

University of Kent Annual Statement on Research Integrity

This document is based on the template developed by the United Kingdom Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) with the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories Group. The University of Kent has reformatted the template to provide it in a fully accessible format.

1. Key contact information

Question Number	Question	Response
1A	Name of organisation	University of Kent
1B	Type of organisation:	Higher Education Institution
1C	Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)	05/03/2025
1D	Web address of organisation's research integrity page	https://www.kent.ac.uk/research-innovation-services/research-ethics-and-governance
1E	Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity	Name: Tegan Coleman Email address: t.coleman-581@kent.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: Tegan Coleman Email address: t.coleman-581@kent.ac.uk

2. Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture

a. 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.

Our Policies

The University of Kent (“The University”) expects that all research and innovation, in its application and practice and whether undertaken at or on behalf of the University, is conducted according to best ethical practice and complies with all laws and regulations. This applies to our:

- Undergraduate Students
- Postgraduate Students
- Staff (Academic, Professional, and Technical)

The University’s full list of policies pertaining to research integrity are listed below:

1. Code of Ethical Practice for Research
2. Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegation of Misconduct

The University’s Code of Ethical Practice for Research (“Code of Ethical Practice”) outlines its expectations for all staff and students when conducting research.

Both the University’s Code of Ethical Practice for Research and the Code of Practice for the Investigation of Misconduct, discussed below, were due for review in Summer 2024. However, due to the restructures taking place and other high-level process improvement projects, this review was delayed to Summer 2025 to ensure roles and processes would be accurately described in any revised version. This review will be conducted Research and Innovation (Culture and Governance) and the revised version will be submitted to bodies within the University for approval.

Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct

The University's Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct in Research, which supports the 'Code of Ethical Practice', ensures that the University have an objective and impartial system in place to investigate suspected misconduct when conduct falls short of these standards.

The process to manage allegations of misconduct, which broadly involve escalation, review, decision, action, and reporting, are currently being reviewed by the University's Culture and Governance Team (Research and Innovation Support). This is to ensure that the process remains fit for purpose, and that opportunities to continuously improve are recognised and implemented. It is expected that an outcome of a full review and any implemented changes will be reflected in the University's 2026 Annual Statement on Research Integrity.

Governance

Research Ethics and Governance Committee

The University's Research Ethics and Governance Committee (the "Committee") is formed of Academic and Professional Services representatives from across its Schools and Departments. The aim of the Committee is to encourage the dissemination of good ethical practice and quality across all University research, innovation, and enterprise activities. The Committee's remit is to:

1. Maintain oversight of university policies, procedures, criteria and guidelines regarding research ethics and governance
2. Provide a forum to discuss research ethics and governance issues that affect University research activity
3. Advise the Senate on broader research ethics and governance issues
4. Monitor the work of the University Research Ethics Advisory Groups (REAGs)
5. Provide a forum for appeals to ethical decisions taken by the REAGs.

The Committee meets tri-annually, once per term. However, the University are implementing changes to the academic year structure from September 2025. The frequency and number of meetings may increase to reflect the additional term. This will be reviewed in Research Ethics and Governance Committee meeting (February 2025).

The Committee submits meeting reports to:

- University [Senate](#) (attended by the Research Ethics and Governance Committee Chair)
- University Ethics Committee (attended by the Research Ethics and Governance Committee Chair and Secretary)
- Research and Innovation Board

Research Ethics Advisory Groups (REAG)

The University's Research Ethics Advisory Groups (REAGS) have devolved responsibility for the ethical review of research and enterprise projects. Currently, 14 REAGs serve Schools across the University. All REAG reviewers are academic staff, and where a project is identified to be 'high-risk', a minimum of two reviewers are assigned to review applications. All REAGs submit an annual report to the Research Ethics and Governance Committee detailing their applications and challenges.

The University of Kent also convenes an Animal Welfare Research Ethics Review Board (AWERB) to ensure any animal research conducted at or on behalf of the University is in accordance with best ethical practice and complies with all laws and regulations.

