

University of Bristol Annual Statement on Research Integrity

Section 1: Key contact information

<p>1A. Name of organisation</p>	<p>University of Bristol</p>
<p>1B. Type of organisation:</p>	<p>Higher Education Institution</p>
<p>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</p>	<p>27.03.2026</p>
<p>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</p>	<p>https://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-governance/</p>
<p>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</p>	<p>Professor Guy Poppy, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation</p>
	<p>Email address: pvc-research@bristol.ac.uk</p>
<p>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</p>	<p>Mr Nathan Street, Research Integrity Officer Mr Liam McKervey, Research Ethics and Integrity Manager</p>
	<p>Email address: Nathan.Street@bristol.ac.uk Liam.McKervey@bristol.ac.uk</p>

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

Policies and systems The University of Bristol is actively engaged in protecting the rights, dignity, health, safety and privacy of research participants, the welfare of animals and the integrity of the environment. The University is a centre for properly conducted, high quality research and is committed to protecting the health, safety, rights, and academic freedom of researchers as well as the reputation of the University.

Research Integrity is a core funded element of the role of the Research Governance Team and is the specific remit of the Research Ethics and Integrity Manager and the Research Integrity Officer.

The University's quality assurance framework for research conduct includes:

- ethics processes which are embedded across the University with strategic oversight from the Ethics of Research Committee which is a key committee of Senate
- risk management processes to ensure that researchers are guided and supported in obtaining the necessary approvals
- regularly reviewed policies, regulations, and guidance provide the framework in which we deliver our commitment to research integrity. These include:

Policies

- [Acceptable Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy \(PDF, 580kB\)](#)
- [Ethics of Research Policy \(PDF, 195kB\)](#)
- [Research Governance and Integrity Policy \(PDF, 300kB\)](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy \(PDF, 95kB\)](#)

Regulations and Codes of Practices

- [Conflict of Interest Regulations](#)
- [Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Regulations on Research Misconduct](#)
- [University Human Tissue Act Code of Practice](#)

Guidance

- [Guidance on Authorship](#)
- [Guidance on Data Protection \(GDPR\)](#)
- [Guidance on Peer Reviews](#)
- [Guidance on Preventing Harm in Research](#)
- [Guidance on Research Misconduct](#)

- [Guidance on Working with Animals](#)

Other

- [Relationships with organisations operating in the defence sector](#)
- [Responsible Research Evaluation](#)
- [Research Integrity Funder Requirements](#)

These are integrated into our governance and administrative processes and training programmes to ensure they are an active and recognisable part of our research culture.

Communications and engagement

The University offers training & development opportunities for staff and students, e.g. staff development courses covering ethics and integrity, delivered on the University internal [MyDevelop](#) training platform. In collaboration with the Bristol Doctoral College we have developed and delivered an [introduction to research ethics and integrity resource for Postgraduate Researchers](#).

Programme-specific postgraduate workshops are run in close collaboration with course leaders and sessions with a focus on research ethics and integrity are delivered for school away days. There is a continuous Research Ethics Committee member training programme, including an annual Bristol Research Ethics Workshop (BREW) delivering best practice training for all REC members. We try to include interactive and participatory elements in our training sessions, to allow attendees to focus on their own research areas, and seek feedback to keep improving our training content.

[Our webpages](#) are a key branch of communications, keeping researchers aware of our latest guidance and best practice in research integrity. During this period research integrity information on our webpages has been more clearly delineated. Key updates or additions to research integrity information are shared through internal communications channels at the university to reach relevant personnel.

Culture, development and leadership

The University of Bristol is globally recognised for the quality of its research, as evidenced by the Research Excellence Framework 2021 which ranked Bristol among the UK's top 5 research universities by grade point average. To maintain and uphold the high standards of our research, we continue to undertake initiatives to ensure that integrity, ethics and excellence are at the core of our research activities and fully embedded in our research culture. The University of Bristol is committed to meeting the commitments of the [Universities UK's Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2025](#).

We are committed to ensuring we sustain a positive research culture. Senior management support includes the Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Research Culture, Professor Daniela Schmidt, who leads on our efforts that focus on sustaining a positive research culture, including improving research conduct, fostering collaboration, and supporting the careers of researchers

and research enabling staff. This agenda is also supported by the Research Culture Committee, which reports directly to University Research Committee.

The University of Bristol's four values are: 'curious and creative', 'listening and learning', 'caring and inclusive' and 'bold and Bristolian'. Where possible we aim to incorporate and be mindful of these values in how we approach research integrity. 'Listening and learning', in particular, resonates with how we aspire to be approachable for members of our University community to contact us on matters relating to research integrity.

Monitoring and reporting

The University of Bristol engages in an annual audit programme, to ensure quality, consistency and the sharing of best practice between university RECs - this incorporates a review of adherence to research integrity practices. We cooperate fully with external audits conducted by funders, partners and national and international oversight bodies. Formal monitoring is conducted for 10% of all Health and Social Care Research and in response to concerns or incidents.

