Fair Research Handbook

6th Edition

Kumamoto University

Foreword

This handbook is intended to clarify the basic rules of fair research activities for anyone performing research at Kumamoto University.

Due to stories of research fraud in the news recently, the university established the Fair Research Promotion Committee under the direct control of the President, the chief administrative officer of the university to discuss and implement methods for preventing research fraud.

This handbook was developed to help researchers understand and fully cooperate with rules of research misconduct. We endeavor to maintain society's high confidence in science and the research activities conducted at this university.

Fair Research Promotion Committee

Sources

※Rules for research and the use of research expenses are simplified. Check the sources below for exact details. (If a conflict appears between the English & Japanese versions, the Japanese version takes precedence.)

- 国立大学法人熊本大学における研究不正の防止等に関する規則
- 補助金等に係る予算の執行の適正化に関する法律
- 本学会計規則等
- 熊本大学教員ハンドブック

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Definitions

Definitions according to the "Rules for the Prevention of Research Misconduct in Kumamoto University"

Research Funds

- R&D Capital
- Operating Expense Subsidies
- Contribution to Scholarships
- Revenue from the University Hospital
- Research Grants

Research funds include ALL FUNDS related to research from the above sources.

Staff

- Trustee
- General Staff
- Medical Staff
- Limited Term Employee
- Rehired Employee
- Individualized Contract Employee
- Auditor

Researcher

- President
- Teaching Staff
- Student
- Professor Emeritus
- Honorary Doctor
- Honorary Fellow

Also applicable to students!

Research Misconduct

Research Fraud	A	**Fabrication, manipulation, and plagiarism** resulting from neglecting the fundamental duties associated with being a researcher.
Research Fraud	B	Destruction, concealment, and dissipation of research materials that are necessary to confirm the existence of the activities stated in A (including materials necessary for the reproduction of experiments and the like during the examination of the charges of misconduct).
Research Fraud	C	Improper behavior other than that in A and B that deviates from accepted research ethics as defined in the university's Code of Conduct or conventional wisdom that researchers should abide by.
Research Funding Fraud	D	Misappropriation of research funds for purposes other than those defined in the content of the grant application or that violate its conditions either intentionally or through gross negligence.

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Research in Kumamoto University

As a comprehensive university, and in the spirit of the "The Fundamental Law of Education" and the "School Education Law", Kumamoto University's purpose is to create, develop, foster, and pass on knowledge. The university strives to develop human resources with high intellectual, ethical, and practical abilities who contribute to both regional and international societies.

The university endeavors to strengthen core competencies in advanced academic research, promote leading-edge creative research, and develop a rich cultural heritage. In addition, the university has a responsibility to comprehensively expand the various sciences related to humanity, society, and nature; to promote academic research of those sciences; and to contribute to the coexistence of humans and nature through sustainable development of society by taking advantage of the features of a fully comprehensive university.

The members of the university (including officers, teaching staff, students, professors emeriti, honorary doctors, guest professors, etc.) must understand the purposes described above, and always perform their duties with ethical judgment and behavior. Therefore, the university established the Code of Conduct to be followed by all members.

I. Researcher Responsibilities

1. Researchers (i.e., staff engaged in any research activity in the university) must always act honestly and sincerely; use good faith judgment; endeavor to improve their own specialized knowledge, capability, and artistry; and make their best effort to demonstrate the scientific accuracy and validity of knowledge created by their research.

2. Researchers must be aware of the fact that the autonomy of science is accepted by the trust and mandate of society; understand the relationship between science, technology, society, and nature from a wide perspective; and act appropriately.

3. Researchers must be aware of the broad expectation of society when using research funds (including all funds used for research in the university, such as R&D Capital that are subsidized through screening for proposed themes publicly sought for by funding agencies, operating expense subsidies, contribution to scholarships, research grants, and revenue from the university hospital) provided to maintain the research environment and perform research.

4. Researchers should aggressively disclose and explain the significance and role of their own research; evaluate its potential influences on humanity, society, and nature; and demonstrate the results in a neutral and objective manner.

