AALBORG UNIVERSITET

AAU PRACTICE COMMITTEE

REPORT 2025

January 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS **1**

INTRODUCTION **3**

AAU Practice Committee **3**
Members of the Practice Committee 3
About the 2025 report 3

STATISTICS **4**
Diversity of the Practice Committee 4
Complainants 4
Employment status of the respondents 5
Diversity of the respondents 5
Distribution of cases by faculty 6
Case processing venue 6
Outcomes of the opinions 7
Case processing time 7

SUMMARIES OF CASES REVIEWED BY THE PRACTICE COMMITTEE **8**
Case 2025-002 8
Case 2025-003 8

DECISION OF THE DANISH COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT **9**
Outcome of the decision 9
Outcome of the case after a decision by the Danish Board on Research Misconduct 9
Case processing time 10

SUMMARY OF CASE REVIEWED BY THE DANISH BOARD ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT .. **10**
Case 2024-006 (Case 2025-01 at the Danish Board on Research Misconduct) 10

CONCLUDING REMARKS **11**

INTRODUCTION

AAU PRACTICE COMMITTEE

The AAU Practice Committee was established by the rector on 1.7.2017 to deal with cases of questionable research practice and to handle the preliminary review of cases of research misconduct. The Practice Committee consists of a permanent member and a faculty member from each faculty. When reviewing a specific case of questionable research practice, an ad hoc member is also appointed to ensure that the Practice Committee represents the expertise required for the case concerned.

MEMBERS OF THE PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Permanent members
Anders Ørgaard, Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (chair)
Michael R. Rasmussen, Professor with Special Responsibilities, Faculty of Engineering and Science (deputy chair)
Søren Risom Kristensen, Professor, Faculty of Medicine
Lone Kørnøv, Professor, Technical Faculty of IT and Design

Alternate members
Malene Charlotte Larsen, Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Michael Møller Bech, Associate Professor, Faculty of Engineering and Science
Hans Struijk, Professor, Faculty of Medicine
Henning Sten Hansen, Professor, Technical Faculty of IT and Design

Ad hoc members participating in 2025
Mogens Rüdiger
Torben Moos
Dan Stieper Karbing

ABOUT THE 2025 REPORT

The report covers the period 1.1.2025 - 31.12.2025

The Practice Committee in 2025 received three notifications, one of which was rejected as manifestly unfounded. In addition, a notification was received in December 2024. As the case was not included in the 2024 report, it is now included in this report.

The Practice Committee in 2025 submitted three cases to the Danish Board on Research Misconduct and is awaiting a decision. The Practice Committee received one decision from the Danish Board on Research Misconduct that the Practice Committee subsequently considered on the merits.

The report thus includes the three cases the committee considered on the merits in 2025.

STATISTICS

The following section presents several statistics based on the cases considered on the merits in 2025.

