

Faculty of Health Sciences

RESEARCH INTEGRITY		Standard Operating Procedure	
Title	Management of Plagiarism and/or Copyright Infringement by External Authors		
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1 COMPILATION AND AUTHORISATION

Action	Designated person	Date	Signature
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Approved by:	Faculty Board of the FHS		10 Aug 2021

2 DISTRIBUTION

Department/Unit	Name	Date	Signature
Research and School Directors, academic staff, and postgraduate students in the FHS	Prof Jeanetta du Plessis	Sept 2021	

3 DOCUMENT HISTORY

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4 PURPOSE OF THE SOP

To provide guidelines and procedures for the Deputy Dean: Research and Innovation (DD: R&I) and the Executive Dean (ED) of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), as well as person(s) seeking 1) to **report an allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement** by (an) external author(s) not linked to the university through any form of employment or a contract and 2) **conducting a formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation** into the said allegation.

Note: Should *copyright infringement* be suspected, Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) will be consulted, and the case escalated to be dealt with in terms of the applicable rules and regulations of the NWU.

It is in the interest of the FHS and the research community that an allegation of research misconduct through an act of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the university through any form of employment or contract be handled *consistently* and *transparently*, with a clear process and procedure for dealing with such an allegation. If such allegation is proven to be true, this can have negative implications (e.g., reputational damage) for the external author, the institution where the external author resides, funding bodies, as well as journal publishers.

This *SOP for the management of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the university through any form of employment or a contract* aims to find a balance between:

- i. Providing safeguards for those who raise genuine concerns about an allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s), and
- ii. Providing protection against an uninformed, inaccurate, and malicious allegation that can cause serious harm to (an) innocent author(s) as well as his/her institution (adapted from UCT, 2014).

The balance is found in:

- An **initial informal intra-faculty research integrity process of assessment by only the DD: R&I and the Research Integrity Officer (RIO)** linked to the office of the DD: R&I, without the involvement of the person(s) making the allegation (allegor(s)). The merits of the allegation are assessed for formal grounds.
- A follow-up **formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation** by the **DD: R&I as chairperson** and the appointed **Standing Research Integrity Committee (SRIC)** as well as specifically **appointed ad hoc members**.

5 SCOPE

This SOP guides different parties within the FHS on how to handle an allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s), as well as how to engage the support of Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) through escalating the case if further actions are deemed necessary.

Because the author is not a staff member of the North-West University (NWU) (through any form of employment or contract), the normal route of a *formal academic integrity investigation* by the office of the Registrar is not followed, and the process must be managed on an intra-faculty level unless further actions are required.

The definitions provided under section 6 guide the specific interpretation and use of terminology used in this SOP.

