

# Annual statement on research integrity

## Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	Roehampton University
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	Approved via email on 9/12/2024
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/research/ethics/">https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/research/ethics/</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: Dr Melissa Jogie
	Email address: melissa.jogie@roehampton.ac.uk
<b>1F. Named member of staff who will act as a first point of contact for anyone wanting more information on matters of research integrity</b>	Name: Dr Claudia Braz Nunes
	Email address: Claudia.nunes@roehampton.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

##### • Policies and systems

The following policies and procedures support a rigorous approach to ensuring research integrity at the University of Roehampton: University Policies can be found here: <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/corporate-information/policies/>

- Code of Good Research Practice and Research Integrity (to be updated as part of the review)
- Ethics Guidelines (to be updated as part of the review)
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Guidance for Researchers
- Health & Safety Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Disciplinary Procedures (Staff)
- Student Disciplinary Regulations

The University is committed to the continuous evaluation and enhancement of our policies and systems to uphold the highest standards of excellence. As part of this, we are undertaking a comprehensive review of our ethics processes, which will be strategically implemented in the upcoming academic year. This initiative reflects our unwavering commitment to fostering a culture of integrity across all areas of research and academic practice.

##### • Communications and engagement

The Research Integrity and Ethics Committee convenes four times per academic year. The committee comprises an ethics representative from each department and a representative from the PGR student community. We routinely invite representatives from HR, Insurance, Health and Safety, Contracts, and Data Protection to provide updates on important changes and to consult on specific ethics-related matters.

A new Research Services and Ethics Officer has been appointed, (Aixia Huang, in post from 23/09/2024) tasked with ensuring that staff have access to regular training sessions, which are currently provided only to Ethics Representatives and Reviewers. Although we piloted an online training program offered by UKRIO, we determined that in-person sessions would be more interactive and promote active engagement.

The Health and Safety team has already established a regular training program to assist PGR students and their supervisors in completing Risk Assessments. Additionally, the Research Office will implement a Research Services induction

for new staff, which will now include an introduction to our Ethics processes and procedures.

- **Culture, development and leadership**

Each School has an Ethics Representative and Reviewer to ensure that staff and PGR students receive ethics support tailored to their specific areas of expertise. A new Ethics Chair, Dr Melissa Jogie, has been appointed to lead this initiative. Dr Jogie brings a wealth of experience to the role, with a background in research design and mixed methodologies, she has been trained in Ethics and Research Integrity (Australian National University) and holds ONS accreditation for the safety in managing and presenting data.

Since taking on the role, Dr Jogie has met individually with each Ethics Representative to consult on the development of the ongoing review of our Ethics processes. The review of the ethics process has been discussed in two committee meetings to date. Consultation and implementation will continue in the upcoming academic year. This collaborative approach aims to enhance the effectiveness and relevance of ethics support across all departments.

- **Monitoring and reporting**

The Research Services and Ethics Officer has assumed responsibility for monitoring and reporting on Ethics applications. A new reporting tool has been developed to track the progress of each application, including details of any delays encountered. Additionally, the Research Excellence Manager has implemented a monthly Ethics report that is shared with School Ethics Representatives. This report provides comprehensive information on pending applications, their current timelines, and highlights actions that need to be prioritised.

In addition, data on pending and approved applications for the academic year is included in the documentation for each Ethics and Integrity Committee meeting. During these meetings, an internal audit of six randomly selected applications is conducted. Each application is assigned to an Ethics Representative for review. The issues identified are then discussed at the Committee meetings to inform and refine current practices, ensuring that necessary measures are taken to prevent misconduct.

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

Our ongoing review of ethics procedures is set to ensure the following implementations in the new academic year:

- **Update of the Code of Conduct:** We will be updating our current Code of Conduct, last revised in 2021. This update will incorporate the latest safeguarding, health and safety, and data protection policies.
- **Training Sessions on Research Ethics and Integrity:** Regular online and in-person training sessions on research ethics and integrity will be introduced. While these sessions are currently a part of the PGR online training on Moodle we will create new training for staff. These sessions will be designed to provide an overview of the research support protocols in place to submit ethics applications for assessment but will also broadly focus on the integrity components of being an effective researcher, which are in line with the standards and behaviours outlined in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, ensuring that all researchers are fully aware and engaging with the Concordat.
- **Workflow Review:** We will conduct a comprehensive review of our workflow processes to ensure that all policies are regularly reviewed by dedicated members of staff or teams, thereby maintaining the highest standards of ethical oversight.
- **Process for Managing Concerns and Misconduct:** A clear and transparent process will be implemented to effectively manage any concerns or instances of misconduct, ensuring accountability.