DIVERSITY OF THE PRACTICE COMMITTEE

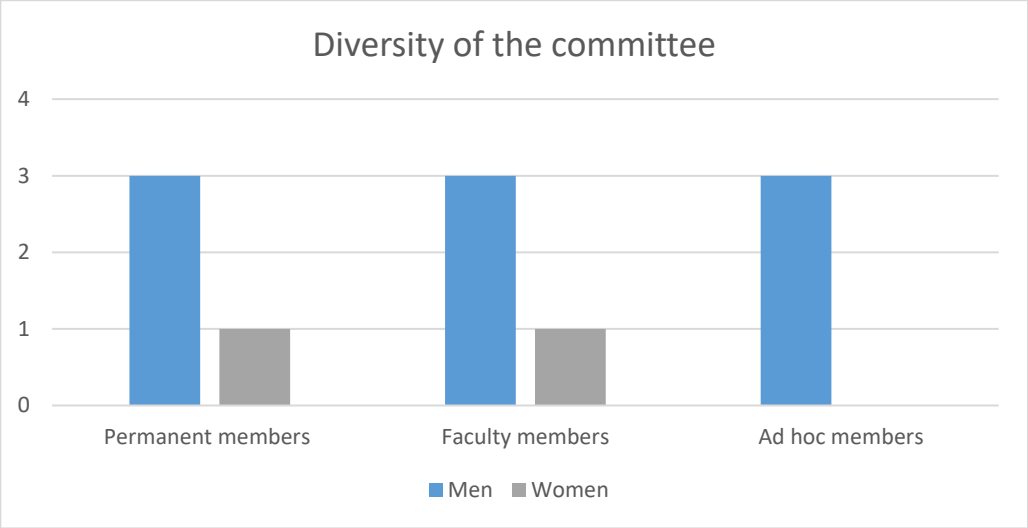

Figure 1 shows the diversity of the committee for permanent members, faculty members and ad hoc members, respectively.
Please note that ad hoc members are calculated per case.

COMPLAINANTS

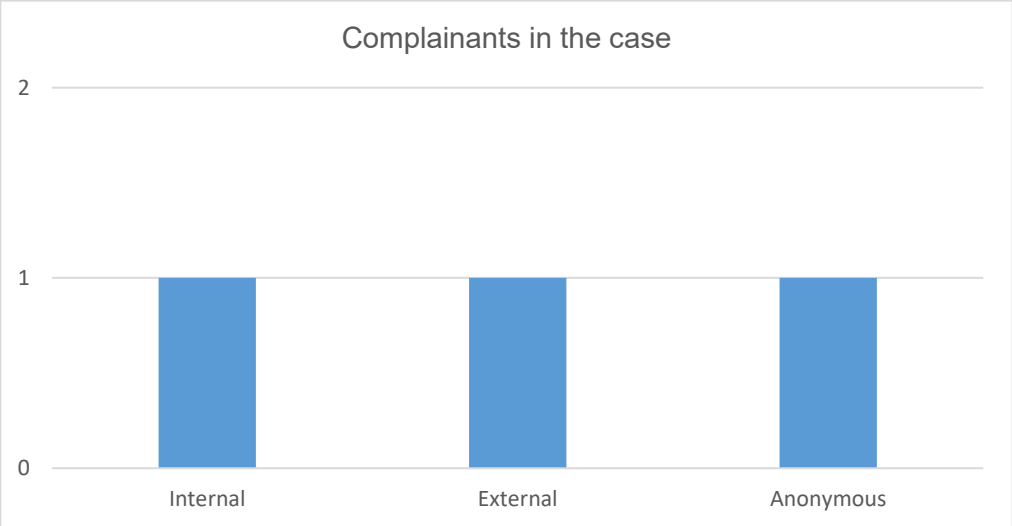

Figure 2 shows the distribution of internal notifications from AAU, and external and anonymous notifications.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

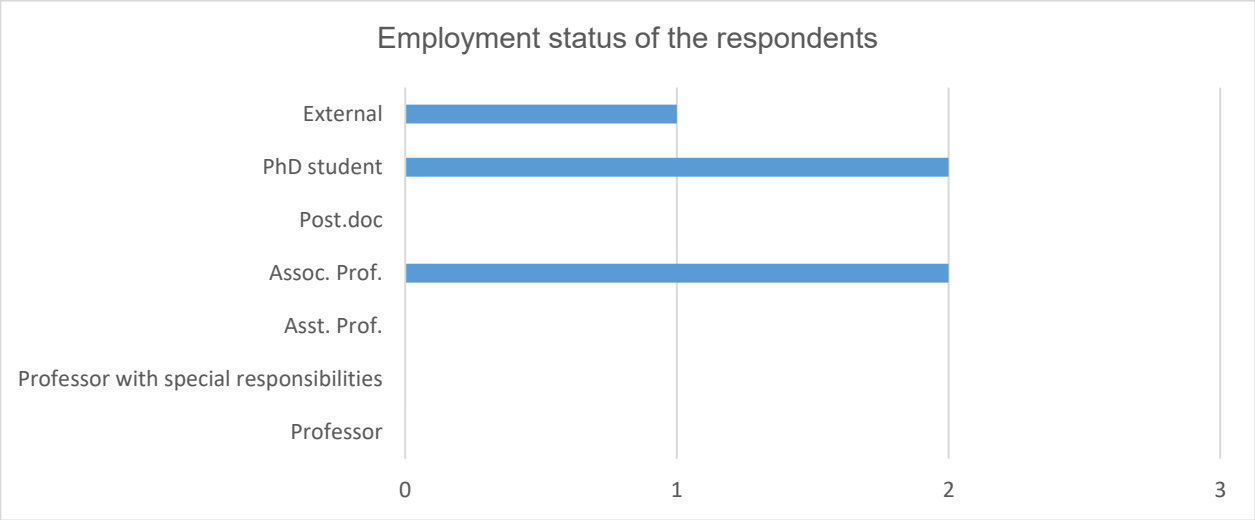

Figure 3 shows the employment status of the respondents at the time the research in question took place.