Research and Innovation Support (Culture and Governance)

The Research and Innovation Support (RIS) Culture and Governance are a central Professional Service team. The roles within this team are:

1. Research and Innovation Support Manager
2. Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer
3. Research Ethics Officer
4. Research Culture Coordinator
5. Research Ethics Coordinator (appointment pending at time of writing)

They provide administration for 5 of the 14 Research Ethics Advisory Groups, with 4 of these 5 being onboarded late 2024. They also monitor changes in policy and legislation and continually improve upon the guidance and resources they have published, to ensure that effective communication of Kent's legal and moral obligations are accessible to Kent's student and staff communities.

For example, the Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer provides specialist support on research ethics, governance, and integrity. They lead on policy development and offer expert guidance that enables the University to respond to changes in the regulatory environment affecting research and

research ethics. They are the University's Sponsor representative in relation to health and social care research that falls with the United Kingdom Policy Framework for Health and Social Care.

Leadership

- Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent (Member of the Senate)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation (Member of the Senate, Research and Innovation Board, Research Culture and Environment Steering Group)
- Director of Research and Innovation Support (Member of the Senate, Research and Innovation Board, Research Culture and Environment Steering Group)
- Head of Operations Research and Innovation Support (Member of the Research and Innovation Board, Research Culture and Environment Steering Group, Named Information Officer for the University of Kent AWERB)
- Research and Innovation Support Manager (Culture and Governance) (Member of Research Culture and Environment Steering Group, Institutional Athena SWAN Self-assessment team, Race Equality Charter Working Group, Staff Disability Network Co-Chair, Research Culture Enablers Network (University of Warwick), and the Eastern Arc Culture Working Group)
- Research Ethics and Governance Committee Chair (research experienced academic staff member)
- Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer (Member of the Research Culture and Governance Committee)

Communication and Engagement

Information Sharing

Research and Innovation Support (RIS) publish and manage a publicly accessible website that provides a broad range of top-level information about research ethics and governance [at the University](#). It includes information about research integrity and an overview of the ethics approval process, provides a route to report allegations of misconduct, and enables access to Kent's suite of policies and practice, and publication of its Annual Statement on Research Integrity.

University staff and students can, from this site, access the dedicated Ethics and Governance intranet site. The intranet site is a hub of the latest information and guidance for Kent's community and is maintained by the Culture and Governance team. The site is being continually improved to ensure that developments across the sector can be acknowledged so that Kent's research active staff and students can rely on the most up to date information from a single source of truth.

The Ethics and Governance intranet site is hosted on the Research and Innovation Support (RIS) intranet site, which is broadly managed and maintained by the RIS Planning, Systems and Information team. News articles and posts can be published directly from this site and quickly and easily disseminated across the university. For example, the Culture and Governance team utilised the news function to publish a 'Call for Reviewers' for one of Kent's Research Ethics Advisory Groups. This was a successful campaign and led to the team training and onboarding new academic reviewers. The team also employ the use of communication channels such as the All-Staff Communication e-newsletter, to maximise the reach and impact of information and communications.

The Research and Innovation Support (RIS) Culture and Governance team also maintains an informally agreed open inbox policy and encourages queries and engagement from across the University. This approach has been applied to our most recently onboarded or newly created inboxes, for example those of the Research Ethics Advisory Groups (refer to [Research and Innovation Support Culture and Governance](#)).

Communities of Practice

Research and Innovation Support have now implemented three new Communities of Practice:

- Pre-Award
- Post-Award
- Data Management

Each community is led by two Research and Innovation Support Managers who have expertise in each area. They each publish a Terms of Reference to describe their purpose, aims, membership, activities, and governance.

The communities have been established to foster collaboration, knowledge, and best practice sharing among staff engaged in activities related to each topic. They aim to create a collaborative and dynamic space for staff to enhance their skills, share knowledge, and collectively contribute to the success of research and innovation endeavours.

The Ethics, Governance and Assurance Community of Practice, which was initiated at the same time as those listed previously, has been paused owing to significant projects being undertaken and explored across this remit. It is anticipated that an iteration of this community will restart at a date yet to be confirmed. It is agreed that this community of practice will benefit significantly from these developments and strengthen its future aims and purpose.

