

## University of Birmingham

### Annual Statement on Research Integrity 2024-2025

#### Section 1: Key contact information

Question	Response
<b>1A. Name of organisation</b>	University of Birmingham
<b>1B. Type of organisation:</b>  higher education institution/industry/independe nt research performing organisation/other (please state)	Higher Education Institution
<b>1C. Date statement approved by governing body (DD/MM/YY)</b>	20/12/25
<b>1D. Web address of organisation's research integrity page (if applicable)</b>	<a href="https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/research-integrity/index.aspx">https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/research-integrity/index.aspx</a>
<b>1E. Named senior member of staff to oversee research integrity</b>	Professor Daniel Tennant, Deputy Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Research Governance and Integrity)
<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: Mrs Becky Case
	Email address: <a href="mailto:r.e.case.1@bham.ac.uk">r.e.case.1@bham.ac.uk</a>

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 University's [Code of Practice for Research](#) 'the Code of Practice', outlines our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of scholarly and scientific integrity in our research. It forms part of the terms and conditions of employment of staff and cohort legislation for students and is therefore regularly reviewed to ensure it evolves alongside internal and external requirements. This Code was most recently updated with a special focus on the IP clauses, our approach to export control and safeguarding in international research. While all staff and students are expected to work in line with the Code of Practice, researchers undertaking clinical research are also expected to comply with the University's [Quality Management System](#) (QMS), that includes policies and standard operating procedures to ensure that the rights and wellbeing of the individuals participating in clinical research are protected and the data collected is credible and managed in line with relevant legislation.

### **Communications and engagement**

The University has been an engaged member of the Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) since 2019.

In addition, the University continues to be an active contributor to meetings of the Russell Group Research Integrity Forum, working in collaboration with the Russell Group Association of University Research Sponsors, the NIHR CRN Programme Board and Birmingham Health Partners Working Groups.

The University has volunteered to be part of the ongoing REF People, Culture and Environment (PCE) pilot exercise, engaging fully with this initiative to help build research excellence, which includes those cultural and structural factors that contribute to protecting research integrity and trust.

### **Culture, development and leadership**

The University has a well-established research ethics and governance infrastructure that supports a positive culture of research integrity at all levels. This includes two central research ethics committees that are responsible for reviewing PGR and staff research at the University, specifically the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) ethics committee and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) ethics committee. In addition, the University operates an Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB). IT systems support the research ethics review process (ERM) and research governance data capture (ReDA).

Dedicated expert support for all matters relating to research ethics, governance & integrity is provided by the Research Ethics, Governance & Integrity Team (REGI), which is part of the Research Strategy and Services Division (RSSD), working in close collaboration with other expert teams from across the

research life-cycle, including, for example, the Clinical Research Compliance Team (CRCT), colleagues from Library Services, Legal Services and HR, to provide proactive support, training & development (details and examples provided in section 3a) to the University's research community. A close liaison between researchers, administrators, collaborators, funders and regulatory bodies fosters a positive culture of research integrity as encouraged by the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

There is active engagement at a College and School / Institute level by Directors of Research, Research Ethics Committee Chairs and Reviewers, with institutional oversight being delivered by the Clinical Trials Oversight Committee (CTOC) and the Human Tissue Oversight Committee (HTOC). These committees report into the Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity Committee (RGEIC), which oversees and coordinates research integrity activities on behalf of the University, reporting to the University Research Committee chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

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

There have been some significant developments during 2024-25, including:

- Creation of and appointment to new role of Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research Governance and Integrity), who provides academic leadership in this regard and reports to Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).
- Reflecting our commitment and action at an institutional level to ensure our research culture is enabling and inclusive for all our researchers, training developed as part of the Wellcome Trust funded ASPIRE project on inclusive research practice has been rolled out to senior research leaders.
- Adoption of the newly introduced UKRI Research Integrity training package (<https://ukrio.org/events/online-training-course/>), prioritising postgraduate research students and early career researchers.
- Recruitment of new Head of Research Governance and Integrity to vacant post, reflecting ongoing commitment to highest standards of service provision and oversight in this area.
- DPVC (Research Governance and Integrity) is now Primary Contact and Research Integrity Officer for United States Department of Health and Human Services Federalwide Assurance
- In the 2024–2025 reporting period, the University underwent two key regulatory inspections relating to research integrity. The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) conducted an inspection at Birmingham Dental Hospital and School of Dentistry on 30 April 2025 (HTA licence 12313). While the establishment met the majority of HTA standards, four minor shortfalls were

identified. The HTA deemed the site suitable for continued licensing, subject to the implementation of corrective and preventative actions. These actions have since been completed to the satisfaction of the HTA. Additionally, a Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) inspection of the University's clinical research processes commenced in May 2024. The University responded with a comprehensive corrective and preventative action plan, which was reviewed and accepted by the GCP Inspectorate. The MHRA inspection is now considered closed. These outcomes reflect the University's ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards of research governance and regulatory compliance.

