

Action plan

Researchers are responsible for **accurate, complete and timely reporting** of their research studies. Universities, as organisations employing researchers, sponsoring research and educating new scientists have an ethical responsibility to support them in adhering to the best international standards.

Here we provide suggestions on what **universities can do to enhance their reputation** as supporters of high standards in health research reporting and **increase the impact of research** carried out by their scientists.

Key actions for universities:

- Provide leadership, advocacy and influence at every level
- Clearly define policies, requirements and expectations
- Provide access to tools, standards, and other resources
- Provide opportunities for education, training, and mentorship
- Motivate, reward, and provide real incentives to adopt best practice
- Apply safeguards, monitoring and checks

Practical suggestions to make it happen:

- Incorporate an explicit philosophy of transparent, complete and accurate reporting into your research strategy
- Promote the use of reporting guidelines through your policies, resources and educational activities
- Refer to the EQUATOR Network resources (www.equator-network.org) on your website
- Set aside resources to develop courses on reporting and peer reviewing research (e.g. on raising awareness of reporting guidelines and their use in the preparation of research protocols and publications, in peer review, etc.); consider employing someone to support researchers in good scientific writing and publication practice
- Introduce education on good research reporting practice by:
 - Incorporating it into existing courses
 - Including it in 'research integrity' education
 - Including it in language teaching (e.g. English for academic purposes)
 - Organising standalone workshops developing effective research publication skills (online or face-to-face)
 - Organising seminars highlighting the importance of accurate research reporting
 - Including information about research reporting policies and EQUATOR resources in a welcome pack for new research staff
- Engage librarians working with health researchers to promote EQUATOR resources and to assist them in locating the relevant guidelines (<http://www.equator-network.org/toolkits/librarians/>)
- Engage academic editors, peer reviewers and publishers based at your university in raising research reporting standards (<http://www.equator-network.org/toolkits/editors/>)
- Display promotional materials available on the EQUATOR website introducing reporting guidelines and other resources (e.g. in research departments; health research libraries, etc.)

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