Eastern Arc

Eastern Arc is a regional research consortium between the universities of Kent, East Anglia, Essex and Sussex built on a shared history of radicalism and interdisciplinarity. Together, the consortium enables strong collaborations in key areas of common strength and provides a platform for addressing the needs and opportunities of our regional and our global community.

There are numerous specialist sub-groups of staff that from across the different organisations that meet to discuss key topics, these include but are not limited to Research Culture, Ethics and Governance, and Open Research.

Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA)

The University maintains memberships to the Association of Research Managers and Administrators to remain engaged in research management topics, including ethics and integrity. The Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer is a member of the Ethics and Governance Special Interest Group and regularly attends the drop-in sessions to discuss ethics and governance across research and research-adjacent projects. The Special Interest Group communicates through a mailing list where members are encouraged to send queries outside of the drop-in sessions, and the University of Kent has both benefited from the collective experience of the members and contributed to discussions in this way.

The Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer attended the ARMA 2025 Conference which included several talks about research integrity and culture. The talks complimented the work of Research and Innovation (Culture and Governance), such as the presentation by Matimba Swana on ‘embedding ethics in research associated activities’, providing insight into the team’s ongoing project

to support ethical review for research-adjacent activities with ethical considerations.

Culture and Environment

The University of Kent's research and innovation activities are delivering significant cultural, social and economic benefits to communities regionally, nationally and internationally. Our research is chiefly collaborative and interdisciplinary across the arts and humanities, sciences and social sciences. Our experts work closely with private, public and third party partners to undertake world-leading and internationally excellent research and innovation [Kent's Research Round-Up provides the latest news from across the University](#). Support for outstanding research & innovation is provided by experts from across Professional Services and by our Technicians. Our experts enable the full breadth of research and innovation to be undertaken across the University, and work in synergy with our academic staff to maximise the benefits of our shared expertise.

In terms of culture, the Research and Innovation Support Manager (Culture and Governance) leads the Culture and Governance team and plays a key role in supporting culture change across the University. They are responsible for monitoring and evaluating Kent's existing research culture and implementing of best practice support into practice and policy across areas such as: staff development; reward and recognition; open research and impact; equality, diversity and inclusion in research and innovation; responsible research and innovation; and nurturing a supportive and collegiate environment.

Technician's Commitment

The University of Kent became a signatory of the Technician Commitment [in 2017](#). It is a university and research institution initiative, led by a steering group of sector bodies, with support from the Science Council and the Technicians Make It Happen campaign. The Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education and research, across all disciplines. Universities and research institutes are invited to become signatories of the Technician Commitment and pledge action against the key challenges affecting their technical staff.

[The Technician Commitment working group](#) is comprised of Information Technology (I.T.), technical and professional services staff representatives from across the University and from a wide range of disciplines. The working group

was established to promote the four principles of the Technician Commitment: visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability. The group works with all IT and technical services staff within the University to deliver the Technician Commitment action plan.

The University is currently developing its Technician Commitment Strategy and Action Plan, and so more information about progress will be shared in our 2026 integrity report.

Training and Development

The Research and Innovation Support (Culture and Governance) team play a key role in designing and delivery training on ethics, governance, and sponsorship. The following training and development sessions have been provided in 2023-2024:

Title of Training Session	Session Purpose and Audience
Introductory Reviewer Training	To introduce the purpose and process of ethical review at the University of Kent to academic members of staff who have volunteered to contribute as a reviewer
Ethics and Governance in Health and Social Care Research	<p>This is a session given as part of taught health and social care courses or those adjacent (e.g. biological sciences) to introduce students to ethical principles in research ethics and the review processes (internal and external) they may encounter if they conduct research or research adjacent projects.</p> <p>Due to the varying courses involved, this training is revised to the timeslot available.</p>
Further additions pending	

Monitoring and Reporting

All Research Ethics Advisory Group s (REAGs) are required to keep detailed records of ethics applications they process. They are also expected to submit

annual reports on these activities to the Research Ethics and Governance Committee (REGC).

