

Peer Review

Elizabeth Wager

For Trainees

Why case studies?

A core function of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) is to provide independent, expert, and confidential advice on the conduct of research, from promoting good practice to addressing allegations of misconduct. We have been doing this since 2006.

Each request for assistance received by UKRIO increases our body of knowledge. These 'lessons learned' not only inform our response to subsequent enquiries but also underpin our other activities, especially UKRIO's education and training work.

We have found that illustrative case studies are an excellent way to raise awareness of research integrity and research culture and to illustrate the complexities and 'grey areas' that can occur.

Case studies are not literal accounts of any enquiry to UKRIO. Instead, they are scenarios, based on real-life situations, which illustrate recurring or notable issues and problems that have been brought to our attention. While some case studies may mention a particular discipline or setting, they contain themes that are relevant across subjects.

Please note that this case study is fictitious. Any similarity to actual persons, organisations or events is coincidental.

Case study 9

A colleague tells you about a fascinating new technique that could be really useful for your research.

When you ask for more details, you discover that the colleague *read about the technique in a paper she is reviewing* for a prestigious journal with a **12-month delay** between acceptance and publication.

She tells you that she plans to submit her reviewer's report to the journal next week and will recommend accepting the paper but won't know what the other reviewers recommend.

Your colleague does not know who the authors of the paper are.



Please discuss and decide:

1. What can you do?
2. What ethical issues does this scenario raise?



Promoting integrity and high ethical standards in research
Providing confidential, independent, and expert support

© Dr Elizabeth Wager and UKRIO 2023

This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License](#), which allows re-users to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for noncommercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.