

# University of Hull

## Annual statement on research integrity 2025

### Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	University of Hull
<b>1B. Type of organisation: higher education institution/industry/independent research performing organisation/other (please state)</b>	Higher education institution
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/research/governance">https://www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/research/governance</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Name: Fiona Matthews, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
	Email address: <a href="mailto:pvc-re@hull.ac.uk">pvc-re@hull.ac.uk</a>
<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: Katie Skilton, Head of Research Excellence, Governance and Impact
	Email address: <a href="mailto:researchgovernance@hull.ac.uk">researchgovernance@hull.ac.uk</a>

## 2: Promoting high standards of research integrity and positive research culture. Description of actions and activities undertaken

### 2A. Description of current systems and culture

#### Context

The University of Hull is committed to ensuring the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research undertaken by the institution. This includes, research conducted in the name of the University, or using University resources or facilities. All members of the University community (students, staff (including those visiting or emeritus), contract holders, consultants, and associates) are expected to uphold the principles of honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect, and accountability, as detailed within the Concordat.

The University recognises its obligation to research participants, funders, partners and the wider community; and in order to maintain high standards of integrity in research, the University pledges to uphold the commitments outlined within the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

Whilst the University has assessed itself in accordance with the 2019 version of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity, which remains valid until April 2026, a project is planned to review the requirements and changes within the 2025 Refreshed Concordat to Support Research Integrity. to ensure compliance in advance of next year's deadline.

In addition to these core principles within the Concordat, researchers must also act in accordance with appropriate ethical and compliance frameworks and abide by requirements set out by the University to ensure appropriate review and approval of research.

This report provides an overview of activities and practices undertaken during academic year 2024/25 to support and enhance integrity in research and looks forward to the year ahead, in accordance with the requirements of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

## **Policies and systems**

The University's Research Governance Framework comprises various policies, procedural documents and codes outlining the standards, expectations and requirements of staff, students, and the University as a whole. These include, the Statement on Research Integrity, Code of Good Research Practice, Code of Practice for Dealing with Research Misconduct, Research Ethics Policy, and the Whistleblowing Policy. These documents are easily accessible on the [University website](#) and via internal SharePoint pages.

These policies, procedures, codes, and general guidance were drafted, and are continually reviewed to remain, in accordance with the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and the previous UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) self-assessment toolkit. The University recognises the importance of having clear and accessible policies and procedures in embedding a culture of integrity and ethics within research.

## **Training**

The University of Hull implements a multifaceted approach to training for research integrity, ensuring provision for all researchers, staff and students, is accessible and appropriate.

For research staff, training on research integrity is delivered online, as part of an e-learning package developed by the University's Learning and Development team. All research staff are mandated to complete this training before conducting University research and this must be refreshed periodically, in accordance with the learning and development mandatory training map. The training covers the fundamental principles of research ethics and integrity, forming the foundation for more discipline specific training delivered in face-to-face sessions. This training was reviewed and updated in early 2024 and a further review is scheduled for the current academic year to ensure it remains fit for purpose and to also include specific reference to the concordat and to signpost colleagues to practical tools and guidance to ensure robust integrity in practice.

Training on research ethics and integrity for PGR supervisors is delivered through a training course that is mandatory for all postgraduate supervisors at the University. This has recently been reviewed and revised in July 2025, with an eight-part online course providing a comprehensive cover of topics relevant to supervisors including a new 'Ethics and PGR Supervision' module. This material is now also included in a

PGR Supervisors' Handbook as well as available on the Doctoral College SharePoint page for reference.

For undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, basic research ethics and integrity training is built into their programme of study. For postgraduate research students, research ethics and integrity is the subject of the new 'Responsible Researcher' accredited module which must be completed by all PGRs in their first year of study. This module, launched in September 2025, is delivered by the Doctoral College in association with academic and professional services staff. It is delivered in a flipped format, with extensive self-guided material on research integrity, research data management, generative AI, ethical approvals, open research and trusted research being available to PGRs immediately on enrolment in their first trimester of study. PGRs then attend two workshops to prepare them for creating a data management plan and applying for ethical approval for their research project. This module is available three times a year, including one fully-online session, to provide maximum flexibility for research students. This module will be continually reviewed to ensure it provides all aspects of ethics and integrity training that postgraduate researchers need.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The University Research Committee (URC) and the University Knowledge Exchange Committee (UKEC) were dissolved at the beginning of the 2024-25 academic year. The University Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (URKEC) was established in their place to bring together both areas of activity. This is in response to the review of university governance and in line with the new Research and Enterprise strategy.