External ethics applications and/or ethical favourable opinion, for example, where a collaborative project is being led by staff member at a different university, is recorded by the Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer. To ensure the University remain compliant with reporting requirements of regulators, the Senior Research Ethics and Governance Officer will present their review findings to the Research Ethics and Governance Committee meeting in May 2025.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement is the philosophy of defining purpose, driving value and reducing waste, alongside a set of tools and techniques to enable this philosophy. Kent's purpose is to empower it's staff with the tools, techniques and philosophy of Continuous Improvement, enabling them to effect positive change and identify opportunities for improving staff and student experience in an evolving higher education landscape.

Two Research and Innovation Support Managers have completed Continuous Improvement Practitioner Training;

- Culture and Governance
- Planning, Systems and Information

They are now able to support the department and its teams in understanding and problem solving, utilising the tools they have learnt to support their team in service and process improvement.

a. Changes and developments during the period under review

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.

Changes to the Research Culture and Governance team

As discussed in the previous year's Annual Statement on Research Integrity, a new Research Culture and Governance team was formed during the restructure of Professional Services in Summer 2023. This replaced the former Research Ethics and Governance team, doubling the size of the team by introducing three new roles, and increasing its remit. The team's purpose is to promote a positive research culture at the University, and which has inclusion, integrity, ethics and governance at its core.

In 2024, the team recruited for a replacement Research Ethics and Governance Officer (April 2024), with the title changing to Research Ethics Officer to reflect the primarily ethics related responsibilities. A newly created role of Research Ethics Coordinator was also created in Summer 2024, to support the centralisation of ethics review administration. The University is currently recruiting for this role.

Research and Innovation Culture

The Research and Innovation Support Manager (Culture and Governance) has and continues to speak with members of research and innovation community to seek their views on the existing research and innovation culture at the University of Kent.

This includes ongoing work to review University of Kent's existing monitoring and reporting processes and undertake Equality Impact Analysis on each. They will seek to understand where our reporting gaps exist and improve and/or develop reporting mechanisms that the University can depend on as a Key Performance Indicators, and that are fully inclusive at their core, by using qualitative and quantitative data sources. This will include reviewing our existing commitment as a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) and the principles of the Leiden Manifesto.

By ensuring that our institutional monitoring practices are embedded in robust, fair, equitable, and transparent ways, it will help us to ensure that our internal and external reporting obligations can be provided with honesty, trust, and integrity at its heart.

Training and Development

Part of the change of culture needed is not just ensuring a positive experience for individuals researching and studying at Kent, but about ensuring the

environment in which our staff work to provide these professional and technical services is equitable and positive.

Training and development are key ways to impact the University's research and innovation culture and so designing a suite of training for a wide range of audiences is a key goal. There are currently countless silos of training and development approaches being undertaken across our Divisions, Centres, Institute's, and Departments. Training may be provided by members of staff from within the departments. However, Professional Services (PS) teams often provide training to research staff and students from across the university. Frequently, training is duplicated by PS teams for different departments, causing increased workloads with no additional resource. The Research and Innovation Culture and Governance team are actively building a central repository of training resources that have so far been created at local level. Further to this, the team are leading on providing a central platform to share all training events being hosted or delivered by teams across the University. These will help provide central oversight of training and enable sharing of resources. It will also help us to understand the existing training offers, and explore opportunities to enhance these for everyone undertaking or enabling research and innovation at the University of Kent. At the University, supervisors of students below doctoral level are responsible for their ethical conduct. To ensure staff feel supported when guiding students, the Culture and Governance team have contributed to training provided for supervisors by the Graduate and Researcher College and are currently conducting a review of the online module provided to Post-Graduate Students.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous Improvement at Kent identified 'Phase 1 Opportunities for Improvement (OFI)' to include research ethics. The overarching objectives for this project are to:

- o find a streamlined, standardised and simplified process with a clearly defined user journey
- o processes designed with consideration for risk, and the different user journeys based on the level of risk
- o real time reporting so problems can be identified and put right/root cause solved as they happen
- o clear and agreed oversight and accountability

- o clearly defined systems requirements for any future system design.