DIVERSITY OF THE RESPONDENTS

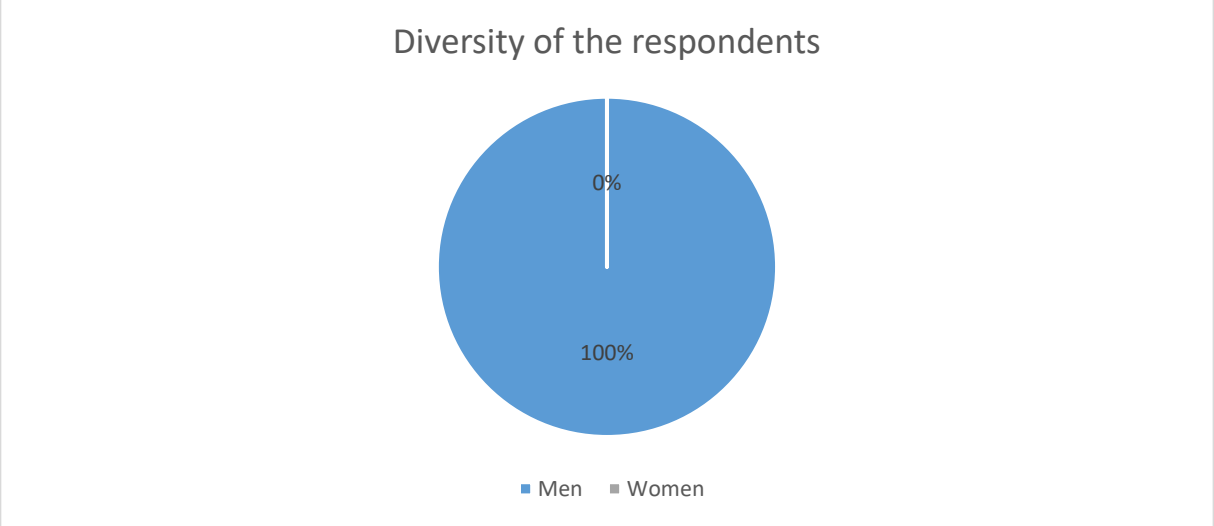

Figure 4 shows the gender distribution of the respondents.

