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VISHNU DENTAL COLLEGE

Institutional Research Code of Ethics

Vishnu Dental College,

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PRINCIPAL,
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Introduction

Research at the Vishnu Dental College is conducted according to the principles of **integrity, academic excellence, accountability, inclusiveness and professionalism**. All research must follow appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. The Code of Ethics for Research Practice have been composed at par with the principles laid out in other relevant policies, guidelines and codes of conduct, including those of funding bodies.

This describes the principles underpinning the ethical conduct of research and defines the process and principles for the objective and rigorous ethical review of research, which falls within its scope.

This code applies to all the faculty, students and visiting researchers of the Institute, including persons holding honorary appointments and students on placements, who conduct research within or on behalf of the institute.

Purpose of the Code of Ethics

The purpose of the code of ethics in dental research is to establish a set of codes or principles that should help the dental student, intern, faculty or a researcher to reach professional standard guided by legal and ethical principles. Research ethics is the application of ethical codes or principles in scientific investigation.

All members of the Institute are individually responsible to ensure their work is conducted in accordance with the institutional values and policies that form part of the terms and conditions of employment or study. Disregard to this policy may lead to failure of assessed work, suspension of study/research projects, and/or funding from research sponsorsandconsent to publish.

Research is any original investigation undertaken in order to acquire knowledge and understanding which would include the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances leading to new or substantially improved insights in health care, scholarship such as the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines (e.g., research databases), the use of existing knowledge

and experimentation to develop new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and fabrication.

Good research practices are based on fundamental principles of research integrity. They guide researchers in their work as well as in their engagement with the practical, ethical and intellectual challenges inherent in research.

These principles are:

• ***Reliability*** in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in the design, the methodology, the analysis and the use of resources.

• ***Honesty*** in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair, full and unbiased way.

• ***Respect*** for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment.

• ***Accountability*** for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organization, for training, supervision and mentoring, and for its wider impacts.

The Code of Ethics for research is described in the following contexts:

• Research Environment
• Training, Supervision and Mentoring
• Research Procedures
• Safeguards
• Data Practices and Management
• Collaborative Working
• Publication and Dissemination
• Reviewing, Evaluating and Editing

❖ Research Environment

• Promote awareness and ensure a prevailing culture of research integrity.

• Demonstrate leadership in providing clear policies and procedures on good research practice and the transparent and proper handling of violations.

• Provides support with good infrastructure for the management and protection of data and research materials in all their forms (encompassing

qualitative and quantitative data, protocols, processes, other research artifacts and associated metadata) that are necessary for reproducibility, traceability and accountability.

• Promotes research activities by acknowledging and appreciating the researchers with rewards.

❖ Training, Supervision and Mentoring

• Ensure that researchers receive rigorous training in research design, methodology and analysis.

• Develop appropriate and adequate training in ethics and research integrity and ensure that all concerned are made aware of the relevant codes and regulations.

• Researchers across the entire career path, from junior to the most senior level, should undertake training in ethics and research integrity.

• Senior researchers, research leaders and supervisors should mentor their team members and offer specific guidance and training to properly develop, design and structure their research activity and to foster a culture of research integrity.

❖ Research Procedures

• Researchers should write and submit the synopsis of intended work/projectto the research committee, ethical committee, research grants committee (if required) and clinical trial registry of India (if applicable) respectively.

• Researchers should design, carry out, analyze and document research in a careful and well-considered manner.

• Researchers should make judicious and conscientious use of granted research funds.

• Researchers should publish results, interpretations of research in an open, honest, transparent and accurate manner, and respect confidentiality of data or findings when legitimately required to do so.

• Researchers should report their results in a way that is compatible with the standards of the discipline and, where applicable, can be verified and reproduced.

❖ Safeguards

• Researchers should comply with codes and regulations relevant to their discipline.

• Researchers should handle research subjects, be they human, animal, cultural, biological, environmental or physical, with respect and care, and in accordance with legal and ethical provisions.

• Researchers should have due regard for the health, safety and welfare of the volunteering subjects, community, collaborators and other individuals involved in respective research projects.