6 ABBREVIATIONS AND/OR DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation	Description
DD: R&I	Deputy Dean: Research and Innovation
ED	Executive Dean
RD	Research Director
FHS	Faculty of Health Sciences
RIO	Research Integrity Officer
RI	Research Integrity
SRIC	Standing Research Integrity Committee
DVC: R&I	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation
RCR	Responsible Conduct of Research
Concepts	Definitions
Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)	The act of making research integrity visible; refers to the practice of scientific investigation with <i>responsibility and integrity</i> through an awareness and application of established <i>professional research norms/standards</i> and <i>ethical principles</i> in the performance of all activities related to the research.
Breach in Research Integrity	The finding of a formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation that (an) external author(s) has <i>potentially transgressed</i> in responsible conduct of research based on an act of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.
Violation of Good Research Practice	Violations of good research practice that damage the integrity of the research process or researchers and that lead to “ <i>questionable research practices</i> ”. Examples include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulating authorship or denigrating the role of other researchers in publications. • Deliberate misrepresentations in publications. • Copyright infringement.
Research Misconduct	Refers to the FFP categorisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fabrication • Falsification • Plagiarism • In • Proposing • Performing • Reviewing research • Reporting results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plagiarism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using other people’s work and ideas in research without giving proper credit to the original source, thus violating the rights of the original author to their intellectual outputs. Or • Re-publishing substantive parts of one’s own earlier publications, including translations, without duly acknowledging or citing the original (self-plagiarism). <p><i>Also see definition in the NWU Policy on Academic Integrity: Annexure 1.</i></p>
Copyright infringement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of work protected by <i>copyright</i> law without permission. • <i>Infringing</i> certain exclusive rights granted to the copyright holder, such as the right to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reproduce the protected work. ○ Distribute the protected work. ○ Display the protected work. ○ Perform the protected work. ○ Make derivative work. <p><i>Also see definition in the NWU Policy on Academic Integrity: Annexure 1.</i></p>
External Author	An author not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract.
External Institution	An institution where the external author(s) reside(s).
Journal Editor	The editor of the journal that has published the work containing the suspected plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.
Allegation	A report that represents an <i>unproven assertion</i> .
Alleger	The person (a researcher or any other member of a research team at the NWU) who raises awareness of possible plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) as the alleged.
Alleged	The external author(s) not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract, accused of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.
Informal Research Assessment	Intra-faculty Research Integrity Assessment An initial informal intra-faculty research integrity assessment process conducted by the DD: R&I, FHS and the RIO linked to this office, into the <i>merit of the allegation</i> or <i>formal grounds</i> of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s).
Formal Research Investigation	Intra-faculty Research Integrity Investigation A formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation into the allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s). This process is conducted by the DD: R&I, FHS as chairperson, the appointed Standing Research Integrity Committee (SRIC) and specified ad hoc members (the research director of the entity in which the alleger resides, an independent consulting attorney and an expert in plagiarism and/or copyright infringement) should the allegation seem to have merit and formal grounds.
Escalation	The process of referring a possible finding of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) after a response from the external institution(s) has been received and potential further actions are required.
Finding of Potential Plagiarism and/or Copyright Infringement	A result concluding that an allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) is <i>potentially</i> true based on the preponderance of the evidence.
Research Integrity Officer (RIO)	A person appointed in the office of the DD: R&I to facilitate research integrity (RI) within the FHS through various functions, i.e. developing and maintaining processes, procedure and SOPs related to research integrity, as well as managing RI within the FHS.
Standing Research Integrity Committee (SRIC)	A Standing Research Integrity Committee (SRIC) appointed in the FHS and consisting of the following members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chairperson: DD: R&I ● Research Integrity Officer ● Head of the Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support ● A Research Director in the FHS knowledgeable in the management of RI (<i>appointed for three years</i>) ● Secretariat <p>Appointed expert ad hoc members:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Research Director of the entity in which the alleging researcher(s) reside(s). • Independent consulting attorney. • An independent expert on plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.
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7 VALUES UNDERPINNING THE FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES' ATTITUDE TOWARDS AN ALLEGATION OF PLAGIARISM AND/OR COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT BY (AN) EXTERNAL AUTHOR(S)

The FHS believes:

- in the importance of impeccable research ethical standards and research integrity;
- that reporting of suspected plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by and external author(s) (not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract) is a shared and serious responsibility of all members of the Faculty;
- that an allegation must be dealt with equitably, confidentially and as expeditiously as possible, taking care that all interested persons have the opportunity to be heard;
- that the procedure for dealing with an allegation must be accessible, understandable, fair, transparent and expeditious;
- that the Faculty has a responsibility to protect the rights and reputations of all individuals, including the person against whom an allegation is made and the person who makes the allegation;
- that a formal assessment is dealt with in terms of existing faculty and university procedures (adapted from UCT, 2014).

8 RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the primary responsibility of the FHS within the bigger NWU to protect the integrity of all research conducted by the researchers (academics and postgraduate students) of the FHS, as the value and benefits of this research are vitally dependent on the integrity of the research. Should there be any possibility of a breach in research integrity through plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) (not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract), the FHS must follow a process that will ensure that this allegation is assessed and handled in a *transparent* and *accountable* way in accordance with the highest standard of *integrity, fairness, due process* and *reasonableness*. Persons who are tasked with the management of this investigative process into an allegation must act with the utmost *integrity* and *sensitivity*. Conflict of interest must be avoided (adapted from UCT, 2014).