#### **New Initiatives (already implemented):**

- **New Ethics Applications Reporting and Tracking Tool:** A new tool has been developed to report on and track the progress of ethics applications, providing greater transparency and efficiency.
- **Monthly Reporting on Current Applications:** We have also introduced a monthly reporting process that provides up-to-date information on the status of current ethics applications, allowing for timely interventions and prioritised actions.

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

In line with the sector, the University encountered significant challenges related to staffing resources, which impacted the efficiency of our review procedures and contributed to delays in implementing the changes outlined above.

In reflecting on our progress, we acknowledge that we have not yet fully met the commitments set forth by the Concordat. For example, under Commitment 2 (Maintaining the highest standards of research integrity), while we have a clear ethics review guidelines document accessible to all staff, it has not been updated since 2014. For Commitment 3 (Embedding a culture of research integrity), training on research ethics and integrity has not been successfully implemented. Furthermore, we have not established systems to identify potential concerns at an early stage, nor do we have a clear process for staff members to raise concerns about research integrity.

Additionally, the UKRIO self-assessment tool has not been used, which would have ensured the annual monitoring in accordance with the Concordat. Finally, we did not fulfil Commitment 4 (Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct) as we currently lack a clear, well-defined mechanism for reporting allegations of research misconduct.

However, we remain confident that these issues will be addressed in the upcoming academic year, allowing us to achieve the standards to which we are committed.

## 2D. Case study on good practice (optional)

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

Please note that the policy outlined below is currently under review. The implementation of any changes will take place in the next academic year. As part of this review, we will provide greater transparency on how to report misconduct and to whom, ensuring that both staff and students are informed and feel comfortable reporting any instances. The process outlined below also indicates that we have a centralised system for handling allegations and complaints, ensuring that all complaints from both students and staff are managed through the same procedure. However, in the new academic year, we plan to introduce a new element to this process. This will involve the Research Office being notified of any allegations and complaints connected to the ethics process, allowing us to maintain a log of incidents and how they were addressed. This will help inform our practices and ensure regular, effective reviews of our procedures.

#### Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct

- 1) Reference should be made to the Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research (UKRIO, August 2008) prior to any use of the Universities standard disciplinary process. Adherence to these procedures is vital to ensure compliance with the suggestions of the UKRIO and to supplement the University of Roehampton's already stringent procedures.
- 2) The procedures relating to staff misconduct in the prosecution of research are set out in the University Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Any allegation or complaint of academic misconduct or fraud in research will be investigated and dealt with under those Regulations.
- 3) The procedures relating to student misconduct in the prosecution of research, are set out in the Student Disciplinary Regulations and the Student Code of Conduct. Any allegation or complaint of academic misconduct or fraud in research will be investigated and dealt with under those Regulations.
- 4) Victimisation or reprisals against a person making in good faith an allegation of misconduct will be regarded as a disciplinary offence and handled in accordance with the Regulations, as will vexatious, malicious or frivolous allegations of misconduct made by members of staff or students.

- 5) The basis for reaching a conclusion that an individual is responsible for misconduct in research relies on a judgement that there was an intention to commit the misconduct and/or recklessness in the conduct of any aspect of a research project. Where allegations concern an intentional and/or reckless departure from accepted procedures in the conduct of research that may not fall directly within the terms detailed above, a judgement should be made as to whether the matter should be investigated using the Procedure. (Procedure for the Investigation of Misconduct in Research, UKRIO, August 2008)

Related information can be found in the [Public Interest Disclosure Policy](#) (Whistleblowing).

**Who to contact with concerns about formal allegations of and suspected misconduct**

Concerns about research misconduct, including formal allegations of and suspected misconduct, should be raised with the University Secretary, as an independent contact. Anyone external to the University wishing to report suspected research misconduct should also contact the University Secretary.

<b>3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken</b>				
<b>Type of allegation</b>	<b>Number of allegations</b>			
	<b>Number of allegations reported to the organisation</b>	<b>Number of formal investigations</b>	<b>Number upheld in part after formal investigation</b>	<b>Number upheld in full after formal investigation</b>
Fabrication	0	0	0	0
Falsification	0	0	0	0
Plagiarism	0	0	0	0
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	1	1	0	0
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	0	0	0	0
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct	1	1	0	0
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)	0	0	0	0
<i>Other*</i>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>*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.</b>				