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY FACULTY

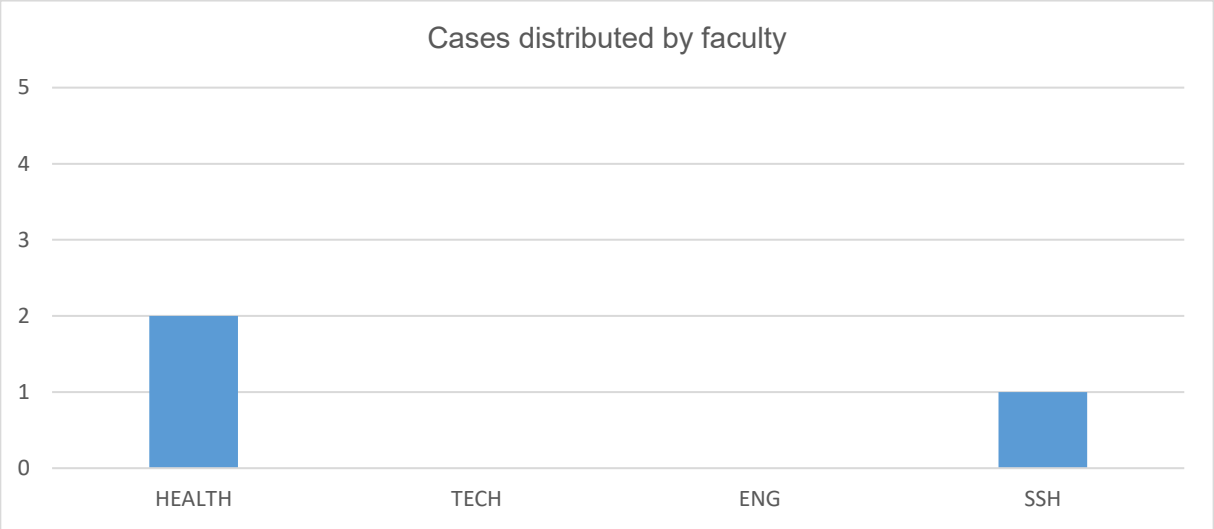

Figure 5 shows the distribution of cases by faculty. In 2025, the Practice Committee did not consider cases from TECH and ENG.

CASE PROCESSING VENUE

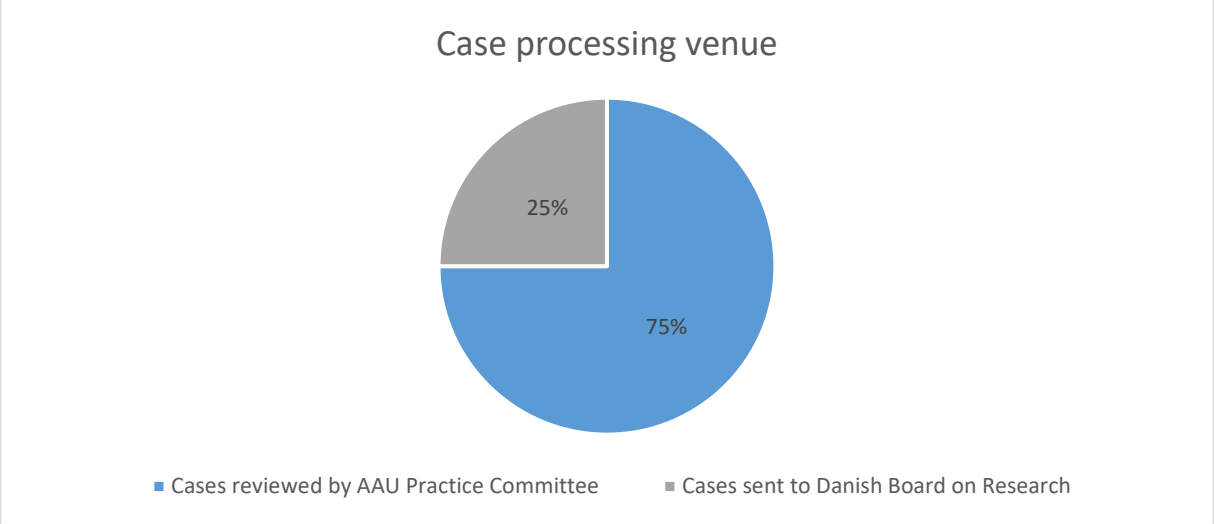

Figure 6 shows the distribution of cases reviewed by the Practice Committee and forwarded to the Danish Board on Research Misconduct. In 2025, one case was sent to the Board for consideration after consideration by the Practice Committee. In addition, the Practice Committee received a decision in one case that was subsequently reviewed by the Practice Committee.