Committee reporting remains of a high standard, with papers on export control, research sponsorship, trusted research and research integrity all being delivered at the University Research and Enterprise Committee this year.

The Concordat to Support Research Integrity continues to be reported into the Concordat Steering Group (CSG). Particular scrutiny has been paid to the training elements relating to integrity this year, alongside notification of the research governance checklist, both of which will be detailed below.

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

### **Policies and Systems**

The Research Administration Support Team (RAST) has moved under the remit of the Research Excellence & Governance (REG) Team. This was a natural move on the return of the Head of REG from maternity leave. RAST look after the ethics committees, REF administration, research events, and other areas introduced this year such as LEAF administration in accordance with the new Concordat to support Environmental Sustainability in Research. Work continues to standardise processes with a move towards centralising the various meetings and groups supported by the REG/RAST team.

The University of Hull's Export Control Policy was approved by the University Leadership Team in October 2024. This policy formalises the due diligence, risk matrix and export control assessment processes. The Trusted Research Manager continues to shape the institution's risk appetite using current examples to encourage discussion and direction. The due diligence process is well established and the risk matrix is increasingly used to identify high risk research which may fall within the remit of export control legislation.

The process for monitoring compliance with the Nagoya Protocol is under review to ensure that the institution is prepared for any future compliance audits. The institution's responsibilities with regards to research involving animals has also been subject to review. This process is robust and in line with expectations.

A small project has just concluded to overhaul the workload plan for the full REG team. Part of this overhaul has built-in ownership of specific areas of research excellence and governance and develop contingencies and cover, during periods of absence.

The revised Code of Practice for Research Misconduct, which came into effect on the 1 April 2024, has been utilised for a small number of investigations during the 2024-25 academic year. Specific information regarding the nature of these investigations will be included within the relevant section below. The next review of the Code of Practice for Research Misconduct will be undertaken during the 2025-26 academic year alongside the ongoing project to overhaul the universities ethics processes, tools, training, policies and guidance.

The Implementation Log for the Concordat to Support Research Integrity was not reported to CSG in the previous academic year due to the changes in the university structure. Instead, detailed written reports on all matters relating to research

integrity were presented to the Group and actions were taken back to the faculties via the Associate Deans of Research (ADRs). The log has now been assigned to a member of RAST who will work with the Head of REG on a project to compare both the 2019 and the 2025 concordats and update the log. This work is planned for the latter part of 2025 to ensure any changes are approved and initiated in advance of the April 2026 deadline.

## **Open Research**

Following its creation in 2023/24, the Open Research Working Group, which comprises of senior leadership, academics (senior and early career) and research support staff continue to deliver on annual plans.

This activity included:

- Establishing a network of Open Research Champions
- Continued membership of UKRN
- Continuing to allocate 0.2fte workload for an open research institutional lead
- Continuing to deliver university-wide open research training
- Developing and approving a university Open Research Statement
- Undertaking a university-wide survey of open research awareness and activity
- Creating an 'Open Research' category in our refreshed Research Culture awards
- Inclusion examples of open research practice as indicators in our revised Academic Careers Framework
- Developing and piloting an 'open research thesis statement' to support the development of open research practice in PhD projects

A draft university strategy for open research has been developed and we anticipate this being ratified by the university in 2025/26. This strategy will formalise policy-level commitments that support and reinforce open research activity as well as expanding the range of open research training.

## **Culture Development**

The Researcher Development and Culture Team (RCRD) has now been embedded into the research structure of the University after its establishment in the 2022-23 academic year. The team launched their [Research Culture Action Plan \(RCAP\)](#) in June 2024 following a period of internal consultation. The RCAP acts as an institutional roadmap for enhancing culture and improving the research environment. It has 4 main strategic objectives: to support research and career development, to facilitate time for research, to enable

collaboration and new ways of working, and to enhance and recognise inclusive and responsible research practices. A 5-year workplan has been created around these 4 objectives.

