

# UKRI 2023–2024 annual statement on research integrity

## Section 1: Key contact information

1A. Name of organisation: UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

1B. Type of organisation (higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state): Government research funding and research performing organisation.

1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY): 30/06/2025

1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable): [UKRI research integrity page](#)

1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity: [The named disciplinary contacts are available on the research integrity page](#)

1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity: [The named disciplinary contacts are available here](#)

## 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 to maintain high standards of research integrity and promote positive research culture Preliminary Investigations

##### 1. Policies and systems

###### External

- 1.1. UKRI policy on the governance of good research practice (GRP)<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2. The policy and associated guidance documents aim to set the minimum expectations for managing research practice and research misconduct allegations for UKRI funded activities.
- 1.3. UKRI people and teams plan<sup>2</sup>
- 1.4. The UKRI people and teams action plan was launched in March 2023 and sets out how UKRI supports the development of people and teams in research and innovation and aims to reduce precarity in research careers.

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<sup>1</sup> [UKRI policy on the governance of good research practice \(GRP\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [UKRI people and teams action plan](#)



- 1.5. [UKRI open access and research data sharing policies](#)
- 1.6. Championing open research practices is a priority for UKRI. UKRI's open access policy (updated in 2022) and research data sharing policies help support transparency, open communication and rigour. These policies support commitments in both the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and the Concordat on Open Research Data. UKRI also engages internationally to support open research practices.
- 1.7. [UKRI Preventing harm \(safeguarding\) in research and innovation policy](#)<sup>3</sup>
- 1.8. This policy applies to all UKRI funded activities irrespective of whether they take place in the UK, or overseas and to all individuals and organisations receiving UKRI funding either directly, or indirectly through a partner organisation.

## Internal

- 1.9. [Investigating allegations of misconduct in research policy](#)<sup>4</sup>
- 1.10. The policy contains guidance for managers, employees, and the relevant HR teams in the handling of allegations of misconduct in research.

## 2. Communications and engagement

### External

- 2.1. [Good research resource hub](#)<sup>5</sup>
- 2.2. UKRI aims to foster a research and innovation system where diverse people and ideas can thrive. The 'good research resource hub' helps achieve UKRI's aims by bringing together policies, standards, and guidance to support researchers, innovators, and organisations. The hub is reviewed annually to ensure the materials are up to date.

## 3. Culture, development, and leadership

### Internal

- 3.1. [Good Research Conduct Network \(GRECON\)](#)
- 3.2. The good research conduct network contains representatives and research integrity leads from across UKRI, including the research councils, Innovate UK, and Research England. It facilitates collaboration and coordination with relevant cross- UKRI teams. The group meets quarterly to discuss trends, processes, and activities, inform relevant UKRI work, and provide support for colleagues. Their work in the past has included developing consensus and consistency on internal processes and responses.

## 4. Monitoring and reporting

- 4.1. [Information relating to Research Integrity collected by the UKRI Funding Assurance Programme](#)<sup>6</sup>
- 4.2. During the Financial Year 2023-24, 33 funding assurance reviews of Research Organisations were completed. Their compliance with UKRI terms and conditions, encompassing research integrity and ethics, was examined. The 2023-24 Funding Assurance workplan included a mixture of Higher Education Institutions, Independent Research Organisations and Research Institutes across the UK.

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<sup>3</sup> [Preventing harm \(safeguarding\) in research and innovation policy](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Investigating allegations of misconduct in research policy](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Good research resource hub](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Funding assurance programme webpage](#)



Assurance activity for Research Organisations is informed by the value of Research Council funding they receive. Those that feature in the top 40-funded Research Organisations are subject to an assurance assignment every three years. Research Organisations with lower volumes of funding are approached on a risk basis.

- 4.3. As part of the Funding Assurance review, Research Organisations must complete a Funding Assurance self-assessment questionnaire<sup>7</sup>. In situations where UKRI has reason to be concerned that expectations are not met, the funding assurance team may make requests for remedial action to address identified issues, and these are followed up on, until acceptably resolved. Of the 33 Research Organisations reviewed this year, four failed to produce and publish an Annual Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity<sup>8</sup>. Issues relating to the timely review of policies concerning research integrity (including investigating allegations of research misconduct) were identified.
- 4.4. Records of research misconduct allegations, as reported to UKRI (including research misconduct allegations reported in organisations that are a legal part of UKRI)
- 4.5. Under commitment 5 of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, employers of researchers must provide a high-level statement on any formal investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken and include data on the number of investigations. UKRI chooses to include additional data from research organisations it funds, recognising that the more data that is publicly available the greater the insight into the health of the sector.
- 4.6. Summary information for allegations reported to UKRI is given in section 3 for the Financial Year 2023-2024. UKRI does not investigate allegations of research misconduct in the research performing organisations that UKRI funds unless those organisations are also part of UKRI in legal terms<sup>9</sup>.

