

Annual statement on research integrity

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Winchester
1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education Institution
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	27/11/24
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	Research Environment - University of Winchester
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Professor Emile Bojesen
	Email address: Emile.Bojesen@winchester.ac.uk
1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity	Name: Professor Emile Bojesen
	Email address: Emile.Bojesen@winchester.ac.uk

Section 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture.

Description of actions and activities undertaken

2A. Description of current systems and culture

Please describe how the organisation maintains high standards of research integrity and promotes positive research culture. It should include information on the support provided to researchers to understand standards, values and behaviours, such as training, support and guidance for researchers at different career stages/ disciplines. You may find it helpful to consider the following broad headings:

- Policies and systems
- Communications and engagement
- Culture, development and leadership
- Monitoring and reporting

Policies and systems

Ethics in research and evaluation

Expectations regarding ethics are set out in the University Research Ethics Policy which is available through the University document store and via the research ethics pages on the intranet. The policy and procedures apply to academic and professional services staff, doctoral students, postgraduate and undergraduate students. There are three levels of scrutiny detailed in the policy: by the University Ethics Committee for complex projects, at Faculty level for less complex projects and there is a self-declaration route for straightforward projects (e.g. concerning publicly available documents, literary criticism etc.). Applicants are guided to the most appropriate route by completing the checklists in Form 1, which then signpost the appropriate form and scrutiny process. The Committee scrutinises matters monthly (except for December and August), working virtually via TEAMS. The Committee meets face-to-face three times in an academic year to discuss matters of policy and process. Faculty scrutiny is managed by an Ethics Lead within each Faculty, running either an ad hoc or monthly process depending on the volume of matters typically seen. The self-declaration route is overseen by the Chair of the Committee.

Communications and engagement

Ethics in research and evaluation

Engaging staff and students in matters of research ethics and understanding the place of ethics in research /evaluation practice is a key priority for the Committee.

Each month there are bespoke live, online one-hour workshops for doctoral students /supervisors as well as general workshop sessions for staff /students. The Doctoral School requires that all new supervisors undertake the training, and existing supervisors are required to undertake a refresher every three years. In addition, there are monthly half-hour drop-ins open to all. In 2023/24 the total training available was 27.5 hours (for the Doctoral School: 11 hours + 2 hours induction; general staff sessions: 8 hours; UG-PG dissertation sessions: 3 hours; Q&A drop ins: 5.5 hours). The Chair is also available to speak to courses /departments if requested. There is a dedicated email address for submitting projects for scrutiny as well as general queries. This is overseen by the Chair.

Culture, development and leadership

Ethics in research and evaluation

Ensuring there is representation from across the University on the Committee helps to ensure diversity in research perspectives and experience. The Chair and Deputy actively encourage staff to consider joining the Committee to support their own development. The leadership and management of the Committee is undertaken in an 'open' style to promote a culture of discussion of matters to do with ethics and an 'enabling' approach to research. Where an aspect of a project raises a risk in the context of ethics, then researchers are encouraged to consider ways to manage or mitigate it. The Chair also recognises the value of engaging with colleagues in wider research groups and networks, such as the special interest group into emotionally demanding research. Areas of current interest are decolonising research ethics and supporting participatory approaches.

Research integrity training and development

Staff and research students are directed towards and encouraged to participate in events run by the UKRIO, for example their annual conference on aspects of research integrity. Details of training events and courses are circulated to REF Unit of Assessment and Research Centre Leads.

In 2023-24 the institution signed up for the UKRIO Introduction to Research Integrity online training course, with free places offered for researchers to participate in the pilot.

Support was provided to researchers in the context of professional development courses designed to enhance research and leadership capabilities. Topics included project management techniques and effective teambuilding and leadership techniques.

Monitoring and reporting

Ethics in research and evaluation

The Committee provides an annual report at the start of the academic year to Senate Research and Innovation Committee summarising the Committee and

Faculty scrutiny activity over the last academic year, an overview of training/development provided, changes in Committee membership and whether there have been any reports of concerns linked to research ethics. No concerns were raised in 2023/24 in relation to ethics.

EDI impact reporting

Data was collected on employee characteristics and the outcomes of workplace initiatives (training, events, panels), in the interests of advancing the objective of fostering a healthy research culture that is perceived as open and inclusive.