In October 2024 the University launched the Academy for Research & Knowledge Exchange (ARKE). The ARKE has the overarching goal of establishing a supportive environment for researchers at the University of Hull to develop as research professionals, to establish and build interdisciplinary research agendas, and to deliver excellent research activity. The past twelve months have seen ongoing consultation with the research community alongside delivery of training and development activities, networking opportunities, and refinement of a set of resources for researchers.

Among these resources the RCRD have produced a resource to support researchers and academics with equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the institution: IDEA-R (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equality and Accessibility in Research). IDEA-R is a tailored University of Hull resource, produced through a scoping review of existing EDI activity and information in the research and innovation landscape. It is designed to build awareness and understanding of EDI in research among the Universities research community and to enable better alignment between Hull researchers and best practice across the sector. IDEA-R is divided into three sections:

1. General – resources to learn about the principles of inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility in research
2. IDEA-R toolkit – support to embed IDEA into research activity
3. IDEA in the research environment – guidance to support IDEA in the research environment.

A framework for support and development for early career researchers (ECRs), THRIVE, has been established by the RCRD team. ECRs are supported through THRIVE by a dedicated suite of training, development, workshops and engagement to help navigate the research landscape. The network has been successful, and there are plans to introduce similar programmes for other groups of staff in the coming 12 months, addressing demand from and needs of mid-career and established researchers.

Since 2024 the university has held two annual research-focused weeks of events, workshops and activity, one exploring research culture, and the other celebrating and recognising research. Sessions have been held which delve into research ethics, the challenges and opportunities resulting from the incorporation of artificial intelligence in research practice, and the use of environmentally sustainable processes and approaches in research. These give space for colleagues across the university to reflect upon, listen to and share views about good practice and integrity in research.

The growth and refinement of work at the University to enhance research culture has brought with it significant increase in our institutional responsiveness to the needs of the research community. This has been achieved by ongoing consultation through annual surveys, enhanced coordination between research and teams within organisational development, and regular formal and informal focus groups and listening sessions.

As an example of this, the University's Research Culture survey provided a benchmark for awareness of open research which was used to target the delivery of guest talks on open research at two different research culture workshops, four research centre/school away days and a meeting of the research support team to inform delivery of our third year of open research training. This activity aligns with the work of the University's Open Research Working Group, coordinated with the Institutional Lead for Open Research, which has driven visibility and understanding of open research, and established a network of open research champions. This is in line with the objectives of the RCAP, specifically, to recognise inclusive and responsible research practices.

## **Training**

Completion of the mandatory Research Integrity training module is monitored by Learning and Development who submit quarterly reviews to the Head of Research Excellence and Governance. This is then in turn presented to the Concordat Steering Group (CSG). Compliance in the 2024-25 academic year has been poor completion rates across the faculties around the 30% mark. A change was made earlier in the year for the training to be mandatory for all academic staff, rather than research staff, and when teaching only staff were removed from the calculations, completion rate increased to just under 50%.

CSG called for a robust response particularly given this training module was mandatory and not optional. The Faculties Associate Directors of Research took this matter back to faculty board and other associated faculty meetings with a view to



pushing this robustly within each faculty. Consideration is also underway regarding how the central governance and compliance team can further support this endeavour. At the time of writing this report the head of REG is yet to receive the updated completion rates for the University's e-learning package on research integrity, it is estimated that completion rates will have improved as a result of this new concerted effort. Although, it is also expected that additional initiatives may be required to ensure compliance across the University.

The Trusted Research Manager has continued to deliver multiple information sessions across the institution to raise awareness of Trusted Research and associated legislation with academics, research support staff and senior leadership. These information sessions will continue throughout the next 12 months and will be tailored to certain disciplines where needed.