## **2B. Changes and developments during the period under review**

This section provides an update on changes made during the period, including examples of new initiatives, training, developments, and examples of changes that are underway. The section is divided into externally facing activities undertaken by UKRI to support the research community, and internal activities to support UKRI's work as a research organisation.

### **5. Externally facing activities undertaken on behalf of the sector, or to support the research community**

- 5.1. UK Committee on Research Integrity
- 5.2. As part of its commitment to supporting high integrity across the research system, the UK Committee on Research Integrity represents one of our most significant investments into research integrity. UKRI funds and hosts the committee for a time limited period to promote and drive research integrity in the UK. Information about the committee's workplan and activities are available on their website <sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> [Funding assurance guidance programme guidance](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Concordat To Support Research Integrity](#)

<sup>9</sup> This refers to UKRI owned Centres, Institutes and Units where UKRI employs researchers, for example the MRC London Institute of Medical Sciences, NERC's British Antarctic Survey and STFC labs (non-exhaustive list).

<sup>10</sup> [UK Committee on Research Integrity webpage](#)



- 5.3.** [Science, Innovation and Technology Committee \(SITC\) 2023 report on Reproducibility and Research Integrity](#)
- 5.4.** UKRI contributed to the UK government's response to the Reproducibility and Research Integrity SITC report in July 2023 which highlights a range of areas where UKRI supports the sector and sets expectations for research integrity and reproducibility.
- 5.5.** [UKRI Open Access policy for monographs, book chapters and edited collections](#)
- 5.6.** UKRI extended its open access policy to include long-form publications in January 2024. This policy, a dedicated open access fund for long-form publications, and actions to support researchers, research organisations and publishers with implementation, help promote transparency and open communication for a wider range of published UKRI-funded research.
- 5.7.** [Research integrity and ethics funding assurance pilot](#)
- 5.8.** Over financial years 2021-2023 UKRI piloted adding enhanced research integrity and ethics questions to the UKRI funding assurance self-assessment questionnaire. The results were then analysed and shared with key internal stakeholders, including the research integrity strategy team, to inform targeted future engagement and support on research integrity activity.
- 5.9.** [Ethics support and position statement](#)
- 5.10.** The good research resource hub has been updated with a dedicated page for ethical research and innovation<sup>11</sup> which links the community to key principles, guidance documents and UKRI policies. This coincided with the release of the UKRI position statement on funding ethical research<sup>12</sup>.
- 5.11.** [Review of peer review](#)  
Following publication of the Review of Peer Review in July 2023<sup>13</sup>, UKRI is continuing to innovate, learn and develop in the area of peer review<sup>14</sup>. Our peer review policy (principles of assessment and decision making<sup>15</sup>) has adopted the recommended principles from the Global Research Council (GRC) Principles of Peer Review<sup>16</sup>, of which UKRI is a signatory.
- 5.12.** [Updates to the UKRI policy on the governance of good research practice](#)
- 5.13.** As part of our regular review of the governance of good research practice policy and guidance, the policy was reviewed in consultation with relevant internal teams and informed by external stakeholders' feedback. Relevant updates included:
- improved clarity on UKRI funding and direct/indirect costs on grants
  - added signposting to the UKRI position statement on funding ethical research
- 5.14.** [Resume for Research and Innovation](#)
- 5.15.** Résumé for Research and Innovation<sup>17</sup>(R4RI), UKRI's narrative CV, is being used in all funding opportunities that require track record information. The format allows people working across the research and innovation sector to evidence a wider range of activities and contributions to research, teams, and wider society.
- 5.16.** We are working with the research community to share best practice, continuously improve, and shift what is visible and valued in the R&I system. Through tools like the Résumé Resources

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<sup>11</sup> [Ethical research and innovation page on the good research resource hub](#)

<sup>12</sup> [UKRI position statement on funding ethical research](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Review of peer review published](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Polishing the gold: why we're innovating in peer review](#)

<sup>15</sup> [UKRI principles of assessment and decision making](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Principles of peer review](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Résumé for Research and Innovation \(R4RI\) Guidance](#)



Library<sup>18</sup> and the Peer Exchange Platform<sup>19</sup> (PEP CV), UKRI is evaluating and supporting the widespread use of narrative CVs to help people articulate their contributions and experiences, making careers in R&I more diverse and appealing, while rewarding and recognising high research integrity.