OUTCOMES OF THE OPINIONS

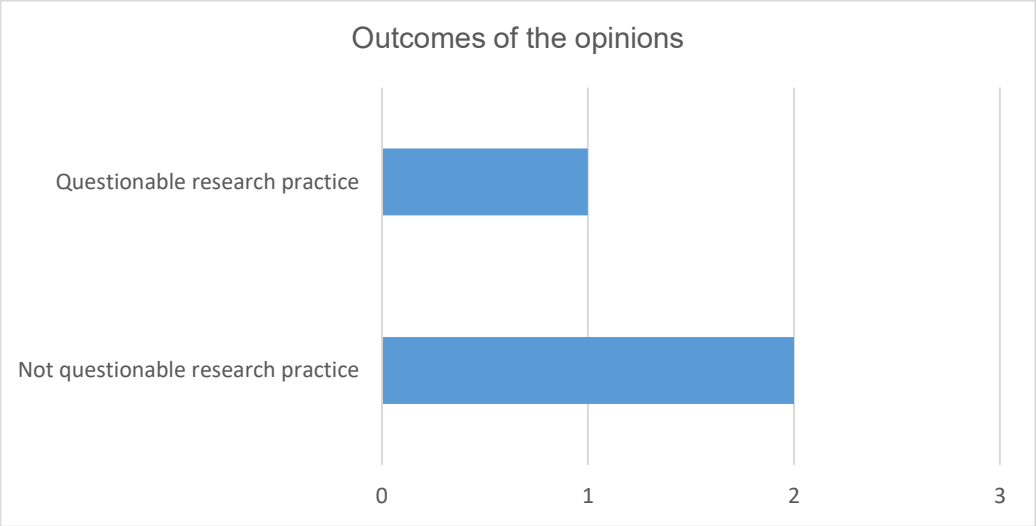

Figure 7 shows that in two cases, the committee determined that there was questionable research practice. It should be noted that in one case, research practice was found to be questionable for the first author and not questionable with regard to the other authors.

CASE PROCESSING TIME

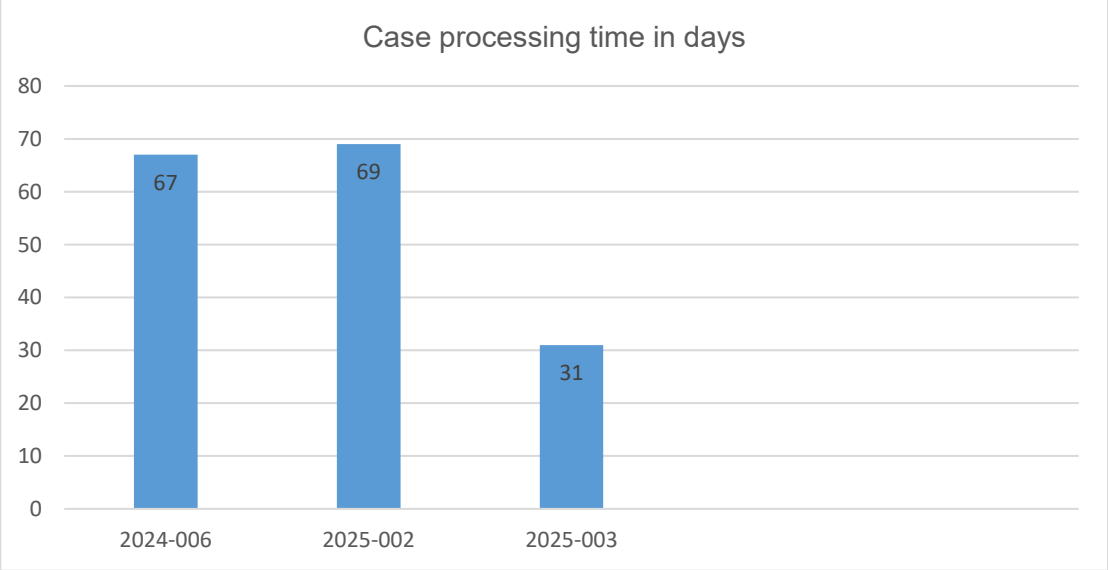

Figure 8 shows the case processing time for the cases the Practice Committee considered on the merits in 2025. Note that case 2024-006 was reviewed in both 2024 and 2025 (before it was sent to the Danish Board on Research Misconduct and after the Board's consideration of the case.) The total case processing time is included here.
The average case processing time was 56 days.

SUMMARIES OF CASES REVIEWED BY THE PRACTICE COMMITTEE

In 2025, the Practice Committee considered two cases of breach of good scientific practice and one of suspected scientific misconduct.

Case 2024-006, which was reviewed by both the Danish Board on Research Misconduct and subsequently the AAU Practice Committee, is summarized below under the section "Summaries of cases reviewed by the Danish Board on Research Misconduct".

CASE 2025-002

Notification concerning self-plagiarism.