At present, training sessions have been delivered to both University-wide and Faculty-based Committees, and further sessions are ongoing with Schools, particularly those engaged in 'high-risk research', to increase awareness and understanding of our responsibilities under the Trusted Research agenda and legislative compliance. A mandatory Trusted Research module for PGR students in relevant subject areas is now included in the new Responsible Researcher package.

The Research Governance Officer has been tasked with developing and delivering face-to-face training on research sponsorship in response to specific requests from the faculties.

### **Staffing updates within the Research Excellence and Governance Team**

The Head of the Research Excellence and Governance (REG) Team returned from maternity leave for the start of the 2024-25 academic year and has since been leading this agenda for the institution. The Research Excellence Manager post remains vacant but will be recruited to shortly.

The new post of Trusted Research Manager (TRM) within REG has continued to make excellent progress around the trusted research agenda as detailed in the report above.

The Research Governance and Quality Officer left the University at the start of the 2024-25 academic year. This post was replaced by a 0.8 FTE Research Governance Officer who has taken on research sponsorship for the University, and provides some support research governance activity predominantly focusing on policy.

As noted earlier within this report, the Research Administration Support Team (RAST) has now moved under the remit of the Head of Research Excellence and Governance and this prompted a piece of work to review and develop workload planning across the research excellence in governance portfolio.

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

The most prominent plan for the upcoming academic year is a root and branch review of the institutions research review processes, including ethics and integrity, risk, due diligence, KE ethics, data protection, AI in research, sensitive research, including security sensitive research, and administrative support for research misconduct, including documents and reporting requirements. This project has been expanding considerably throughout the last year with new workstreams being added to an overarching project. Some activities are already underway, such as the creation of a research governance and planning checklist for researchers, a review and subsequently a planned overhaul of the risk assessment criteria to name a few. There remains a priority to review the University Ethics Policy and to implement a more standardised review of ethical applications. Training in research integrity has been updated. But further updates will inevitably follow as more work is undertaken in this area.

In order to progress the various workstreams it is essential to utilise all available resource. This has led to a review of the work undertaken by research Administration Support Team (RAST) with a view to streamlining, reducing overlap, providing contingencies for crucial areas of work and administrative support across REG activities including the project detailed above.

## Section 3: Addressing research misconduct

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

The University creates and embeds a research environment in which all staff, researchers and students feel comfortable reporting instances of misconduct. The University's Code of Practice for Dealing with Research Misconduct accepts reports of suspected research misconduct raised internally or externally. Within the research integrity training, researchers are advised that they may raise concerns via a number of routes, including, but not limited to supervisors, peers, or formally to the University Secretary under the institution's whistleblowing policy.

The University Code of Practice for Dealing with Research Misconduct also outlines the manner in which a research misconduct investigation should be conducted and how appropriate investigation panels should be organised. The objectives of the policy are to:

- ensure that an investigation is thorough and fair;
- ensure that, by using an agreed standard process, errors in the conduct of an investigation should be minimised; and
- reassure those who are under investigation that the process of investigation will follow a standard procedure consistent with national best practice.

The University updated its Code of Practice for Dealing with Research Misconduct (version 3) which was implemented on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. There have been a number of cases which have now been investigated under the new procedure. As such, a review of the effectiveness of the new procedure is planned as part of the overarching research review processes.

There have been a number of research misconduct allegations reported in 2024/25. As you will see from the data below there was a significant number of issues relating to failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations. These figures primarily related to one faculty, and the majority were unearthed as part of the work to bring together the RAST team and unify ethics processes. Although many of the allegations were not applicable (for example, some related to academics having obtained ethical approval elsewhere, some were consultancy etc.) a small, yet significant number, indicated a need to ensure that training around the importance of obtaining ethical approval right at the inception of a research project; and the need for clarity within the university's own processes. Immediate actions have already been undertaken, and further work to overhaul the ethics review process and then deliver both individual comms as work streams are completed, followed by a large umbrella presentation of all the work done and the requirements on researchers etc.

<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	<5	<5		<5
Falsification				
Plagiarism	<5	<5		<5
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations	9	<5		<5
Misrepresentation (e.g., data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)				
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct				
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)				
<i>Other*</i>				
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>6</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>				
N/A				