## **6. Internally facing activities to support UKRI staff, strategy, and processes**

- 6.1.** [UKRI people standards April 2023](#)
- 6.2.** The UKRI people Standards define 'how' UKRI staff are expected to approach our work, by highlighting the core behaviours and attitudes required by colleagues to support UKRI in delivering our strategy, making UKRI the most efficient, effective, and agile organisation we can be. The standards are related to the UKRI core values of Integrity, Collaboration, Innovation and Excellence.
- 6.3.** [STFC National Labs Research Ethics Procedure Development](#)
- 6.4.** The revision of the STFC Ethics procedure provides a clearer route for researchers and departments to implement the UKRI Ethics Policy. It provides guidance on how to ensure any ethical considerations have been considered and mitigate any risks to that may arise from these.
- 6.5.** [STFC research integrity subgroup](#)
- 6.6.** To ensure that STFC's national laboratories and facilities uphold the expectations set out in the concordat, in the 2022- 2023 reporting year a subgroup was organised across the STFC national laboratories and facilities. Over the last reporting year, the group worked with HR to ensure that appropriate "tags" for research misconduct are within existing systems and to allow for misconduct investigations to consider research misconduct. A comms plan is in place to provide messages on best practice in research and research culture. This will be implemented once the revised research ethics procedure has been agreed.
- 6.7.** [NERC Culture Forum](#)
- 6.8.** The NERC Culture Forum continues to facilitate collaboration and sharing between NERC Centres and wider National Capability partners, online and via a team SharePoint site and will meet by exception going forward. The Forum is an informal group for knowledge sharing and celebrating best practice relating to research culture and integrity across NERC's Centres and National Capability Partners.
- 6.9.** [NERC Strategic Relationship and Assurance Meetings](#)
- 6.10.** Centres now must provide a Research Integrity update as part of the yearly Strategic Relationship and Assurance Meetings (SRAM) to encourage greater transparency and enable discussion of research integrity practice during the meetings.
- 6.11.** [MRC establishments](#)
- 6.12.** In 2023/24, MRC establishments, including the MRC Laboratory for Medical Sciences (MRC LMS) and the MRC Laboratory for Molecular Biology (MRC LMB) continued to deliver training activities on research integrity for their personnel and students. The LMS has revised their induction course for both core and transdisciplinary PhD (tPhD) students to include several new elements on good experimental conduct and research integrity. LMS students have also benefited from taking part in a course delivered by EMBO on "Scientific Integrity: how to publish reproducible results". The LMB hosts a range of internal seminars and workshops on various research techniques and technology platforms, which contribute to supporting research integrity and best research practice.
- 6.13.** To benefit the wider research community, The Mary Lyon Centre at MRC Harwell continues to progress the validation of genetics of animals used in research to ensure rigour and reproducibility

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<sup>18</sup> [Résumé Resources Library](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Peer Exchange platform](#)



of the data obtained using these animals. The centre is providing training courses to aid in improving reproducibility in experiments involving animals.

## **2C. Reflections on progress and plans for future developments**

The following activities are evidence based and developed with careful consideration to ensure they do not create unnecessary bureaucracy through our processes.

### **7. Activities on behalf of the sector, or to support the research community**

#### **7.1.** [Good Practice Exchange](#)

**7.2.** UKRI continues to make progress on the Good Practice Exchange (GPEx). The next phase is to contract a supplier to develop and test a model for delivering the GPEx, building on the findings of the Research Culture Initiatives report.

#### **7.3.** [UKRI Research Data Policy Framework](#)

**7.4.** UKRI is developing a pan-UKRI research data policy framework. This will update, clarify, and better harmonise UKRI's policies to support good research data sharing and management practice for disciplinary and multidisciplinary research.

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

### Definitions of intentional research misconduct

- 7.5. UKRI, as a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, uses the descriptions of intentional research misconduct as defined in the Concordat, see commitment 4 for full definitions (fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; failure to meet legal, ethical, and professional obligations; misrepresentation; improper dealing with allegations of misconduct)<sup>20</sup>.

### Investigations of research misconduct that were undertaken where UKRI is recognised as the employer during financial year 2023-2024.

**Table 3.1: Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken where UKRI is recognised as the employer during the financial year 2023-24**

MRC, NERC and STFC are the only councils where UKRI has employees that are covered by the scope of this reporting. There were no reports from MRC or STFC from this period.

<b>NERC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of formal investigati ons</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number ongoing</b>
Fabrication	2	0	0	1	1
Failure to meet legal, ethical, and professional obligations	1	0	1	0	0
<b>Combined total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

- 7.6. There were no investigations of research misconduct undertaken where UKRI is recognised as the employer, which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded during financial year 2023-24.

### Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been reported to UKRI by institutions in receipt of UKRI funding

<sup>20</sup>[Commitment 4 of the concordat lists descriptions of the forms of intentional misconduct: The Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#)





**in line with the UKRI FEC grants standard terms and conditions of grant<sup>21</sup>**

- 7.7.** Records of misconduct allegations information held by UKRI from Financial Years 2015-16 to 2021-2222 are available on the UKRI website.
- 7.8.** UKRI encourages research performing organisations to conduct investigations into research misconduct allegations in a timely manner. This is to limit the impact these investigations have on the individuals involved and the research being conducted. However, UKRI recognises that the complexity of these cases can sometimes result in longer than recommended timelines.
- 7.9.** In accordance with UK data protection legislation, UKRI does not normally disclose the identity of any individuals involved in any research misconduct allegations reported to UKRI. We cannot provide information on the amount of funding related to reports in these tables, as to do so may result in individual award holders being identified.