5. Researchers must select the appropriate means and manner as accepted by society in which their research and its results should be made public.

6. Researchers must participate in training sessions on research ethics, laws and regulations related to research activities, prevention of research misconduct, and endeavor to promote fair research activities.

II. Fair Research

7. Researchers shall act sincerely in accordance with the Code of Conduct in the process of framing, planning, performing, applying, and reporting their own research. Researchers must take responsibility for recognition of their achievements to suit their roles by demonstrating the results of their research through academic publications or other means. Researchers must record and store complete data of their investigations; strictly treat the data according to the rules; prevent research misconduct, such as fabrication, manipulation, plagiarism, and misappropriation of research funds; and themselves not participate in such misconduct.

8. Researchers must be aware of the fact that performing responsible research, and establishing and maintaining a fair environment to prevent research misconduct are important duties to be performed their own. They must endeavor to obtain the understanding and cooperation of society to qualitatively improve the research environment of the scientific community and the organization to which they belong.

III. Appropriate Operation and Management of Domestic Research Funds

9. Researchers must thoroughly recognize that even if their research fund proposal is accepted, the university is responsible for the management of the funds because they are financed primarily by domestic taxes. Any misappropriation of research funding has a serious impact on the whole of the university and all scientists engaged in research activities.

10. University employees must operate and manage research funds appropriately. They must thoroughly understand and comply with the rules defined by each research fund classification and the related regulations of the university.

11. University employees must adhere to the rules regarding research funds and continuously participate in compliance education to prevent misappropriation of funds.

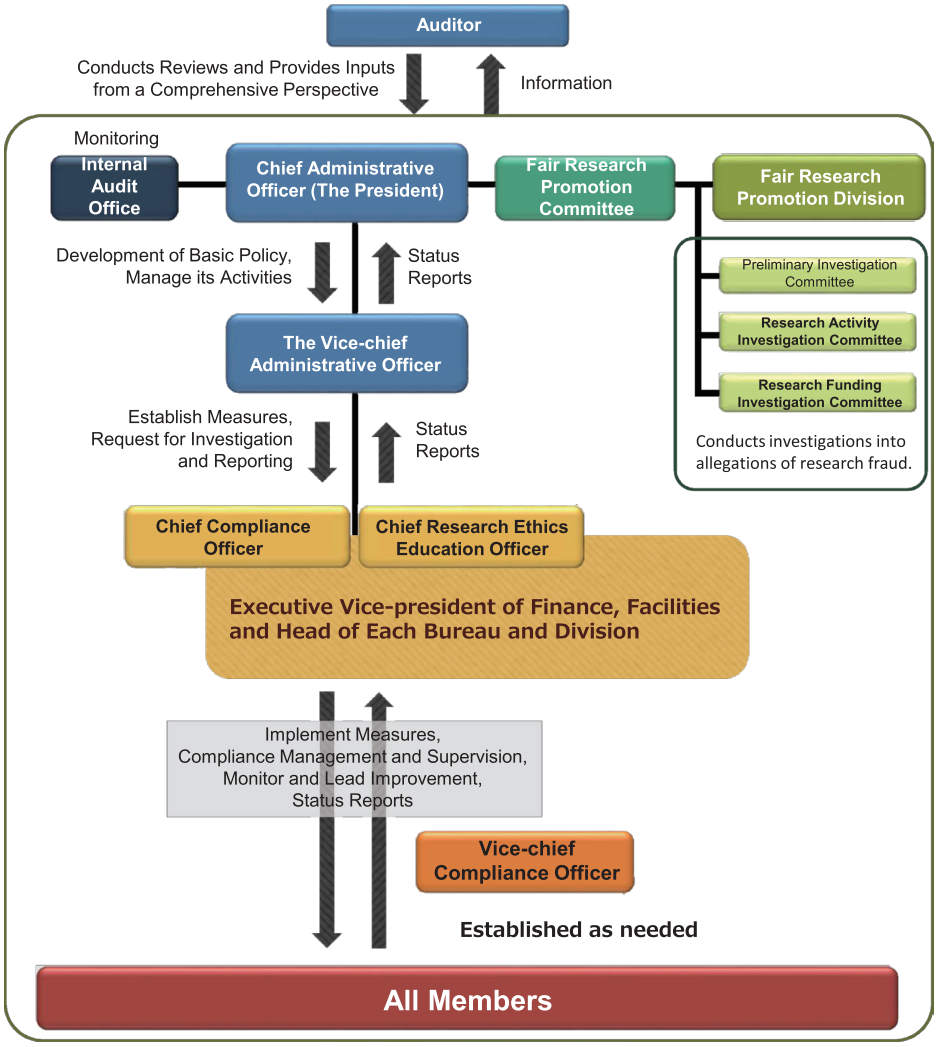
IV. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