8.1 Various role players have different responsibilities in this process:

The specific responsibilities of the various role players are set out with a more detailed step-by-step process under the *process discussed* in section 9.3.

8.1.1 The alleger

The person (a researcher) with an allegation, observations, or evidence of potential plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) (not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract) who follows any one of several processes to bring this to the attention of the DD: R&I, FHS.

Must share requested documentation as proof of evidence.

Clarifies any uncertainties the SRIC and ad hoc members may have.

8.1.2 The alleged

The external author(s) (not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract) against whom the allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement is being made must offer his/her full cooperation in the assessment of the allegation by his/her own institution by providing requested documentation.

It should be clear to the external author(s) that he/she/they is/are protected until the allegation is determined to be defensible.

8.1.3 The external institution

Acknowledges receipt of the request from the FHS, NWU that they (the external institution) investigate a potential breach in research integrity through the act of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by one of its researchers.

On receipt of the allegation of potential plagiarism and/or copy right infringement against one of its researchers, investigate the allegation.

Notify the DD: R&I of the outcome of the institution's investigation.

If found to be true, will request the retraction/correction of the article.

8.1.4 The journal editor

The journal editor on receiving the notification of the possibility of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) author(s) investigates the possibility of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement in the published article.

Retract/correct the published article on receiving the request from the external investigating institution or decide not to change anything.

8.1.5 The Deputy Dean: Research and Innovation

The DD: R&I, FHS must launch an initial informal intra-faculty assessment with the support of the RIO linked to the office into the *merit of or grounds for the allegation* of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract, before proceeding to the more formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation.

If the allegation seems to have formal grounds, the DD: R&I, FHS as chairperson of the SRIC and appointed expert ad hoc members, initiates a formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation with the support of the RIO, to empanel the appointed SRIC, as well as the specified ad hoc members.

The SRIC and the appointed expert ad hoc members with the DD: R&I as chairperson first meet with the alleging persons(s).

The DD: R&I, FHS with the support of the RIO finalises the letters to the alleged external author(s), the institution(s) where the external author(s) reside(s), and the journal editor.

The DD: R&I, FHS and the RIO discuss the outcome of the investigation and planned actions of the SRIC and expert ad hoc members with the ED of the FHS to finalise the way forward.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO does regular follow up on the progress made by the external institution and the editor of the journal and provide regular feedback to the alleging person(s).

The DD: R&I, FHS and RIO evaluate the final letter(s)/report(s) provided by the external institution(s) and the editor and decide whether the case can be closed or whether any further legal action should be taken.

The DD: R&I and RIO provide written feedback to the alleging person(s) on the final outcome of the case.

The DD: R&I and RIO ensure that Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) are well informed and provide all the necessary documentation (*only if escalated*).

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO closes the case if satisfied.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO sets up and manages an effective data record system and registry with a track record of cases (allegations, processes, letters, and reports).

8.1.6 The Research Integrity Officer

The RIO acts as advisor and support to the DD: R&I and ED throughout all processes of alleged research integrity breaches and the assessment thereof.

- Receives the allegation on behalf of the DD: R&I.
- Supports the DD: R&I in deciding on the merit and formal grounds.
- Allocates a case number from the Research Integrity Register.

- Sets up the SRIC and appointed expert ad hoc members after empanelment by the DD: R&I.
- Oversees the secretariat in setting up meetings and taking minutes during meetings.
- Keeps records of all evidence.
- Supports the DD: R&I in writing the necessary letters to the author(s), the institution(s) and the journal editor.
- Joins the DD: R&I in feedback meetings with the ED.
- Writes the final summative report.
- Ensures that progress reports reach the office as indicated and closes cases.
- Gives monthly status reports of RI cases to the DD: R&I and ED.
- Where a case needs to be escalated for a formal external investigation, helps with organising supporting documentation and formulating the accompanying letter of referral to the appropriate person, and sets up the handover meeting.
- Joins the DD: R&I in the handover meeting if escalated to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) (*only if applicable*).

