

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
1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	25/04/2024
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. 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 and Deputy 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 which were introduced in 2022/23. The Chair and Deputy are also available to speak to courses /departments if required, and there is a standing presentation slot given by the Chair for doctoral students in their induction. There is dedicated email address for submitting projects for scrutiny as well as general queries. This is overseen by the Chair and Deputy.

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 project raises the 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 newly formed special interest group into emotionally demanding research and 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.

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 2022/23 in relation to ethics.

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.

Ethics in research and evaluation

- Introduction of monthly half hour Q&A drop-in sessions.
- Including information on ethics in relation to postgraduate taught masters in the Ethics committee annual report.

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.

This is the first year of completing the template/statement.

Plans for future developmentsResearch integrity training and development

As mentioned in section 2B, the new 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.

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:

Academic Misconduct Policy

University Research Ethics Policy

Complaints Policy (covering student, staff and public complaints)

Academic Misconduct Policy

This policy applies to the summative work submitted by all students on undergraduate and taught postgraduate modules and programmes and postgraduate research programmes, including those delivered by a Collaborative Partner. The procedures set out in the policy were established by Senate Academic Development Committee for dealing with all allegations of academic misconduct at all levels, whether current or retrospective. It is expected that most instances of suspected cheating, academic misconduct or other forms of unfair advantage will be identified by staff actively involved in the marking process, however students and External Examiners may also be the source of concerns. In such cases where the concern is raised by someone other than the marker, the individual should report the matter to the Programme Leader in the first instance. Where allegations of academic misconduct are notified to staff or students by an individual outside the University, the individual and/or evidence should be referred to the Academic Registrar. Wherever possible, the identity of the individual reporting the allegation should be kept confidential.

There are five possible processes which could be implemented depending on the type and/or timing of the allegation.

- Process A: Allegations of poor academic practice
- Process B: Allegations of Plagiarism, Falsification, Collusion, Contract Cheating as well as second or subsequent allegations of poor academic practice
- Process C: Allegations of Cheating in an Exam or Practical Assessment
- Process D: Allegations of Attempting to Obtain Unauthorised Access to Exam Question Papers, Bribery Attempts, Unethical Conduct and False Declarations
- Process E: Allegations of Personation

The detail of these processes, including the timescale involved and procedures for investigation can be found in the **Academic Misconduct Policy** which is included in Appendix A of this document. In summary, the Academic Misconduct Officer communicates the allegation to the student along with evidence from the marker, the Academic Misconduct Policy and a request to the student for a response to confirm or deny the allegation. These communications are guided by the use of templates to ensure all the relevant information is included. Fifteen working days after the date of communication with the student, the Academic Misconduct Officer reviews the evidence again, including any response and information from the student, and prepares a report to determine one of three outcomes: whether there is no case to answer, it is an instance of poor academic practice or academic misconduct has been evidenced. Should the allegation be upheld following an investigation, the **Academic Misconduct Policy** sets out a list of penalties (section 10, table 1) and recommended penalties to be applied for breaches of academic conduct (section 10, table 2). Students may only appeal the decision following an investigation on the grounds that the procedures detailed in the **Academic Misconduct Policy** were not followed thereby rendering the decision unsound. This process is outlined in section 11. A student who is dissatisfied with the University's internal process or its conduct in a matter has the right to submit an application to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The Academic Registrar is responsible, on behalf of Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC), for the assurance of quality and standards in the operation of this policy, in particular the consistency of decisions. An annual report is submitted to SADC detailing the number and type of allegations and their outcomes, plus any issues relating to the principles, process or procedure.

As of September 2023, the policy was reviewed and updated to become: **Student Academic Integrity Procedures**.

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 whistle-blowers 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. The detail of this process has been included in Appendix B of this document.

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 require 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 2022/23 in relation to ethics.

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

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.

The table below sets out the high-level details of investigations and findings in relation to research misconduct allegations covering University staff and Postgraduate Researchers in academic year 2022/2023.

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	0			
Falsification	0			
Plagiarism	0			
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	0			
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0			
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0			
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0			
<i>Other*</i>	0			
Total:	0			
*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.				