12. University employees must comply with related laws and regulations when performing research activities and using research funds.

13. When considering publication of research, university employees must consider any conflicts of interest between individuals and organizations, or between different organizations, and deal with conflicts openly and appropriately.

Organization

System to Promote Fair Research Activities and Fair Use of Research Funds (Conceptual Diagram)



Prohibited Matters

Forbidden!!

Infractions can become a criminal matter. Please consult the help desk (on page 19) if you are not sure!

Research Funding Fraud

- Vendor Deposits
- Fake Business Trips
- Fake Remunerations
- Overstatement of Expenses

et cetera.

Vendor Deposit
Where an employee requests a vendor to prepare fake documents on transactions with the university, applies for research funds based on the fake documents, and then deposits the overpayment with the vendor as a secret savings.

Fake Business Trip
Where an employee receives reimbursement of travel expenses by submitting fake business trip reports even though he/she cancelled the trip.

Research Fraud

- Fabrication
- Manipulation
- Plagiarism
- Inappropriate Authorship
- Abandonment of Researcher Duties

et cetera.

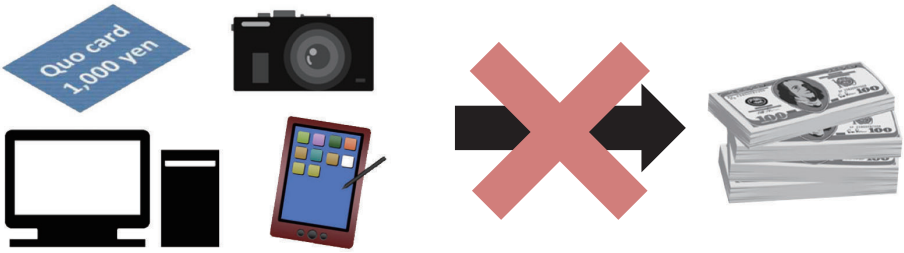
Inappropriate Authorship
Where a staff member does not disclose the authors of a paper appropriately. Examples include crediting a person who did not contribute to a paper, or refusing to credit a person who has made a significant contribution.

Prohibited Matters

Absolutely Unacceptable!!

Infractions can become a criminal matter. Please consult the help desk (on page 19) if you are not sure!

Conversion to Money



For goods that are considered to be at high risk of being resold or converted for private use, random physical checks of goods will be conducted to ensure they are used appropriately.

High Value Goods

PC , Tablet Computer , Digital Camera , Video Camera , TV , Recording Equipment , Cash Voucher , Precious Metal for Experiments et cetera.

Failure to check goods may raise suspicion of research funding fraud, that is, using funds for purposes other than the original intent, such as for private use. In addition, inadequate management of high-value goods may result in the following situations:

- **If equipment cannot be located during an audit of research funds**
  → It may raise suspicion of research funding fraud, unauthorized diversion, or private use.
- **If an item has not been properly registered**
  → Return of research funds, including KAKENHI, may be required.
- **If a PC is lost**
  → Research data may be leaked, and collaborative research projects with companies or other organizations may be terminated.
- **If equipment is taken out upon retirement, transferred without authorization when moving to another institution, or kept at home**
  → It may raise suspicion of breach of trust or embezzlement.