8.1.7 The Executive Dean

The ED listens to the report on the outcomes of the investigation of the SRIC and the appointed expert ad hoc members presented to him/her by the DD: R&I and the RIO, gives his/her stamp of approval to the way forward and co-signs the letters set up by the DD: R&I with the support of the RIO to the external author(s), the institution(s) where the external author(s) reside(s), as well as the journal editor.

Keeps up to date with all active RI cases.

8.1.8 The Research Directors

The RD of the research entity where the alleging researcher(s) reside(s) forms part of the SRIC and appointed expert ad hoc members.

8.1.9 The Head of the Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support

The Head forms part of the SRIC.

8.1.10 The independent plagiarism and/or copyright infringement expert

The independent expert in plagiarism and/or copyright infringement does the necessary assessment and provides the empanelled SRIC and ad hoc members with a written report that will be used in the communication to the external author(s), the external institution(s) and the editor of the journal.

8.1.11 Independent consulting attorney

The independent consulting attorney only ensures safety in legal *communication* to the various parties.

9 PROCEDURE(S)

9.1 The principles underpinning the process of handling an allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s)

- Procedural fairness.
- Natural justice.
- Due process.
- Integrity.
- Confidentiality (“need-to-know rule”).
- One assessment where possible.

9.2 Questions that guide the procedural framework

- Who receives the allegation?
- Who takes the first step(s)?
- Who appoints the SRIC and expert ad hoc members?
- Who does the formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation?
- How are the outcomes managed?

Note: The details of this procedural framework are explained in the rest of the document.

9.3 The process

9.3.1 Reporting of possible plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s)

The alleging person(s), with an allegation based on observations or evidence of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract, must directly notify the office of the DD: R&I via the RIO.

In all cases of reporting, it must be very clear from the start whether it is:

- Just a process of seeking advice
Or
- A process of making a formal allegation.

Important note: *Under no circumstances should an initial assessment be conducted by any party other than the DD: R&I and the RIO linked to the office. Neither should the internal author/person(s) attempt to communicate with the external author(s) or the editor of the journal.*

9.3.2 The steps in handling allegations

- 1) Initial informal intra-faculty research integrity assessment into the *merit and formal grounds* of the allegation(s) by the DD: R&I and RIO only and the decision whether the process should continue.
- 2) Formal intra-faculty investigation by the SRIC and appointed ad hoc members.
- 3) Reporting and recording.
- 4) Escalation to the Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) if any further action is required due to possible copyright infringement (*only if applicable*).

9.3.2.1 Informal Intra-faculty Research Integrity Assessment

On receiving a written allegation of a possible breach in RI/RCR, the DD: R&I, FHS with the support of the RIO launches an *initial informal intra-faculty assessment* into the *merit and formal grounds of the allegation* of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the NWU though any form of employment or contract, before deciding to proceed to a more formal intra-faculty research integrity assessment process.

This assessment is done with the hard evidence provided by the allegor(s) and handled at face value.

The focus of the initial informal intra-faculty assessment is to determine *whether an answerable case* can be made:

- Is it a valid complaint of potential plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by (an) external author(s)?
- Is it in good faith and not malicious?

A final decision is taken whether the case has merit and formal grounds.

If the allegation(s) seem(s) to have merit and formal grounds of a *potential breach of RI/RCR through an act of plagiarism and/or copy right infringement by (an) external author(s) not linked to the NWU through any form of employment or contract*, the DD: R&I, FHS continues with the next step in the process and launches a *formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation* with the support of the RIO.

9.3.2.2 Formal Intra-faculty Research Integrity Investigation

A case number is allocated by the RIO from the Research Integrity Register.

A risk management-based approach will be used.

The formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation is handled by the DD: R&I as chairperson and an empanelled SRIC and ad hoc members. In *empanelling the SRIC and appropriate ad hoc members*, the DD: R&I with the support of the RIO must rule out any possible *conflict of interest, bias, and unfairness*. *Confidentiality* and *due process* will be maintained throughout the process.

The Standing Research Integrity Committee (SRIC) consists of:

- Chairperson: DD: R&I
- Research Integrity Officer
- Head of the Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support
- An elected Research Director knowledgeable in the management of RI, for a term of three years
- Secretariat

Ad hoc members:

- Research Director (RD) (unit in which the allegor(s) reside(s)).
- An independent consulting attorney.
- An independent expert on plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO will as soon **as possible, but no later than a week** after receiving the allegation, call a meeting with the empanelled SRIC and ad hoc members.