2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

Please provide an update on any changes made during the period, such as new initiatives, training, developments, also ongoing changes that are still underway. Drawing on Commitment 3 of the Concordat, please note any new or revised policies, practices and procedures to support researchers; training on research ethics and research integrity; training and mentoring opportunities to support the development of researchers' skills throughout their careers.

Research integrity training and development

Following external review in 2023 the University successfully retained the European Commission HR Excellence in Research award. The new HREiR Action Plan (2022-25) is driven by the ambition to create an inclusive and resilient research and innovation culture.

Additionally, during the period under review an institutional subscription to the UKRIO was initiated.

2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

This should include a reflection on the previous year's activity including a review of progress and impact of initiatives if known relating to activities referenced in the previous year's statement. Note any issues that have hindered progress, e.g. resourcing or other issues.

Reflections on Progress

The Research Integrity Statement submitted to UKRIO for 2022-23 was the first annual statement submitted by the institution. Positive progress has been made

in 2023-24, including:

The development and approval in June 2024 of the institution's *Research Code of Practice*. The Code builds upon, and is in accord with, the UKRIO *Code of Practice for Research* (2023). The Code covers the principles of good practice in research, including integrity; transparency; collaboration; legal and compliance considerations, and trusted research. It brings together the relevant internal and external policies and outlines the institution's responsibilities, its procedures for handling allegations of research misconduct, and its mechanisms for monitoring and reporting.

The establishment of a Research Concordat Steering Group. The steering group held its first meetings, with membership representing various career stages, Faculties and including HR representatives.

Actions outlined in the HREiR Action Plan were progressed. In particular, survey findings from the CEDARS report were shared with key stakeholders and discussed by the Research Concordat Steering Group, as part of the drive to enhance research culture.

To foster transparency and enhance communication, actions were taken to ensure that research staff are represented and have opportunities to engage directly in policy development.

Plans for future developments

Ethics in research and evaluation

The provision of support workshops for staff and doctoral students will continue. New plans for this year are the development of bespoke sessions to support Unit of Assessment Leads for REF 2029 in relation to integrity and ethics in research, and to target areas such as authorship ethics.

Research integrity training and development

As mentioned in section 2B, the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan (2022- 25) is driven by the ambition to create an inclusive and resilient research and innovation culture. The research integrity section of the plan includes the following plans for development:

Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct, through:

- a) provision of a University level event on research integrity and professional conduct for managers and dissemination of key aspects to postgraduate students and all staff engaged in research;
- b) integration of research integrity and professional conduct standards into research-related strategies (for example, REF Unit of Assessment strategies); and
- c) Research and Innovation monitoring of exceptions and ensuring

any interventions are effective.

Working with members of the Ethics Committee, ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity, through:

- a) training on research integrity and appropriate professional conduct for managers;
- b) managers of researchers working with them to ensure they are attending relevant training and maintaining the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.

Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.

Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.

Training and development sessions on research integrity will be developed working with the UKRIO.

In addition, the launch of a Research and Innovation Academy, mapped to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, will incorporate training in researching with integrity.

2D. Case study on good practice (optional)

Please describe an anonymised brief, exemplar case study that can be shared as good practice with other organisations. A wide range of case studies are valuable, including small, local implementations. Case studies may also include the impact of implementations or lessons learned.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

3A. Statement on processes that the organisation has in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct

Please provide:

- a brief summary of relevant organisation policies/ processes (e.g. research misconduct procedure, whistle-blowing policy, bullying/harassment policy; appointment of a third party to act as confidential liaison for persons wishing to raise concerns) and brief information on the periodic review of research misconduct processes (e.g. date of last review; any major changes during the period under review; date when processes will next be reviewed).
- information on how the organisation creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable to report instances of misconduct (e.g. code of practice for research, whistle-blowing, research misconduct procedure, informal liaison process, website signposting for reporting systems, training, mentoring, reflection and evaluation of policies, practices and procedures).
- anonymised key lessons learned from any investigations into allegations of misconduct which either identified opportunities for improvements in the organisation's investigation procedure and/or related policies / processes/ culture or which showed that they were working well.

