

# THE COMPASS

A BULLETIN BY THE RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND ETHICS OFFICE

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## Fake News Law and Research Conduct

**Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA)** is an anti-fake news law that was passed in Parliament on **8 May 2019** aimed at curbing the spread of online falsehoods that pose a threat to public interests. Education Minister Ong Ye Kung has clarified that the "[Law won't apply to academic research](#)", as the law distinguishes between **statements of facts** and **opinions**, with the latter not being covered by this law.

"The only way POFMA comes in is if the research uses false observations and data to start with, which prevents public discourse from taking place properly. In which case, I do not think such work can pass the academic and professional standards of any decent university or research institute," he said. [[+Read excerpts of his speech here](#)]

NTU has a [policy on research integrity](#) that aims to ensure researchers conduct their research responsibly and with utmost integrity. There is zero tolerance for any research misconduct in NTU.

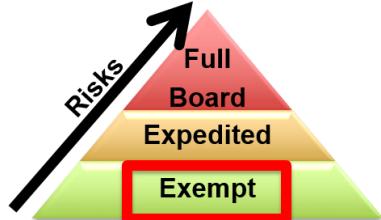


## Rewarding Rigour in Research

For falsifying data in research applications and reports to US agencies, **Duke University** was asked to pay **US\$112.5 million** to the US government, which arose from a whistleblower who reported misconduct occurring in one laboratory. Duke University has since formed a new Advisory Panel on Research Integrity and Excellence. [[+Read more](#)].

In a [Nature commentary](#) by Arturo Casadevall, he commented that scientific misconduct can carry severe institutional and scientific costs, with more than a dozen papers retracted due to this case. Rewarding scientific rigour is key to a change in culture to eliminate misconduct.

## Launch of new IRB Exempt Review



At the recent NTU-IRB roadshow on "**Applying Under the New Exempt Review Category**" held on **22 May 2019**, NTU researchers were introduced to the new Exempt category which aims to facilitate prompt processing of IRB applications classified as the lowest risk. [[+Read more](#)].

Participants were introduced to the 6 categories under Exempt Review, followed by an analysis of research studies that are included or excluded from this form of review. Participants were also provided with an overview of the application and submission process.

To qualify for Exempt Review, researchers must ensure that their study meets all of the 6 criteria mentioned below:

1. Less than minimal risk
2. Participants must not be coerced
3. Anonymous participants or de-identified data
4. No vulnerable groups (unless stated in the category)
5. Meet the eligibility in any of the 6 exempt categories



From **1 Jun 2019**, submission of Exempt Review applications will be via the [new form](#) to be attached in NORA under "**Other Supporting Documents**". Please write to [irb@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:irb@ntu.edu.sg) for any enquiries.

### Deadlines:

**NTU-IACUC:** Next due date for new AUP submissions is **1 Jul 2019**. [[+Read more](#)].

**NTU-IRB:** New submissions are due on Mondays of every week. [[+Read more](#)].

### Email Us:

[NTU-IRB](#) [NTU-IACUC](#) [RIEO](#) [NTU Research Integrity Officer](#)

### Web Links:

[NTU-IRB](#) [NTU-IACUC](#) [Research Integrity](#) [ARFMS](#)

