

Summary of LOWI decision 2018-04

Keywords: admissible petition, duty of confidentiality, substantiation of complaint

Relevant provisions: Article 7.5(a) and (d) of the LOWI Regulations

Board involved: Executive Board, Radboud University

Petition

The Petitioner disagrees with the formal settlement of his complaint about the violation of research integrity by three employees of Radboud University Nijmegen. The Research Integrity Committee (RIC) recommended that the Board should rule the complaint inadmissible because it was not sufficiently substantiated to be able to issue a substantive opinion on it. In its assessment of the complaint, the RIC also took account of the fact that the Petitioner did not comply with the duty of confidentiality.

Decision by the Board

The Board decided, in accordance with the RIC's considerations, to rule the complaint inadmissible.

The most relevant considerations in the LOWI's opinion:

- Like the university's Complaints Procedure, the LOWI Regulations apply the principle that a complaint about a violation (or alleged violation) of research integrity is a serious matter and that there must therefore be a substantiated reason for a substantive investigation. That substantiation must be clear and sufficiently related to the (alleged) violation of research integrity.
- The LOWI finds that the Petitioner's Petition is not sufficiently clear and does not meet the conditions set. It is written on the basis of an unusual and personal theory. There are no details of publications in which plagiarism is committed or of the passages of the Petitioner's work from which texts are derived. Other complaints about improper treatment were not substantiated by the Petitioner.
- The LOWI therefore gave the Petitioner the opportunity, on two occasions, to provide an oral explanation of his Petition. The Petitioner refused to give an oral explanation because his petition is perfectly clear. A further written explanation which the Petitioner did provide to the LOWI was once again unclear.
- The LOWI sees no direct connection with the alleged violations of research integrity. In the opinion of the LOWI, there is insufficient reason to deal with the Petition because the petition and the written additions do not contain the required clear description of the complaint.

LOWI ruling:

The Petition is inadmissible, meaning that the LOWI will not proceed to a substantive assessment of the Petition or to issuing an opinion to the Board.