A series of working meetings with key ethics review process stakeholders helped to identify process elements which add value (i.e. elements that contributed effectively to the overall goal of the process to deliver an ethical opinion on submitted applications) and those which that wasteful (i.e. elements that hindered or delayed the overall goal of the process). This helped to identify areas for improvement through redesign. Key outcomes included:

- o variation in local processes and resistance to change
- o time consuming and complex nature of the processes
- o complexity of the user journey's (e.g. which process should be used, duration of process)
- o different levels of engagement with the process within divisions
- o risk aversion in some areas creating the potential for more risk in others (e.g. process over-engineering for some low-risk requests take away capacity from higher risk requests)
- o reliance on knowledge held by people rather than in process documentation
- o duplication of effort across the process and potentially in other areas/systems (e.g. Contracts and Assurance, Data Protection)
- o potential for approval to be given incorrectly if the wrong Research Ethics Advisory Group (REAG) is selected for the funding type.

The Continuous Improvement work was paused in September 2024 to help the Research Culture and Governance team focus on onboarding additional Research Ethics Advisory Groups, following a process centralisation effort across the university. The CI process will resume in 2025. However, CI work to date has identified from stakeholders that the desired end state would be an embedded technical infrastructure that can be used across the university, equitably by staff and students, that synergises policy and processes for effective ethics application reviews, continuity of practice, underpinning policy, quality assurance, and real time reporting. The system and all related processes and policy development would ensure that the University of Kent can provide a robust structure to underpin research integrity and governance..

Additionally, the following areas of improvement were identified, outside of CI, but are imperative to support the ethics review process:

- Training
- reporting and auditing
- misconduct procedures.

It is worth noting that:

- projects to support these areas were addressed in the previous Annual Statement
- Overall, the CI project at the University seeks to support the University's development of an internal CI capability to a self-sustainable model by September 2025. As such, it is intended that all related ethics, governance, and sponsorship processes will undergo a CI review.

Research and Innovation Trusted Research

The Contracts and Assurance Team was established in 2023 with a focus on research and innovation contracts and a responsibility for undertaking due diligence and risk assessments for funded research. Within our robust and appropriate due diligence process there is a consideration that we are capturing the Trusted Research requirements. The Trusted Research campaign was introduced in 2019 by the National Protective Security Authority and was created to help researchers, UK universities and industry partners make informed decisions when collaborating with international partners. Collating our due diligence information alongside the Trusted Research guidance has increased our confidence in international collaboration and the ability to make informed decisions around any potential risks for research and research staff due to potential theft, misuse or exploitation of research.

We have an appropriate escalation route for high risk due diligence outcomes through the Research and Innovation Support Director, who can also further escalate when the risks are deemed to be greater.

The Contracts and Assurance Team are also trying to increase awareness across the institution and have included Trusted Research links in email signatures and we also now have a dedicated SharePoint page detailing highlights from the Trusted Research campaign and links to NPSA homepage.

Open Research

A project to promote Open Access (OA) publishing of books and chapters has been successfully completed, having produced [guidance](#), communications, finance, services and [specific processes](#) to support compliance with UKRI requirements. We engaged with researchers in one-on-one meetings regarding their book publishing plans. This raised awareness of the opportunities afforded by OA book publishing. Six applications to access UKRI central funds have been made and approved. We also supported the publication of two further non-UKRI open access books. See <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51617-7> and <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009406727>

We responded to the new REF 2029 Open Access Policy by producing a summary of the changes for our researchers. The complexities were distilled into recommended actions for staff made available via a [blog post](#), SharePoint News and [Open Access and the REF webpage](#). Our [answers to FAQs](#) attempt to make it as easy as possible for researchers to interpret the requirements and work out the best way to proceed.

CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) is a standardized system for describing author contributions to a research article. This supports Open Research by providing a more standardized and transparent approach to authorship and ensures that all contributors receive appropriate credit for their work. We are promoting and supporting CRediT and have incorporated the taxonomy into our institutional Kent Academic Repository. In particular, we are raising awareness of CRediT through our Eastern Arc Technician's Commitment community.

A co-ordinated, collaborative cross-team approach to reviewing University Ethics guidance documents, templates and example consent forms and participant information sheets has resulted in improved joined-up guidance that incorporates the advice of the specialist research data management, assurance and data protection and ethics teams.

We continue to provide an enquiry and support service for queries relating to open research. These average over 200 enquiries a month. Narrative feedback indicates that our service is meeting and exceeding researchers' needs and

expectations for support with the element of research integrity relating to openness and sharing of research outputs.

b. Reflections on progress and plans for future development

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.

Our previous annual report to Senate can be found on our website (<https://www.kent.ac.uk/research-innovation-services/research-ethics-and-governance>).

Research Ethics and Integrity

Many of the initiatives discussed in our previous statement are ongoing either because they are long terms goals that will positively impact our core research culture, or because of project reprioritisation as the year developed.

We are optimistic that the centralisation of ethics administration will support the standardisation of ethical review, a key challenge identified in the previous Annual Statement and through Continuous Improvement.

There is also acknowledgement that a purpose-built ethics management system will improve centralisation opportunities. A business case is under review and the outcomes of which will be reported in the next annual statement. In terms of AI in research and the ethical considerations involved, a briefing on the matter was received by the Research Ethics and Governance Committee. The final recommendation of the briefing was that a working group be formed to establish a policy specific for the University of Kent. The formation of this working group is underway.

Open Access

University-wide adoption of an author rights retention (ARR) approach to support OA publishing of articles has not progressed as swiftly as hoped. University structural change, changes to governance and limited staff resource within the Open Research Team have hindered progress. However, a new Research Publications policy, that incorporates ARR, is progressing through University approval. We aim to have ARR in place by June 2025. This will enable us to meet OA REF requirements by 2026 and reduce reliance on paid-for OA during a period in which the JISC negotiated Read and Publish agreements are at risk.

In collaboration with our Eastern Arc colleagues, a proposal to support Early Career Researchers to develop book proposals and publish OA is being considered.

6. 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 Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct in Research ensures that, where conduct falls short of our standards, we have an objective and impartial system in place to investigate suspected misconduct.

Our website lists our whistleblowing contact and we have a specific policy which seeks to balance protections for individuals who want to report misconduct with protections for staff and student at the University against inaccurate allegations.

All staff are required to complete mandatory training modules on diversity, equality and inclusion and our 'Respect at Kent' policy provides a code of conduct for our students.

3 cases of research ethics misconduct were reported and resolved during 2022/2023. All 3 instances related to student research projects which has highlighted an increased need for engagement with students and their supervisors on matters of research ethics. These cases were resolved informally as they did not impact participants and the preferred route was education on best ethical practices.

Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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The Code of Practice for the Investigation of Allegations of Misconduct in Research was due for a review in 2024, as a review of this code should occur every 4 years. However, due to further restructure within the University, it was decided that the review of the code would be delayed to the Summer term 2025 to ensure that the code accurately reflected the roles present within the University structure after January 1st 2025.

All staff are required to complete mandatory training modules on diversity, equality and inclusion and our 'Respect at Kent' policy provides a code of conduct for our students.

The cases of potential misconduct encountered in 2023/2024 related to a failure to either obtain appropriate ethical approval/favourable opinion or to comply with the conditions of this approval/opinion. All were found to be done without malice and were rather a result of ignorance or poor guidance in the specific areas. This supports the findings of the CI process information regarding what qualifies for ethical review and how to submit for ethical review must be clarified. It also provides a clear goal for our reporting and auditing project to ensure that our reporting/auditing supports researchers in understanding the conditions of their approval and how practically they can comply.

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	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	3	2	1	0
Misrepresentation (eg 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)				
Other	0	0	0	0
Total:	3	2	1	0

