

Checklist for Investigating Allegations of Research Misconduct  
 Association for the Promotion of Research Integrity (APRIN), Japan

Allegation	1	Was a preliminary investigation conducted by a committee in response to the allegation?
	2	If no formal investigation was conducted (i.e., if an investigation committee was not formed), was the complainant informed of the reason for this?
Fairness and Competence of the Committee	3	Did the members of the investigation committee have adequate knowledge and experience?
	4	Were half or more of the investigation committee members recruited from outside the institution where misconduct is alleged to have occurred?
	5	Were possible conflicts of interest examined and, if necessary, dealt with for each individual committee member?
	6	Were possible conflicts of interest of the committee as a whole and/or the research institution(s) itself (themselves) examined and, if necessary, dealt with?
Protection of the Rights of Persons Involved	7	Were both the complainant and the respondent given the opportunities to express their opinions about the members of the investigation committee?
	8	Was the respondent given sufficient opportunity to rebut or defend against the allegations, and was the rebuttal or defense dealt with fairly?
	9	Were the rights of individuals involved, including those of the complainant and the respondent, protected?
Investigation Process	10	Was the reason for establishing the investigation committee explained to cognizant public office(s), such as that in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology?
	11	Did the committee make best efforts to preserve all evidence intact, starting from the preliminary investigation stage?
	12	Did the investigation cover all points necessary and appropriate for determining the occurrence or absence of research misconduct?
	13	Did the committee carry out its investigation of the allegations thoroughly, including examination of relevant publications and reports?
	14	Were the materials considered as evidence appropriate?
	15	Did the committee make best efforts to obtain all materials necessary to reach a conclusion?

	16	Did the committee make best efforts to interview all people involved in and critical for the investigation?
	17	Did the committee investigate the possible involvement of other researcher(s), author or co-author(s) in the alleged misconduct?
	18	Is the record of the investigation of the persons concerned being preserved properly?
	19	Are the conclusions supported by the findings from the investigation?
	20	When the conclusion of the investigation was “no misconduct,” was the original allegation re-evaluated to determine whether or not it was appropriate, and was the complainant informed of the conclusions?
	21	Was the complainant or the respondent given the opportunity to appeal against the conclusions of the investigation committee?
Investigation Report	22	Does the report include a summary and an explanation of the reasons for the conclusion?
	23	Does the report clearly describe the substance of the allegation?
	24	Does the report describe the reason why the allegation was considered to merit a formal misconduct investigation?
	25	If there is any evidence and/or interviews that was considered necessary but could not be obtained, does the report describe their nature, together with the reasons they were unavailable?
	26	Does the report logically explain the process that led to the evidence-based conclusion?
	27	After submitting the report to the funding agency, if there was a finding of misconduct by the investigation committee, was it disclosed to the public?
Actions	28	Was the connection between the alleged research misconduct and external funding examined, and was a recommendation made in a timely fashion to suspend use of the fund(s)?
	29	Were the errors in research publications made public and/or was the journal that published the research notified?
	30	Was the respondent advised to withdraw the article(s) in which research misconduct was found?
Conformity with Rules	31	Was the investigation conducted in conformity with the rules and regulations of the institution?
	32	Was the investigation conducted in conformity with the rules and regulations of the government and/or funding agency?