The formal intra-faculty assessment process should be prompt, discreet and effective, and should decide **within three weeks**.

The DD: R&I decides whether he/she will make any material available to the SRIC and ad hoc members before the meeting. The DD: R&I and RIO decide on the material to be made available and the secretariat ensures that the SRIC and ad hoc members receive it in time. The panel reviews materials available to them, draws from knowledgeable sources and collects relevant documentation, if necessary, to empower them for the assessment.

The initial meeting begins with the DD: R&I welcoming all and allowing time for introductions if necessary. The confidentiality of the matter is emphasised and each member's role during the investigation explained to them. The DD: R&I makes it clear that this is a formal intra-faculty research integrity investigation and that the external author(s) is/are not considered guilty unless evidence proves otherwise.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO presents the case in detail to the SRIC and ad hoc members with the necessary evidence and documentation at hand.

Should the SRIC and ad hoc members deem it necessary, the allegor(s) is called to present his/her/their allegation and evidence and provide clarity.

An important initial responsibility of the SRIC and ad hoc members is to make sure that the allegation was made in good faith.

A timeframe is set for **one week after the present meeting** to reconvene for a follow-up meeting and make a final decision based on the expert's findings.

Time is allowed for discussions, reflections, questions, and answers.

The SRIC and ad hoc members continue with their discussion with all evidence at hand, having heard the expert's report, and come to some form of a summarised version of the allegation and decide on a finding. They must come to a decision that the allegation proved to have *substance* and *defensibility* and a finding of a *potential breach or no breach in RI/RCR*.

If a finding of a potential breach in RI/RCR is made, the SRIC and ad hoc members decide on:

- The way forward.
- The time frames.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO prepares letters to:

- the external author(s),
- the institution(s) where the researcher(s) reside(s),
- the editor of the journal, and
- the allegor(s).

The **letters** indicate the following:

- *To the external researcher(s):*
 - The finding of a *potential* breach in research integrity through (an) act(s) of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement naming the publication.
 - Explaining the nature of the *potential* breach and attached addenda if applicable.
 - The process followed at the NWU.
 - That (a) letter(s) will be sent to his/her/their institution(s) to request an internal investigation.
 - That a letter will be sent to the editor of the journal explaining the finding and process followed.
 - Request of confirmation of receipt of the letter by a stated date (two weeks from sending the letter).
- *To the appropriate person dealing with such matters at the institution(s) where the researcher(s) reside(s) (Note: This will vary for each institution and initial groundwork is required to identify the appropriate person):*
 - The finding of a *potential* breach in research integrity through an act(s) of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement naming the author(s) and the publication.
 - Explaining the nature of the *potential* breach and attached addenda if applicable.
 - The process followed at the NWU.
 - That letters will be sent to the author(s), other institutions if applicable, as well as the editor of the journal (attach copies of letters).
 - A specific request for an internal investigation by the external institution into the allegation(s).
 - Request confirmation of receipt of the letter by a stated date (two weeks from sending the letter).
- *To the editor of the journal:*
 - The finding of a *potential* breach in research integrity through an act(s) of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement naming the author(s) and the publication.
 - Explaining the nature of the *potential* breach and attached addenda if applicable.
 - The process followed at the NWU.
 - That letters will be sent to the author(s) and his/her/their institution(s) to request an internal investigation.
 - A specific request for an internal investigation into the allegation(s) and, if proven true, to retract the article or request that the necessary correction be made.
 - Request confirmation of receipt of the letter by a stated date (two weeks from sending the letter).
- *To the internal researcher(s) that made the allegation of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement:*
 - That letters were sent to the external author(s), the appropriate person at the institution where the external author(s) reside(s), and the editor of the journal.
 - That they should *not attempt any interaction with the authors, or any parties* involved in the incident.
 - That feedback will be provided of the outcome of the investigation and any further actions deemed necessary.

