

Good scientific practice at LUT

Ethical sustainability is the starting point for all scientific activity regardless of the field. In human sciences, conducting research usually requires an advance ethical review and a statement from the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. In LUT's research fields, the practices are less strict, and carrying out research rarely requires advance reviews when the researcher commits to applying the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research¹. Research that follows good scientific practices is ethically sound and reliable, and its results credible. The responsible conduct of research is also an important part of managing the quality of the university's scientific research. The guidelines for the responsible conduct of research can be found on the web site of the [Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity](#).

Even though an ethical review is usually not required in our research fields, attention must nevertheless be paid to good scientific practices and research ethics when the research involves people or human behaviour or when people and their behaviour is monitored and/or tested experimentally and/or by collecting information. Also the increasing openness of science introduces new ethical questions concerning e.g. permit policies or the utilisation of data collected by others.

If you are uncertain of whether an ethical review or statement is needed for your research, please contact the presenting official for research ethics issues. In some cases, the object, financing source or partner in cooperation may also require an advance review, or the research results are planned to be published in a journal requiring an ethical review. Please contact the presenting official for research ethics issues also in these cases.

Handling ethical issues that require a statement

At LUT, statements on the ethical acceptability of planned research are given by the vice-rector for research based on a joint proposal by the presenting official of research ethics issues and the university legal counsel. The statement can be based on the **ethical principles of research** issued by the Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity. You should familiarise yourself with the principles before requesting a statement.

The following documents are usually needed for the statement request²:

1. Cover letter (motivation for the statement request and the contact information of the person in charge of the research)
2. Research plan and an abstract (if the language of the research is English, an abstract in Finnish is required)
3. Assessment of the ethics of the research by the person in charge if the research
4. Fact sheet to the research subjects
5. Consent form to be signed by the research subjects (a consent form is required in addition to the fact sheet if the research data analysed is identifiable and contains sensitive material).
6. Commitment by the participating researchers to handle the research data in an ethically sustainable manner

¹ Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity: Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland.

² Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity: Guidelines for formulating a request for a statement

7. Other material submitted to the research subjects (interview outline, journals, questionnaires, etc.)
8. Data management plan (for handling, storing and archiving data)
9. Data disposal plan
10. Data Protection Ombudsman's **data description sheet** if identifiable data is collected. The data description document is submitted to Records Services (asiakirjat@lut.fi)

The statement request is submitted to the presenting official for research ethics issues at least two weeks before the statement is needed. You may also contact the presenting official already when you are preparing the statement request and ask for further information on the need for an ethical review and the content of the statement.

Handling allegations of misconduct at LUT

Suspected violations of the responsible conduct of research are handled in accordance with the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity on the responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland. [Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland. Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity guidelines 2012.](#)

The guidelines aim to promote the responsible conduct of research and ensure that allegations of misconduct are handled competently, fairly and rapidly. The guidelines are applied in all fields of science in Finland. The guidelines on the responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct are also a key tool in the evaluation of teaching ethics.

Guidelines for handling misconduct in studies

In cases that are not investigated according to the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board for Research Integrity, LUT applies its own [guidelines for handling misconduct](#). The purpose of these instructions is to describe concepts and processes involving good scientific practice and related misconduct at LUT. The guidelines apply to all studies at LUT. In cases of misconduct related to studies, please contact the Head of Student Services.

Further information on research ethics issues

The LUT Doctoral School has obtained a licence for a course on research ethics. The licence is valid at least until 2018. The course is open to all of LUT's postgraduate and undergraduate students and staff. The course deals with questions such as research ethics, preparing an ethically sustainable research plan, ethical principles that govern research, and the researcher's ethical responsibilities.

Handling ethical issues at LUT is the responsibility of:

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