

Annual Statement on Research Integrity

If you have any questions about this template, please contact:
RIsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk.

Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
1A. Name of organisation	University of Chichester
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)	21/11/2023
1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)	https://www.chi.ac.uk/research/research-governance/
1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Professor Simeon Keates, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
	Email address: s.keates@chi.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	Professor Rob Warwick, Chair of the Research Ethics Committee
	Email address: r.warwick@chi.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

The University has in place robust systems for establishing and delivering high standards of research integrity, and for ensuring that those standards are effectively monitored over time. The principal body responsible for this is the Research Ethics Committee, which meets four times a year.

The [Research Ethics Policy](#), upheld by the Research Ethics Committee, seeks to empower individuals to take responsibility for and negotiate ethical issues arising from their research activities. A key responsibility of the Research Ethics Committee is to oversee applications for ethical review in accordance with the University Ethics Policy.

Communications and Engagement

The Research Office acts as the first point of contact for all researchers who may have queries or need support about any issues relating to research ethics and integrity. All our policies are available on our main website, and further resources are available on a dedicated page on the University's Virtual Learning Platform, Moodle. Communication about any updates, or training available are made regularly via Moodle's Announcement function and/or emails sent to all staff and

students, whichever is more appropriate.

Culture, Development and Leadership

The University is committed to supporting its research culture, and has created an internal Research and Innovation Fund (RIF) to which researchers can apply for funding. The Panel that oversees the allocations particularly welcomes applications for funding projects that that can lead to impacts/benefits in wider society, such as impacts on health and wellbeing, culture, social welfare, commerce, public policy, production, and the environment.

It is expected that researchers at all levels will be offered training about research integrity within their academic department, so that this is tailored to any discipline-specific considerations. The Research Ethics Committee also offers at least one training workshop per year dedicated to a specific theme. The Data Protection Office also offers online training to both staff and students.

The Research Office provides a comprehensive and growing suite of training activities for all research-active staff and postgraduate students, including sessions on research development, research ethics and research supervision. Emphasised throughout these activities is the University's unerring commitment to empowering and serving its community, fostering vigilance around research ethics and integrity, and providing opportunities for individuals to raise and discuss any concerns they may have. For more details, see the latest version of our [Professional Development Programme](#).

Monitoring and Reporting

The Research Ethics Committee regularly conducts random audits with academic departments as part of its assurance process and to ensure compliance with the Research Ethics Policy.

The Research Ethics Committee is overseen by the University's Research and Innovation Committee, and the Academic Board. The Committee submits an annual report on its activities to both its overseers.

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.

Open Access Policy

The University believes that publicly-funded research should be freely accessible and widely available in the public domain. We recognise that we have a moral duty to increase knowledge, make research more efficient and impactful, and that Open Access benefits everyone through greater opportunities for discovery, access and re-use. As such, the University keeps its Open Access Policy under regular review. This policy was reviewed in 2022-23 and can be found on our [website](#). Our library staff, in particular the Research Support Librarian, provide OA training to staff by request.

Training

In January 2023, the Research Ethics Committee ran a training workshop on Equality and Diversity issues in Research Ethics.

New Research Centres

Throughout 2022-23, the University reviewed the structure of its Research Centres and Entities, to ensure that each researcher belonged to an entity. The aim is that these entities will encourage interdisciplinary working, and create support networks for all our research staff. Whilst the new policy for Research Entities was published in 2021-22, implementation started in 2022-23, and this encouraged the development of numerous new centres, which are now on our website.

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.

The training workshop in January 2023 led to a discussion about how to encourage diverse participation in research, including making sure that consent forms and information sheets are accessible to a wider population. As a result, the University's Research Ethics Moodle page now contains exemplars of ways in which these can be adapted.

Plans for 2023-24

This will be the first year in which the new Research Centres will have a full year to plan and organise activities. It is hoped that they will act as a mentoring network for researchers.

The Research Ethics Committee will be conducting its biennial review of its policies and forms.

The University is also planning to review its Data Management Policy to ensure this is in line with current best practice.

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.

From Adversity to University

This case study describes an application for ethical approval for a project designed to evaluate a bespoke bridging module (part of the 'From Adversity to University project') to support Higher Education access for people from underrepresented backgrounds. The project started in 2018 with a small group of students who had previously been affected by homelessness. Special consideration had to be given to the project's design, because these student participants were already known to each other, and many were vulnerable in very specific ways.

Once the application was completed it was submitted to the Research Office as a 'Category B' project. Category B is reserved for higher-risk applications, and is subject to the scrutiny of a Research Ethics Subcommittee comprising a chair and three experienced researchers. Once the application was scrutinised, written feedback (with areas to address) was returned to the applicants in a timely fashion, in order to prevent any unnecessary delays to the research.

In the initial application it was proposed that group discussion and individual interviews would both be used to illicit the views of the participants. The subcommittee questioned whether both interview methods were necessary,

highlighting the additional ethical complexities and possibility for disclosures involved in combining them. Another issue that was highlighted related to maximising the anonymity of participants. Rather than submitting a new form, it was requested that the application for ethical approval be amended (using track changes), in order to enable the applicants to submit their revised proposal in a timely fashion.

The applicants found the feedback from the subcommittee both timely and constructive, addressing salient ethical considerations and enabling them to improve the overall quality of their research. For example, they ultimately decided to omit the group discussion from the research, as the applicants agreed with the subcommittee that a group discussion was ultimately unnecessary (if potentially interesting), and participants would have sufficient opportunity to talk about their personal experiences in their individual interviews. Omitting group discussion also allowed them to protect participants' anonymity. Overall, the applicants found the ethical approval process timely, appropriate, and a useful opportunity to learn – both about research ethics and research methods more generally.

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.

The University is dedicated to ensuring that all research conducted under its auspices is underpinned by the highest standards of rigour and integrity. The University's principles about research integrity are outlined in its Researcher Code of Conduct.

The Research Ethics Committee has the authority to investigate breaches of ethical practice in research, and may, where necessary, recommend that further investigation is undertaken in line with the University's Disciplinary Policy for Staff or the Procedures for Disciplinary Action outlined in our Academic Regulations, as applicable. The Research Ethics Policy is reviewed biennially. The Disciplinary Policy is reviewed every three years, and the Academic Regulations are reviewed each year.

The University also has a Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy and a Dignity at Work and Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy. Both of these are publicly

available on our website.

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	0			
Falsification	0			
Plagiarism	18	11	0	11
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:	18	11	0	11
*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.				
<p>The plagiarism statistics are for all student levels, including Undergraduates, and so includes allegations of misconduct for all assessment types. Academic misconduct at Undergraduate Level 4 is normally investigated only at the level of the Academic Department, and is not progressed to a formal investigation with our department for Academic Quality and Standards Services. This accounts for the seven allegations that were reported but did not progress to formal investigation.</p> <p>No allegations of research misconduct were reported at staff level.</p>				