



To researchers who have applied for public research funds such as Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI)

As part of our efforts to prevent the misuse of public research funds and ensure their proper execution, the University requires participation in compliance education and submission of a written pledge every five years, starting in AY2020.

If you have applied for KAKENHI and other public research funds for AY2025 and did neither attend the compliance education nor submit the pledge in AY2020 or thereafter, please do so promptly. The information on the compliance education video and online submission of the pledge is available on the following webpage.



https://www.ritsumeai.ac.jp/research/member/research_expenses/05.html/ (in Japanese/English)

Attendance at "Research Ethics Education" is also mandatory. Please make sure to take the relevant course by accessing the JSPS e-learning system (eLCoRE) (the course needs to be taken in AY2021 or thereafter).

<https://elcore.jsps.go.jp/top.aspx> (in Japanese/English)



Cases of misconduct actually occurred in other universities

On the MEXT webpage below, the outlines of the actual cases of misconduct are disclosed.

https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kansa/houkoku/1364929.htm

(in Japanese only)

There are two cases reported in the current year: the following report summarizes one of them.



Type of misconduct	Fraudulent acquisition of business travel expenses
Year of occurrence	AY2019 and AY2021
Amount of research funds improperly spent	267,550 yen
Number of researchers involved	1 person
Motives	<p>The faculty member in question denied any wrongdoing for one of the two business trips under suspicion, and his/her motive is unclear as he/she has been consistently making excuses for his/her conduct. For the other case, the faculty member's claims have been inconsistent, but he/she has been making excuses, saying that there were errors in the travel report and in the operation of the business travel system.</p>
Methods	<p>[Business Trip (i)]</p> <p>When faculty members, etc. of the relevant university wish to receive travel expenses for domestic or overseas business trip, they are to submit a travel application in advance through the business travel system and report their business trip afterwards. However, the faculty member in question made a false application for a business trip by declaring that a domestic business trip would be carried out that was not scheduled in reality, submitted a false business trip report stating that he/she had carried out the said business trip, and fraudulently obtained travel expenses (accommodation expenses of 130,000 yen and daily allowance of 27,500 yen) related thereto.</p> <p>[Business Trip (ii)]</p> <p>The faculty member in question applied for a business trip to attend and make a presentation at an overseas academic conference, and traveled overseas, but did not, in actuality, attend or make a presentation at the said conference. Nevertheless, he/she made a false report that he/she had attended and made a presentation at the abovementioned conference, and fraudulently obtained travel expenses (transportation expenses of 53,850 yen, accommodation expenses of 37,600 yen, and daily allowance of 18,600 yen) related thereto.</p>
Occurrence factors	<p>The faculty member in question attended compliance education prescribed by the relevant university in AY2020 and research ethics education in AY2019, and submitted a written pledge (the one that the university requires faculty members involved in the operation and management of public research funds to submit) in AY2021. Accordingly, it should be stated that the faculty member was fully aware of the importance of preventing misconduct related to public research funds. Nevertheless, in light of the fact that, in this case, the said faculty member defied the regulations to make a false business trip application and report, without refraining from actually doing it, while being aware that it was false, it must be said that the faculty member was totally deficient in basic ethical standards as a researcher.</p>

With regard to the matters above, the faculty member in question does not admit to any wrongdoing on his/her part. However, the relevant university's Investigation Committee, based on a comprehensive judgment of the results of the entire investigation, including a written investigation, interviews with those concerned and the faculty member, and a forensic investigation(*), found that the faculty member had committed misconduct (improper acquisition of travel expenses) in the two business trips. Consequently, the faculty member in question received a disciplinary action of suspension from the work for a period of four months, and a summary of the misconduct, including the name of the faculty member, was disclosed on the university's website.



Moreover, when misconduct such as this occurs, stricter measures must be considered in the overall execution of research funds, including "submission of proof of stay," "submission of evidence related to research implementation," and "mandatory submission of proof of airline boarding" as preventive measures. This would affect not only the faculty members concerned but also all researchers.

Please note that regardless of the existence of private use, any expenditure that is not directly related to the implementation of the research on the relevant research project, or any documentation that is not true, would constitute misconduct.

Please refer to the "Research Fund Spending Guidebook" for the University's policy on the proper execution of research funds and various procedures for the execution of research funds.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the relevant Research Office.

https://www.ritsumeikan.ac.jp/research/member/file/research_expenses/guidebook_en.pdf

(*) Forensic investigation

An investigative method that scientifically analyzes digital data and information for use as evidence.

When misconduct is suspected within an organization, it entails examining the computer and e-mail histories of its members among others. Forensic investigation also includes restoring deleted files and data and analyzing their contents.



Please make sure to complete the procedures of the settlement of business trips and out-of-pocket expenses.

Please proceed promptly with the reporting of business trips made during the summer vacation period.

Also, please do not hoard receipts for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, and proceed with the procedures as frequently as possible.



Publication of Newsletter

This Newsletter is published quarterly as part of our awareness-raising activities, and is intended to disseminate and deliver information for the proper execution of research funds on a regular basis, such as sharing of misuse cases including those that have occurred at other organizations and the factors that have led to their occurrence, as well as matters pointed out during internal audits and voucher inspections. The next issue is scheduled to be published in December 2024.



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