

Guidelines for the written assignment on responsible conduct of research



Why a written assignment?

In order to complete the course in responsible conduct of research (RCR) and to improve your learning outcome, as a PhD student, you must submit an assignment in which you **describe and discuss 1-2 RCR concepts or areas presented in the course curriculum in relation to your own research project.**

List of possible RCR concepts or areas to address (not exhaustive):

- Authorship conflicts about e.g. co-authorship
- Inappropriate handling of data
- Academic freedom in relation to publication of results
- Communication to a wider public
- Sharing data and/or results with other researchers
- Handling of potential conflicts of interest
- Any other relevant RCR issue

Content of assignment

More specifically the assignment must include the following three aspects:

- A very brief description of own research project (max. ½ page).
- Description of 1-2 concepts or areas within RCR presented in the course curriculum that could cause problems, conflicts and/or dilemmas for researchers.
- Discussion of an actual or envisioned situation that you have experienced or might experience during your own research where the described RCR concepts or areas would be relevant. The assignment should focus on grey areas, unclarities, problems with implementing guidelines, etc. It must include a discussion on how the situation could be handled in relation to your own situation.

Format

The assignment can be written in English or Danish. Please include your full name on the first page. The main text (excluding references) should not exceed **two pages**.

References

It is a requirement that proper and direct references to the curriculum are included in the assignment. The curriculum can be found here: <http://ifro.ku.dk/rcr.pdf/>. References to slides from the presentations will not be accepted. The references must be made in text (via parentheses), as footnotes or as endnotes. The reference must include author, year of publication, and page number. Other sources can be included in the assignment as well and should be referenced in the same manner as references to the curriculum. The references and an eventual reference list must have a format similar to references in scientific publications.

In order to pass the assignment, you must:

- Demonstrate an understanding of central and basic concepts, rules and issues as presented in the curriculum.
- Describe causes of researchers' problems, conflicts and/or dilemmas in relation to the chosen concepts/areas within RCR.
- Describe an actual or envisioned situation in relation to your specific research project that is a concrete example of the chosen problem, conflict and/or dilemma within RCR.
- Describe and discuss possible ways to handle the problem, conflict and/or dilemma described in relation to the specific research situation.
- You may draw on various sources in the assignment, but at least one reference must be made to the curriculum as described above.

Deadline and how to submit the assignment

You must upload the assignment to Absalon (an e-learning platform) in Word or PDF format. You will receive an invitation to the relevant Absalon site from the course organizer. The deadline for submission of the assignment will be approx. two weeks after the course. The exact submission deadline will be announced during the course.

Assessment

The assignment will be assessed by teachers from the course within two weeks after the assignment deadline (the month of July is exempted). The focus will be on the assessment criteria described above. Assignments will be marked in Absalon by the assessor as either 'Complete' (√) or 'Incomplete'(X). It is your responsibility to check in Absalon whether you need to re-submit.

Non-satisfactory assignment

If the assignment is marked 'Incomplete', you will receive written comments on how to improve the assignment. Within two weeks, you must submit a revised assignment to Absalon and inform the relevant teacher of the resubmission, including information on which course you attended.

You have three attempts to pass the assignment. If the assignment is not passed after three attempts, you must take the RCR course again. Failure to meet a deadline results in a failed attempt. To ensure a fair assessment, all non-satisfactory assignments will be evaluated by two teachers. The assignment and the course are governed by [the PhD rules and regulations at SUND](#).

Confidentiality

Assignments are confidential for all other than the assessors and the course directors and course organizers.¹ When all assignments have been graded, they will be deleted from Absalon.

Questions

Questions about the assignment must be directed to the relevant teacher on module 1 and 2. Usually either:

Mickey Gjerris: mgi@ifro.ku.dk ,
Morten Hillgaard Bülow mhb@soc.ku.dk, or
Sune Hannibal Holm: suneh@ifro.ku.dk

For any other questions about the RCR course, please contact Olga Trolle from the Department of Science Education at olga.trolle@ind.ku.dk

¹ If a PhD student files a complaint of the assessment, other staff may also read the assignment to be able to assess the complaint. If an alleged case of scientific misconduct is described in the assignment, the assessors and the course directors may forward the assignment to the university management, after consultation with the PhD student.