The University Ethics of Research Committee (UERC) is tasked with fostering a research environment in which research ethics and integrity issues are firmly embedded in working practices. UERC monitors the University's compliance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. It is also the body that receives annual reports and presentations from each research ethics committee and the Research Governance Team. UERC report formally to the University Research Committee on its proceedings after each meeting on all matters within its duties and responsibilities and provides an annual report to Senate on how it has discharged its duties during the previous academic year.

Section 2B. Changes and developments during the period under review

We are committed to supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice and support for the development of researchers

We continuously look for opportunities to further improve all areas of research integrity; harnessing current activity and recognising that future developments for students, researchers at all stages of their career, supervisors and research managers should be harmonised by joint working.

A major development during this year was the implementation of a new research ethics committee structure and process, with greater adherence with UKRIO's Core Principles for Research Ethics Reviews. This aims to break down silos between faculties, enable interdisciplinary reviews, better manage bottlenecks in applications submissions and reduce the amount of workload hours for reviewers. UERC is actively monitoring implementation in 2025/26.

We have introduced a new process for monitoring the ethical review of research carried out under the Official Secrets Act and have updated the Ethics of Research Policy accordingly.

The number of training sessions delivered has continued to increase over this past year and we continue to further our reach across the institution and our Doctoral Training partnerships which extend beyond our institution. Following participation in the 2024 pilot of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) online training module, we have procured 1000 places on their new module titled 'An Introduction to Research Integrity 2025' for staff and students.

We have developed an integrated internal approach to support and nurture research integrity with input from multi-professional teams and senior management oversight that can be evidenced against UKRI expectations and the UK Research Integrity Office Self-Assessment Tool.

The Research Integrity team have continued to add to guidance for stakeholders about the varied reporting requirements for different funders at particular stages of the funding and research process - in relation to research misconduct, professional misconduct, preventing harm in research, authorship and conflicts of interest. The Research Integrity team work closely with the University departments responsible for investigating such incidents to ensure prompt reporting, as required.

Externally, active membership of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum enables us to share best practice and benchmark against activity within the HEI sector, as well as engaging with external stakeholders, such as United Kingdom Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), United Kingdom on Research Integrity (UKCORI) and World Conferences on Research Integrity (WCRI). We promote information on our webpages about these stakeholders. Our annual integrity statement follows this standardised format and structure in accordance with The Concordat to Support Research Integrity Signatories Group template. We are working to incorporate the recommendations outlined in the Cape Town statement on fairness, equity and diversity in research.

The University actively participates in discussions at the Russell Group to share best practices related to research involving defence-sector organisations. A new framework for the Assessment of Partnership in the Defence sector was agreed in November 2025 and will be implemented in 2026.

The Ethics Policy and Procedure, the Research Governance and Integrity Policy and Regulations on Research Misconduct were all reviewed, updated and approved this year. We developed a research misconduct reporting proforma and a new confidential mailbox research-misconduct@bristol.ac.uk for triaging queries, integrating research misconduct queries into our case management and online research ethics management system.

A paper has been submitted to the University Research Culture committee regarding UK CORI's research integrity indicators for analysing the University in relation to the 16 indicators and where they are being met, partially met or not met.

Section 2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments

The University of Bristol's plans for future development in research integrity include:

- Further implementing the recommendations in the Cape Town Statement.
- Reviewing and updating existing policies in accordance with policy review timelines
- Continuing to engage with the research integrity indicators where improvement is required to develop a working plan on how the University can meet all 16 indicators.
- Continuing to develop and improve processes for tracking allegations of research misconduct, bullying and harassment and preventing harm relating to research.
- Working with stakeholders to update guidance for safeguarding and the preventing of harm in research to participants, to researchers and to the wider community.
- Engaging with the new Faculty Research Ethics Officers and School Research Ethics Officers to promote and embed Research Integrity throughout the new ethics structure.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

We are committed to using transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.

Clear and effective policies in this area have been in place for several years; policies are routinely reviewed and updated to ensure that they meet all relevant requirements and are reflected in current practice. These include updated Regulations on Research Misconduct, Whistleblowing Policy, Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy, Acceptable Behaviour Policy and Conflict of Interest Regulations.

These policies are available to all staff and are signposted in our primary communication channels with researchers.

Last year we reflected on the low numbers of cases being reported and re-evaluated our reporting and assessment processes. This has led to the adoption of new reporting processes, which may lead to a higher number of cases being reported here in future.

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

NB: This format requires a report of allegations reported within the period and formal investigations *completed* within this period. As not all allegations are found to require a formal investigation, and as investigations can be complex and lengthy – these numbers are not necessarily correlated.

Type of allegation	Number of allegations			
	Number of allegations reported to University	Number of formal investigations completed	Number upheld in part after formal investigation	Number No. upheld in full after formal investigation
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	1	1	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	1	0	0	0
Misrepresentation (e.g. data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	0	0	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	0	0
Total:	2	1	0	0