- The University has implemented robust due diligence and export control policies to safeguard international research and ensure that partners act with integrity and in accordance with good ethical standards. High-risk cases are escalated for approval to an oversight committee chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (international). In addition, an International Risk Oversight Group reports to the University Executive Board and Council, providing accountability and driving best practice in the management of international risk. The University upholds the Trusted Research framework, enhancing its processes to ensure protection of national security within research and international collaborations.
- During the reporting period, a series of tailored Trusted Research communications have been circulated to all staff, and at a more fine-grained level to targeted groups.

Trusted Research is a regular topic at RSSD Town Hall meetings and is embedded as a standing agenda item within College Hub discussions, and induction and Performance and Development Review processes. Consistent communication at every level of the Division ensures that Trusted Research is embedded within RSSD culture, from Research Strategy & Development, through to Business Engagement and Research Partnerships.

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

The 2024-25 year has been one in which a number of positive new initiatives have been progressed, as outlined above, and this principle of continually updating our approach to Research Integrity, will continue in 2025-26.

Significant developments that are planned for next year will include the:

- AI guidance framework for research finalised, which addresses the engagement of diverse stakeholder groups and sustainability.

- A pilot of e-lab books is in progress, across multiple STEM disciplines and three separate providers.
- Development of appropriate training to be used where necessary for those running investigations and serving as panellists for reviews following allegations of research misconduct, in line with updated requirement within the Concordat to support Research integrity.
- Assessing our current policies and where necessary strengthening these to ensure that the University is meeting the UKRI requirement for a safeguarding policy for international research.
- The University has identified key priorities to strengthen existing ethics review processes, including clearer guidance, better training, and streamlined processes. These changes will continue to support the highest standards of responsible research and ensure our processes remain transparent, consistent, and aligned with best practice, while further building capacity in our systems.

## **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**

In addition to the [Code of Practice for Research](#) which includes a section on managing potential allegations of research misconduct (reviewed 22/23) [the Policy and Procedure on Public Interest Disclosure and 'Whistleblowing'](#) is designed to allow staff, students and all members of University bodies (e.g. University Committees) to raise, at high level, concerns or information which they believe in good faith provides evidence of malpractice. The policy sets out how such disclosures should be made, and how cases will be handled by the University. Allegations of Harassment and Bullying will be managed in line with the [Harassment and Bullying policy](#). Website information signposts appropriate ways on raising concerns and this information is included in development sessions for the research community.

The University's institutional mandatory training includes Data protection and GDPR, Information Security, Health & Safety, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and fire safety. Study specific mandatory training includes good clinical practice training for clinical studies and mandatory training for research that involves animals.

A variety of research ethics, governance & integrity training / development activities are available to the research community. This includes online training courses that are free at the point of use for all University staff and students, providing an introduction into research ethics, governance and integrity focusing on good research conduct such as research data management courses, research methodology and research skills training. There are specific courses for researchers conducting clinical trials in line with the University's QMS and for research that involves animals to support researchers with compliance with legislation and principles of the Reduction, Replacement and Refinement.

There is a provision for more informal 1-1 and small group sessions for research staff and students seeking guidance and support on issues pertinent to their research. This includes development and support sessions for PGR students in all Colleges.

3B. Information on investigations of research misconduct that have been undertaken				
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	2	2		
Falsification				
Plagiarism	1	0		
Failure to meet legal, ethical and professional obligations				
Misrepresentation (eg data; involvement; interests; qualification; and/or publication history)	2	1		
Improper dealing with allegations of misconduct				
Multiple areas of concern (when received in a single allegation)				
Other*				
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5</b>			
<p><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></p> <p><i>[Please insert response if applicable]</i></p>				