For the period under review, the following policies were in place to inform the action to take:

Student Academic Integrity Procedures
University Research Ethics Policy
Student Complaints Policy
Public Complaints Policy

Student Academic Integrity Procedures

The University, its students and staff, work as a community with collective responsibility for maintaining and promoting a culture of practice of honesty and ethical behaviour in scholarship. We acknowledge the importance of fair and equal assessment processes where all scholarship is assessed on its own merit, and our academic integrity processes exist to uphold that principle for the benefit of all students, to ensure that allegations of unfair practice, cheating, plagiarism and other academic misconduct are investigated and, where proven, sanctioned appropriately.

The *Student Academic Integrity Procedures* describe the basic principles of academic integrity that the University follows, provide examples of breaches of academic integrity and Poor Academic Practice and detail the process that the University follows when potential academic misconduct has been identified within the work of a student.

The University's Academic Integrity procedures are overseen by the Conduct and Complaints team within Registry and Academic Quality. An annual report summarising the cases of misconduct is drafted each year by the Student Conduct and Postgraduate Records Officer and received by Senate.

University Research Ethics Policy

The University takes all allegations of misconduct relating to research ethics seriously, by both staff and students. The University handles such allegations using existing appropriate policies and disciplinary procedures.

Concerns about the conduct of research carried out under the auspices of the University should be made in the first instance in writing to the Director of Research and Innovation, Professor Emile Bojesen, as the named point of contact. This information is given in the policy and on the externally facing website. The named point of contact to act as confidential liaison for whistleblowers or any person wishing to raise concerns about the ethics of research practice is Dr Samantha Scallan (Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee).

The Director of Research and Innovation will then liaise with the Chair of Ethics Committee and the relevant Dean of Faculty, as appropriate, in recommending further action which may invoke the University Complaints Policy and procedures.

Where significant concerns have been raised about the ethical conduct of a study, the Ethics Committee can request a full and detailed account of the research for further ethical review. Where the Committee considers that a study is being conducted in a way which is not in accord with the conditions of its original approval, consideration will be given to approval withdrawal and requirements that the research be suspended or discontinued. It is the duty of the Chair of Ethics Committee to inform the Director of Research and Innovation in writing and the appropriate funding body (if an externally funded project) that ethics approval has been withdrawn.

The Committee provides an annual report at the start of the academic year to Senate Research and Innovation Committee summarising the Committee and Faculty scrutiny activity over the last academic year, an overview of training /development provided, changes in Committee membership and whether there have been any reports of concerns linked

to research ethics. No concerns were raised in 2023/24 in relation to ethics.

As of December 2023, the Complaints Policy was reviewed and updated to become the ***Student Complaints Policy*** and the ***Public Complaints Policy***.

The University defines a complaint as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction about the University’s action or lack of action, or about the standards of service by or on behalf of the University’.

Current (or recent) students are directed to the Student Complaints Policy, which details a three-stage complaint process, including an early resolution stage, a formal complaint and a review stage. Once students have been through all internal stages, if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome or any resolutions being offered, they can take the matter externally to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Non-students, including applicants, are directed to the Public Complaints Policy, which also follows the three-stage process, but public complainants are not eligible for OIA review.

Both policies cover complaints relating to programmes of study, services or facilities provided by the University and actions/lack of actions by the University or any member of the University community. An appeal against a decision concerning academic progress, assessment or award is not a complaint, and students wishing to raise concerns about these areas would be directed to the academic appeals procedures, detailed in the Appeals Regulations. Concerns about the quality of supervision or teaching which the complainant considers contributed to a failure to achieve a required academic standard would be aspects considered under the Student Complaints Policy.

Complaints are overseen by the Conduct and Complaints team within Registry and Academic Quality. An annual report summarizing the formal complaints received from both students and members of the public is drafted each year by the Head of Complaints and Casework and received by Senate and the Board of Governors.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken

Please complete the table on the number of **formal investigations completed during the period under review** (including investigations which completed during this period but started in a previous academic year). Information from ongoing investigations should not be submitted.

An organisation's procedure may include an initial, preliminary, or screening stage to determine whether a formal investigation needs to be completed. These allegations should be included in the first column but only those that proceeded past this stage, to formal investigations, should be included in the second column.

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to the organisation	Number of formal investigations	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication				
Falsification				
Plagiarism				
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations				
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)				
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct				
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)				
<i>Other*</i>				
Total:				

***If you listed any allegations under the 'Other' category, please give a brief, high-level summary of their type here. Do not give any identifying or confidential information when responding.**