

# **Statement on Academic Ethics by the Ministry of Science and Technology**

**Amended on October 20, 2014**

- 1. Importance of academic ethics:** Academic ethics are the academic communities' self-disciplined regulations for research conduct. The core principles of academic ethics are honesty, responsibility, and righteousness. These foundations are necessary to ensure that academic research is implemented suitably and effectively while maintaining social confidence and support.
- 2. Guidelines for the academic ethics and differences between fields of research:** There may be uncertainties when enforcing academic ethics. Academic groups shall regulate themselves and provide positive guidelines on proper conduct of research as well as improper actions to avoid. The Ministry hereby publicly declares the basic principles of academic ethics. However, we also respect the differences in various fields and encourage the establishment, promulgation, and promotion of additional regulations in different areas of research.
- 3. Principles for handling research misconduct cases:** The responsibility of the Ministry is only applicable to cases related to academic research. Ethical behaviors related to daily life or work is not within the jurisdiction of the Ministry. The public authority shall only be involved when violations of academic research have severely hampered the enforcement of public authority (such as research grants issued by the Ministry or the promotion of instructors and professors in universities and colleges). From the administrative perspective,

since administrative penalties issued by the Ministry are only related to issues regarding rewards and subsidies. The Ministry shall therefore only handle violations of academic ethics that are related to rewards and grants provided by the Ministry.

4. **Assessment of research misconduct:** The standard adopted by the Ministry to determine if academic ethical violations have occurred is:

*“Any intentional and obvious violation of the code of conduct accepted by academic groups which severely misleads the Ministry review processes and the verdict issued for the research outcomes, and any case that affect resource distribution and efficiency.”*

Although certain acts are considered unacceptable (such as “*salami slicing*” where results of a research project are divided into multiple smaller papers with each paper making only minor improvements; and improper citation of papers), these acts will not be within the scope of possible penalties issued by the public authority. The Ministry may adopt a review system to make such acts unprofitable in order to change academic conduct. Academic groups shall enforce internal disciplines for the misinterpretation, improper summarization, or lack of stringency of research results. However, where the results of such acts do not mislead the review process, penalties from the Ministry will not be required.

5. **Procedure for reviewing research misconduct cases:** For any case of a signed report providing substantial evidence or suspect violations of academic ethics identified by the Ministry when conducting its

official duties, the Ministry shall submit case to the concerned academic research department for preliminary review. If the violation of academic ethics is verified, the case shall be submitted to the Academic Ethics Investigation Committee for review. Before arriving at a verdict that penalizes the violator, the person concerned should have the opportunity to explain.

6. **Prudence in the judgment of research misconduct:** For any violation of academic ethics reviewed by the Ministry, the Ministry shall also notify the agency of the violator and register the act in formal records regardless of the severity of the act. The academic reputation of the violator will be severely affected . Therefore, any form of verdict or penalty shall be carefully considered and reviewed. The Ministry adopts the approach of “*containing the extent of public authority*”. Only the most severe cases of violations shall be subject to penalties enforced by the public authority.

7. **Responsibilities of academic institutions for academic ethics:** Every academic institution is responsible for establishing a set of rules and system governing academic ethics in order to promote and safeguard academic ethics while avoiding improper behavior. The Ministry shall handle cases of academic ethical violations promptly, impartially, professionally, and confidentially. Where the Ministry has determined the case to have violated academic ethics, the Ministry shall notify the academic institution(s) where the violator works at and require the said institution(s) to review and improve upon the issue.