An appointment is made with the ED where the DD: R&I with the support of the RIO presents the case and letters to the various recipients to the ED. If the ED concurs with the findings and letters, he/she co-signs the letter with the DD: R&I.

The letters are sent off to the various recipients.

The DD: R&I notifies the internal author/person(s) by email of the outcome and the process being followed. The authors are cautioned not to interact with any of the mentioned external parties.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO does regular follow up with the institution(s) as to the progress made with the case at hand if timelines are unnecessarily stretched and keep the internal author/person(s) up to date.

On receipt of a response from the external institution(s), the DD: R&I calls for a meeting **within one week** with the SRIC and ad hoc members to decide:

- 1) Whether they are satisfied with the response and the case can be closed.
- 2) Whether they would like to request further information from the external institution(s).
- 3) Whether they would like to escalate it to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) for possible further actions (see section 9.3.2.6).

If the SRIC and ad hoc members decide that they are satisfied with the response, the DD: R&I with the support of the RIO writes a letter to the external institution(s) of accepting the outcome of the investigation.

The internal author/person(s) is/are notified by email of the outcome of the investigation, whether further action is required, and the way forward.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO closes the case.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO sets up and manages an effective data record system and registry with a track record of cases (allegations, processes, letters, and reports).

9.3.2.3 Reporting and recordkeeping

A register for research integrity cases is kept in the FHS.

A number is allocated to each registered case.

A factual and objective mandatory report must be written after the formal intra-faculty investigation and updated with a closing report at the end of the investigation. The RIO will be responsible for the report and approved by the DD: R&I.

The following should be included in the initial report:

- Name of the internal institution.
- Name of the faculty.
- The research entity in which the internal researcher(s) reside(s).
- Full names and surname of the alleging researcher(s).
- Personnel/student number.
- Title of the publication (if applicable).
- Name and institution of the external author(s).
- Date of receiving the allegation.
- A detailed description of the allegation.
- The evidence summarised (available evidence and record(s)).
- The process followed.
- Finding(s) that indicate(s) breach or no breach.
- Actions the FHS is taking to address the breach in research integrity.
- Name of the RD.
- Name of the independent consulting attorney.
- Name of the independent expert.
- A final copy of the report must be stored in the office of the DD: R&I.

The following should be included in the closing report:

- The name of the internal researcher(s) and the entity in which the researcher resides.
- The name(s) of the external author(s) and the institution(s).
- Name of the publication.
- Date of conclusion of the case.
- Summary of the conclusion process and any further comments.

Note: The SRIC and ad hoc members will be allowed to respond to the draft report before finalisation, and stored for record purposes.

9.3.2.6 Possible escalation to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) if further actions are required due to possible copyright infringement

As indicated earlier in the SOP, the SRIC and ad hoc members can make a finding that they deem the case worthy of escalation to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) for possible further actions.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO writes a letter explaining the internal process followed and why it seems appropriate to escalate the case to Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) for possible further actions.

The ED supports the finding and the way forward and co-signs the letter.

The DD: R&I sets up a meeting with the indicated persons at Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS) to formally hand over the letter of escalation and supporting documents of proof of potential plagiarism and/or copyright infringement and to explain the case. The RIO joins the meeting.

Points of discussion for the meeting:

- Findings of a potential breach in RI/RCR through the act of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement.
- Why the need to escalate the case for potential further action.
- The future process.

The DD: R&I with the support of the RIO keeps track of the progress made with the case by Legal Services and the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office (TTIS).

