Annual statement from the **Medical Research Council** on Research Integrity and Scientific Misconduct for the period 1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018

i) Summary of actions and activities that have been undertaken to support and strengthen understanding and application of research integrity issues

The MRC’s e-learning on Good Research Conduct, which is available to all via the MRC Regulatory Support Centre website, continued to be well used during this year, with around 350-400 new users registering each quarter. MRC staff have contributed to meetings on research integrity, such as the first UK Research Integrity Forum, and the MRC has continued to use the web site and the blog ‘MRC Insight’, to draw attention to resources available to support robust, reproducible research and research integrity. We have updated our guidance to applicants and continued to embed changes to the peer review process for funding applications to ensure greater attention is given to experimental design and statistical aspects of the proposed research. Although research misconduct is not thought to be a major contributor to the recognised problems with reproducibility, many actions to raise awareness of the problem and promote good practice also help to promote research integrity.

ii) Assurances that the processes employers have in place for dealing with allegations of misconduct are transparent, robust and fair, and that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the organisation.

The MRC’s ‘Scientific misconduct policy and procedure’ was updated in November 2014. Two allegations have been handled satisfactorily following the updated procedure.

iii) High-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct/Statistics

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| Number of full investigations that were underway during the year | 0 |
| Of these the number that started during the year | 0 |
| Number of investigations completed during the year: i) upheld ii)not upheld | 0 |
| 0 |
| Number of allegations that did not proceed to a full investigation | 0 |

As an indicator of scale, the average number of MRC full-time equivalent employees during 2017/18 was 1425[[1]](#footnote-1). [However, this includes many staff unlikely ever to be in a position to commit research misconduct].

1. This does not include locally employed staff in the MRC Units in The Gambia and Uganda [↑](#footnote-ref-1)