The case concerns a higher doctoral dissertation submitted for assessment. According to the notification, there were several instances of text overlap with the respondent's own previously published works without a clear indication of a verbatim or almost verbatim reproduction.

The committee found that the reproductions are non-trivial in scope and are not without significance; thus, these reproductions should have been referenced with quotation marks, italics or other clear indication of reproduction from the source.

The Practice Committee concluded that the respondent had demonstrated questionable research practice.

CASE 2025-003

Notification of suspected scientific misconduct.

The case concerns a scientific article where the respondent is a co-author. According to the notification, there was suspicion of fabrication and manipulation of data and figures in the article.
The practice committee considered the matter at a meeting. The committee found that it was difficult to make a qualified assessment of whether there was manipulation or falsification of the image material in the article, and that such an assessment requires special expertise. The Practice Committee determined here that there is a reasonable suspicion of scientific misconduct.

The Danish Board on Research Misconduct has the authority to evaluate scientific misconduct; thus, the Practice Committee forwarded the case for a decision by the Danish Board on Research Misconduct. The case is still awaiting the decision.

DECISION OF THE DANISH COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

The practice committee in 2025 received a decision in one case that the Practice Committee had submitted for consideration by the Danish Board on Research Misconduct in early 2025.

OUTCOME OF THE DECISION

Figure 9 shows the outcome of the decision. The Board determined that no scientific misconduct had been committed.

OUTCOME OF THE CASE AFTER A DECISION BY THE DANISH BOARD ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

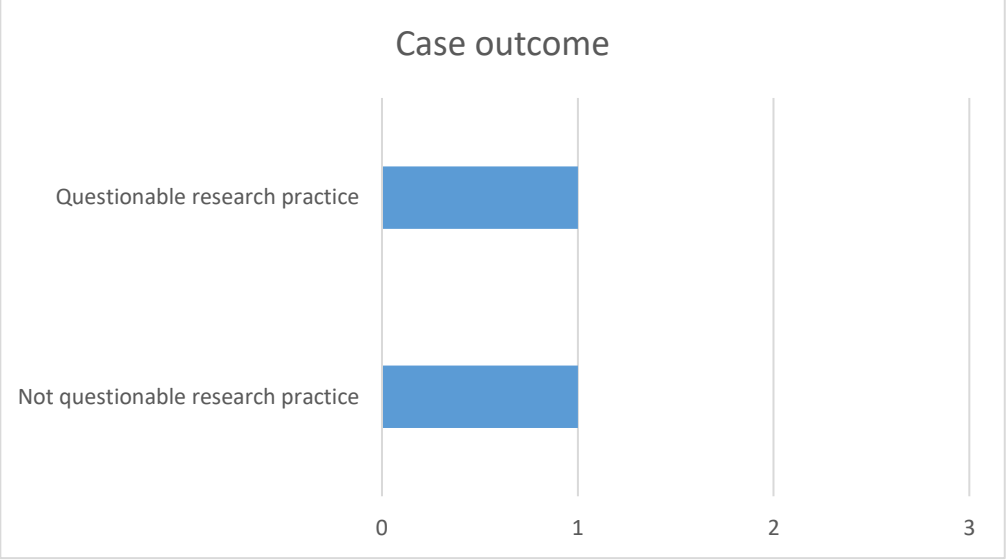

Figure 10 shows the case that the Practice Committee considered on the merits after the Board found that there was no scientific misconduct. The Practice Committee stated that the first author had demonstrated questionable research practice, but not the other authors.