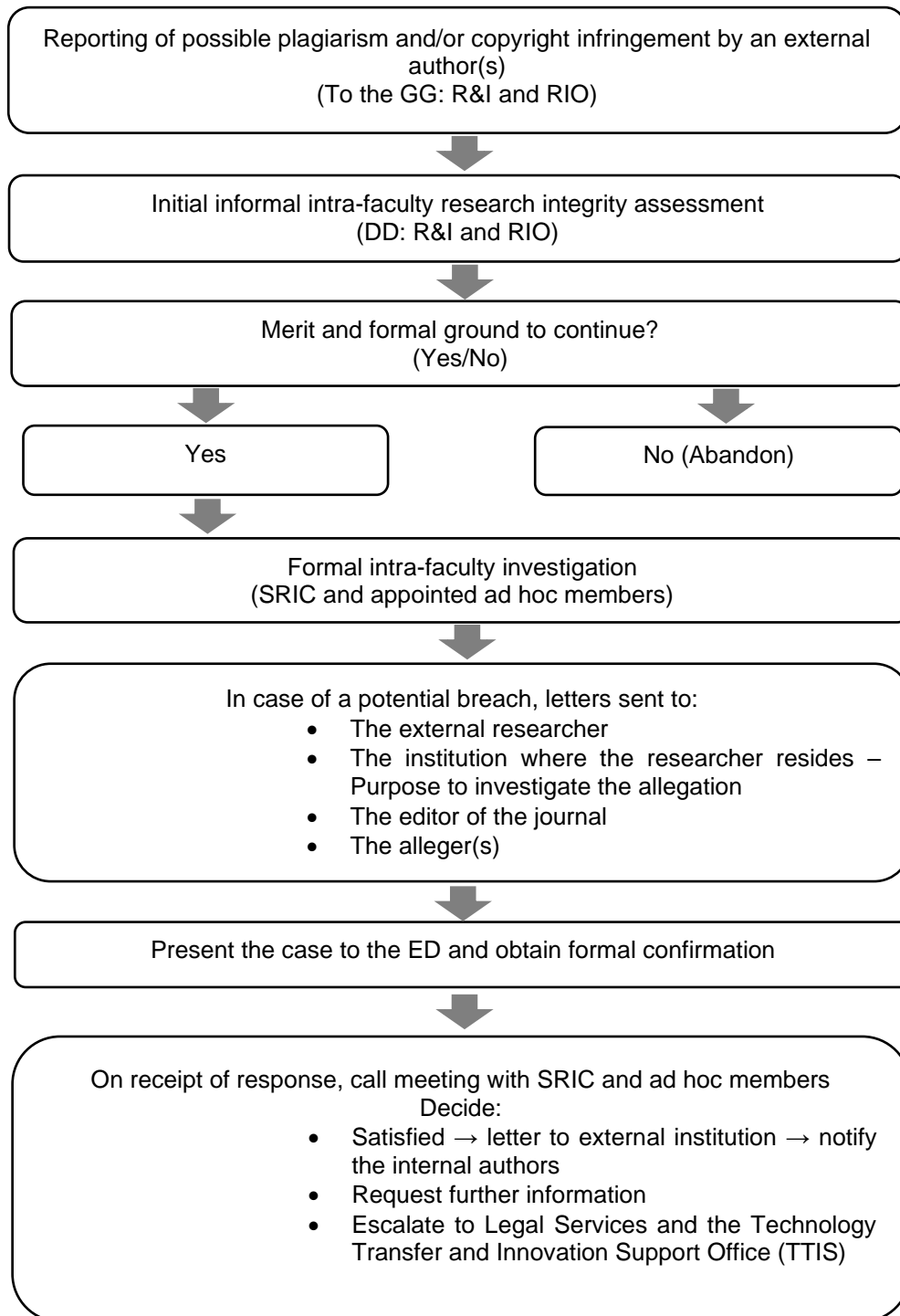
The outcome of the case should be reported to the ED, the DD: R&I, and the RIO.

Once the case has been finalised, the DD: R&I signs the case off.

The RIO closes the record.

10 SUMMARISED PROCESS

Diagram 1: Processes and procedures for the management of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement by external authors



11 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

SOP for complaint management (SOP_Ethics_1.5, NWU, 2018).

SOP for whistleblowing pertaining to research (SOP_Ethics_1.8, NWU, 2018).

SOP for non-compliance of the University of Cape Town, 2013.

SOP for ethics committees of the University of the Western Cape.

Singapore Statement on Research Integrity, 2010.

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (revised edition), 2017.

UCT policy and procedures for the breach of research ethics codes and allegations of misconduct in research, 2014.

12 ADDENDA

No	Document name
None	

Original details: SOP_RI_5 Management of Plagiarism and/or Copyright Infringement by External Authors, 10 August 2021.

File reference: