

## RMPP Unit 7 Collaborative Discussion 2

### Initial Post

The case is based on the accuracy of the information, and the ethical predicament Abi, a research and statistical programmer, finds himself in. The project sent from the manufacturer would like data collection and analysis for reporting on a cereal product.

Concerning the product's nutritional value, whilst Abi finds the nutritional value potentially harmful rather than safe, he assumes this is not the information the manufacturer wishes to receive about the product. Abi assumes that the manufacturer wishes to sell the cereal and aims for a favourable report; however, we do not know the original intentions. Perhaps this could be a first or second opinion on the product.

The manufacturer should be provided with an accurate, valid and reliable report and not misrepresent information on the product's performance which would violate 3e. of the BCS Code of Conduct (British Computing Society, 2022). Furthermore, if Abi decided to manipulate data to support a conclusion, this potentially could cause public health harm violating item 1a on the BCS Code of Conduct.

Abi also has to respect the rights of third parties (1b.). Should he present a full ethical report and the manufacturer chooses to disregard negative results, he is obliged to express his concerns due to the risk posed to consumers of the cereal product. Interactions between the researcher and all stakeholders should be open, and researchers should be shielded from marketing influences by the manufacturer (Rucker & Rucker, 2016).

Professionally, should Abi follow unethical behaviour, he risks damaging his credibility and risks consequences from his employers and his membership in professional associations.

Ultimately, Abi needs to present findings in a manner which allows the manufacturer to make an informed decision on their next steps with the product. The report should be transparent with a clear methodology producing valid and reliable data. The work produced would be impartial and not conflict with Abi's professional practices showing strong ethical principles as in Section 2 BCS Code of Conduct.

Research misconduct in numerous cases has compromised ethical standards, and the design of a universal research code of conduct has been conceptually considered to support integrity, reliability and trust (Sivasubramaniam et al., 2021).

British Computing Society. (2022). Code of Conduct For BCS Members. Available from: <https://www.bcs.org/media/2211/bcs-code-of-conduct.pdf> [Accessed 28 January 2023].

Rucker, R. B. & Rucker, M. R. (2016). Nutrition: ethical issues and challenges. *Nutrition Research*, 36, (11): 1183-1192.

Sivasubramaniam, S. D., Cosentino, M., Ribeiro, L. & Marino, F. (2021). Unethical practices within medical research and publication – An exploratory study. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 17, (1): 7.