Penalties

If an employee is involved in research misconduct, he/she will be punished in accordance with the laws and regulations established by the university. Additionally, the following actions (I – IV) will be taken if necessary.

I. **Banning the use of research funds** inside and outside of the university for a limited time,

II. **Demand the return of all or part of the research funds** that have been used,

III. **Criminal suit and civil suit** against the staff member who performed research misconduct, and

IV. **Penalty for the head of the bureau or division** where the staff member who performed the research misconduct belongs to if the head is responsible for managing members in the prevention of misconduct.

In some cases, a penalty may also be imposed on the research institution (the university) in addition to the individual by the funding body.

I. **Return research funds used** inside and outside of the university over a determined period of time,

II. **Adverse assessment of indirect expenses** for the research institution (the university), and

III. **Suspension of commissioned projects** for the university.

Research Fund Use Procedures

[Help Desk]
- Administered in each department by the person in charge of travel expenses

I. Travel Expense Payments

Notes for researchers:

i. Evidence of business travel by a trip report that includes proof-of-travel documents, such as the proceedings of an academic conference, is required.

ii. Evidence of incurred expenses by documents, such as receipts, is required.

Travel Expense Reimbursement Flow Chart

Traveler



i. Application for travel (using system)

ii. Application approval (using system)

iii. Trip arrangement and travel

*** Outsourcing of travel expenses administration**

The university outsources a part of travel expense administration such as the calculation of travel expenses and reimbursement. The merits for travelers if they request trip arrangement by an outsourcing agency include:

- Reimbursement for transport expenses, etc. will be unnecessary
- Travelers may omit some evidence documents attached to a trip report.

iv. Trip report and travel expense reimbursement request (using system)

v. Payment

Administration



Examples of Evidence Documents

Classification	Transportation	Evidence Documents
Domestic trip	Railroad, Bus	N/A
	Ship	N/A (Regarding sleeper fees, a document proving the necessity of using a sleeper for the applicant's duties and a receipt of payment are required.)
	Airline	Receipt, Boarding pass, etc. (Documents that can be used as evidence to prove boarding)
Oversea trip	Railroad	Documents attesting to the class and amount
	Ship	Documents attesting to the class and amount
	Airline	Receipts and documents attesting to the course and passenger class (estimates are acceptable), and boarding passes for domestic travel (Documents that can be used as evidence to prove boarding)
	Car rentals	Receipts

*Depending on the type of transportation and type of research funding, documents other than those listed above may be required. If you have any questions, please contact the Help Desk.

Research Fund Use Procedures

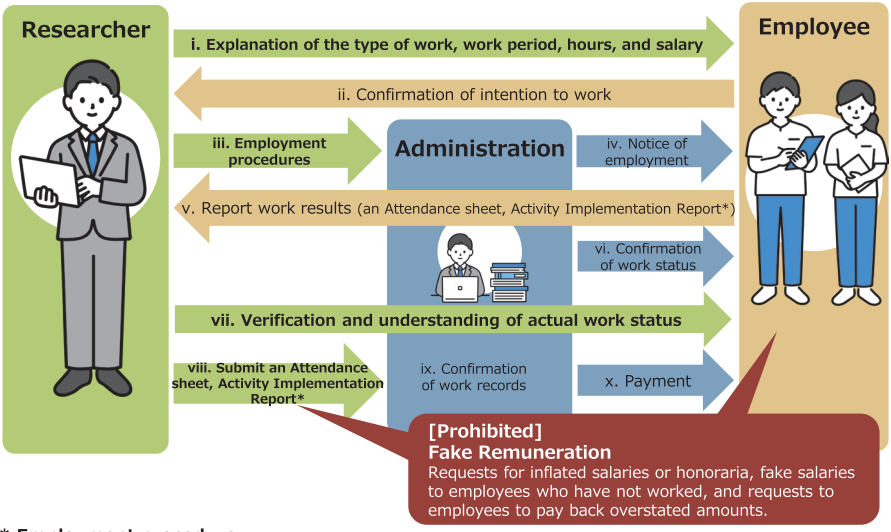
[Help Desk]
- Administered in each department by the person in charge of human resources

Ⅱ. Salary Payments

Notes for researchers:

i. Explanation of the type of work, work period, hours, and salary to prospective employees
ii. Confirm intention to work with prospective employees
iii. Confirm and provide proof of actual working conditions to prospective employees

Payment of Salary Flow Chart



*** Employment procedure**

In principle, completion of **employment procedures** are necessary at least one month before employment if a researcher requires an employee.
However, one-time remuneration is sufficient in some cases (e.g., **employment under two months or other forms of temporary work**). Please contact the help desk before hiring an employee for details.

*** If employees are hired using R&D Capitals (e.g., KAKENHI)**

If an employee's salary is paid using R&D Capitals, **the employee must only engage in duties that are covered by the relevant R&D Capitals.** The employee may not engage in work/research other than that based on the "Implementation Guidelines for Self-motivated Research Activities by Young Researchers Employed with Competitive Research Funds" (February 12, 2020, Agreement of the Liaison Meeting of Related Offices and Ministries on Competitive Research Funds).

*** Activity Implementation Report**

If remuneration for research collaboration is paid for employment of less than two months duration, the employee is required to submit an Activity Implementation Report, together with their attendance sheet, on the final working day of the month in which their research collaboration activity is conducted.

Research Fund Use Procedures

[Help Desk]
- Administered in each department by the person in charge of contracts, or by the accounting section of the hospital

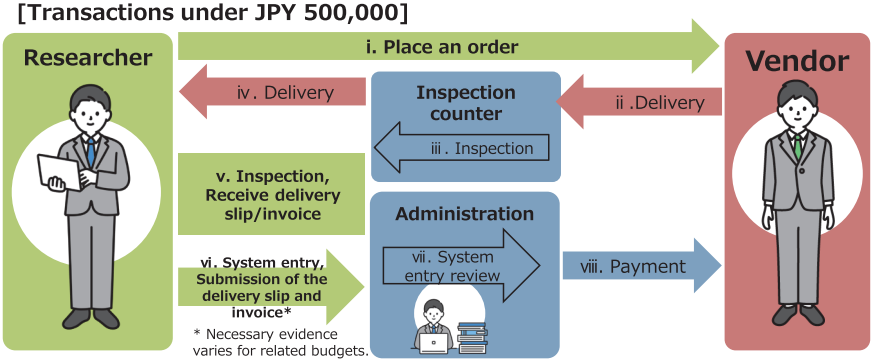
Ⅲ. Materials/Goods Purchases

Notes for researchers:

i. Goods purchases should assure fairness, transparency, and economical competitiveness.
ii. Requests for purchases over JPY 500,000 are made using the electronic ordering system (self purchases are prohibited).
iii. Purchases over JPY 100,000 require pre-approval.
iv. Incoming purchases must be inspected by a third party (a certification counter or certified person).

Materials/Goods Purchases Flow Chart

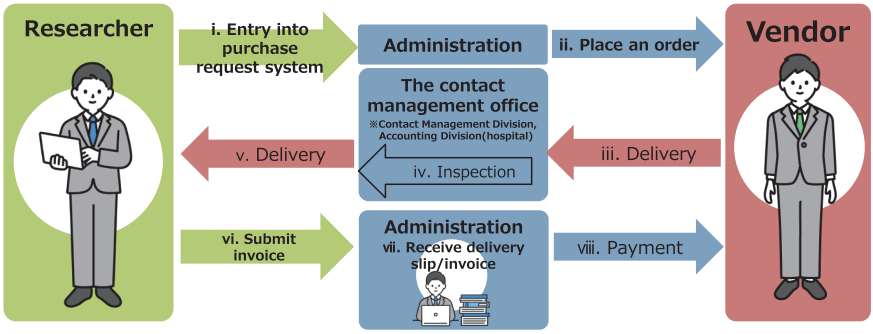
[Transactions under JPY 500,000]



[Prohibited]

Vendor Deposit	A researcher conspires with a vendor to disguise purchase transactions to induce the university to pay, and he/she pools the money with the vendor as a secret savings account.
Fabrication of evidence	A researcher conspires with a vendor to prepare fake evidence such as quotations, delivery slips, and invoices to induce the university to pay for nonexistent goods.
Conversion into money	A researcher sells unused goods for conversion into money.
Break up of transaction	A researcher breaks up an order of closely related goods into multiple transactions to reduce the size of each transaction to under JPY 500,000 (including VAT) with a vendor.

[Transactions over JPY 500,000]



Research Fund Use Procedures

[Help Desk]
- Administered by each department's accountant

Ⅳ. Funding Rules for Research Expenses

Fund use rules may differ depending on the funding source.

Research funds, such as Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI), are R&D Capitals issued to the primary investigator(s) of a research program.

Research funds are to be managed by research institutes based on the rules of the funder and the research institute. **It should be noted that research funding rules may differ depending on the funding source.**

Please follow the appropriate use procedures after consulting with the department accountant.

○ : Available × : Not available △ : Available for some types of research funds

Source of Research Funds	Rules to be Followed	Representative Research Funds	Uses			
			Combined use with other expenses	Purchase of desks and chairs	Food and drink fee in a meeting*	Use outside of the research period
R&D Capital	・Law on the Regulation of Execution of Budgets Pertaining to Subsidies, etc. ・Rules of use for each research fund system ・Accounting guidelines of the university	Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI) offered by MEXT[1]	△	△	△	×
		Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI) offered by MHLW[2]	△	×	△	×
Contracted Research	・Contract guidelines ・Rules of use for each research fund system ・Accounting guidelines of the university	-	△	△	△	×
Donation	・Donation Intent ・Accounting guidelines of the university	-	○	○	○	△
Operating Expense Subsidy, etc.	・Accounting guidelines of the university	-	○	○	×	×

* Food and drink fees should not include alcoholic drinks.
[1] MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
[2] MHLW: Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare

Research Fund Use Procedures

Ⅴ. Carry-over of Research Funds

【Help Desk】
Research/Social-Academic Collaboration Department
Research Advancement Division x3186
Research-Industry Collaboration Advancement Division x3984

Depending on the research fund, part of it may be carried into the next fiscal year.

Some funds, such as KAKENHI, may be carried over into the next fiscal year.

If research cannot be completed within the planned fiscal year due to unforeseen circumstances, do not spend funding needlessly. Please consider a carrying the leftover funds into the next fiscal year to use in research expenses.

Follow your research plan for the use of research funding.

Ⅵ. Prevention of Research Funding Fraud

【Help Desk】
Research Fraud Prevention
⇒ Fair Research Promotion Office x3146
Travel Application Requests
⇒ Labor Department x3254

- **For travel expenses:**
  - A pre-travel application is required
  - Submit a business trip report as soon as you return!
    ⇒**Evidence of conducted business:**
    (Attach one of the evidence to provide proof the business was conducted.)

・Conference Ticket Stub ・Academic resume ・Conference nameplate
・Participant business cards ・Photos ・Copy of notes
・Other evidence that can provide proof

【Prohibited】Fake Business Trips
Expenses that differ from travel documents, expenses that differ from actual expenses incurred
Please submit proper travel documentation to help prevent fake business trips.

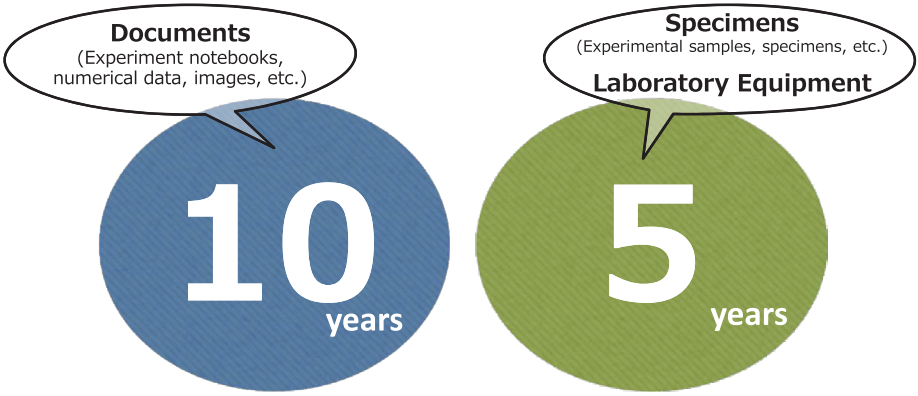
- **Please review the Kumamoto University faculty handbook and the fair research homepage.**

The faculty handbook on the university portal and the **"Promoting fair research activities at Kumamoto University" website** provide detailed information on compliance. Please contact the help desk if there is something you do not understand.

Rules for Research Activities

[Help Desk]
- Fair Research Promotion Office x3146

Storage/Retention Periods for Research Materials (in Principle)



* Regardless of the rules above, the officer responsible for research ethics education (department head) can establish special rules depending on the research activities of the department.
* The storage period begins from the publication of the first paper.

Researcher Responsibilities

Researchers must comply with the Kumamoto University Research Code of Conduct, not engage in research fraud, and strive to prevent research fraud by others.

(Specifics)

- Attend training on laws and regulations related to research activities and ethics.
- Maintain means of research reproducibility so it can be verified by a third party.
  - Record research activities (experiments, observations, etc.) in experiment notes.
  - Log sufficient information (experimental conditions, data acquisition, etc.) in experiment notes for future use or verification, and in a format that can not be subsequent modified. Properly and securely store experiment notes as primary research information records.
  - Preserve research materials that were the basis for publication of results appropriately so they can support future use and/or verification.
  - Maintain searchable metadata for traceability of research materials for future reference.
- Properly store and manage research materials for the appropriate period of time.
- Appropriately disclose research materials and documents as necessary and if warranted.

Rules for Research Activities

～Before presenting research results～

- ☑ Have you followed the code of ethics of the research institution to which you belong and the article submission regulations?
- ☑ Are the images and tables exactly as described in the paper? Have you confirmed that preliminary data and data used to test your hypothesis not mixed together?
- ☑ Have you properly stored and managed experimental data, materials, samples, and notes?
- ☑ Are the experiments described in your paper reproducible by other researchers?
- ☑ Can you confirm the each coauthor's contribution? Do the coauthors agree with their joint responsibility for the content of the paper?
- ☑ Have you included citations for content or concepts from works that have already been published to avoid duplicate submission or plagiarism?

To prevent unintentional research fraud, such as bribery or plagiarism, to foster research ethics awareness, and to teach young researchers and graduate students early on how to write a correct dissertation, the university uses plagiarism detection software.
⇒ To use the software, apply at the Fair Research Office

Search: 熊大公正 (Kumamoto University Fair Research)

FAQ

I would like to purchase equipment for my research but the price is JPY 500,000 including value-added tax (VAT). Can I order it from a vendor directly?

If an item is over ¥500,000, you CANNOT order it yourself even if you have sufficient research budget. Please make a request to the contract management office through your department for items that are over JPY 500,000 including VAT.

We applied for a research/education project solicitation from MEXT which was accepted. If approved by the head of the department, can the researcher in charge receive funds into his/her personal bank account?

The researcher in charge CANNOT receive funds into in his/her personal bank account even if he/she obtains approval from the department head.
Project funds are (i) related to the operation of the university, (ii) managed by a researcher within the scope of his/her duties, and (iii) compensated by the university in the case of unexpected events, accidents, etc.
Funds are to be received by the university in a bank account managed by a treasurer.

I have surplus research funds at the end of the fiscal year. Can I purchase equipment for research planned for the next fiscal year?

No, you CANNOT make purchases for next year from this year's budget.
Most public research funds use a single-year national accounting system. As the Japanese fiscal year is from April to March, public research funds are, in principle, intended to be used systematically in this period. Therefore, you cannot receive equipment for use in the following fiscal year until after March 31. However, some research funds and surpluses resulting from specific circumstances may allow you to return or carry over the surplus.

If there is no budget remaining for the current fiscal year (March of each year), can I purchase materials myself in advance and be reimbursed the following year?

No, you CANNOT purchase materials in advance.
Without a budget, you cannot order materials for deliver in the following fiscal year. If the following year's budget is already set, you can make a purchase using that year's budget by setting the delivery date for on or after April 1. If you urgently need materials in March, you can try applying for a diversion of funds from within your department.

Improving Research Ethics Awareness

Research Ethics Education Courses

Kumamoto University has established “Guidelines for Research Ethics Education in Kumamoto University” and uses e-learning courses for every department.

eLCoRE 研究倫理eラーニング & eAPRIN

Persons required to take the courses

①Persons with researcher numbers (e-Rad) at this university.

②Those listed in the appended table of the "Guidelines for Research Ethics Education in Kumamoto University ”.

(Graduate students are also required to take the courses.)

※ Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, this does not apply if the Chief Research Ethics Education Officer of each Bureau and Division finds that there are reasonable grounds for a person being exempted from taking the courses.

Persons recommended to take the courses

①Persons outside of this university who engage in research activities, including collaborative research, for a certain period at this university

②Other person deemed to be necessary by the Chief Research Ethics Education Officers

How often the courses must be taken

It is required to take research ethics education every three years.

Submission of a Written Oath

University staff must understand and comply with the following matters, and strive to appropriately manage research expenses, enforce rules, and pledge to not engage in research misconduct.

1. **Kumamoto University Code of Conduct for Research**
2. **Kumamoto University Rules for Preventing Research Misconduct**
3. **If violations of the above items are discovered, bear the legal responsibility and comply with the punishment decided by the funding agency and Kumamoto University.**

Help Desk

"When help is needed concerning the use of research funds."

First, contact the appropriate person of the department.

Type of Inquiry	Department		Extension
Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI)	Research Advancement Division		3186
Industry-Academia Collaborations (Contracted research, joint research, academic consultations, confidentiality)	Research-Industry Collaboration Advancement Division		3984
Accounting Procedures	Financial Affairs Division		3154
Contracts, Receiving & Inspection (goods/materials)	Contract Management Division	Kuro-kami	3188 / 3172 / 3196
		Honjo	5026 / 5021 / 5338
	Accounting Division(hospital)		5938
Fixed-term Employees	Personal Division		3140
Travel Application Requests	Labor Division		3254
Other matters	Fair Research Promotion Office		3146

Compliance Counter

"To receive consultation on or report research misconduct."

The Compliance Counter is available as stipulated in Article 15 of the "National University Corporation Kumamoto University's Rules on Preventing Research Fraud ".

Method	On-campus	Off-campus
Mail	〒860-8555 2-39-1 Kurokami, Chuo-ku, Kumamoto-shi, General Affairs Dept. General Manager	〒862-0924 4-23-20 Obiyama, Chuo-ku, Kumamoto-shi, Takenaka Honda Law Offices
Email	koueki.jimu@ms.kumamoto-u.ac.jp	satoshi.honda.1981@gmail.com
Telephone	096-342-3115	096-382-3188

*Information up-to-date as of April of 2026. Current information can be found on the Kumamoto University website.

Published by: Research/Social-Academic Collaboration Department
〒860-8555 2-39-1 Kurokami, Chuo-ku, Kumamoto-shi
Tel：096-342-3146
First Edition: March 2015, 6th Edition: April 2026

Search: 熊大公正 (Kumamoto University Fair Research)