**Table 3.2: Records of formal research misconduct investigations reported to UKRI via BBSRC in its role as a funder in financial year 2023-24**

<b>BBBSRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of formal investigations reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Plagiarism	1	0	0	0	1
Total number of investigations/allegations	1	0	0	0	1

**Table 3.3: Records of formal research misconduct investigations reported to UKRI via EPSRC in its role as a funder in financial year 2023-24.**

<b>EPSRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of formal investigations reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Plagiarism	1	0	0	0	1
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	1	0	0	1	0
Total number of investigations/allegations	2	0	0	1	1

<sup>21</sup> [UKRI terms and conditions](#)

<sup>22</sup> Research England records of misconduct allegation information are included in reports from Financial Year [on the UKRI website](#)



**Table 3.4: Records of formal research misconduct investigations reported to UKRI via MRC in its role as a funder in financial year 2023-24.**

<b>MRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of formal investigations reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Falsification	1	0	1	0	0
Other*	2	0	0	1	1
Total number of investigations/allegations	3	0	1	1	1

**7.10.** MRC Other\*: Approval and licencing of tools and another focussed on acquiring appropriate permissions.

**Table 3.5: Records of formal research misconduct investigations reported to UKRI via all councils combined in its role as a funder in financial year 2023-24.**

AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC and RE funded work is in scope. AHRC, ESRC, NERC, STFC and RE were not informed of any formal investigations during this period.

<b>Total allegations</b>	<b>Number of formal investigations reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Combined total (BBSRC, EPSRC and MRC)	6	0	1	2	3

**Table 3.6: Records of formal investigations into Research Misconduct cases which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded or remained ongoing during financial year 2023-24 reported to UKRI via AHRC.**

<b>AHRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of ongoing formal investigations previously reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	1	1	0	0	0
Total number of investigations/allegations	1	1	0	0	0

**Table 3.7: Records of formal investigations into Research Misconduct cases which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded or remained ongoing during financial year 2023-24 reported to UKRI via BBSRC.**

<b>BBSRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of ongoing formal investigations previously reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Plagiarism	1	0	0	0	1
Other*	1	0	0	0	1
Total number of investigations/allegations	2	0	0	0	2

**7.11.** BBSRC Other\*: Breach of human tissue policy.

**Table 3.8: Records of formal investigations into Research Misconduct cases which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded or remained ongoing during financial year 2023-24 reported to UKRI via EPSRC.**

<b>EPSRC: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of ongoing formal investigations previously reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Plagiarism	3	0	1	0	2
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	1	1	0	0	0
Total number of investigations/allegations	4	1	1	0	2

**Table 3.9: Records of formal investigations into Research Misconduct cases which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded or remained ongoing during financial year 2023-24 reported to UKRI via RE.**

<b>RE: Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of ongoing formal investigations previously reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Plagiarism	1	0	0	0	1
Total number of investigations/allegations	1	0	0	0	1



**Table 3.10: Records of formal investigations into Research Misconduct cases which were ongoing during previous statements but concluded or remained ongoing during financial year 2023-2 to UKRI via all councils combined.**

AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC and RE funded work is in scope. ESRC, MRC, NERC and STFC were not informed of any allegations that were ongoing during this period.

<b>Total allegations</b>	<b>Number of ongoing formal investigations previously reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number not upheld</b>	<b>Number still ongoing</b>
Combined total (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC and RE)	8	2	1	0	5



## **Funding assurance questionnaire returns**

8. UKRI received questionnaires from the following 33 organisations for which funding assurance assignments were completed for the 2023-24 financial year:

- Alan Turing Institute
- Bradford Teaching Hospital NHS Found Trust
- City University, London
- Culham Centre for Fusion Energy
- Diamond Light Source
- Heriot-Watt University
- Imperial College London
- Innovate Cell & Gene Therapy Catapult
- Innovate Compound Semiconductor Applications Catapult
- Institute for Fiscal Studies
- Lancaster University
- Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
- London School of Economics and Political Science
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- National Health Service Blood & Transplant
- Queen's University Belfast
- Royal College of Art
- The Rosalind Franklin Institute
- University of Bath
- University of Bradford
- University of Dundee
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Huddersfield
- University of Kent
- University of Leeds
- University of Northumbria at Newcastle
- University of Reading
- University of Southampton
- University of Stirling
- University of Surrey
- University of The West of England, Bristol
- University of Ulster
- University of York