improve the research environment within their

community of researchers and the university as a whole, and to educate and enlighten all regarding the prevention of misconduct. In addition, they shall endeavor to obtain society's understanding and cooperation in achieving these tasks.

9. Concern for research subjects

Researchers shall respect the individuality and human rights of those who cooperate in research and show concern for their welfare. They shall also handle research animals with a sincere attitude.

10. Relations with others

While appropriately evaluating and critiquing the findings of others, researchers shall listen carefully and humbly to evaluations and critiques of their own research, exchanging opinions with a sincere attitude. They shall fairly evaluate the achievements of others and their intellectual findings, and respect authority and intellectual property rights. They shall also actively participate in the peer review of fellow researchers within the community of researchers, particularly in their own specialty.

III. Science in society

11. Dialogue with society

Researchers shall actively participate in exchanges with citizens to enhance mutual understanding between society and the research community. They shall endeavor to provide valid scientific counsel regarding policy formation to persons proposing and determining policy to resolve various societal issues and promote the realization of social welfare. At such times, researchers shall aim to present advice based on the consensus among researchers. If differences of opinion do exist in the scientific community, they should be presented in an easy-to-grasp manner.

12. Scientific counsel

Researchers shall conduct research activities with the goal of contributing to the public welfare, and present impartial advice based on an objective scientific foundation. At such times, researchers shall be cognizant of the significant impacts that their statements could have on public opinion and policy formation, understand their responsibility, and not abuse their authority. They shall also do their utmost to ensure the quality of their scientific counsel, while at the same time clearly explaining the uncertainties of scientific knowledge and the diversity of opinions.

13. Scientific counsel for policy formulators and policy decision-makers

When providing scientific counsel to policy formulators and policy decision-makers, researchers shall recognize that although scientific knowledge should be adequately respected as part of the policy formation process, it is not the sole basis for deciding policy. If a policy is selected that differs from the counsel the research community has given, it may be necessary to ask those who proposed and decided on the policy to explain their decision to the public.

IV. Legal compliance

14. Legal compliance

All those involved in research shall actively participate in training and information sessions regarding research activities, including the administration and management of public research funds. They shall work to acquire knowledge and understanding of all related laws, university regulations and rules and comply with them.

15. Appropriate use of public research funds

All those involved in research shall be cognizant that the source of public research funds is the taxpayer's money, and of the need for accountability in the use of those funds.

16. Obligations of administrative staff

Administrative staff shall understand the uniqueness of this university's research activities and use their specialized knowledge and abilities to ensure the appropriate administration of public research funds.

17. Mutual cooperation

All those involved in research shall cooperate and work to prevent research misconduct (including misuse of research funds) before it happens.

V. Miscellaneous

18. Nondiscrimination

Researchers shall not discriminate against individuals based on race, gender, rank, ideology/ creed or religion during research, education or social activities, and treat all persons fairly based on the scientific method, respecting personal freedoms and human rights.

19. Conflicts of interest

In their research, evaluations, critiques and scientific counsel, researchers shall pay sufficient attention to the possible collision of interests between the individual and the organization or between different organizations, and respond appropriately in consideration of openness to the public view.

Supplementary provisions

This Standard of Conduct was put into effect October 16, 2007.

Supplementary provisions (revised September 24, 2014)

This Standard of Conduct was put into effect October 1, 2014.