• Research protocols take account of, and are sensitive to, relevant differences in age, gender, culture, religion, ethnic origin and social class.

• Researchers should recognise and manage potential harms and risks relating to their research.

❖ Data Practices and Management

• Researchers should ensure appropriate stewardship and curation of all data and research materials, including unpublished ones, with secure preservation for a reasonable period.

• Researchers should ensure access to data will be in line with the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable) for data management.

• Researchers should provide transparency about how to access or make use of their data and research materials to the institute.

• Researchers, research institutions and other organizations should have a reciprocal acknowledgement for data as legitimate and citable products of research.

• Researchers should ensure that any contracts or agreements relating to research outputs include equitable and fair provision for the management of their use, ownership, and/or their protection under intellectual property rights.

❖ Collaborative Working

• All partners in research collaborations should take responsibility for the integrity of the research.

• All partners in research collaborations should agree at the outset on the goals of the research and on the process for communicating their research as transparently as possible.

• All partners should formally agree at the start of their collaboration on expectations and standards concerning research integrity, on the laws and regulations that will apply, on protection of the intellectual property of collaborators, and on procedures for handling conflicts and possible cases of misconduct.

• All partners in research collaborations should be informed and consulted about submissions for publication of the research results.

❖ **Publication and Dissemination**

• All authors are fully responsible for the content of a publication, unless otherwise specified.

• All authors should agree on the sequence of authorship, acknowledging that authorship itself is based on a significant contribution to the design of the research, relevant data collection, analysis and interpretation of the results.

• Authors should ensure that their work is made available to colleagues in a timely, open, transparent, and accurate manner, unless otherwise agreed, and are honest in their communication to the general public and in traditional and social media.

• Authors should acknowledge important work and intellectual contributions of collaborators, assistants, funding agencies, and any other individual who have influenced the reported research in appropriate form.

• All authors should disclose any conflicts of interest and financial or other types of support for the research or for the publication of its results.

• Authors can issue corrections or retract work if necessary, however the reasons shall be clearly stated.

• Authors and publishers should consider negative results to be as valid as positive findings for publication and dissemination.

• Researchers should adhere to the same criteria as those detailed above whether they publish in a subscription journal, an open access journal or in any other alternative publication form.

❖ Reviewing, Evaluating and Editing

• All the researchers should take seriously their commitment to the research community by participating in refereeing, reviewing and evaluation.

• All the researchers should review and evaluate submissions for publication, funding and reward in a transparent and justifiable manner.

• Reviewers or editors with a conflict of interest should withdraw from involvement in decisions on publication, funding and reward.

• All the reviewers should maintain confidentiality unless there is prior approval for disclosure.

• All the reviewers should respect the rights of authors and applicants, and should also seek permission to make use of the ideas, data or interpretations presented.

Violations of Research Integrity

It is of crucial importance that researchers master the knowledge, methodologies and ethical practices associated with their field. Failing to follow good research practices violates professional responsibilities. It damages the research culture, degrades relationships among researchers, and undermines trust in and the credibility of research. It misuses the resources and may expose research subjects, users, society or the environment to unnecessary harm.

❖ Research Misconduct and other Unacceptable Practices

Research misconduct is traditionally defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism (the so-called FFP categorization) in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results:

• ***Fabrication*** is making up results and recording them as if they were real.

• ***Falsification*** is manipulating research materials, equipment or processes or changing, omitting or suppressing data or results without justification.

• ***Plagiarism*** is using other people's work and ideas without giving proper credit to the original source, thus violating the rights of the original author(s) to their intellectual outputs.

These three forms of violation are considered particularly serious since they distort the research record. There are further violations of good research practice that damage the integrity of the research process or of researchers. In addition to direct violations of the good research practices set out in this Code of Conduct, examples of other unacceptable practices include, but are not confined to:

• Manipulating authorship or denigrating the role of other researchers in publications.

• Re-publishing substantive parts of one's own earlier publications, including translations, without duly acknowledging or citing the original ('self-plagiarism').

• Citing selectively to enhance own findings or to please editors, reviewers or colleagues.

• With holding research results.

