

Tuesday late afternoon session Track A, Tuesday, Sep 23 2025, 16:00-17:45

Location: Main Hall

Session: Training and Education

Chair: Aleš Novak

OR-24

RCR training has no effect on European students' ability to handle grey-zones: results from a large scale survey across educational levels

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In this talk we seek to address two gaps in the current literature on academic integrity among high school and university students. First, while much research has been done on students' perception of and engagement in plagiarism and various forms of clear-cut cheating, grey-zone practices have been largely neglected. Second, comparisons across educational levels are rare, making it difficult to understand how students' integrity behaviours evolve throughout their educational trajectory.

To address this gap, we present results from a large-scale survey of 3,297 students from Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, and Switzerland [1]. The survey we conducted included and allowed comparison between three educational levels (upper secondary, Bachelor, and PhD students). Further, it was designed to examine the perception of and engagement in likely grey-zone and non-compliant practices, and to cover the following three dimensions of academic integrity: i) Plagiarism and citation practice, ii) Collaborative practices, and iii) Data collection and analysis.

Answers were analysed using descriptive statistics and regression analyses. Based on these results we will in the talk give a comprehensive overview of European students' conceptions of and engagement with academic integrity.

We found that participants at higher educational levels were generally better than those at lower levels at identifying likely non-compliant practices and were less likely to have engaged in such practices during their current studies. However, participants across all levels had a low level of competence in identifying grey-zone practices. The academic integrity training participants indicated they had received had some effect on their competence in terms of likely non-compliant practices, but it had no observable effect on their ability to identify likely grey-zone practices.

In the talk we will argue that these results call for a different approach to academic integrity training. In particular, they call for more comprehensive approaches that include grey-zone as well as non-compliant practices and address a broad range of questionable behaviours, not only plagiarism.

References

[1]: Johansen MW, Goddixsen MP, Clavien C, Hogan H, Olsson IAS, Santos JB, Santos RA, Wall PJ, Sandøe P, Lund TB (in review): How do students' practices and conceptions of academic integrity vary across educational levels? A survey study from four European countries.