CASE PROCESSING TIME

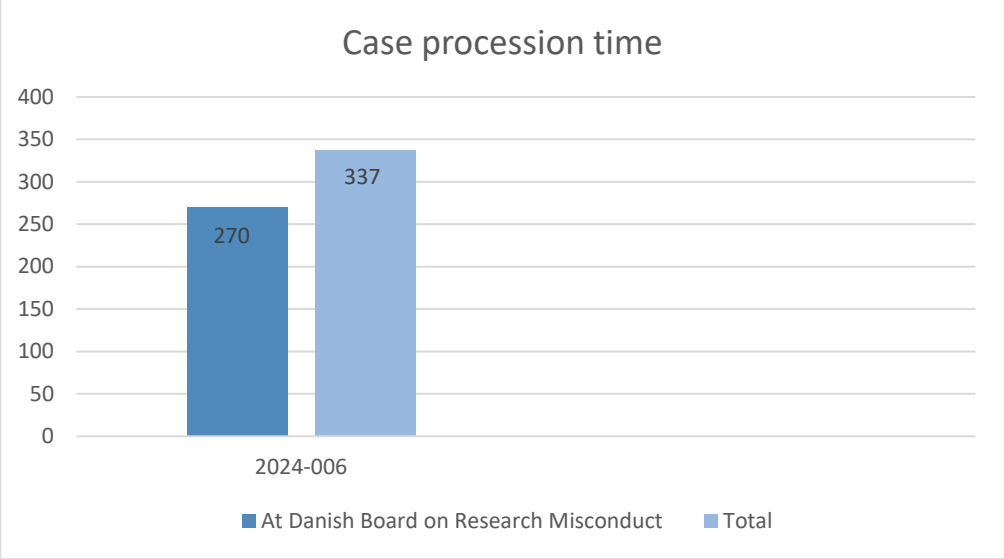

Figure 11 shows the processing time for the case from AAU which the Danish Board on Research Misconduct decided in 2025.

SUMMARY OF CASE REVIEWED BY THE DANISH BOARD ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

The Practice Committee in 2025 received a decision in one case that the Practice Committee sent to the Danish Board on Research Misconduct for review in early 2025.

CASE 2024-006 (CASE 2025-01 AT THE DANISH BOARD ON RESEARCH MISCONDUCT)

Notification concerning plagiarism.

The case concerns a published scientific article. According to the review, the authors had acquired data, images and material without legitimate attribution of these, as the authors of the article had used data obtained for the preparation of a Master's thesis.

The Board only reviewed the case with regard to the first author of the article. The complainant withdrew the notification concerning the other authors on the grounds that it was the first author who had plagiarized. The Board found no basis for taking up the case against the other authors on its own initiative.

The Board found that the authors of the Master's thesis had made an intellectual contribution to the article in terms of methods in data collection and data. However, they were not permitted to be involved in the drafting of the article or to consent to the use of their data.

The Board found that the first author of the article has used different methods and prepared different analyses than those used by the authors of the Master's thesis, and that the article created several fictitious accounts based on the empirical data collected by the Master's thesis students. In addition, other references regarding the methods used that are not mentioned in the Master's thesis were included, and the first author did their own analysis. The Board also found that the Master's thesis students who collected data and credited them in the article were recognized in the article's "Acknowledgements".

In view of this, the committee found that there is no basis for establishing that the first author in the article had plagiarized. The Board therefore determined that there was no scientific misconduct.

The case was then sent to the Practice Committee for consideration of whether there was questionable research practice. Subsequently, the Practice Committee stated that the first author of the article had demonstrated questionable research practice given that crediting in the article's "Acknowledgements" without prior offer of involvement to work on the article or consent to the use of data for research publication does not accord with good practice for integrity in research. The committee found that the other authors, by relying on the first author's assessment of the correct crediting of the Master's thesis students' work, did not have the necessary culpability; the committee therefore did not determine that the other authors did not demonstrate questionable research practice.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The reports and cases that the Practice Committee reviewed during the year concern plagiarism in a scientific article and self-plagiarism in a higher doctoral dissertation submitted for assessment. The third case concerns suspicion of scientific misconduct, which is awaiting the decision of the Danish Board on Research Misconduct.

In previous years, notifications have dealt with self-plagiarism in PhD theses. Last year, the Practice Committee found that this was an area that needed further supervision of the PhD students to better equip them to handle the principles of good scientific practice. The conclusion is that this supervision appears to have helped.

In 2025, the Practice Committee received notifications from the doctoral school, one anonymous and one external.

In the 2024 report, the Practice Committee found that there was an overrepresentation of men among the permanent members and the faculty members. The committee has the same representation at the end of 2025. Among the appointed ad hoc members in 2025, only men have been represented.

The Practice Committee notes that the committee's case processing time has increased from 39 days in 2024 to 56 days in 2025.