• Allowing funders/sponsors to jeopardize independence in the research process or reporting of results so as to introduce or promulgate bias.

• Expanding unnecessarily the bibliography of a study.

• Accusing a researcher of misconduct or other violations in a malicious way.

• Misrepresenting research achievements.

• Exaggerating the importance and practical applicability of findings.

• Delaying or inappropriately hampering the work of other researchers.

• Misusing seniority to encourage violations of research integrity.

• Ignoring putative violations of research integrity by others or covering up inappropriate responses to misconduct or other violations by institutions.

• Establishing or supporting journals that undermine the quality control of research ('predatory journals').

In their most serious forms, unacceptable practices are sanctionable but at the very least every effort must be made to prevent, discourage and stop them through training, supervision and mentoring and through the development of a positive and supportive research environment.

❖ Dealing with Violations and Allegations of Misconduct

National guidelines details as to how violations of good research practice or allegations of misconduct are to be handled. However, it always is in the interest of society and the research community that violations are handled in a consistent and transparent fashion. The following principles need to be incorporated into any investigation process.

Integrity

• Investigations are fair, comprehensive and conducted expediently, without compromising accuracy, objectivity or thoroughness.

• The parties involved in the procedure declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the investigation.

• Measures are taken to ensure that investigations are carried through to a conclusion.

• Procedures are conducted confidentially in order to protect those involved in the investigation.

• Institutions protect the rights of 'whistle- blowers' during investigations and ensure that their career prospects are not endangered.

• General procedures for dealing with violations of good research practice are publicly available and accessible to ensure their transparency and uniformity.

Transparency

• Investigations are carried out with due process and in fairness to all parties.

• Persons accused of research misconduct are given full details of the allegation(s) and allowed a fair process for responding to allegations and presenting evidence.

• Action is taken against persons for whom an allegation of misconduct is

upheld, which is proportionate to the severity of the violation.

• Appropriate restorative action is taken when researchers are exonerated of an allegation of misconduct.

• Anyone accused of research misconduct is presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

Informed Consent

• The investigator should comply with the applicable regulatory requirement(s), and should adhere to GCP and to the ethical principles that have their origin in the Declaration of Helsinki.

The investigator, or a person designated by the investigator, should fully inform the subject or, if the subject is unable to provide informed consent, the subject's legally acceptable representative, of all pertinent aspects of the trial including the written information and the approval/ favorable opinion by the IRB/IEC.

Rights of the researcher

- **The right to research freedom**

Researchers at the institute are free to choose the subject of their studies related to the thrust area and to seek support for their research from any appropriate source.

Researchers have the right to information required for their research, in so far as there is no legal or moral limitation on furnishing such information.

- **The right to research environment conducive for research**

Institute has the responsibility to create an environment that promotes research and fosters good research.
Institute will create an environment in which research can flourish, by, and among other things, visionary policy innovative programs, sound support services, appropriate incentives, effective financial management and mobilization of funding.

- **The right to the facilities, services and other resources of the institute**

The institute has the responsibility, in so far as it is feasible, to make facilitates, equipment and services available for use in research, with a view to the creation of an environment, which is conducive to research.

Where the institute does not have sufficient resources to give effect to this right, it should endeavor to obtain resources to give effect to this right, it should endeavor to obtain resources from other sources and to allocate them to researchers.

Researchers are allowed to negotiate facilities, funds and other resource from elsewhere for research programmes in case of limited availability of resources, with due permission from Head of Institution.

Intellectual property

Researchers should be aware of all the provisions and should themselves to all the regulatory guidelines of the institute. The principles underlying are:

- Promotion of free and creative work to the benefit of science and society as a whole. The conservation of traditional university practices and privileges with regard to the making available and publication of academic works
- Establishment of ethical standards and procedures with regard to intellectual property
- Promotion of creative and innovative research and cooperation by the establishment of mechanisms recognizing the rights of all the parties concerned, promoting the acquisition of benefits from research and guaranteeing the equitable distribution of benefits from research by establishing principles and procedures for distributing revenue from inventions and creative work (as per the funding agencies); protecting and marketing the institute's assets, including its intellectual property, to the benefit of all interested parties